

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Annual Report to President 2008-2009
KSU Commission on the Status of Women
July 1, 2009

FY 2009 Accomplishments

For the past few years, the CSW has been relatively inactive; therefore the first priority for this year was to reevaluate the purpose and goals of the commission. To facilitate this process, the commission was divided into three subcommittees, each with a specific focus.

The first subcommittee, Health and Safety, took on the task of purchasing and installing flier covers in each of the public restrooms on campus, excluding those in the dormitories. The plan is to use these covers to display information on subjects such as prevention of the transfer of disease, sexual and domestic violence, rape, and consent. In addition, the covers will be made available for use by other campus organizations to display information pertinent to the health and safety goal of the project.

The Health and Safety Subcommittee is also investigating methods of working with the Aggieville merchants to make the area safer at night and to disseminate information about the Aggieville safety risks to K-State students.

The Equity and Environment Subcommittee was created to look at issues such as pay and promotion equity, as well as harassment and other environmental conditions of K-State women. After the CSW as a whole determined that previous years' salary reports are not an effective indicator of equity, it was agreed that further discussion will be necessary to determine the best way to evaluate this issue. In addition, it appears that there may be inequities in the promotion of women, but further examination will be necessary to confirm or negate this assessment.

Work environment topics were gathered at a public forum held in 2003. These topics have not been evaluated since the forum, so it is not evident whether the issues that arose at that time have been addressed satisfactorily, or if additional issues have arisen. It is recommended that Office of Educational Innovation and Evaluation (OEIE) be contracted to conduct a professional women's forum to determine and report on the environmental and equity concerns at K-State.

The third subcommittee, the Communications Subcommittee, worked to redesign the CSW website and reestablished the listserv. Included in the website is a message board to attempt to open discussions between women across campus, establish networking to help the CSW to know which issues most concern K-State women, and to allow a venue to make recommendations and suggestions. After the launch of this message board, several women in the K-State community have posted discussion topics.

Future Goals

Funding

If this committee is to be able to move forward in continuing current projects and discovering areas of need, it will be necessary to receive financial support from the Office of the President. The cost of the recommended forum and subsequent report will not exceed \$1,000. In addition, we would like to request an annual budget of \$700 to provide refreshments at a networking gathering for K-State women, and to fund two health and safety fliers each year.

Parental Leave

Many employees have expressed concern about our university policy on parental leave. K-State policy allows directors, department heads, and other supervisors to have considerable flexibility in administering leave, making parental leave very inconsistently applied across the university.

For faculty who teach in a 16 week semester, when the Family and Medical Leave Act specifies only 12 weeks leave, the absence of a clearly defined policy is very problematic. We recommend a policy that allows research and/or service assignments during the semester of the birth of a child.

While staff members do not face the same semester constraints as faculty, the commission would like to see a formal policy in place to help all K-State families with their parental leave. We request the current shared leave policy be revised to allow this time to be used during pregnancy when the doctor advises time off or after childbirth when the employee has used all other paid leave time. The Faculty Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate has reviewed this policy and supports this recommendation.

As a more long term solution, the Commission on the Status of Women urges the President and Faculty Senate to request the State of Kansas review and revise parental leave benefits.

Promotion

In 1986, an evaluation of salary and promotion equity done by Donald Hoyt, Associate Provost and Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis, now called the Office of Planning and Analysis, determined that women at K-State were not being promoted in a manner that was equitable to the promotions of male employees across all categories.

Dr. Hoyt stated in his report:

“Women faculty are underpaid in comparison with men – not simply because they earn less on the average than men in similar rank – but because a good many of them are in lower ranks than men of similar training and experience.”

A comparison of men's and women's salary groupings in FY 2008 shows a higher percentage of the women employees in lower salary groups and a lower percentage in higher salary groups across six of the seven Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) job categories. Only the Clerical and Secretarial had higher percentages of the women in higher salary groups. This indicates that although it seems progress has been made in providing equal pay for equal work, Dr. Hoyt's comments about promotion appear to be as true today as they were twenty years ago.

Thank you, President Schulz, for taking the time to review this report and agreeing to meet with us to discuss the work of the Commission on the Status of Women. We look forward to our continued work with you on behalf of women at K-State.

2008-2009 KSU Commission on the Status of Women

Chair

Nancy Baker, Office of Planning and Analysis

Allison Coon, Student

Pam Upham, Agronomy

Kimberly Douglas-Mankin, Dean of Engineering

Ruth Dyer, Office of the Provost

Donna Ekart, KSU Libraries

DeeAnna Fugate, Controller's Office

Myra Gordon, Diversity and Dual Career Development

Amy Hubbell, Modern Languages

Angela Hubler, Women's Studies

Judy Hughey, Special Ed Counseling & Student Affairs

Jaime Mitchell, Agronomy

Meena Kumari, Anatomy and Physiology

Melissa Linenberger, Academic Personnel

Victoria Mowery, Student

Mary Todd, Women's Center, Student Life Office

Mary Tolbert, Engineering Experiment Station