

October 16, 2009

To: Phyllis M. Wise, Provost and Executive Vice President

From: Women's Center Working Group

Ruth Johnston, Associate Vice President, Finance and Facilities; Member, Women's Center Advisory Board, *Chair*
Dawn Trudeau, Member, Women's Center Advisory Board
Liz Coveney, Associate Vice President, HR Administration and Information Systems
Ellen Taylor, Director of Counseling Center, Office of Student Life
Steve Woodard, Assistant Vice President, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity
Tetsuden Kashima, Professor, Department of American Ethnic Studies
Nancy Woods, Dean Emeritus, Professor, School of Nursing
Eve Riskin, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Engineering, Director of NSF ADVANCE
David Allen, Chair, Department of Women Studies
Julie Severson, GPSS representative
Maggie Capwell, ASUW Representative
Coleen M. Carrigan, Graduate student, Socio-Cultural Anthropology

cc: Doug Wadden, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Planning
Ana Mari Cauce, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

RE: Women's Center Review

Provost Wise:

In response to your letter dated July 7, 2009, the Women's Center Working Group has met regularly over the past three months to assess the status of the Women's Center.

The attached report is the result of that effort.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Women's Center Review – Report to the Provost

October 16, 2009

Introduction and Process:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Women's Center Working Group. Our group has worked together and in partnership with others knowledgeable about the Center to understand the issues we were charged with: 1) reviewing current activities and how they align with UW core missions; 2) learning about the current finances and funding and revenue ideas for the future; 3) making recommendations on organizational structure; and 4) looking at our peer institutions' women's centers and programs. We started by learning about the Women's Center and quickly concluded that the mission (in appendix B) and activities are closely aligned with the UW--especially with our values of diversity, excellence, collaboration, innovation, and respect. The Women's Center offers an important and unique portal for those seeking services or learning opportunities. With a university as large as the UW, multiple entry and service points are necessary to serve our community. That said, we also learned there are issues to work on, including improving the overall visibility and value of the Women's Center to the UW, building more collegial and collaborative relationships with service partners, and improving the fiscal and human resource administration/ development of the Center. Through our interviews, presentations, and study, we offer these recommendations, followed by descriptions of each issue we explored.

Recommendations (potential actions are identified in appendix A):

- Increase the visibility of the Women's Center throughout the University community.
- Reassign organizational reporting to Arts & Sciences to provide leadership, direction and infrastructure support (administration, budget, human resources, and technology).
- Undertake a strategic planning effort, to be completed by the end of the 09-10 academic year, including Women's Center staff and partners (e.g., Student Life, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, Diversity Research Center, PACW, Arts & Sciences, Human Resources), to review and focus the efforts of the Women's Center, refine the mission statement to focus on core programs and services, and clarify staff roles.
- Improve collaboration and strengthen relationships with campus services and organizations, especially those that offer complementary services.
- Create a financially sustainable plan for administering the Center (align the cost of services with budget and funding sources available).
- Aggressively seek additional funding alternatives (external sources and internal services such as Lifelong Learning classes), in addition to current efforts, in order to build a financially stable organization.
- Improve measurement and data mining to demonstrate Women's Center program successes and impacts (Making Connections increased data/longitudinal tracking, student advising, etc.) and/or areas to improve.
- Serve as a leader of and focal point for women's issues at the UW (issue identification, problem solving, engagement, connections), working with campus partners.

The Women's Center and the UW:

Interviewees (list can be found in appendix D) were unanimous that the Women's Center is a vital resource supporting many of UW's priorities and goals. It has built positive relationships with many constituencies, from Washington's political elites to communities who are under-represented on campus. This latter group, in particular, finds the

Women's Center creates a more inviting UW and, once members arrive here, offers important support for their success through its various programs. While initially there were some questions about Women's Center programs being duplicative, interviews did not support that. Instead, our interviewees argued that the Women's Center complemented other services (e.g., counseling services, Lifelong Learning, Work/Life, SafeCampus, SARIS) by providing an entry-point that was unique and supportive for particularly vulnerable women who may not initiate help-seeking through other avenues. Many interviewees reported that the Women's Center makes referrals to other units on campus sensitively and appropriately, while others noted this as an area for improvement. The resulting network of services creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. The Women's Center is a vital component in this network. We learned that one service or resource does not fill all needs at the UW.

