

ANNUAL REPORT

for

2002/2003

**Committee on Women
in the Academic Community**

October 2003

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Executive Summary

The Committee on Women in the Academic Community focused on three major concerns during the 2002-2003 academic year:

1. The Role of the Non-tenured Faculty. Continued investigation was made into the effects on the academic workplace of the status and role of untenured long-term faculty appointments. Such appointments, at least as an historical matter, have included more women than men, and appear to be increasingly used to meet the core teaching and research missions of the University. Given differences in approach to the hiring and use of such appointments within the various schools and departments, it may be that more attention should be given to the management of such appointments by the University.

2. Career Planning and Staff Development. Continued investigation was also made into the ways that the University could provide more meaningful career development support for women staff. The continued heavy concentration of women at the lower salary grades suggests that such efforts could both provide the University with a more valuable and more highly skilled staff, while at the same time improving the workplace environment. Several specific recommendations, including enhancement of the use of web resources in the hiring process and inclusion of career-strategy training, are made.

3. Childcare. As recommended in the 2002 report of the Childcare Committee, COWAC has assumed a role in monitoring the progress of the University's childcare initiatives, and in determining the extent to which those initiatives satisfy the childcare needs of the University community as identified in that report.

4. Survey. During the past year, the faculty and staff subcommittees have developed a survey, which COWAC anticipates will be finalized and distributed to all faculty and staff before the 2004 winter quarter. The survey is intended to identify issues of importance to faculty and staff that have not been addressed yet by the committee.



Charge of the Committee on Women in the Academic Community

In 1995, in response to a report from the Task Force on Women in the Academic Workplace, Northwestern University President Henry Bienen established the Committee on Women in the Academic Community (COWAC). Beginning in 2001, members have been invited to serve for two-year terms. The Committee is responsible for reporting annually on the University's progress in meeting the goals outlined in the report. (The Task Force report and subsequent reports can be found at <http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/cowac/report.html>.)

COWAC membership during 2002 - 2003

During 2002/2003, Charlotte Crane, Professor, Law School, chaired COWAC. Crane also chaired the faculty subcommittee; Theresa Parker, Assistant Dean and Director of Finance and Planning, Kellogg School of Management, chaired the staff subcommittee. Other committee members included:

Deborah Brauer, Department Assistant, Political Science, WCAS

Kimberly Gray, Associate Professor, Civil Engineering, McCormick

Veronica Jackson, Office of Clinical Trials, Feinberg

Joan Linsenmeier, Senior Lecturer, Psychology, WCAS

Nancy MacLean, Associate Professor, History, WCAS

Barbara Jo Mueller, Assistant Director, Industry Relations, McCormick

Shericka Pringle, Business Coordinator, Preventive Medicine, Feinberg

Todd Van Neck, Assistant Director, Office of Budget Planning

Catherine Webb, Associate Professor, Pediatrics, Feinberg

James Webb, Director, Information Technology, SESP

Theresa Woodruff, Associate Professor, Neurobiology and Physiology, WCAS

Other participants included:

Rita Winters, Director, Human Resources - Chicago

Renee Redd, Director, Women's Center, Office of the Provost

Jean Shedd, Associate Provost, Office of the Provost.

Christopher Gaul, Office of the Provost, provided staff assistance.

REPORT of the COMMITTEE

Section I: Report and Recommendations of the Faculty Subcommittee

Non-tenure track appointments

As observed in its 2001-2002 Annual Report, the University now relies on a significant number of non-tenure track faculty in pursuit of both its teaching and research missions. At least historically, in many parts of the University, women have held these positions disproportionately.

During the 2002-2003 academic year, COWAC explored the possibility that the relatively unstructured nature of the non-tenured positions can lead to a work environment for those holding such positions that is considerably less satisfying than it might be. Although no systematic study was conducted (such a study is beyond the limited resources of COWAC to conduct), COWAC members engaged in informal interviews with various administrators and affected faculty members in an attempt to learn more about the environment in which non-tenured faculty members operate. The observations we were able to make were mixed. Significant steps have been made in some units toward regularizing the procedures for hiring, compensating and promoting non-tenure track faculty members and additional steps have been taken to ensure that their role within their academic unit is sufficiently well defined. In other units, confusion about the status of non-tenure track faculty (especially those whose compensation is related to, but not determined by, their status within the University) appears to have adverse effects on the community in which they operate. There appears to be little general understanding across and within the various units of the respective roles of the faculty (tenure or

non-tenure) and the unit heads in the determination of selection criteria for such positions and in the procedures used for hiring, review and retention.

