

University Committee on Women Faculty and Students

Meeting Minutes for October 2, 2013

Members in Attendance: Kevin Barry, Kathy Brickley, Kasey Buckles, Laura Carlson, AedinClements, Paulette Curtis, Christine Caron Gebhardt, Karen Hooge, Sharon Keane, Jennifer McAward Mason, Mary Ann McDowell, AbigailPalko, Catherine Perry, Catherine Pieronek, Ava Preacher, Samantha Salden, Katherine Spiess, Sarah Wake, MacKenzie Warren, Grace Xing

1. **September meeting minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of September 4, 2013, were approved as presented.

2. **NDAIS applications:**Dr. Brad Gregory, Director of the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study, and Dr. Don Stelluto, Associate Director, spoke to the Committee about their concern that during the fall 2013 semester there are no female fellows (faculty or graduate students) at the Institute—a situation that is an aberration from previous years but still a concern.

For comparison: In 2009, 33% of applicants were women, 60% of offers were to women, and 35% of fellows were women. From 2010 to 2012, the application and offer statistics were similar, with percentage of women as fellows varying from 50% in past years to 10% this year. In three out of four years, offers to women exceeded their representation in the applicant pool.

Drs. Gregory and Stelluto said that one move they have made to remedy the situation for the 2014-2015 academic year is to extend offers the second week of February 2014, rather than the first week of April, so that the Institute's procedures will be in line with other residential fellowship programs. They are also searching for ways to obtain more top-quality women applicants (and urged members of the Committee to spread the word about the Institute's work to colleagues and students).

Discussion revolved around whether there might be unintended biases within the selection committee and whether women appeared to say "no" to offers for different reasons than men. Drs. Gregory and Stelluto noted that in previous years, the quantity and quality of applications from women has not been as high, comparatively, as those from men. They explained that women scholars who receive offers but have family and/or spousal situations have received considerable assistance from the Institute for navigating or ameliorating these issues. Moreover, the various levels of review, including external review, include women scholars.

2. **Notre Dame climate survey:** Prof. Carlson distributed copies of the 2013 Notre Dame faculty survey, in which the University partnered with several peer institutions to assess institutional climate, work load, work/life balance, the tenure/promotion process, mentoring, research and scholarship infrastructure, and benefits. Prof. Dan Myers, associate provost, will attend the Committee's November

meeting to discuss the survey in depth. Thus, at today's meeting, members identified questions of interest.

There was some discussion about the structure of the climate questions. One point was that there is little room for the administrative or SPF experience.

3. Mapother lunches: Several years ago, William Mapother established a fund at the University to enhance communication between the faculty and administration—particularly communication that would help women faculty thrive and advance at Notre Dame. The fund underwrites four meetings a year between women faculty and the Provost. Two of the meetings are with untenured faculty, two with tenured faculty. Prof. Carlson asked members to send her nominations of women faculty to participate in the lunches within the next week. She will then circulate the list among the committee via email. Once selected, the women faculty will be asked to agree beforehand on some themes or discussion points for their meeting with the Provost and to report back in a general way to the Committee.

4. Invitation from the Ladies of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College: This fall, the group Ladies of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College distributed an email through the University listserv for its annual opening reception. Some objections followed—a fact that the Committee discussed today—both the substance of the objections and the fact that people felt strongly enough to object. Some members thought that the language of the email was problematical; some thought that a club for spouses would be different than a club restricted to women; and others questioned what groups can have access to the University's listserv. Given time remaining in the meeting, further discussion was deferred to December.

5. Language around sexual assault announcements: Members discussed the content and wording of recent announcements around incidents of sexual assault at the University. Ms. Wake said that Security has heard suggestions from the campus community and is working to include more language around issues of consent. Dr. Gebhardt, director of the Gender Relations Center, pointed out that students are most vulnerable to sexual assault in the first eight weeks of the semester. This fact is the primary reason to emphasize consent.

6. President's Leadership Forum: The theme of the 2013-2014 President's Forum is Women in Leadership. Members were asked to use the website to nominate possible speakers. See: <http://forum2013.nd.edu/>

Prof. Carlson adjourned the meeting at 12 noon.