

Appendix 6

REPORT ON BEST PRACTICES FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUITY

In response to a request by the University of Wisconsin System Committee on the Status of Women, Chancellors from nearly all the UW campuses submitted a list of practices on their campuses that seek to evaluate or improve the status of women. (A copy of the letter appears at the end of this report, along with a complete list of the practices collected by the Committee.) What follows here is a description, not an evaluation, of some of those practices, based on information provided by the Chancellors. Since one of the strengths of the UW System is its ability to foster collaboration among diverse campus settings, we hope that we can establish a mechanism for soliciting, evaluating, and sharing practices that work to create a more hospitable campus culture for women students, faculty and staff.

This report also includes some practices from outside the UW, which have not been tested on System campuses. In some cases, we have looked outside the academic community to the business community for “best practices” in areas where business has led. In part, this is due to the fact that the business community has mechanisms for identifying and rewarding companies for progressive and inclusive policies toward women and minorities. For example, the annual Catalyst Award honors companies that take innovative and successful approaches to the hiring and advancement of women. Working Woman magazine honors companies that have progressive family friendly policies. As yet, there are no comparable awards to honor institutions of higher education for innovative and effective programs for women.

The following practices have been organized into the five key areas identified by the Committee on the Status of Women:

- 1) Educational Opportunities for Women Students
- 2) Hiring, Promotion and Retention of Women Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff
- 3) The Learning and Working Environment
- 4) Balancing Work and Personal Life
- 5) Organizational Structure

1. Educational Opportunities for Women Students

The Women in Science Program, an office of the UW System Women's Studies Consortium, has worked to create a campus and classroom climate that contributes to the retention of women faculty and students. The Women and Science Program is a model of the kind of collaboration to improve the status of women that is possible among

campuses within the System. Housed at UW-Oshkosh but jointly supported by the UW System and the 15 individual UW System institutions, the program has helped faculty to reform the content and teaching methods in introductory science courses, the point at which many potential majors are lost. Funded initially by a grant from the National Science Foundation, which has called the program a national model for faculty development, the program has included faculty from every campus in the UW System and now also holds annual Summer Institutes for faculty across the country.

2. Hiring, Promotion, and Retention of Women Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff

In an effort to encourage women to enter leadership positions, UW-River Falls has instituted administrative internships for women. Women who have some interest in administration but may not have had any experience at it are given the opportunity to work for a semester in an administrative office on campus. In just three years, the program has awarded internships to four women, one of whom subsequently has been appointed Assistant Dean and another appointed Associate Provost.

Model programs in the area of hiring, retention, and promotion have come primarily from the business community, where such programs have been in effect long enough to have been tested and proved successful. For example, companies such as Motorola, Deloitte & Touche, and the Bank of Montreal--all winners of a Catalyst Award given annually for corporations that advance the status of women--have instituted practices that have increased the number of women in upper management, including integrating business objectives with diversity objectives, identifying potential leaders from a pool of women and minorities and preparing them for leadership roles in the company, and holding managers accountable for the retention and promotion of women and minorities.¹

In general, initiatives such as those at Motorola, Deloitte & Touche, and the Bank of Montreal depend on strong leadership and "a clear business case," an assessment of current barriers and opportunities for women, and the development and implementation of solutions as well as systems for measuring progress. Their example may provide a model for similar initiatives at the UW.

3. The Learning and Working Environment

Campuses in the UW-System have tried through various programs to create a hospitable working and learning environment that fosters respect for women. UW-Stout, for example, recognizes the fact that women students of color often feel isolated, since they comprise only two percent of the student population, and feel alienated by "the system"

¹ For more information about initiatives at these companies, see Advancing Women in Business, The Catalyst Guide: Best Practices from Corporate Leaders (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1998).

because they are often among the first generation in their family to attend college. In order to improve the climate for women students of color by helping them feel more connected to others and more comfortable in the system, UW-Stout has established a program called Empowering Women Students of Color, which provides formal and informal mentoring “by professional staff from campus, by community education and business leaders, and by off-campus professionals.”

4. Balancing Work and Personal Life

Within the UW System, UW-La Crosse has established policies that help faculty, staff, and students to balance the demands of their working lives with those of their personal lives. The UW-La Crosse Chancellor’s Ad Hoc Committee on Family Friendly Policies was formed to recommend ways to help make the campus “a workplace that promotes a healthy balance between an employee’s work life and family life.” As a result of the committee’s work, UW-La Crosse established several programs and policies, including training for supervisors on creating a family-friendly workplace. The University also instituted a policy providing benefits to domestic partners of employees of UW-La Crosse in areas over which the institution has sole control, such as the use of facilities.