Almost everyone we talked to also agreed that the Women's Center was not sufficiently understood, recognized, visible or valued by many parts of UW. Few of our interviewees were aware of the depth and reach of the programs and the many services available through the Center, and we found no clear consensus on if or how it might be better focused. Some, for example, argued for strengthening an academic/research focus while others believed this should and could not be part of Women's Center priorities. Almost all felt there was underutilized potential for partnerships between the Women's Center and many aspects of our campus (e.g. Student Life, Office of Minority Affairs/Diversity, Human Resources). We received numerous recommendations to strengthen these relationships through proactive outreach and engagement from the director and her staff, as some noted the Women's Center was not as open to collaboration and shared problem solving as it could be.

Current Activities (each program is described in appendix C):

The Making Connections program was universally valued. It is a national model with a fabulous record of success in being a recruitment, connection and retention of underrepresented students in college—especially in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields. It is important to track the participants after they enroll in college to determine the program's effectiveness in preparing girls to major in STEM fields. The mentoring aspects are seen as well designed and vital. The Re-entry program was likewise seen as an important, unduplicated source of support for an atypical group of students. Opinions about Lifelong Learning (variety of fee-based short courses) were more varied—while many of the offerings were unique and well focused within the Women's Center mission, others (e.g. yoga, pilates) did not seem to be. There was agreement that a stronger economic model could be developed while recognizing the importance of continuing courses for low-income individuals. While the International Women's dinner is largely a fund-raising event, it also is an important symbol (as is the Center itself) of UW's values about women, especially those who are under-represented on campus.

Administration and Finances:

Overview: The Women's Center is funded from a mix of state, revenue, grants, gift, scholarship and endowment, and discretionary budgets. Commencing July 1, 2009, the Women's Center's permanent state budget allocation was reduced by half (from \$163,793 to \$81,938 per year) as part of the Provost's Office's portion of the state budget cut. The Provost's office provided temporary funding of \$55,648 to backfill part of the cut (resulting in a net 16% cut of the 2008-09 Center's overall funding) through December 2009, pending the results of this review. Over the years, the Women's Center has done an incredible job of running the programs with such slim resources and has been quite ingenious in finding additional support as needed. That effort alone takes great time and energy and distracts from the program and service goals. In order for the Women's Center to continue to operate and serve the needs of the UW, our Working Group believes the Women's Center should be funded at the prior GOF/DOF allocation after the 16% budget reduction (meaning a state-funded budget of \$137,586/year or \$275,172/biennium). The Center needs a director and an experienced and knowledgeable administrator (%FTE to be determined) to maintain the Center and not overly burden a parent department. Two staffing scenarios are suggested later in this report.

Staffing. Currently, the only "permanent" staff positions are those of the Center's Director (80% state funds/20% Provost's Office temporary funds) and a Program Operations Specialist for the Making Connections program (96% Making Connections grant/4% Gift fund). Two other monthly paid employees are in temporary appointments: one supports the lifelong learning programs (50% time, one-year temporary appointment funded from self-sustaining

program revenue); the other, a six-month temporary full-time office support position, had previously been supported on state funds, but is now supported through the end of 2009 by the Provost's Office temporary funds. A variety of other student employees, hired as student assistants and work-study students, together with numerous volunteers support the range of Women's Center operations. Total 2008-09 expenditures for hourly temporary and/or student workers do not appear to reach the level that would be required to convert them into one permanent staff position. Reliance on temporary staff and volunteers creates a high level of turnover and requires constant retraining, a task that could be managed more effectively with more experienced and consistent administrative staff. Graduate students may also be able to play a role in supervising and training volunteers, while receiving credit for service learning.

Staffing Scenarios:

If housed within Arts & Sciences, which has a solid (yet stretched) administrative infrastructure, central support could be provided to the Women's Center to assist with fiscal, human resources, computer systems and advancement management. Direct involvement from the director and fiscal staff in Arts & Sciences administrator meetings, chair meetings, committees, etc. would help to build collaboration and support, and improve understanding on how to work effectively at the UW. Staffing needs may be met with a director and a strong, appropriately compensated 50-percent time program operations manager. Additional staffing could come from graduate students who could train and supervise students/volunteers doing service learning and other office tasks. Graduate students could also conduct surveys, data mining and provide needed reporting on program effectiveness.

Alternately, the Director's position could be state funded at less than 100 percent, while the administrative position could be funded at a higher percentage (than the 50% noted above). The Administrator would manage the day-to-day operations, including fiscal and human resources, while the Director could be tasked with outreach to the UW and external community, and fundraising. The Administrator would need to be experienced and knowledgeable about how the UW operates and be compensated appropriately. Note: we do not recommend changing the funding until a new funding model is identified and there is enough lead time allowed to ensure success.