COWAC intends to explore these issues further in the coming academic year, and to make topics related to these issues prominent in its contemplated survey of the faculty and in its statistical analysis.

Section II: Report and Recommendations of the Staff Subcommittee

Recommendations on Training and Staff Career Development

In 2001-02, COWAC reported its intention to look at strategies that would increase the ability of university staff in general, and women staff in particular, to develop professionally and to plan for a career within the university. Last year's report noted that statistics gathered in 2000-2001 suggested that women staff are concentrated in the lower-paying salary grades. After the committee's meeting with the Provost in November 2002, the staff subcommittee met with Senior Vice President for Business and Finance Eugene Sunshine to discuss issues of career development for women within the University. Mr. Sunshine emphasized his support for activities that would further staff development, and for policies that would acknowledge the importance of the staff in helping the university fulfill its mission.

The staff subcommittee met with representatives from Human Resources on several occasions during the past year, to provide input on proposed projects that supported the subcommittee's interests in career development for women staff.

First, the staff subcommittee met with Guy Miller, Associate Vice President, Human Resources, in October 2002 to discuss the features of the proposed new Human Resources Web page. The subcommittee supported strongly the development of an updated HR Web page that would allow candidates to search the open positions listings and provide more detailed information about posted positions. The redesigned web site, launched during 2002/2003, contains these features, and is a significant improvement over the previous site.

Second, the staff subcommittee met with Guy Miller; Vera Potapenko, Director, Human Resources Consulting and Staffing; and Kathy Tessorf, Director, Human Resources

Information System in February 2003 for a demonstration of the PeopleSoft e-recruit module to be implemented at Northwestern in the future, and to provide feedback on the merits of its various features. The module will be implemented in the near future, but, in the meantime, Human Resources, under the guidance of Potapenko, is working to streamline the University's job application processes and provide greater feedback to candidates.

It will now be easier for current staff to look for promotional opportunities. Internal candidates will get a phone call from an HR counselor upon their application for a position. This one-on-one counseling is aimed at assisting the internal candidate in assessing the opportunities available and their strength as candidates.

Enhancements to the recruiting process that have recently been adopted will make the process quicker by allowing hirers to communicate their job openings electronically; will allow daily instead of weekly updates to the open positions listing; and will allow candidates to submit resumes electronically.

Third, the staff subcommittee met several times with Paul Corona, Director of Training and Development, Human Resources. We discussed the importance of providing staff training that serves two purposes: a) training that provides information and competencies necessary for university staff to do their current jobs well; and b) activities that help staff analyze their longer term career goals, identify areas where they need to develop competence, and develop a plan to attain the competencies needed to take the next step in their career.

At this point, the Training and Development division of HR, because of heavy workload and modest staffing, is challenged in meeting expectations regarding even the first type of training (providing information and developing competencies). There are currently no programs offered that address the second type, relating to career development more broadly. As the

technology we use in our daily processes continues to become more and more sophisticated, a heavier burden is placed on the training required for staff to meet their daily responsibilities. The struggle to meet the training needs of schools and departments will become more difficult and will require more resources as many functions and processes become more decentralized. We will need to address this difficult issue soon – the longer we delay, the more serious the potential risks the University will face. COWAC will continue this general discussion with HR and with the various staff organizations on both campuses.

More immediately, COWAC feels it is essential that a program to train managers be developed in the near future. In initial discussions, Potapenko and Corona have indicated their support in principle for such a program, although whether the Training and Development division has the resources necessary has not yet been addressed. Such a program would address issues such as sourcing, interviewing and selecting job candidates for positions; effective performance evaluation; mentoring staff; dealing with difficult employees, etc. Such a program would be a vehicle for educating managers to view their staff as an important resource to be nurtured and developed through mentoring activities, through opportunities for professional development, and through ongoing feedback on performance.

