Provost’s Advisory Committee for Women’s Concerns Meeting
September 16, 2009
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Present: Emily Bailey (Religious Studies), Maureen Beal (Financial Operations, Co-chair), Patricia Beeson (Provost’s Office, Economics), Jean Ferguson Carr (English/Women’s Studies, Co-chair), Janice Dorman (Nursing), Marguerite Matthews (Neuroscience), Kelly Otter (College of General Studies), Kathleen Pratt (Human Resources), Mary Koch Ruiz (Sexual Assault Services), Linda Schmitmeyer (Pitt Chronicle), Elsa Strotmeyer (Epidemiology), Jennifer Woodward (Surgery), Frances Zauhar (Johnstown, English Literature), Stephanie Hoogendoorn (Provost’s Office)

Introduction of PACWC Members
PACWC members introduced themselves.

Role of the Committee
The committee’s charge is to investigate the situation of women at Pitt; identify areas in which the University could improve responsiveness to women’s concerns; suggest alternative solutions for perceived problems; and represent woman in all areas of the University, including teaching, research, administration, and support services. At the end of each academic year, the chairs of the subcommittees meet annually with the Provost to present their findings and to make any recommendations.

Announcements
The annual Reception Welcoming New Women Faculty is scheduled for October 1, 2009.

There are two Provost’s Inaugural Lectures from distinguished women faculty this year: Dr. Lucy Fischer, Distinguished Professor of English, on October 13, 2009 and Dr. Ellen Frank, Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry, on April 6, 2010. PACWC members are encouraged to attend if their schedules permit.

Activities from 2008-2009
The minutes of the May 20, 2009 meeting were approved as written.

The Mentoring Subcommittee completed the new Faculty Mentoring Resources Web site. The url for the Web site is http://www.provost.pitt.edu/mentoring/. Janice Dorman, chair, discussed the key features of the site and highlighted the various types of resources included. The site is meant to encourage programs and departments to establish and expand mentoring programs within their units. Future plans include highlighting existing mentoring programs on campus, promoting the site, and could also include adding resources to address the mentoring of faculty post-tenure, staff, and/or graduate students.

The Benchmarking Subcommittee continued its work of revising the long term agenda from the 1990s in order to help PACWC focus on issues of the highest priority for the next ten years or so. The survey completed by PACWC in 2007-2008 identified the following issues as having the highest priority:

- economic equity
- work/life balance for staff, younger faculty, and graduate students;
- safety issues for undergraduates;
- networking and professional development for professional students; and
The survey, especially the comments, has helped the committee understand the complexities and nuances of the issues.

Patty Beeson informed PACWC that she would be meeting with administrators to discuss SafeRider and she will report back about what changes have been made to the program. Patty mentioned that PACWC can ask people to report to them and identified the following resources that PACWC might find useful:

- Center for Instructional Development and Distance Education for their consideration of offering graduate teaching certificates (not as an official degree program but as a professional development program).
- Joan Lakoski for the Women in Medicine and Science Forum to be expanded in 2010 to include the lower campus and staff concerns. Dual hiring was a major concern of this group at the first forum held in spring 2009.
- Ron Frisch for staff mentoring and dual hiring for partners of staff and faculty.

Patty suggested that PACWC might want to host a monthly happy hour at the University Club to facilitate staff and faculty networking.

Patty distributed copies of the letter from the Chancellor informing her, as chair, that PACWC was selected to receive the 2009 Chancellor’s Affirmative Action Award.

**Goals for 2009-2010**

A new committee this year will focus on how policies and resources that address women’s concerns are communicated to the university community. We are fortunate to have the editor of the Pitt Chronicle, Linda Schmitmeyer, chair this committee. Two key issues are to:

- Identify sources of disconnect in information and also how people find out about policies and procedures.
- Highlight the achievements of women at the University.

The goal of the committee is to make recommendations to administrators on how to improve communications.

We should be promoting our policies. Kathy Pratt pointed out that she has a list of family friendly benefits that are not well-known, for example, staff members work a 37.5-hour week as opposed to a 40-hour week.

A member mentioned that PACWC members and others should be nominating women for awards as often as possible. There are a number of local awards such as the YWCA and the Pittsburgh Athena Award Program. In some cases, it may be better for the department chairs to nominate women.

PACWC members were asked to sign up to serve one of the three subcommittees: Communications, Mentoring, or Benchmarking. Each committee will work towards developing its specific goals in consultation with the co-chairs.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of PACWC will take place on Thursday, January 14, 2010.