

MEMORANDUM

July 12, 1993

TO: Committee on the Role and Status of Women

FROM: Jane McIntyre

SUBJECT: Summary of Work of the Task Force on Sexual Harassment for the report to the President.

On December 14, 1988 Faculty Council approved a policy statement on sexual harassment. This policy says (in part) that "Members of the University community who believe that they have been sexually harassed should seek resolution of the problem through the University's informal and formal grievance procedures." [emphasis added] However, the informal procedures recommended in Spring 1989 were not approved by Faculty Council.

On October 4, 1991 President John Flower, at the request of the Academic Steering Committee of Faculty Senate, agreed to form a new Task Force on Sexual Harassment to deal with the issue once again. This group was appointed and began meeting in December 1991. Working through the summer of 1992, we prepared a preliminary draft of procedures for the informal resolution of complaints of sexual harassment. This draft was reviewed by University Legal Counsel in July 1992. After further revision, a second draft was distributed in October 1992 to a number of University committees and organizations, and once again, to University Legal Counsel.

Although supported by several groups, including the Professional Staff Organization and the Committee on the Role and Status of Women, the draft was strongly criticized by the University Faculty Affairs Committee. In addition, the University Legal Counsel raised new objections. The basic stumbling block we now face is as follows: although virtually all model codes of informal procedures for resolving complaints of sexual harassment involve the keeping of confidential records, by state law in Ohio, such records could not be confidential. (Student records are protected by the Federal Family Privacy Act, but records pertaining to employees are public.)

There seem to be two options the University could pursue regarding the informal resolution of complaints of sexual harassment. We could appoint a special ombudsperson to deal with complaints without record keeping; or, we could pursue a policy incorporating record keeping, although these records would not be confidential. The Task Force has not met since Winter Quarter 1993, and these issues remain unresolved.

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Presidential Committee on the Role and Status of Women

From: Elizabeth Unis Chesko, Convenor, Process Subcommittee

Subject: Progress report and recommendations

At the committees' retreat of September 10, 1992, it was decided that the purview of the Process Sub-committee would be five-fold; dealing with the questions of Professional Development, Career Ladders, Mentoring, Communication and Networking. Members of the Process Sub-committee included: Connie Hollinger, Judy Richards, Mareyjoyce Green, Nancy Ensign and myself as convenor.

We met regularly on a bi-weekly achedule starting October 16, 1992. The sub-committee pondered and discussed in detail the various tasks set before us and decided that the most efficient use of our time and energies would be to divide our work among us, according to our various talents and interests. It soon became obvious that we could not tackle each aspect individually and that they all overlapped in some manner. Our work evolved into three central areas of focus in 1992/93 and they were as follows:

Programatic and Career Activities: Libby Chesko

Suggestions for speakers and workshop presenters were taken from women who represented all segments of the University. Other colleges and universities in the area were contacted to be sure that our efforts would not be duplicated and literature from speakers' bureaus and agents was carefully perused to determine who could best provide the women of CSU with the kinds of insight and information we were seeking. All suggestions were acted upon and we found that while many of them were interesting, pertinent and valid, we could not, for any number of reasons, make connection because of time-tables and/or fees (which were in some instances, too much for our modest budget).

Through our efforts and at the suggestion of Dr. Timothy Runyan, chair of the Department of History, we were able to contact and subsequently bring to campus two women historians: Dr. Susan Stuard of Haverford College in Haverford, Pa., whose speciality is Medieval Women's History and Dr. Jean Peterson of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, whose speciality is Victorian England; Social History and Medicine.

Our special project of the year was held on April 21, 1993 when SALLY HELGESEN, author of The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership, appeared on campus and presented a leadership workshop for our committee and various women leaders and directors on campus. This workshop was followed by a luncheon which was attended by our new president, Dr. Claire Van Ummersen who extended to us the opportunity to be among the first who welcomed her to CSU. Ms. Helgesen delivered a public speech at 2:00 which was attended by our students and later in the afternoon, conducted another workshop which wad open to the University community and the public at 5:30 p.m. in University Center. According to the affirmative response and commentary provided thereafter, it proved to be a most successful and enjoyable event.

Evaluation and Tracking and Educational Activities: Judy Richards

We attempted to develop a process for evaluating and tracking promotions for women at CSU (faculty, professional staff and classified staff). This project was abandoned because the gathering of information became sensitive and the sub-committee decided not to pursue the roadblocks. This project would also have attempted to evaluate the various interim positions that women have served in and their effect on women at CSU.

The process sub-committee felt that Professional Development should be a top priority and this project became a reality during this fiscal year. Together with Continuing Education and the entire committee, we undertook the task of developing a survey for the women at CSU. The survey was mailed out on June 14, 1993. The purpose of the survey was to ask questions that would help Continuing Education and the committee to identify the concerns of women on campus and to evaluate their concerns about professional educational opportunities. We have the full support of the Dean of Continuing Education and our objective will be to compile the information from the survey and develop a concise composite of programs we hope will be offered in the Fall Quarter.

Other ideas such as a "Women's Section" in the On Campus came out of the brainstorming sessions that took place between the committee and Continuing Education.

Mentoring Activities: Nancy Ensign

The idea of a mentoring program for both professional staff and faculty women was raised at the committee's planning retreat last Fall. It was placed, as mentioned earlier, under the purview of this sub-committee.

We believe that the objective of a mentoring program is to provide ongoing support and an opportunity for new friendships to develop. We further believe that such relationships will only develop within an environment of trust and openness. We also believe that the role of this committee should be to provide the opportunities for this type of activity.

To this end, we have initiated a series of brown bag lunch meetings that has become known as the CSU Women's Dialogue Series. At each meeting we will discuss a book chosen at the previous meeting by the group assembled. Our first meeting was held on May 21st at noon. We began discussion of "Revolution from Within" by Gloria Steinem. Dr. Connie Hollinger was our group facilitator and our discussion of this book will continue at our next meeting which will be July 15, 1993. This ongoing study group will enable a diverse group of women to meet and discuss topics of mutual concern and interest. By choosing books that deal with various women's issues and asking our own faculty and staff to facilitate the discussions, we hope to provide an opportunity for friendships to develop in a natural way. These meetings provide an opportunity for the women at CSU to meet those they probably would otherwise never come in contact with.

Conclusion and Recommendations

While the Process Sub-committee has been able to work well together (and we did work hard, devoting many hours to our tasks), there is still much to be done. We recommend that the work we have initiated be continued and that new and creative ways of communicating and networking be conceived and acted upon. As the song says, "We've only just begun!"