

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS**  
**UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME**  
**MEETING OF May 10, 2011**  
**3:00-4:30 p.m. Room 500, MAIN BUILDING**

**Members present:** Susan Ohmer, Kevin Barry, Jennifer Mason McAward, Kathie Newman, Alison Rice, Sister Susan Dunn, Maura Ryan

**Members absent and excused:** Don Pope-Davis, Tracy Bergstrom, Aimee Buccellato, Jessica Collett, Paulette Curtis, Ken Milani, Emily LeStrange, Catherine Soler, Diane Wagner, Allison Regier, Amber Handy

**Guests:** Linda Kroll— Associate Vice President for Finance and Chair of the ECDC/ND standing committee, Elizabeth Clark--Office of Budget and Planning; Tracey Thomas (Recorder)

**1. Welcome and Approval of minutes of May 4, 2011 meeting:**

Prof. Susan Ohmer, chair, greeted and welcomed members to the last meeting of the academic year. She reviewed the minutes of the May 4, 2011, and updated the committee on the discussion of the proposed changes to the Academic Articles by the Faculty Affairs Working Group of Academic Council. Both changes will go to the full Council at its next meeting.

Prof. Kathy Newman made a motion to approve the minutes; it was seconded by Kevin Barry. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**2. Report on the ECDC-ND relationship:**

Prof. Ohmer welcomed two guests to the meeting: Linda Kroll, associate vice president for finance and chair of the ECDC/ND standing committee, and Elizabeth Clark, from the Office of Budget and Planning. They have been invited to present a report to the committee on the relationship between ECDC and Notre Dame and an update on the issue of child care needs on campus.

Ms. Kroll thanked the committee for inviting her to speak. The relationship between the UCWFS committee and the issue of child care is a long and strong one, as the committee has consistently advocated for institutional support for child care.

Ms. Kroll explained her connection with ECDC. ECDC is a separate corporation with which ND has a contractual relationship and very close ties, in part due to the physical presence of the business on the university's campus. Because of this close relationship, ND has two representatives on the ECDC Board of Directors; this insures that the lines of communication stay open. Ms. Kroll and Professor Ohmer are the current ND representatives on the ECDC Board.

Ms. Kroll is also the Chair of the ECDC/ND standing committee, instituted by John Affleck Graves in response to requests from this committee and from other campus groups. One goal of the committee is to provide a regular conduit for communication between the university and the child care center. Previous to the creation of the committee, issues would arise, an ad hoc committee would be formed to address the issues and implement a response, and then the committee would be disband. When questions eventually would emerge again, another ad hoc committee would be formed. In 2009, this standing committee was created to move information through the campus representatives to the Board, and from the representatives out into the campus community.

Ms. Kroll gave a power point presentation which explained the role of the committee, the background of ECDC, the relationship between ECDC and ND, the financial facts of ECDC, the enrollment process, including the tiered payment system and the wait list for a spot, the development of the family resources website, and the consideration of expansion of child care to a second ND site.

The standing committee has three central objectives.

1. To provide an overview of operations at ECDC, including the lottery process, revenue and expenses
2. To be an information conduit from the committee to the ECDC Board
3. To be an information conduit from ECDC to the ND community

The current committee is composed of members drawn from the Faculty senate, the graduate student body, the Office of Graduate Students, Human Resources, the Provost's Office, the Staff Advisory Council, and two members from this committee. Ms. Kroll noted that both UCWFS members are rolling off at the end of this academic year; she encouraged members to fill these spots, as UCWFS has been an important voice for child care at ND.

Ms. Kroll provided a brief history of ECDC. It is a non-profit organization which is independent of ND but enjoys close contractual relationships with ND and with St. Mary's. Each site is a separate business contracted with each of the two institutions but managed by the same organization and implementing the same curriculum under the direction of one curriculum director. The ND site caters to children ages 2 through kindergarden. The St. Mary's site caters to children ages 3 through pre kindergarden. The sites are licensed by the state, which dictates things like the ratio of teachers to students per classroom. The sites are also accredited by NAEYC, one of about three child care centers in South Bend to be so accredited. Accreditation establishes teacher qualifications and other curriculum requirements. 75% of the expenses are dictated by these two items, as will be discussed later.