Structure: While there was general agreement (from those interviewed and Committee members) that the Provost's Office was not the optimal location or portfolio for the Women's Center, beyond Arts & Sciences (the Dean is willing to take on leadership for the Center), there was little agreement about other possible locations. Student Life, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, Human Resources and Educational Outreach were discussed as options, but not chosen--in large part because the scope of the missions differed extensively or were quite narrow to serving a particular constituency. Programs that serve students, faculty, staff and the broader community are rare at universities, and hard to place. Arts & Sciences was deemed a suitable location for the Women's Center for several reasons: it also houses Women's Studies, its outreach efforts to alumni and students, and the past supervision of the Women's Center by the current Dean of Arts & Sciences.

Of the other universities we explored, there was no consistency in peer institution structure: the Centers reported to a variety of offices. Wherever the Women's Center is housed, the director and staff benefit from active, committed and guiding leadership, infrastructure help (especially with budget infrastructure and technology support), and colleagues with which to collaborate. Opinions about the Centers Advisory Board varied widely, although most agreed fund raising should be a central role. The Advisory Board should have a Women's Center-wide view, however, focusing on all services and programs -- internal and external to the UW. Another idea is to create an internal Advisory Board in addition to a more externally focused one, but with connection and synergy between the two.

Revenue/Development. The Women's Center works very hard to raise external funds, with generous support and time from the Board and from sponsors committed to the Women's Center work. Nonetheless, additional opportunities must be identified and developed.

The Women's Center offers a variety of courses through their Lifelong Learning Program. Some, such as GMAT and ACT preparation, are revenue producers that more than cover their costs. Others, such as Divorce 101, target low-income women and participant costs are free or very low cost. The mix of course offerings, evaluations and enrollments is

reviewed and recalibrated each year. Availability of on-campus classroom space is limited, since these are non-credit offerings, and these courses are given lowest priority for room assignments. The minimum enrollment required for a class is four registrants. Instructor fees are calculated at a percentage of the registration fees. While such an approach may moderate the impact of offering courses with few enrollees, any low-enrollment class uses classroom space that might possibly be used by other Women's Center classes that produce higher income.

Clearly, the Women's Center is fulfilling a service to the community by offering low- or no-cost classes targeted at underserved and vulnerable populations. Nonetheless, it would be beneficial to approach Educational Outreach (who has offered), the Experimental College, or another experienced provider of fee-based course offerings for assistance in methodically evaluating the types of courses, mix of revenue-generating offerings, and minimum enrollment practices with an eye toward generating a higher level of program income without diluting the mission, vision and values underlying the Women's Center's offerings. Suggestions include offering fee-based programs targeted at professionals and recalibrating the fees for courses known to be priced below market.

While certain fund-raising activities are well established; e.g., the annual International Women Leaders Dinner, the Center does not currently have a relationship with UW Advancement or other development organizations. Nonetheless, the organization has succeeded in securing grant funding for the highly regarded Making Connections program as well as the Gender Equity/Violence Prevention and Human Trafficking policy/research initiatives. The Meena Vashee scholarship fund for survivors of domestic violence or children of survivors and the Alene Morris endowment were awarded as a direct consequence of individuals' support of the work and mission of the Women's Center. Interview reports recognize the Women's Center as a unique and valuable resource that is held in high regard by many. The Women's Center would benefit greatly by identifying support for increased grant writing and development/donor support.

Administration/Financial Management. There is a gap in understanding and perhaps communication, between the Women's Center and the Provost's Office as it relates to general administration/financial management. The Director indicated that the Women's Center has never had a staff member with experience or UW staff training in budget/fiscal management/human resources. Moving forward, it appears essential that the Women's Center receives administrative/financial management support based on a solid understanding of budget, finance and human-resource policies and procedures. We recommend that the organization to which the Women's Center reports assign a resource to work closely with the Director and staff, providing centralized, collaborative support in the areas of budget and financial planning, workforce planning, and budget management.

Peer Review (list can be found in appendix E):

Staff of the Women's Center conducted a comparative analysis of other university centers in the Global Challenge States and the UW Office of Financial Management's eight peers. Data elements include the number of students in each university, the proportion of women students on campus, total center funding, reporting structure, programs offered, staffing, and other information that would foster better understanding of the typical structure, mission, and funding for these centers. Of 19 centers identified and reviewed, the majority exist on campuses with 25,000 to 35,000 students. Funding levels are highly variable and it is not clear to what extent there is central state support or whether the centers are funded by grants. Nonetheless, annual funding ranged from less than \$100,000 to \$1.8 M (U of Virginia) with a similar wide range in staffing. Although some center directors reported directly to the president or provost, others reported to the executive vice president of academics, associate provost, or office of undergraduate education (vice provost). Centers were located in a variety of administrative areas, including student life, equity and diversity, undergraduate education, and academic affairs. There is no clear home for these centers.

