

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME  
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 19, 2009  
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Room 500, Main Building**

**Members present:** Amy Barrett, Laura Carlson, Lauren Cummings, Susan Dunn, Lauren Gamboa, Karen Graubart, Amber Handy, Sallie Hood, Susan Ohmer, Allison Regier, Carol Tanner

**Members absent:** Angie Chamblee, Mary Rose D'Angelo, Sharon Hu, Jessica Kayongo, Ken Milani,

**Permanent Invited Guests present:** Catherine Pieronek, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Engineering; Kathryn Lam, Recorder; Heather Rakoczy Russell, Director, Gender Relations Center

**1. Approval of minutes:** The minutes of the December 5, 2008 meeting were approved as amended.

**2. Updates**

**Mapother lunch:** Prof. Ohmer notified members of the upcoming Mapother lunch that will take place in April 2009. Prof. Barrett remarked on her experience as an attendee at one of the lunches.

**President's response to Committee report:** Prof. Ohmer said that President Jenkins is developing a response to the Committee's report which will be communicated to faculty in the near future.

**Future guests:** Prof. Ohmer informed the Committee that Linda Kroll – who is currently chairing a committee charged with reviewing the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) – will make a presentation at a future meeting. Doug Marsh, University Architect, and Jim Mazurek, Director of Sustainability, are both planning on attending an upcoming meeting. Prof. Ohmer indicated that she delayed inviting the deans of each college/school at this time. She said that once the President has issued a formal response to the Committee's report, she will invite the deans to address their thoughts and plans for women faculty recruitment and retention. The hope is these issues will be considered while the colleges develop their strategic plans.

**ECDC news:** Prof. Ohmer reported that the University's Board of Trustees recently voted to approve an increased subsidy for ECDC. She said that faculty and staff with children currently enrolled in ECDC will soon receive a letter outlining the subsidy provided.

**Lactation Rooms:** Prof. Ohmer distributed copies of an email from Human Resources (HR) in which they respond to concerns and recommendations made by the Committee about the proposed lactation rooms. Prof. Ohmer then highlighted some areas of the response:

- It was affirmed that the initiative would include graduate students.
- For privacy purposes, ID swipe cards will be required to enter the rooms.
- Insulated bags will be provided to mothers so that they do not have to leave their milk in facilities across campus and can transport it to their offices, study areas, etc.

The Committee raised a couple of additional questions for HR. Ms. Handy asked to clarify if, like faculty and staff, graduate students will be able to receive a subsidized pump. Prof. Hood asked if undergraduate students will be able to use the facilities.

**3. ImproveND survey:** Prof. Ohmer informed members about an upcoming survey, ImproveND, which will be administered in March and will solicit feedback on the quality of various internal services at Notre Dame. Both faculty and staff will be invited to participate. The Committee considered the survey as an opportunity for individuals to express their concerns about parking on campus. Prof. Ohmer encouraged members to complete the survey and Prof. Barrett suggested that members help alert their colleagues about the survey.

**4. Academic Council:** Prof. Ohmer provided an update on the proposed amendments to the Academic Articles that were recently approved by the Academic Council. She gave an overview of the amendments to the appointment, reappointment, promotion and tenure process and the related appeals process. She reminded members that the Academic Council's vote is advisory to the President. In turn, he will develop a recommendation and take it to the Board of Trustees for final approval in May.

**5. Sexual assault policy:** Copies of "A Resolution Proposing a Review of the University's Sexual Assault Policy" were sent to members prior to the meeting. Ms. Cummings explained that she is co-chair of the Committee on Gender Issues which is part of Student Government. After hearing from students who have friends or were themselves victims of sexual assault, the committee drafted the aforementioned resolution which was passed unanimously by Student Senate. The resolution was then sent to Fr. Mark Poorman, Vice President for Student Affairs, who was very receptive and asked that the issue be referred to the Committee on Sexual Assault Prevention (CSAP). Ms. Rakoczy Russell explained that CSAP is divided into subcommittees which oversee the following areas: policy, resources, and education and prevention programs. She said that the policy subcommittee is currently reviewing the resolution and developing a recommendation to bring to the full CSAP who will in turn bring a recommendation to Fr. Poorman.

Ms. Cummings asked members for ideas about where to do additional research on the issue. She also asked if they feel faculty are prepared to handle a situation in which a student approaches them about a sexual assault.

Through a robust discussion, the Committee considered ideas, including the following:

- benchmarking other institutions
- developing liaison relationships between lawyers and health services on campus who can help provide a channeling mechanism to proper resources

- making victim resource persons, policies, and other resources very public so faculty, staff and students know where to turn for help
- providing training to faculty so that they can learn how to respond when they become aware of incidents of sexual assault

Ms. Rakoczy Russell noted that, based on the Cleary Act, if faculty or staff hear about an incident of sexual assault, they are required by law to report it to Notre Dame Security and Police.

Prof. Graubart moved that the Committee support the two resolutions drafted by the Student Senate Committee on Gender Issues (SS0809-19, dated December 10, 1008). Professor Hood seconded the motion. The resolutions request that Student Affairs, the Office of Residential Life and Housing, the Committee on Sexual Assault Prevention, The Gender Relations Center, and Student Government review and evaluate the effectiveness of the University's sexual assault, rape, and sexual misconduct policy, resources for victims of sexual assault, and the University's disciplinary options available to victims of sexual assault, and asks that Student Affairs be helpful and assist Student Government in this process. The motion passed unanimously. Prof. Ohmer said she will send an email to the directors of these offices, to formally notify them of the Committee's support.

Prof. Ohmer concluded the discussion by noting that this is a very important issue for the Committee and that she hopes that both Ms. Cummings and Ms. Rakoczy Russell will provide updates at future meetings.

**6. Faculty Senate's response to Committee reports:** In advance of the meeting, Prof. Ohmer distributed copies of the Faculty Senate's response to the Committee's reports to the President and Provost. She informed the Committee that Fr. Jenkins likes to build support and consensus around issues such as faculty recruitment and retention and that is why the report was sent to the Faculty Senate. Prof. Ohmer summarized the Faculty Senate's response as generally positive and supportive and then highlighted some of the areas covered in the report. She noted that that it adds strength to the recommendations of the Committee when large committees come together and show support together.

**7. New Business:** Ms. Rakoczy-Russell provided a handout on a Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) and Sexual Awareness Week sponsored by the Gender Relations Center. She said that the full VPI curriculum will take place in the 2009-2010 academic year. However, a number of other events are taking place during the Spring 2009 semester. In particular, Ms. Rakoczy Russell asked anyone interested to attend a dinner on Friday, February 27, 2009, at which faculty and students will speak about sexual assault and some students will provide personal accounts of their experience. She requested that members help spread the word about the initiatives underway and offered to email the handout to anyone interested.

**8. Adjournment:** After requesting that members email to her any ideas for future agenda items, Prof. Ohmer adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.