1994 - 1998 Equity Issues Committee: Reports and Recommendations

Commission for Women

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1994-95 Report

The equity issues committee this year included:
Arlene Garrison, Paul Phillips, Nancy Goslee, Mary Jones, Pam Hindle and Cheryl Travis. Fran Ansley served on the committee for a part of the year. Norma Cook and Debby Schriver were ex-officio members.

The Equity Issues committee is charged to research and monitor campus equity issues and recommend action when appropriate.

Much of the year was focused on definition of issues within the scope of the committee's charge. Accomplishments for the year include:
• Investigation of the status of the staff exempt audit.
• Monitoring staff exit questionnaires for evidence of equity concerns.
• Identification of salary inconsistencies through the study of faculty salaries.

1995-96 Recommendations

The Committee focuses on campus situations where gender equity could be an issue. Thus, many documents are presented to the committee by the CFW chair. Several items are appropriate for annual monitoring and the committee should take action to routinely receive:
• Staff exit questionnaire summaries.
• The Campus Affirmative Action plan.
• Announcements of administrative searches.

Many potential concerns have been identified which require further investigation. The committee recommends that these items receive additional attention from the 1995-96 Equity Issues Committee of the Commission for Women:
• Continue to monitor the exempt audit process. In particular, the committee should investigate the criteria and process for job reclassification. A summary of the reclassification outcome should be analyzed for gender inequities.
• Investigate the process of criteria determination for administrative searches. Search parameters must be defined low enough to be inclusive. Who sets the criteria? Are the criteria unnecessarily restrictive and therefore limiting the pool of qualified applicants?
1995-96 Report

The Equity Issues committee is charged to research and monitor campus equity issues and recommend action when appropriate. During the 1995-96 year the committee selected three areas for focus:

- gender specific job titles,
- exit questionnaires and
- staff exempt job audits.

**Gender specific job titles:**
The Committee identified several gender specific titles from the University positions available listings. A request for a review of job titles for gender bias was made to Charlene Rice, the system coordinator of titles. In an April 25, 1996 memo, Chancellor Snyder has recommended the formation of an ad hoc committee to study alternatives titles for the two titles creating the greatest problems: Foreman and Fellow. This issue should be resolved during the next academic year. Nancy Goslee and Norma Cook have agreed to serve on this subcommittee. Anne Mayhew and Suzanne Kurth will provide resource information on the topic. The subcommittee plans to work through the summer and will report on progress in the Fall.

**Exit questionnaires:**
The Committee obtained copies of the exit questionnaires and responses and reviewed for gender specific issues. The Commission devoted a meeting to discussion of this topic. No gender based problems were identified and the Commission was pleased to find that the questionnaires were in revision with the intention of creating a single instrument for use with all employees. Concern remains about the value of the questionnaires due to the lack of confidentiality.

**Staff exempt job audits:**
The Committee discussed the issues regarding exempt employees and monitoring the exempt staff committee established for UTK in December. A subcommittee will be formed to discuss the outcome with OHRM. Gail Cope has been suggested as the appropriate contact. The subcommittee will consist of Arlene Garrison, Kathy Warden and Mary English.

The Committee received the UTK Affirmative Action plan for 1995-1996 and the Study of Faculty Salaries for 1995-96. The Committee is pleased to report that progress is evident when the salary surveys for 1994/95 and 1995/96 are compared. A salary differential continues to exist.
1996-97 Recommendations

Substantial progress has been made in the three topics identified by Equity Issues Committee. Work must continue on all these areas next year.

- The gender specific job titles should be resolved during 1996/97.
- The new exit questionnaire will be reviewed in 1996/97. The committee will also investigate the feasibility of an alternative mechanism for information gathering from departing employees. An informal interview process has been proposed as a role for the commission. One alternative under consideration is a retrospective interview up to a year after departure.
- The staff exempt audit subcommittee will work through the summer and report in the fall.