Programs offered through the centers were similar to those of the UW Women's Center. Most commonly cited programs were workshops on career planning, transition in life and school, assessment testing, life coaching, seminars, community education about women's issues, safe campus issues (including anti-violence work, referral for sexual assault), social construction of gender, family advocacy, prevention of sex trafficking, referrals for health issues (depression, eating disorders), self-defense workshops, women's history events, mentorship, support groups, skill-

building workshops, peer education programs, stress management, networking, leadership development, and research about women and women's issues.

Staffing of the centers was highly variable, depending on the funding levels. Typical of most centers is engagement of volunteers in the work of the center, including students for internships and community-based volunteers; e.g. board members.

Working Group Process:

The Working Group met six times since mid-July. We organized our work into sub-teams charged with interviewing members of the UW community, learning about the current activities, finances, and communications. The Women's Center Director presented an overview of the Center and its activities at one meeting; a founder and former director presented at another; and a small group met with the Provost's Office budget director and later with the Women's Center staff to discuss budget and finance. In total, we interviewed 51 students, faculty, staff, board members and community members to learn about the Center, its activities and effectiveness.

Conclusion:

The Working Group appreciates the opportunity to conduct this review and reinforce the value of the Center to the UW. The programs are well regarded by those who use them and the Center serves as an important connection point between the UW and the broader community. Opportunities to enhance the Center's value and operation include increased outreach and collaboration within the UW, development of strong internal financial and administrative practices, more emphasis on grant writing, an improved financial model for lifelong learning, and placement within an administrative structure that will provide the needed leadership, direction and support for success. We encourage more frequent reviews of the Women's Center and its staffing, in line with regular, 5-year interval program reviews. These reviews provide the opportunity to enhance the Center's visibility and value and to refocus its efforts as necessary in this ever-changing environment.

Appendices:

A. Recommendations and potential actions to consider:

- Increase the visibility of the Women's Center to the University community:
 - Create a temporary internal UW Advisory Board to work in parallel with more externally focused current Advisory Board until the UW visibility is improved.
 - Re-balance service profile to increase UW community-focused programs and services.
 - Provide additional opportunities for service learning, especially for graduate students.
- Reassign organizational reporting to Arts & Sciences to provide leadership, direction and infrastructure support (administration, budget, human resources, technology)
- Undertake a strategic planning effort, to be completed by the end of the 09-10 academic year, including Women's Center staff and partners (e.g., Student Life, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, Diversity Research Institute, President's Advisory Council on Women, Human Resources, Faculty Committee on Women), to review and focus the efforts of the Women's Center, refine the mission statement to core programs and services, and clarify staff roles
- Improve collaboration and strengthen relationships with campus services and organizations, especially with those that offer complementary services:

- Proactively reach out, engage and partner with SARIS, SafeCampus, Student Life, Human Resources to build collaborative relationships and improve support for Women’s Center users.
- Create a financially sustainable plan for the future (improved credibility, services and administration):
 - Create an internal set of UW advisers and partners, who can assist with strategic planning, improving fit, partnerships, synergies.
 - Involve graduate students in managing center functions, including training and supervising students; data mining and reporting, etc.
 - Work with UWEO to create a more effective economic model for the Lifelong Learning program
- Aggressively seek additional funding alternatives (external sources and internal services like Lifelong Learning), in addition to what’s already being done, in order to build a financially stable organization:
 - Explore State and federal grants; private lending/donations;
 - Seek support from Advancement, in order to create long-term endowment;
 - Review and update the Lifelong Learning costing model to generate a better return, and consider a higher cost set of classes.
- Improve measurement and data mining to demonstrate Women’s Center program successes and impacts (Making Connections increased data/longitudinal tracking, student advising, etc.) and/or areas to improve.
- Serve as the focal point for women’s issues at the UW (issue identification, problem solving, engagement, connections):
 - Educate the University about women’s issues on all three campuses, using information from President’s Advisory Committee on Women, Faculty Advisory Committee on Women, Climate Surveys, etc.

B. Mission and Vision (taken from Women’s Center website):

Mission: The University of Washington Women’s Center is a vital place where women and men partner to build a culture of gender equity campus-wide, locally and globally.

