

**University Committee on Women Faculty and Students
Annual Report for the Academic Year 2012-2013
Prepared for the University of Notre Dame's Academic Council**

The Academic Articles state that the University Committee on Women Faculty and Students “considers policies, practices, and the general environment at the University as they relate to women faculty and students. The committee may make recommendations for action to the President and Provost or, as they direct, for action by the other officers of the University and the Academic Council. The committee should meet regularly and should publish a record of its deliberations for the University community. The chair of the committee provides an annual report of its activities to the Academic Council.”

The University Committee on Women Faculty and Students (UCWFS) met five times over the course of this year. Two members of the Committee served on the Notre Dame ECDC group and one served on the Benefits Committee, providing both faculty and graduate student input into their deliberations. The UCWFS also nominated women faculty for the Mapother lunches with Provost Thomas Burish. The eight faculty members whom the Provost hosted in 2012-2013 expressed appreciation for the quality of the conversation and the opportunity to share their thoughts.

For the 2012-2013 academic year, members identified and focused on several priorities: supporting the climate survey being prepared by the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research; mentoring, particularly of graduate students; work/life balance; community engagement and connections to Chicago; clarifying policies regarding faculty leaves; and women in senior leadership positions. In keeping with past practice, the UCWFS identified other campus groups or units with which to collaborate to accomplish its goals.

Climate Survey: A climate survey has been in development over the past three years and the UCWFS is grateful for OSPIR’s willingness to discuss the survey throughout this time. The discussions have helped shape the survey instrument and the topics discussed. This year the UCWFS met twice with members of the OSPIR and offered ideas about how to promote participation; the survey began in April 2013. The UCWFS is committed to working to implement the recommendations that result from the report.

Mentoring: The UCWFS met with Ann Moran, Graduate Student Program Director in the Career Center, and Stephanie Lyons, a graduate student in Physics and founder of the Notre Dame chapter of the National Association of Women in Science. Ms. Lyons expressed appreciation for the efforts of Dean Greg Crawford and Kathleen Cannon to support women in science. Members of the UCWFS explored why graduate students and some faculty do not see the value of mentoring, but believe it interferes with their research time. The UCWFS discussed ways to encourage faculty to mentor and graduate students to participate, perhaps by offering a one-credit course in professional development as part of a graduate student’s training. It might also be helpful to offer incentives for faculty to mentor, for example, putting funds into a faculty member’s research account.

Work/Life Balance: In April the UCWFS and the Provost's Office jointly sponsored an information and discussion forum at which representatives from HR, RecSports, the ND-ECDC Committee, the DPAC and the Wellness Center spoke about the many benefits and discounts offered to faculty and staff at Notre Dame. The audience in attendance expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for the event and said how much they learned about what is available. At a subsequent meeting, the UCWFS explored ways to increase awareness of the forum in future years and agreed that many faculty are not aware of the full range of benefits the university provides.

Community Engagement in South Bend and Chicago: At its May meeting the UCWFS met with Jay Caponigro and Jessica Brookshire from the Office of Public Affairs. They discussed the goals and programs of the office, such as its support of K-12 education and efforts to promote economic development and civic participation. The UCWFS developed a deeper understanding of the work of this office to facilitate collaborations between campus experts and community groups. Thanks to the generous support of Alumni Association president Dolly Duffy, the UCWFS held a teleconference with the Chicago Alumni office and shared thoughts about how to build networks that could help faculty and students.

Faculty Leaves: The UCWFS met with Vice President and Associate Provost Daniel Myers and Denise Murphy, HR Director of Compensation and Benefits, to review current policies governing FMLA and maternity-related teaching releases with the aim of clarifying language and achieving consistency in practice across the University. The Committee looks forward to hearing the results of their work next year.

Women in Senior Leadership Roles The Committee would like to highlight this topic for next year and identified the following questions of interest:

- How many women occupy leadership positions and what can we do to encourage more women to become involved?
- What empirical data exists on the reasons women do/do not participate in significant service and/or leadership roles on campus. Are there institutional and/or infrastructure issues that prevent women from taking on leadership roles?
- How does the context of a Catholic university shape the opportunities for women to take on leadership roles?

The UCWFS appreciates the willingness of these many groups on campus to meet with its members and to hear their thoughts. We look forward to continuing discussions next year.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ohmer
Chair, 2012-2013