Additionally, the committee plans to continue to review appropriate documents as they are supplied to the Commission for Women. In particular, the Committee anticipates participation in the evaluation of gender differences in the impact of recent budget cuts.
• The study of faculty salaries was prepared prior to gender adjustments. What criteria were used for distribution of adjustment funds? How effective were the adjustments?
• Establish a dialog on negotiation skills. Work with Personnel to determine need for a workshop on this subject.
• Perform a preliminary review of the Affirmative Action Plan to identify any special concerns and possible need for a special CFW committee.
• Examine all position announcements for sexist language. Research and suggest alternative language as necessary.
• Investigate University policies and regulations related to the placement of support staff upon departure of the supervisor.
• Continue to promote the formation of an organization to provide a connection to University administration for exempt personnel.
• Investigate inconsistencies in encouragement of professional staff development. The Equity Issues committee feels that departmental attitudes are limiting employee participation in continuing education and campus committee opportunities.
• Develop a method to investigate the impact of second jobs. This issue has the greatest impact on staff and part time instructors.

The current members of the Equity Issues committee will collect information on these topics over the summer of 95. Many of the committee members have agreed to continue to serve next year, and participation by additional CFW members is welcome.
REPORT OF THE CFW EQUITY ISSUES COMMITTEE
May 7, 1998

The major focus of the Equity Issues Committee for 1997-98 has been the review of several documents including:

*The Status of Women at The University of Tennessee Knoxville, prepared by the UTK Commission for Women, March, 1994;*

*The Affirmative Action Plan, 1997-98; and*

*1997-98 Study of Faculty Salaries at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, prepared by the Office of Institutional Research, February, 1998.*

As can be seen in the attached summary of the review of the 1994 *Status of Women* Report, the other documents have assisted in our review and have influenced our recommendation that a survey be undertaken to measure the progress since the 1993 survey reported in 1994.

The Equity Issues Committee believes the goals set forth in the *Affirmative Action Plan* are admirable, but expresses concern that affirmative action has not resulted in a higher level of retention and/or hiring of women and minorities. The Equity Issues Committee also reiterates its concern that affirmative action be considered in the recommendations presented by APEC and NAPEC.

The *Study of Faculty Salaries* causes concern in that even though "no statistical difference" in salaries is reported for both 1996-97 and 1997-98, there is, in fact, an average difference of approximately $1,000 in real terms for both years. The salary study also reflects a concern that salaries of newly hired faculty may reflect a gender difference. The Equity Issues Committee has contacted Nancy Waller, of the Office of Institutional Research with a list of questions. Nancy has spoken with the Director of Institutional Research, Dr. Don Scroggins, who is willing to meet with the Equity Issues Committee to discuss our questions and the possibility of providing data which was suggested at our last Equity Issues Committee meeting.

Norma Cook has presented a comparison of awards and other types of recognition to men/women at UTK to the Equity Issues Committee and the resulting book will be studied further by the committee to provide a report which includes a trend analysis based on the tables prepared by Norma. This may provide the basis for an article for the *Networker* and for *Context*. Norma's work includes a study of awards to faculty, staff and students from 1979-1998 which is important in that recognition of women faculty, staff and students is imperative in providing a climate of encouragement at the University.

Gail Cope's summary of women in administrative positions, presented at the March, 1998 Commission for Women meeting, will be incorporated into the report including Norma's work on awards and her report that no women have been appointed to the UTK Chairs of Excellence for the period 1992-97.
Norma Cook has also provided a report on commencement speakers. Ann Baker Furrow was cited in a 1972 *UT Daily Beacon* article as "UT's first woman commencement speaker in 1971." Norma's study indicates that an effort was made in the 1970's and 1980's to include at least one woman commencement speaker per year. From 1989-1995 there were no women commencement speakers, although two women commencement speakers appeared in 1995-96 and one woman was chosen as commencement speaker in 1996-97. It should be noted that the study began with years in which four commencements were held when UTK used the quarter system and then included three commencements per year under the semester system. Of the 97 commencements held from 1971-72 through May 1998, 24 have had women as commencement speakers, including one instance of sharing the platform with two male speakers. The total represents 24.7% of the commencements held during this period. Norma's study notes that women were most often chosen for the December commencements and/or the March commencements under the quarter system. She states that "Women serve as commencement speakers most frequently at smaller graduations and seldom at the commencement that includes the greatest number of graduating students."

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra C. Walker, Convener