Both the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Iowa have model programs for helping faculty, students, and staff balance the demands of work and personal life, improving morale and increasing productivity while supporting the recruitment and retention of women. Both universities provide good quality care for children and elderly members of families of faculty, staff and students, as well as snow-day childcare, while the University of Iowa extends benefits to domestic partners of faculty and staff. These universities make it possible for each employee to balance the demands of the workplace and the home, while acknowledging the demographic changes that have created the changing number and nature of dependents.

These institutions are recognized because they seem to have in place functional programs and services that are comprehensive and inclusive; acknowledge the variations in the support network of each employee, the still-existing bias in the obligations of women as the primary caregivers in most nuclear families, and the demographic changes that create an expanding number of dependents; and are innovative in recognizing the contributions of each employee.

5. Organizational Structure

Several campuses in the University of Wisconsin-System have committees that specifically address the status of women. The success of these committees depends in large part on the support that they have from the top leadership on the campus. At UW-La Crosse, a Women’s Advisory Council, comprised of women faculty, academic staff, classified staff, and students, has been appointed by the Chancellor to identify and research issues of importance to women on that campus (e.g., creating a more female-

friendly campus through mentoring and training) and to make recommendations to resolve identified problems.

Since 1993, UW-River Falls has had a similar committee, the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women, which has been charged with identifying and making recommendations concerning current and emerging issues related to women faculty, staff, and students. One of the tasks of the committee has been to initiate a survey on the climate for women faculty, staff, and students at UW-River Falls. The Committee sponsored a campus visioning exercise in which members of the UW-River Falls community answered the question, What are aspects of a healthy climate? After a literature review of university climate surveys, a survey was developed, administered and collected. Using this data, the committee will recommend specific policies to address issues identified by the survey. The Committee on the Status of Women at UW-River Falls provides a means of contact and dissemination for matters concerning women on campus and in the UW System. It also provides a means of communication among disparate committees and organizations concerned with the status of women on campus, bringing together women from across the ranks, and giving classified staff, who are predominantly women, a mechanism for the advocacy of their concerns.

The Committee on Women in the University at UW-Madison is responsible for evaluating the status of women faculty and staff at the University, recommending proposals for improving the status of women, and making suggestions to administrative offices about priorities and policies regarding gender equity. According to its 1997-1998 annual report, the committee has worked with University governance committees, administrative offices, and organizations in order to assess and improve the climate for women at UW-Madison. Among its activities, the committee has collected and analyzed the data on faculty recruitment and promotion, comparing its hiring of women to that of peer institutions as a way of measuring its progress toward gender equity. The committee has promoted several programs in order to increase the number of women faculty hired, has studied the retention of women faculty and has addressed the issue of gender equity in faculty pay. In an effort to improve the climate for women on campus, the Committee on Women in the University has recommended workshops on sexual harassment, and has helped develop "materials for voluntary informational sessions on sexual harassment policies and issues for faculty."

Conclusion

This report arises out of the experience of the Committee on the Status of Women in trying to define, find, and evaluate best practices inside and outside the UW System. This task was made more difficult by the fact that there is no information available about best practices on campuses nationwide, and no systematic collection of information about the results of practices within UW institutions.

If there is to be an on-going, System-level office responsible for overseeing implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Status of Women, that

office could annually collect, evaluate, and publish best practices in this area from around the System. The effect of such a collection program would be not only to encourage campuses to develop innovative programs, but also to monitor and measure their success, and to help UW institutions to share the practices they have found most effective.

Given the lack of information about best practices in higher education nationally, we suggest that the UW System also initiate an effort to identify and publish best practices that improve the status of women in colleges and universities around the country. Working with a few colleges and universities outside Wisconsin, representatives from the UW System could approach a non-profit organization such as the Office of Women in Higher Education at the American Council on Education to establish a program based on the Catalyst model, which evaluates similar practices in the corporate world, publishes information on those they find particularly effective, and presents a high-profile annual award.

Best Practices Collected

These practices are organized according to the key areas for progress identified by the UW System Committee on the Status of Women. Some practices appear in more than one category. Most are from within the University of Wisconsin System, but the list also includes several from other institutions of higher education and from corporations.