The ND site was begun at this location in 1993, while the St. Mary's site has been in business at that site since 1971. The ND site was founded with the spirit of inclusion of the university community, which significantly means that all university employees have access to the service

and that access is equal; there is no preferential treatment. ECDC also implements a tiered sliding scale for payments to enable it to meet this accessibility goal.

Ms. Kroll reviewed the 2008 report put together by the last ad hoc committee. This group made the recommendation to revise the sliding scale for the first time since the opening in 1993. In addition, a regular review process was instituted so that the gap between income and amount paid will not occur again.

The oversight role played by ND for the ECDC services was next reviewed. The presence of two ND representatives on the ECDC board gives ND a voice. When ECDC services were reviewed by the last ad hoc committee, it was noted that the operations were efficient; there is little outside expense besides teacher costs and direct care costs. ND makes two contributions to ECDC in return for the accessibility agreement. The first is a cash subsidy paid by ND to ECDC to compensate for the financial losses due to the sliding scale. The second is an in kind contribution to ECDC: the corporation pays \$1.00 rent/year for use of the building, and to cover housekeeping, landscaping, and maintenance of the building and property. On the recommendation of the ad hoc committee, the sliding scale is no longer adjusted on a cliff process but rather evaluated yearly for relevance to the costs. This adjustment has, among other things, enabled the ad hoc to be discontinued.

To support the ND community, in light of the equal access program, the ECDC/ND standing committee has seen fit to begin the development of a website to provide detailed information to ND families on a range of family-related topics, prominently including off campus child care information. The intention is to create a portal to information for ND families. In response to a question, Ms. Kroll noted that the website is not yet functional. Ms. Clark, here today, has done a tremendous amount of work to pull this together; it is at the mock-up stage, awaiting the go ahead from the General Counsel. The design allows users to state their availability to provide a personal experience based review of a resource. The review itself is not posted. The goal is to get the website up and running by Fall, 2011.

Another outcome of this last ad hoc committee was the creation of the standing committee.

Ms. Kroll reviewed the operating revenue and expenses of ECDC. 74% of revenues come from tuition, 14 % come from the ND subsidy. The remaining 10% is covered by the in kind contribution from ND. This leaves 2% private fund raising revenue, that ECDC solicits each year. In terms of operating expenses, 76% is salary and benefits, including the six administrative positions, divided between the two sites. The predominance of staff is the classroom teachers, including floating teachers to insure that the centers stay in ratio compliance at all times. In addition, each site makes use of part time student workers. In terms of expenses, the non-negotiables account for 1% of expenses; daily supplies are 7%, educational needs are 4% and the in kind expenses are 10%. All but 2% of expenses is spent on classroom materials or non-negotiables. Thus, there is not much room to scale back the expenses of the centers. One

option would be to reduce accreditation compliance, but it would be rare for campus-based child care centers not to be accredited. Ms. Kroll noted that the salaries are not ‘high’ compared with local public school salaries. She suggested that the teachers find reward in the setting and the opportunity for classroom management. Of the four two-year old classroom teachers, two have been in the employ of the ND site since it opened.

Ms. Kroll addressed the question of the subsidy. The standing committee was concerned that the high income users were subsidizing the lower income users; this is not so. The subsidy covers the gap between what the lowest income earners can pay and the cost. The annual review is designed in part to monitor this and adjust the tiers as needed. In addition, there is a regular 2-3 year review of cost in comparison to local centers and to peer institution centers.

Ms. Kroll discussed the process which determines access. The lottery system is used for all users in the priority one category (ND faculty, staff and students. Priority two includes CSC relatives. Priority three includes ND alum and then St. Mary’s alum). The executive director conducts the lottery. The sites can take 170 children, distributed across a wide range of schedules (there is not room for 170 children at the same time in the buildings). Typically there are about 72-84 names on the ND waiting list; the waiting list has been relatively stable in size and distribution over 5 or more years. She stressed that there is no preferential access provided to any user; there is no preferential access for recruitment purposes.

