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UT K COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

In December, 1971, Chancellor Archie R. Dykes appointed a Task Force on Women to "assess the present state of women--students, faculty, and staff--at the University . . ." and to "recommend a set of guidelines for development of an affirmative action plan to insure equality for women at UTK." The Task Force composed of faculty, administrative, and student members was chaired by Dr. Lida Barrett. After nearly a year of work, the Task Force reported that inequities existed in many areas of the University and provided over eighty recommendations to help redress them. Among the most important recommendations were development of a comprehensive affirmative action plan and establishment of a Commission for Women which would hear grievances, investigate inequalities, and educate students, staff, and faculty about sex discrimination and sex bias.

A Commission for Women was established and began meeting during January, 1973. Each academic year since, a Commission for Women has been appointed by the Chancellor. Their charge has been to advise the Chancellor on planning, implementaion, and evaluation of University programs, policies, and services designed to improve the status of women. The Commission works directly with the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration.

Annual reports on Commission activities, projects, and area of concern are available in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration. A brief summary of some of the Commission's projects follows:

1973-1974: The Commission concentrated on implementing the Task Force recommendations. Attention was also directed to the Office of Institutional Research survey of male and female salaries and interrelationships with supporting personnel office and the office of academic affairs. Also a Women's Studies program was added during 1973-1974.

1974-1975: CFW made women's studies, child care, salary equilization, a women's handbook, and placement procedures priority projects. The Commission was instrumental in the establishment of an affirmative action coordinator.

1975-1976: CFW was involved in the selection of a full-time Affirmative Action Coordinator, as well as in the drafting of the UTK Affirmative Action Plan. The Commission also was involved in the establishment of a campus Women's Center. The CFW also promoted the establishment of a Women's Athletic Program with scholarships and an Athletic Director.

1976-77: The Commission's priority areas were affirmative action, the situation of supporting staff, salary equalization, Title IX and Women's Athletics, and the Women's Center. Significant progress was made in each of these areas.

1977-1978: The Commission developed a set of non-sexist language guidelines which were issued to the faculty by the Chancellor and subsequently included in the Faculty Handbook. A "Confronting Sexism" week was cosponsored with the Women's Studies Program. Procedures for evaluating salaries, promotion and tenure rates, and affirmative action efforts were examined.

1978-1979: During the 1978-1979 Commission year, the CFW addressed a number of the same issues that have been with the Commission since its inception: salary equalization, promotion and tenure, and child care. We were concerned that these issues never seem to be resolved despite the continued efforts of the Commission. We also had sub-committees on the following: affirmative action, communication among women staff and faculty, publicity, support staff,

and Women's Center. Further issues addressed by this Commission were: the use of AAUP Guidelines in yearly salary reviews; use of the Hay Study, title changes without proper search procedures, use of exit interviews to determine possible issues regarding sexism or racism, and the use of a ranking system for part-time employees.

1979-1980: The year was one of internal examination by the Commission. The Commission's role was delineated as one of an advisory body that identifies needs and makes recommendations to the Administration. Open Forums were sponsored each quarter in an attempt to adequately reflect the needs of all women on campus. A get-acquainted reception was sponsored in November for all new faculty and administrative women. Also, during the spring, an assertive training workshop for faculty was held. The function of the Women's Center was a serious concern of the Commission. The Commission also addressed the issues of sexist language and sexual harassment, exit interviews, concerns of support staff, policies concerning part-time faculty, salary equalization of faculty, retirement benefits, and affirmative action in athletics. In addition, the Commission monitored Affirmative Action procedures on campus. Various other concerns were addressed which included flexible and staggered work hours, the problem of space for Women's Studies, use of sexist course descriptions in the Catalogue, and lack of recruitment of women students for non-traditional fields.

The UTK Commission for Women will continue their vigil to monitor University practices that affect women, but this year they hope to obtain a number of positive achievements so they can be more responsive and of more assistance to the women of UTK, says Marty Black, a UT law professor and this year's Chairperson.

This means changing the Commission's focus from a largely reactive body, spending most of their energy attempting to fulfill their designated function as "watchdogs" and advisors, and taking a more active stance in the University community. The Commission will establish long-range pro-active objectives instead of crisis-orientated reactions, Black says.

The UTK Commission for Women is the organization that plans, implements and evaluates University programs, policies and services to improve the status of women on campus.

The Commission is appointed by the Chancellor, and Black reports directly to the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration. Thus far, that office has been very responsive, Black says.

Combating sexist language and sexual harassment is of special interest to the Commission. Sexist language is a concern for students, and Black says in an academic institution, women should not have to be subjected to that sort of negative reinforcement of their goals. The Commission is responsible for Chancellor Reese including guidelines on non-sexist language in the faculty handbook.

The Commission hopes to become involved in identifying women to serve on University commissions and committees and in procuring those appointments. Black says quite a few women have been lost from administrative positions this year, and the Commission would like to see these positions refilled by women.