Civility Policy

Drawing on the work of the Campus Safety Committee, the University has developed a new policy on civility in the work place. Both the Provost and the Senior Vice President noted that the issue of how members of the University community treat each other is an important one. Once this policy has been finalized, it will be important to publicize it vigorously within the community. COWAC is pleased that this issue is being addressed, as it will solidify the concept

of respect for the important role that both staff and faculty play in furthering the goals of the university.

Section III: Review of Childcare Initiatives and Recommendations for Their Continuing Oversight of University Childcare Initiatives

A. Background

In its February 2002 report to the Provost, the Child Care Committee made recommendations regarding:

1. Establishment of childcare facilities on or near the Evanston campus.
2. An approach to donor support for childcare funding.
3. Partnership with Childcare Network of Evanston for training and referral
4. Partnering in Chicago
5. Enhancement of FSA and FSA matching programs
6. Evaluation of sick childcare program
7. Enhancement of Office of Child and Family resources
8. Inclusion of students in programs to extent possible

The Committee concluded with the following recommendation:

“We recommend that the Provost charge the Committee on Women in the Academic Community (COWAC) to monitor, at least annually, the progress made by Northwestern University in implementing these recommendations.”

The Provost accepted this recommendation, and has charged COWAC with monitoring the progress of the University’s childcare initiatives. This report therefore includes a summary of the substantial steps taken during 2003 toward meeting the Childcare Committee’s recommendations, and a summary of expectations for its continued role in monitoring the resulting programs.

B. Review of Childcare Initiatives Implemented in Fiscal 2003

1. Establishment of childcare facilities.

In an effort to better meet the childcare needs of the University community in Evanston, the University has entered into a partnership with the McGaw YMCA in Evanston in connection with its preexisting child care center. Under the agreement, Northwestern will have ongoing involvement in management of the center through positions on board, the regular parent committee, and on a committee charged with coordinating the University resources that are available to the center.

The enhancements in the program offered at the McGaw YMCA because of the University's involvement have been well received, and the University has committed a limited amount of financial support to the center for the duration of the contract. The extent to which these arrangements will meet the on-going needs of the NU community needs to be monitored. It remains unclear whether the result of this partnering effort will provide an effective long-term solution.

The possibility of near-term solutions in Chicago is unfortunately far lower. There may be some very viable and possibly more clearly permanent solutions in Chicago, however, given the amount of construction currently underway on and near the Chicago campus.

The available space, both existing and under construction, has been surveyed and several possibilities have emerged. Investigation has begun into identifying suitable outside providers to administer a childcare center, and into the possibility of co-sponsorship of a center, either in University or nearby commercial space. Identification of a possible outside provider appears to be a necessary early step, since such a provider should be able to make a far more accurate needs assessment than would be possible without the expertise such a provider offers.

It may be difficult for the University to meet the goal of providing a solution on the Chicago campus for fiscal 2005 unless decisions are made imminently.

2. Securing donor support for childcare funding.

Although some interest in investment in childcare has been rumored to be expressed by individual members of the Board of Trustees, no concerted effort to solicit support for childcare appears to have been made. At a minimum, it is hoped that efforts will be made to inform the Board of the interest in the new initiatives in Evanston and of the needs that may remain, especially in Chicago.

3. Partnership with Childcare Network of Evanston for training and referral

Center care is not a desirable option for everyone. One significant reason is that most center care, including that at the McGaw YMCA, is offered essentially only on a full-time basis during the regular work day. Center care is therefore a relatively expensive, and not always personally optimal choice for those parents whose schedules are flexible.

In an effort to ensure that satisfactory options are available for those for whom center care is not desirable, Northwestern has entered into a partnership with the Childcare Network of Evanston (CNE) in which CNE offers training to childcare providers who provide back-up care (typically, short-term, intermittent care) either in their own homes or that of the clients. As of October 2003, this training had been completed successfully by 22 participants, who include Northwestern students and spouses, and members of the Evanston community.

Also under this agreement, CNE has developed a program to increase the number of in-home childcare providers in Evanston (offering training and guidance in getting state certification), so that more in-home care possibilities are available to NU and the Evanston community.

4. Similar Partnering in Chicago

Although the University has continued its relationship with the Day Care Action Council of Chicago, a referral service that provides information to faculty, staff and students on childcare providers in the City of Chicago, there seem to be fewer possibilities for constructive partnerships.