Vision: Women’s rights are human rights. We envision a society where women and men work together to transform social norms so that:

- Everyone has a voice, and everyone matters.
- Women are free to realize and fulfill their potential.
- Equality of access, inclusion and leadership thrive in every aspect of society.
- Violence and oppression against women and children are unacceptable.
- Through education, women and men become agents of social change.
- Our campus climate recognizes and values the unique perspective and significant contribution of female students, faculty and staff.

C. Program Descriptions

- Re-Entry Program: The Re-Entry Program provides non-traditional entering students with services and counseling in order to help facilitate their transition back into school. The Re-Entry Program provides

information and counseling services, support groups, peer counseling, and study groups. The program also hosts an orientation for the participating students to meet each other and network, and hear campus speakers offer advice on time management, writing skills, stress management, and more.

- **Making Connections**: The Making Connections program extends educational opportunities to many Seattle high-school students who would not otherwise have access. Participating high-school students can take advantage of tutoring services, a mentoring program, workshops, support during the college-application process, company and college visits, and many more services. The Making Connections program has demonstrated a notable success rate for its participants, with 100 percent of its graduates enrolled in college in 2009. Historically over the 10 year life of this program, over 90% of participants have enrolled in college, many first generation.
- **Lifelong Learning**: The Lifelong Learning program offers educational outreach and opportunities to University of Washington students, staff, faculty, and community members. The Women’s Center offers a selection of low-cost, non-credit courses and seminars, including classes in writing, professional development and leadership, study and language skills, fitness, and health and wellness.
- **Gender Equity and Violence Prevention**: The Women’s Center has developed a two-year work plan to explore, test, and develop a long-term, self-sustaining strategic plan focused on encouraging men to become involved in institutionalized, transformative violence-prevention programs. The objective of the program is to evaluate existing violence prevention/anti-oppression programs available for the engagement of men. This program provides educational workshops and seminars such as the “Step Up and Speak Out: Youth Violence Prevention Program,” and many others, for approximately 2,000 people each year.
- **International Women Leaders Dinner**: The International Women Leaders Dinner highlights the amazing leadership of women in the world by connecting the local with the global. Central to the vision of this event is the Women’s Center’s mission of building gender equity and social justice locally, nationally, and internationally.
- **Information and Referral Services**: In addition to its many programs, the Women’s Center serves as a bridge to many community members seeking information and access to higher education and services.

D. Names of those interviewed and affiliation:

- **UW Faculty**
Ana Mari Cauce, Dean for College of Arts & Sciences, Professor of Psychology
Sandy Silberstein, Professor of English, Faculty Council on Women in Academia
Christine DeStefano, Associate Professor of Political Science
Gail Stygall, Professor of English, former Faculty Senate Chair
Priti Ramamurthy, Associate Professor of Women Studies
- **UW Staff**
Eric Godfrey, Vice President and Vice Provost for Student Life
Sheila Edwards Lange, Vice President for Minority Affairs/Vice Provost for Diversity
Rene Singleton, Assistant Director of Student Activities
Connie Kravas, Vice President for University Advancement
Melissa Tumas, Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Specialist, Office of Student Life
David Szatmary, Vice Provost for UW Educational Outreach
Mindy Kornberg, Vice President of Human Resources
Clive Pursehouse, Administrator, Housing and Food Services
Dave Girts, Manager of Safe Campus
Gillian Wickwire, Safe Campus

Randy Shapiro, Assistant Director of Work/Life
Jennifer Self, Q-Center Director
Neal Rotta, Experimental College Director
Selva Baltan, Assistant Professor of Neurology

- **Women's Center Affiliates**

Pat Dawson, Board and M.D., Ph.D. - Swedish Medical Center
Nancy Finelli, Staff
Alene Morris, Women's Center Founder, former WC Board member
Eileen Concannon, WC Board and Attorney - Riddle & Williams
Dana Divens, UW staff, former Staff
Kris Swanson, former Board
Angela Ginorio, UW Faculty, former Director

- **Making Connections Affiliates**

Chelsea Adams, Alumni
Azeb Abera, Parent
Kelly O'Boyle, Mentor
Meade Crosby, Tutor
Senayet Woldemariam, Student
Brittney McKenzie, Student
Kristi Daggett, Tutor
Sam Lim, Tutor

E. Names of Peer Institutions (OFM 8 and Global Challenge)

- University of Arizona
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Irvine
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, San Diego
- University of Colorado, Boulder
- University of Connecticut
- University of Illinois, Champaign
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- University of Michigan, Dearborn
- University of Michigan, Flint
- Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- University of Oregon
- University of Virginia
- Washington State University