Ms. Kroll provided data on the enrollment by tier level, by income bracket. Typically staff members enroll about 60 children in the ND center, faculty enroll about 47, and students about 43. The wait list is heavily occupied by two year olds; the center is able to accommodate the needs of most 3, 4 and 5 years at some point in each year. On the other hand, there are about 40 two year olds on the wait list. In response to a question, Ms. Kroll said that predictive work has been done on the changing demographics of the user population. Some data has been pulled from the numbers of children of appropriate age who are enrolled in ND insurance. This produces a rough number but of some value nonetheless for assessing demand now and in the future. The potential user group has grown. Clearly, there is not enough capacity to meet the demand. This fact was instrumental in the committee’s decision to create the family resource list website, as it is certain that there will never be sufficient resources on campus to meet need at 100%.

Members discussed the differences between the ND site and the St. Mary’s site. Both are under the same curriculum director. Both receive the same accreditation. But there is a distinct disinterest in members of the ND community to use the St. Mary’s site. Some possible explanations: the building is not a stand-alone building; the location is not as convenient as the ND site; because of campus restrictions, the St. Mary’s site opens slightly later each morning; due to the St. Mary’s College calendar, the St. Mary’s site is closed for 3 weeks of the year— during which, the enrolled children can be transferred to the ND site; the food service used at

each site is campus determined. In summary, there are some operational differences between the two sites; there are no curricular differences at all. When users visit St. Mary's, they find classrooms with the same environment and feel as the classrooms at the ND site. There is also a lack of knowledge that the two sites are run by the same administrators. Many do not realize that there is a relationship between the two. Surveys reveal that potential users have formed strong negative assumptions about the St. Mary's site, even without having visited or seen the site. The result is that the St. Mary's site is not filled to capacity. It is part of the St. Mary's contract that open spots can be filled with members of the public; up to 30-40% of the slots are taken by non-university users. This represents a disconnect between campus child care needs and the opportunities available to fill those needs.

It also impacts the question of whether there is a need for further expansion to child care centers at ND. Members discussed the logistical barriers to ND users of placing a child at the St. Mary's site. While some pointed out that the St. Mary's site is much closer than any other child care option in South Bend, it was acknowledged that for some user groups, particularly graduate students, the location across a major city street can be prohibitive. Certainly, the St. Mary's site, with its accreditation, is the best site available which is not on the ND campus. In response to a question, Ms. Kroll reported that the St. Mary's site is not prepared to open its enrollment to two years at present. Per licensing and accreditation rules, this age group has specific space and staffing needs which are beyond the present physical conditions of the St. Mary's site; specifically, the hand washing requirements, related to diaper changing, are not possible in the current physical space. Long term, the St. Mary's site will be renovated, but there is no current plans for that.

The motivation to have a child care program on site is different for each institution. ND provides this service on campus in order to meet an expressed need of its community. At St. Mary's the center is designed primarily to support the educational training of the St. Mary's students. There is a lesser need for child care in the St. Mary's community; the center provides a practicum option for the school. There is no curricular interest in a two year classroom at present. Again, the site is managed by St. Mary's, and ND cannot dictate to it.

Members turned to a discussion of the possibility of expansion on the ND campus. Ms. Kroll emphasized again that licensing and accreditation rules limit class sizes, ratios of teachers to students, and qualifications of the staff. She also noted that the demand decreases with age of child—more slots are desired for two year olds than for five year olds, although more five year olds can be accommodated in one classroom than can two year olds, by the ratio standards.

The standing committee considered the hypothetical possibility of building another location on the ND campus with an identical footprint to the current site to serve the high demand user group of infants through two year olds. After a close review of the data, the committee could not seriously recommend this option. Ms. Kroll explained that the licensing and accreditation demands for this age group would limit the number of infants who could be served in this

identical physical space to 16; the number of 12-18 month olds would be 20, and the 18-24 month olds would be 20, with a total of 56 children served in that space with the increased expense of this more expensive service. This would be a negligible portion of the possible population.