5. Enhancement of Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account and matching programs

Participation in the dependent care flexible spending account (FSA) program, which can be used for eligible child care expenses, and in the dependent care FSA matching program, has increased over the past year, reflecting both a increase in match rates and stronger promotion of the programs.

For the first time since the inception of the dependent care FSA matching program, participation has used up the allotted budget. It is uncertain whether, should participation continue to increase without additional budgeted allotted, participation will drop as a result of uncertainty about the degree to which the University match will in fact be available at the time the employee commits to participate.

6. Evaluation of sick childcare program

The sick childcare program remains almost unused, and may become even less valued if the training of flexible childcare providers makes in-home care of sick children easier to arrange. It is unclear whether this is the result of the lack of awareness, or lack of interest even by those who are aware. Such a program is only of use if it can be availed of on relatively short notice.

The existing arrangements should be re-examined to determine this program's potential usefulness.

7. Enhancement of Office of Work Life, Child and Family Resources

With the establishment of the childcare initiatives mentioned earlier, the University strengthened the Office of Child and Family Resources (now the Office of Work Life, Child and Family Resources) through the addition of a new position (director) in October 2002. The director, Katie Krauch, is charged with oversight of the initiatives; working directly with faculty, staff and students on childcare issues; and working with the providers of the childcare services with whom NU is partnering.

Krauch will meet at least annually with COWAC to provide updates on the various childcare initiatives, to help COWAC fulfill its charge of monitoring the University's progress toward the goals laid out in the report of the Childcare Committee.

8. Inclusion of students in programs to extent possible

Students have responded to the invitation to use the center care at the McGaw YMCA, and have availed themselves of the limited financial support available through the YMCA initiative. Students enrolled in graduate programs administered through The Graduate School may be eligible for aid; students in the professional schools are not eligible, at this point.

C. COWAC's Continued Role in the Monitoring of the University's Childcare Initiatives

The Childcare Committee envisioned a role for COWAC not only in monitoring the early progress of the specific initiatives recommended to and undertaken by the University, but also with monitoring the degree to which these initiatives will continue to meet over the longer term the childcare needs of the University community as identified in the Committee Report.

The following questions emerge as the most important for COWAC to pursue in evaluating the progress of each of the childcare initiatives:

- A. Is the University community appropriately aware of the University's childcare initiatives?
- B. Do the currently available resources meet the expectations of those using them?
- C. Are there any aspects of the childcare needs of the University community that were identified by the Childcare Committee that are not adequately met by the currently implemented initiatives?

In order to fulfill its monitoring function, COWAC must have access to data that reflects the answers to these questions. Much of this monitoring function is made easier by the presence of the Office of Work Life, Child and Family Resources (OWLCFR). So long as OWLCFR receives adequate support, it can continue to operate as a clearinghouse for members of the University community seeking child care, and as such a clearinghouse, can provide COWAC with the necessary data. COWAC intends to meet with OWLCFR at least once a year to review the progress of the childcare initiatives.

1. Establishment of childcare facilities.

a. Evanston

- A. Is the University community aware of the University's arrangements with the McGaw YMCA in Evanston?

A commendable amount of energy has been spent in the last year informing the University community of the new arrangements. In anticipation of the first normal “enrollment season” (late winter to spring), articles were placed in the Observer, coverage secured in Chicago-wide newspapers, and notices were included in the newly created Human Resources e-mail newsletter on the University web calendar. Widely advertised open houses were held.

It appears that through its normal operations, OWLCFR is generating adequate publicity about the partnership with the McGaw YMCA, and no additional steps need be taken to monitor the publicity efforts or to measure their success.

However, COWAC suggests that some reference to the childcare initiatives be included in the annual Human Resources open enrollment pamphlet (even if no elections or commitments need to be made in connection with the open enrollment season) because of the relatively great use of this pamphlet throughout the community.

B. Is there adequate exchange of information between the McGaw YMCA and the University?

Is there adequate participation of the University in decisions made by the McGaw YMCA about childcare? Are the mechanisms for input in these decisions adequate?

Are there provisions for ensuring continuity in the institutional connections between the McGaw YMCA and the University?

The University has established several mechanisms (including memberships on boards and participation in staff committee meetings) likely to contribute to an adequate continuing flow of information and opportunity to influence the McGaw YMCA program. It would not appear to be necessary to take any additional steps at this time to measure the adequacy of these mechanisms.