An on-going project from last year is the Tenure and Promotion Kit, which will set specific guidelines for faculty on credentials to be presented for tenure and promotion. Right now there are no clear-cut guidelines for this procedure. The Commission is also in the process of formalizing the rights and responsibilities of part-time faculty, most of whom are women.

The Commission, composed of 20 persons plus Thomasenia Robinson, Affirmative Action Coordinator, is responsible for evaluating and revising the University's Affirmative Action Plan. A salary study is being run based on the November payroll, and these results will be ready in January.

Throughout the year, the Commission holds forums and workshops on topics of special interest to women. Five potential topics are the identification and response to sexual harassment, the rape crisis in the UT - Fort Sanders area, the images of women in the media and the attempts to change these images. An assertiveness training workshop will also be held to help women respond to sexist behavior.

A get-acquainted meeting will be held in November 6, at 2:30 in the Crest Room of the University Center, where faculty, administrators and staff may meet. Luke Ebersole, Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration, and Betsy Creekmore, Associate Vice Caancellor will be there.

The Commission will also sponsor an open forum each quarter where women campus-wide may share their concerns with Commission members. This forum will be held just prior to a Commission meeting so the Commssion may discuss the views expressed. November 16 is the date for this quarter's open fouum.

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The UTK Commission for Women is appointed by the Chancellor to advise on planning, implementation, and evaluation of University programs, policies, and services designed to improve the status of women. The Commission is related administratively to the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration.

The Commission:

1. recommends changes in policy or procedure relative to the concerns of women;

2. facilitates coordination of new and existing academic and extracurricular programs;

3. recommends and encourages research to assess the status of women at UTK and compares their status with that of women at other institutions and agencies;

4. assists in the evaluation and revision of the Affirmative Action Plan;

5. advises and consults with all University officials on the needs and status of women; and,

6. aids in ensuring campus and community access to information on Commission and University activities related to women.

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

BYLAWS

I. PURPOSE -

The UTK Commission for Women is a body appointed by the Chancellor to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of University programs, policies, and services designed to improve the status of women. The Commission is related administratively to the Office of Affirmative Action.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES -

The Commission:

1. Shall recommend changes in policy or procedure relative to the concerns of women;

2. Shall make recommendations concerning new and existing academic and extracurricular programs;

3. Shall recommend and encourage research to assess the status of women at UTK and compare their status with that of women at other institutions and agencies;

4. Shall consult in the evaluation, revision, and implementation of an Affirmative Action Plan, and in so doing promote the hiring and promotion of women;

5. Shall advise and consult with all University officials on the needs and status of women; and

6. Shall pursue ways of providing to the campus and community information on Commission and University activities related to women.

III. COMPOSITION -

A. Membership. The UTK Commission for Women shall consist of no fewer than twenty-four members, with a proportionate number of faculty members, exempt and non-exempt staff members, and students, all equitably distributed among the various colleges, schools, and administrative units of the University. Appointments shall be made on a three year, rotating basis.

B. Chair. The Commission shall be headed by a Chair recommended to and approved by the Chancellor.

III. COMPOSITION (CON'T) -

C. Committees. Committees shall be formed as needed; volunteers to serve on such committees shall be solicited.

D. Graduate Assistant. A graduate assistant shall be chosen to aid the Chair by attending and taking notes at Commission meetings, editing Networker, or performing whatever other tasks may be assigned. In addition, the graduate assistant will be a full voting member of the Commission.

E. Secretarial Support. The Chair shall be provided with a full- or part-time secretary, a senior clerk-typist, grade 4.

IV. SELECTION OF CHAIR -

At least one month prior to the election of a new chair, nominations shall be solicited from the Commission members by a nominating committee (see Section III C) and shall be restricted to present or past members of the Commission. Ballots shall be mailed to Commission members at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the election is to take place and may be returned by mail, by messenger, or in person at the election meeting itself. The Commission's recommendation to the Chancellor shall be determined by a simple majority vote.

V. MEETINGS -

A. Frequency. The Commission shall schedule regular monthly meetings at a time to be agreed upon at the beginning of each academic year. Additional meetings shall be scheduled as needed. The agenda at these meetings shall be determined by the Commission itself and may include items placed on it at the request of the Chancellor; of a member of the faculty, staff, or student body with a grievance or concern; or of any member of the UTK community with an issue which might demand investigation. All meetings shall be open to any member of the UT community.

B. Rules of Order. The meetings of the Commission shall be conducted according to Roberts' Rules of Order.

VI. BUDGET -

The Commission for Women, being an advisory body serving the Chancellor, shall be provided with funds through the Office of the Director of Affirmative Action to cover such expenses as telephone service, graduate assistant, secretary, and the Networker, a publication of the Commission intended to serve the female faculty, staff, and student body at UTK.

VII. APPROVAL AND AMENDMENTS -

These bylaws shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Commission taken by ballot and may be amended by a similar vote taken at two successive regularly-scheduled meetings. Both bylaws and amendments shall become effective upon the approval of the Chancellor.