

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS

October 8, 2012

500 Main Building

12:00-1:00 p.m.

Members present: Jade Avelis, Catherine Rastovski, Jennifer Mason McAward, Paulette Curtis, D. Katherine Spiess, Susan Ohmer, Don Pope-Davis, Pamela Wojcik

Members absent and excused: Maura Ryan, Kevin Barry, Kathie Newman, Aimee Buccellato, Margaret Porter, Alison Rice, Rebecca Wright, Grace Xing

Guests: Ava Preacher, Heather Rakoczy Russell, Catherine Pieronek,

1. Welcome

Associate Provost Don Pope-Davis, designee to the committee of the president, Father Jenkins, welcomed members. He thanked members for their willingness to do the important work of this committee for the betterment of the university community. Although there are two open slots for undergraduates in the membership, the committee will move forward to elect a chair for this academic year.

After members introduced themselves, Prof. Pope-Davis invited everyone to read through the charge for the committee as stipulated in the Academic Articles. He noted that this committee is one of only a few on campus that reports directly to the President and Provost. The committee is charged to meet 'regularly' and has the option to form subcommittees should it choose. It is charged with considering 'policy, practices and the general environment at the University as they relate to women faculty and students.' The committee is able both to review issues and to raise issues for consideration.

2. Election of chair 2012-2013

The committee unanimously elected Prof. Susan Ohmer to the position of chair for 2012-2013. Prof. Pope-Davis turned the committee over to Prof. Ohmer, who thanked members for their support. Heather Russell noted that the Articles state that one member of the committee will be 'one of the University's Sexual Assault Resource Persons;' at present these positions are empty. Prof. Pope-Davis said that efforts are underway to identify who should fulfill those positions.

3. Review and approval of April 23, 2012 meeting minutes

The minutes of the April 23, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

4. Distribution of 2011-2012 UCWFS Annual Report

The Annual Report of the committee for the previous year was distributed and members reviewed it. Prof. Ohmer suggested that members draw on the April, 2012 minutes and the Annual Report to identify priorities for this upcoming year's work.

5. New chair's agenda and priorities

Members were invited to suggest topics which could be included on the committee's agenda for the upcoming year. After a wide ranging discussion, the following list was compiled:

- 40th anniversary of co-education at ND
- Update on the report, by Prof. Dan Myers and Denise Murphy, of the FMLA policy
- Continuing concerns about the work/life balance at ND
 - This might have special focus on the situation for single women, others in non-normative majority categories on campus, faculty who do not reside in South Bend
 - Discussion of ways the community and the university could begin and/or continue to support an active engagement with Chicago by the university population (faculty and students)
- Update on the climate survey
 - UCWFS has the opportunity to include selected questions in this survey; this would be a useful way to collect data pertinent to other agenda items
- Discussion of possible workshops to be held on campus with gender-based focus
- Update on the childcare website
- Discussion of mentoring by female faculty of female graduate students
 - Discussion of why the current structure does not meet the stated need
- The presence or absence of women in senior leadership roles in the university
 - Due diligence with key policy makers on campus
- Empirical collection of data on the reasons women do/do not participate in significant service and/or leadership roles on campus
 - Data could help identify if there are institutional and/or infrastructure issues leading to this behavior
 - Discussion of the definition of leadership by women in the particular context of a Catholic university
 - Update of the UCWFS report from 2008 with the current number of women faculty at ND
- Discussion of ways to disseminate the 'good news' of women at ND
- Graduate student concerns:
 - Birth control access through insurance
 - Health insurance coverage for spouses and children

Prof. Ohmer will develop an agenda around the topics suggested today.

The meeting was adjourned shortly before 1:00 p.m.