

Commission on Women and Gender Equity
Special Report to the President
May 2004

History and Structure

In the fall of 1994, President Albert C. Yates appointed the Task Force on the Status of women to determine the issues and priorities for women at Colorado State University and to make recommendations to the President for addressing these priorities. Based on the recommendations of the Task Force, the President's Commission on Women and Gender Equity was established in January of 1997. In the 2001-02 academic year, the Commission became a subcommittee of the Diversity Coordinating Committee.

The purpose of the Commission is to assist the University in designing, implementing, and evaluating strategies for achieving gender equity. The Commission seeks to assist in the creation of an environment at the University that fosters healthy relationships and interactions among people, freed from limitations and restrictions of culturally defined gender roles and empowered and supported by the University in pursuing their goals. The Commission also is charged to monitor campus issues and developments in light of local and national trends and to forward recommendations, concerns, and program ideas in support of its charge through the Diversity Coordinating Council for consideration in institutional planning and budgeting efforts. The Chair of the Commission serves on the Diversity Coordinating Council.

The Commission currently is composed of 12 members, 6 standing and 6 at-large, who serve staggered two-year terms. Standing members are the assistant to the President (ex-officio), Vice Provost (ex-officio), Director of the Office of Women's Programs and Studies, Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, Human Resource Services Coordinator for Training and Development, and the Chair of the Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Program. At-large members will be appointed by the President from a slate of individuals proposed by the Diversity Coordinating Council, in consultation with the Office of the President and the Chair of the Commission. Members are chosen for their knowledge of women's issues and concerns, interest in promoting gender equity, and leadership. At-large members will include a graduate student and an undergraduate student. At least two at-large members, including the Commission Chair, must be tenure-track faculty.

For those occasions when the Commission must respond quickly, an Executive Committee, comprised of the Chair, one standing member, one at-large member, and one member of the teaching faculty member, may act for the Commission. Any such actions must be reported to the entire Commission at the next regular meeting.

Major recommendations from the Commission

1997-1999

- Establishment of Commission procedures.
- Proposal for inclusion generally of courses addressing women and gender issues within the context of the diversity/cultural requirement of the core curriculum and specifically that “Introduction to Women’s Studies” would fulfill the University Studies Program (USP) requirement of Cross-Cultural Awareness, which was approved through curricular processes. (The USP was the University’s core curriculum prior to the adoption of the All-University Core Curriculum.)
- Proposal for creation of a guidebook and web page on work-life balance issues and recommended that responsibility for work-life balance issues be located within the Vice President for Administrative Services.
- Submitted a funding request for a University Children’s Center Gender and Cultural Infusion Project to promote diversity in early childhood programs.
- Recommendation that the University establish a policy statement and a comprehensive Employee Development Program within the office of Human Resource Services that would include training programs, resources, services, and collaborative efforts with the Career Center, Professional Development Institute, Classified Professional Council, and others.
- Proposed a Partner Employment Relocation Program Proposal to address employment issues for partners of new hires.

2000-2003

- Recommendation for greater equity in campus professional development opportunities.
- Creation of “Women at Colorado State,” a website to gather and maintain information that serves as resource for the campus community and other interested individuals and groups. This website is located at:
<http://women.colostate.edu/>
- Endorsement of domestic partner benefits for faculty members and administrative professionals. This proposal was endorsed by the Diversity Coordinating Council but an administrative decision was made that it was best not to forward the proposal to the board at that time.
- Recommendation of centralization of information on graduate student employment opportunities at Colorado State, which were approved and forwarded to the Provost

and Graduate Dean for action. Due to timing issues, the policy was not implemented during the 2003-04 academic year. Currently the Dean of the Graduate School is working with various groups to refine the policy, including clarification whether the policy applies to graduate teaching assistantship (GTA) positions that require the individual to be enrolled in a graduate program in a particular department.

2003-2004

Membership of the Commission on Women and Gender Equity

Emily Campbell, undergraduate student
David Dandy, Chemical Engineering
Carol Dollard, Facilities Management
Ann Gill, College of Liberal Arts, Chair
Dana Hiatt, Office of Equal Opportunity
Jane Kneller, Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Program
Cara Neth, Office of the President
Maria Puig, Social Work
Ri Romero, Office of the Vice President for Administrative Services
Lori Smith, Human Resources
Alan Tucker and Sandra Woods, Provost Office
Karen Wedge, Office of Women's Programs and Studies

Reports and Recommendations

- Creation of a brief history of the Commission on Women and Gender Equity to inform President Penley about the mission and activities of the Commission.
- Endorsement of the Campus Outdoor Lighting Plan and expression of strong support to continue to make progress in upgrading lighting technology and adding lighting to those areas of campus where it is warranted.
- Encouragement to improve communication and campus education regarding the policy on centralization of information on graduate student employment opportunities and implementation for 2004-05.
- Recommendation that the campus community be clear that results from the Survey of Work Experiences and Diversity Activities survey, which is referred to as the "campus climate survey," do not give information about the campus climate for women or Women's perceptions about that climate. The questions in the survey were not presented in a gender-specific form and the survey was not designed to be a gender survey.
- Recommendation for a change in the membership procedures of the Commission, specifically, that a tenure-track faculty member be appointed as Vice Chair when the Commission Chair begins the second year of a two-year term. At the expiration of the Chair's term, the Vice Chair then will become Chair for a two-year term.

Partial Agenda for 2004-05

- Updating of the “Women at Colorado State” web site.
- Supporting the drafting of a workplace violence policy and protocol, including the creation of a response team with members from law enforcement, Human Resources, Psychological Services, Counseling Center, Employee Assistance Program, and outside experts.
- Review structures and programs to determine whether classroom, advising, and other practices are detrimental to the goals of inclusiveness and gender equity.

Support campus and other attempts to meet NCAA regulations and recommendations to ensure continued growth and development of gender equity in athletics.