1. Educational Opportunities for Women Students

UW System:

Women and Science Program (housed at UW-Oshkosh)

UW-Madison

Tuition Assistance Program

Women in Science and Engineering Residential Program

University Health Service Program on Relationships, Health and Violence

Violence Prevention Coordinator

Society of Women Engineers

Wisconsin Emerging Scholars (WES) Program

UW-Parkside:

Women in Engineering Program

Women in Science Program

Women in Math, Science and Technology Day

UW-Platteville:

Women in Engineering Program

UW-Stevens Point:

Women and Science Days

UW-Stout:

Empowering Women Students of Color

UW-Whitewater:

Scholarship for two returning women students

Sisterhood Summit

2. Hiring, Promotion, and Retention of Women Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff

UW System:

Women and Science Program (housed at UW-Oshkosh)

UW-La Crosse:

Single Parent Self-Sufficiency Program

UW-Madison:

Academic Leadership Series

Administrative Development Program

Manager / Supervisor Development Series

Office Professionals' Conference; Departmental Effectiveness Series

Leadership Institute

Learning Series

Strategic Hiring Initiative

Tuition Assistance Program

Women Faculty Mentoring Program

UW-Milwaukee:

Faculty retention surveys

Faculty mentoring program

Office of Diversity / Compliance activities:

 Career tracking

 Exit interviews

 Search and screen presentations

Training

Information dissemination

Alternative dispute resolution

UWM chapter of Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership

UW-Oshkosh:

Junior Women Faculty Mentoring Project

Faculty Development Program

UW-Platteville:

Women in Engineering Program

Exit interviews and questionnaires for terminating women and persons of color

Women's leadership conference

UW-River Falls:

Administrative Internships for Women

Faculty Mentoring Program

Women recruited into tenure track positions above disciplinary availability

UW-Stevens Point:

Women and Science Days

Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership activities

Women students in leadership positions

3. The Learning and Working Environment

UW-Madison:

Diversity Awareness Workshops for Faculty and Staff
 Graduate Assistants' Equity Workshops
 New Faculty Workshops
 Academic Staff Mentoring Program
 Departmental Faculty Mentoring System
 Women Faculty Mentoring Program
 Sexual Violence & Students: A Collaborative Approach
 Health Service programs on violence prevention
 Women's Studies Program
 Women's Studies Research Center
 Job Security for Academic Staff members
 Strategic Hiring Initiative
 Statistics
 Web page for Women Faculty and Staff

UW-Milwaukee:

Faculty mentoring program
 1992 Faculty Retention Survey

UW-Oshkosh:

Campus Climate Initiative

UW-Parkside:

Women and Poverty Initiative
 Focus on Women Conference
 Community Advisory Board of the Women's Studies Program
 Center for Community Partnership
 Certificate in Social Action

UW-Platteville:

Anti-harassment training
 Campus climate survey
 National Women and Girls in Sports Day

UW-River Falls:

Faculty mentoring program
 Campus climate survey

UW-Stout:

Mentoring Faculty Women Project
 Empowering Women Students of Color

4. Balancing Work and Personal Life

UW-La Crosse:

Chancellor's Ad Hoc Committee on Family Friendly Policies

UW-Madison:

Brochure on Family Leave & Extension of Probationary Period

Office of Campus Child Care

Child Care Tuition Assistance Program

SAFE (Safe Arrival for Everyone) Nighttime Services

Sexual Violence and Students: A Collaborative Approach

UW-Oshkosh:

University Escort Service

Campus for Acquaintance Rape Education (CARE) Program

UW-Platteville:

Campus Safety Walk

Children's center

UW-Superior:

Self-defense classes

UW-Whitewater:

Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Committee

Sexual Assault Response Team

Practices outside of the UW System:

University of Pennsylvania Quality of Work Life

<http://www.hr.upenn.edu/quality>

University of Iowa Human Resources Family Services

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~hrpersvc/index.html>

University of California, Davis Quality of Work Life Initiatives

employer@ucdavis.edu

<http://hr.ucdavis.edu/qwli2>

Johnson & Johnson Balancing Work and Family Program

5. Organizational Structure

UW-La Crosse:

Women's Advisory Council

Organization for Campus Women

UW-Madison:

Committee on Women in the University
Ombuds for Women Faculty
Employee Assistance Office
Equity & Diversity Committees

UW-Milwaukee:

Women's Resource Center
Task Force on Working Environment for Women Faculty

UW-Parkside:

The Student Women's Center

UW-Platteville:

Women's Center

UW-River Falls:

Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women

UW-Stevens Point:

Women's Resource Center

UW-Superior:

Committee on Status of Women
Faculty Senate operating policy requires a woman on each committee
Association of Women Students
Women's Resource Center

UW-Whitewater

Children's Center, Adult Resource Center, and Women's Center

Practices outside of the UW System:

Baxter Healthcare Corporation Work and Life Strategic Initiative