

The University of Washington
Special Committee on Faculty Women (SCFW)

The Special Committee on Faculty Women met at 1:30 p.m. on **Friday, May 04, 2001** in 26 Gerberding Hall. Chair Barbara Krieger-Brockett presided.

PRESENT: *Faculty* Fligner, Krieger-Brockett, Waaland, *Ex officio* Redalje, Remick.

ABSENT: *Faculty* DeWitt, Frenkel, Kemp, Liu, Muecke, Powell, Wilke. *Ex officio* Basu, Sengupta.

In the future, the members present voted to post minutes on the Faculty Senate website as “draft” if, after one month from the meeting date the minutes have not been approved by a quorum. Approval by a quorum of voting members will also be sought via email.

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Oda v. UW—SCFW’s Next Step

Krieger-Brockett proposed that SCFW invite a representative from UW to come to the next SCFW meeting to answer questions about Oda v. UW. She suggested that the meeting could be similar to the question & answer session held on April 6, 2001 with the attorneys from Hagens Berman, the firm representing the five women faculty in the case. The Committee members agreed that they would like to hear the UW’s position on the suit and asked Krieger-Brockett to find out who the UW representative might be. Krieger-Brockett agreed to draft a list of questions for the UW representative, based on the types of questions written for the meeting with the Hagens Berman attorneys. Tentatively the meeting is scheduled during the next regular SCFW meeting time, on June 1 at 1:30 p.m., room TBA.

On a similar note, Krieger-Brockett pointed SCFW members to two web-sites that may be useful to those interested in issues of subtle discrimination against women in academia. They are the webpages of: the UW Climate and Community Project of the College of Arts and Sciences (<http://depts.washington.edu/asccp/>), and Bernice Sandler, dealing with various aspects of gender and race in education (<http://www.bernicessandler.com/id4.htm>). These two sites will also be linked on the SCFW’s list of “Resources for Faculty, Students, and Staff.”

Future Issues

The following issues were proposed as possible topics of discussion for SCFW next year:

- Medical and Family Leave Policies

Remick told the Committee that the University has a progressive and flexible leave policy (http://www.washington.edu/admin/acadpers/sickleave_familyleave.html). Full-time paid leave is available for up to three months, part-time unpaid leave can be arranged, and a year off the tenure clock will be granted whether or not leave is taken. However, the Instructional Responsibility Policy (IRP), an administrative policy that requires all faculty to teach every quarter that they receive State funding, restricts options during part-time leave and the year off-clock. However, it is possible on a case-by-case basis to negotiate a waiver of the IRP requirement for some part of the year past childbirth or after adoption of a child. The Committee would like to see a greater understanding among woman faculty that IRP waivers are possible.

Krieger-Brockett said she would bring this issue up at the next meeting of the Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs (FCFA), whose members are already considering IRP issues. Specifically, Remick suggested that she might ask FCFA to look at data on how many women who have had

children have taken leave and from which fields. She suspected that women faculty in the sciences are less likely to take time off because they cannot easily take time away from running their labs.

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- Childcare issues

Email messages to Krieger-Brockett have indicated that there is considerable support for and interest in the issue of suitable and accessible childcare on campus. She indicated that this could be a priority topic for SCFW to consider.

- Copyright Issues for women regarding scholarly communications: are women faculty impacted by copyright laws equally?
- Examination of Lecturer issues

Krieger-Brockett told the Committee that proportionally, a large number of Lecturers and Senior Lecturers are women, relative to the total number of tenure-track faculty. Lecturers typically receive very little guidance on promotion. They also spend a large number of contact hours with students, allowing little time for research: a criterion for promotion to Senior Lecturer in some departments. She suggested that SCFW could provide input to FCFA on this matter, especially as it affects women.

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- Evaluation of the mentoring process for women faculty

SCFW might wish to consider how mentoring can be conducted effectively for women faculty. Remick pointed out that mentoring programs are an attempt to formalize informal interactions and are therefore not always successful. On the other hand, the Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) mentoring program seems to be more successful because it provides mentor training and requires that all parties feel that their mentoring relationships are mutually beneficial. Some SCFW members stated that social events and informal meetings are probably the most effective ways for women to connect with others who are great sources of information.

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Faculty Development Fellowships

Fligner reported to the Committee on her overwhelmingly positive experience this year as SCFW's representative on the President's Committee on Faculty Development Fellowships, which is headed by Steve Olswang. The fellowships are granted to faculty who, for various reasons (poor mentoring, bad administrative decisions, lack of resources, family emergencies, etc.), need time to develop their tenure packages. The fellowships allow them to "buy" release time from teaching duties to work on particular projects that will improve their promotion package. She noted that recipients of these fellowships feel very grateful and want to contribute something to the University community. Plans include a lecture series in which recipients present aspects of their work. In general, recipients have been successful in obtaining tenure, and the review process has also been of benefit to applicants who did not receive a fellowship. Fligner recommended that SCFW continue to send an active representative to this committee each year.

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The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. Minutes by Katherine Wimble, Recorder.