Given these facts, the committee considered the possibility of building an identical center which would serve the same population group now being served at the ND ECDC site: 2 rooms of 2 year olds; 1 room of 2/3 year olds; 1 room of 3-4 year olds; 1 room of 4 year olds; 1 room of 5 year olds. This would expand the campus service to two year olds from 15 to 34. 100 full time students could be served in this site for the same costs.

The committee has recommended to the university to seriously consider opening a second site on the ND campus and gear it to the 2-3 year old range, serving as support structure for the pre-K classroom. The Provost's Office has given its support to this recommendation, if a donor can be secured to endow the building, as is standard for new buildings on the ND campus. ND is willing to commit to duplicate its support of the center in terms of subsidy and in kind contribution. This recommendation and support has been presented to the ECDC Board; it would need to evaluate whether it would be interested in operating this second site. Given a donor and ECDC commitment, the university would include a new child care center as a priority of the next capital campaign.

Members discussed this expansion recommendation. Some expressed a wish to support the family policies of the university by providing infant care even if it would be on a limited basis. Ms. Kroll noted that expense is not a limiting factor; the cost to the university would be identical whether the new site served 56 infants or 100 2-5 year olds. If the community expressed a unified desire for the former, that would be an influential factor. However, she noted that the numbers suggest that this would be a bad decision. Further, she reported that there are other good resources to be recommended to parents of infants; this is in part what has motivated the family resources website. She noted that she sought and found high quality and reasonably priced infant care for two children. Contrary to belief, these options are usually affordable, as is good quality nanny care. It was suggested that an infant care facility would demonstrate the university's commitment to its family policies, and would meet a unique need that can be hard to satisfy. While Ms. Kroll agreed that families can have difficulties in finding infant care, it is in fact available. There is evidence that access to information is a significant barrier for families; again, the website is being designed to meet this need.

Ms. Kroll shared with members that the state operates a website, Carefinder, which provides access to all Health Inspector reports filed by the state for every child care operator which is licensed by the state. A lot of useful information is available here that can aid families in making child care choices.

Prof. Ohmer noted that the question of how to meet infant care needs for ND families has not been fully answered; she suggested that this is a significant issue the committee should take up in the next academic year. One possible consideration is a portable subsidy; this might, however, impact the overall ND subsidy, which must be considered. ND does not want to negatively impact the ND ECDC site's business model. She also noted that this committee could take up the issue of identifying better ways to communicate accurate information about the St. Mary's site, so that ND users can more effectively take advantage of the classroom slots available there.

Ms. Kroll briefly reviewed two more initiatives undertaken by the standing committee in response to faculty requests which arose from a presentation to faculty arranged by Prof. Ohmer in 2010. Out of that significant discussion of family programming were identified an increased need for more lactation spaces on campus and a request for high chairs in campus dining spaces. She reported that HR has explored further spaces that can be used for lactation and is currently reviewing the location and utilization of the lactations now available. She also reported that all but the very smallest dining spaces on campus now have high chairs available for diners' use. Ms. Kroll applauded this committee's work which facilitated the collection of feedback that was heard and acted on.

Prof. Newman thanked Ms. Kroll for the excellent presentation and asked about the institutional structures which monitor and act on the kinds of issues discussed today. Prof. Ohmer noted that there is a significant change from a few years ago. Today these issues are overseen by HR, this committee, Ms. Kroll's office, the Family Life advocate (Mary Daly) and Prof. Ohmer's office within the Provost's Office. More importantly, each of these units is in regular conversation with one another and with the Provost and JAG. It is now a full constituted network.

Prof. Ohmer thanked Ms. Kroll for this informative presentation. She noted that Ms. Kroll has been an incredible leader in this area, which is of ongoing concern for ND families. She said the standing committee's report was responsible for the increase in the subsidy levels, a boon for families. Child care is an important topic, and it will be featured as a significant part of the committee's agenda next year.

Prof. Ohmer thanked members for its service to the ND community, and she looked forward to another successful and productive year in 2011-2012.

The meeting was adjourned.