Is the McGaw YMCA arrangement acceptable for those who are likely to choose center care?

Is the quality of care at the McGaw YMCA such that University should continue the affiliation? Are NU parents who use the McGaw YMCA generally satisfied?

The McGaw YMCA program has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and can be expected to maintain this accreditation. The University can rely on this accreditation process and the self-study involved in maintaining it for assurance that the basic care offered at the center meets the general expectations of those using such care.

The accreditation process may not always reveal ways in which center care can be adjusted to better suit the needs of its users. The McGaw YMCA conducts annual surveys of its parents, and may be willing to share this information gathered with OWLCFR. COWAC suggests that OWLCFR explore with the McGaw YMCA the most useful way in which this information can be shared, whether additional questions pertaining to NU participants should be added, and whether OWLCFR should engage in its own survey of NU participants, even if such a survey were relatively informally.

C. Has the arrangement with the McGaw YMCA child care center provided an adequate supply of center care?

In particular, how many NU parents each year seek spaces that are not available?

How many non-NU parents each year seek spaces that are not available?

Why do NU parents that might use center care choose not to use the McGaw YMCA?

Although the McGaw YMCA child care center maintains a waitlist, and shares information about the waitlist with the University, it is not clear that the information

generated by this process is sufficient to fully answer these questions. First, it is very difficult to obtain information about those who would generally find center care appealing, but who choose not to use the McGaw YMCA. Second, claiming a spot on the waitlist requires a payment of \$100., a commitment that not all who would use the McGaw YMCA were a space available will choose to pay.

Although questions could be asked of those who make inquiries of OWLCFR, and those who attend the McGaw YMCA Open House, it is unclear whether these efforts would reveal anything more than highly particularized and anecdotal responses. This question should be revisited, however, should demand for the McGaw YMCA appear to lessen.

Should the partnership with the McGaw YMCA be reconsidered for any of the following reasons:

- * The demand for center care cannot be accommodated with the resources available to the Y
- * The physical aspects of using the McGaw YMCA are unsatisfactory compared to closer facilities
- * The programmatic aspects of using the McGaw YMCA are unsatisfactory compared to that which would likely be provided by a University-controlled program

These questions can be explored using the answers to the more specific questions above.

b. Chicago

So far, central administration has shared with COWAC and with the Childcare Committee several possibilities for meeting childcare needs on the Chicago campus.

2. Securing donor support for childcare funding.

Regretfully, there has been little activity to monitor.

3. Partnership with Childcare Network of Evanston for training and referral.

OWLCFR will maintain information about those enrolled in the training program, and CNE will maintain and adhere with OWLCFR information about usage.

4. Similar Partnering in Chicago

COWAC has received conflicting reports about the adequacy of the current arrangements with the Childcare Action Council, and urges OWLCFR both to monitor the relationship more closely and to explore other possible sources of information about childcare developments in the Streeterville neighborhood..

5. Enhancement of FSA and FSA matching programs

Review of terms of programs, participation rates, and survey of means of communication can be done annually without special ongoing monitoring. The director of the Office of Work Life, Child and Family Resources will provide this information to COWAC.

6. Evaluation of sick childcare program

Further investigation is necessary to determine the usefulness of continuing this little-used program. COWAC suggests that the director of OWLCFR review the program and recommend a course of action.

7. Enhancement of Office of Work Life, Child and Family Resources

Review of funding and staffing can be done as part of the annual meeting with OWLCFR without ongoing monitoring.

8. Inclusion of students in programs to extent possible

Review of policies and participation can be done without special effort so long as breakdowns for student participation are kept as part of regular tallies of the resources within the purview of OWLCFR.

Section IV: Contemplated Survey of Faculty and Staff

The 1993 Task Force on Women in the Academic Workplace conducted a survey of all faculty and staff designed to identify areas ways in which the University could enhance the professional development of both staff and faculty women. No similar systematic attempt to assess issues of concern to COWAC has been made since. During the last academic year, COWAC has developed survey instruments for both faculty and staff that are designed both to update the original survey and to provide new information about the environment in which women within the University work. It is hoped that these instruments will be finalized and the survey conducted before the 2004 winter quarter.