

To: Chancellor Gearhart and Provost Gaber

RE: Commission on Women, Year End Status Report, 2012

I am very pleased to report to you the status of the commission's work during this second year of our existence. We have had a very active and productive year, following up on our agenda set last year. Our activities are discussed below, followed by a list our new agenda items for 2013.

- 1) The primary issue carrying over from 2011 was campus childcare, which the commission had identified as a major concern. The opening of new Jean Tyson Child Development Study Center is an exciting opportunity for our campus. The goal of that facility is primarily a laboratory for research and education of students, but it will provide an opportunity for faculty, staff and students to expand much needed care on campus. However, it was clear that this cannot meet all the needs of the campus community, so the commission worked with the Staff Senate to survey the faculty, staff and students regarding child care needs and willingness to pay. An economics graduate student provided central support for analyzing the results, solicited input from Doug Walsh, the facility's new director, and with input from the commission's members produced a report that is attached to this document. Our hope is that this report can inform those who may benefit from its information as the Center opens its doors, and as plans for the future of the Center are considered.

Recommendation: The survey makes it clear that there remains significant unmet demand for childcare that the current center cannot meet both in terms of quantity and price. While it may not be possible to address this shortfall without the additional infusion of significant resources, we, nonetheless, hope that this report will be useful in identifying more precisely campus needs to guide future resource development.

- 2) The second issue that the commission addressed is parental leave. After speaking with Chancellor Gearhart and the Executive Committee at the close of the last academic year, the commission was invited to investigate the needs and implications of offering leave. We spoke with Debbie McLoud who conducted research regarding the costs and legal implications of offering this benefit. Her report to the commission indicated that college deans have been instructed to offer maternity leave to faculty, although the details with regard to specific policies surrounding this issue have not yet been clarified. It is our recommendation that the specific challenges in the design and implementation of the parental leave policy be discussed in a transparent manner to ensure comparable implementation across various campus units. McLoud further informed us that the implementation of a leave policy, for example, for staff will require changes at the state level, and while the university is working on this, it will not be a simple task.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the university develop a uniform policy for faculty across units, after significant and meaningful input from faculty and staff housed in the various units across campus, and we offer our assistance as the university investigates this benefit for staff and faculty.

- 3) Workshops: The commission feels strongly that it is very beneficial to create venues to bring women on campus together to address concerns, provide support and mentoring and share information. This spring we conducted our first event open to the entire campus community. Approximately 120 men and women attended a luncheon with three speakers addressing the issue of mentoring. The event proved to be a tremendous success. We received significant positive feedback regarding the benefits of this event, and numerous suggestions were made for future events. We want to thank the Chancellor for his financial support for this event, and we are planning to seek funds from the Women's Giving Circle for follow-up events next year. It is our hope that we can receive support once again from the Chancellor if we fail to secure funds independently. Future topics might include mental health and stress, caregiving or a number of other topics of interest to both men and women.
- 4) Website: The commission has developed a basic website with information regarding our activities, documents and highlighting women on campus who have made outstanding contributions. We hope to populate this site further with access to resources that might be of use to our campus population.
- 5) Future activities and issues to explore:
 - a. The commission has identified pay equity as an important issue on campus, and next year this will be a significant item on agenda to research.
 - b. Violence on campus is also a problem that is not unique to our campus, and although the campus has taken major steps to address this issue, we would like to study the issue, if this is seen as a benefit to the campus community, and see if there is anything more we might need to do. Specifically, there is a grant program that we have identified that may make it possible to bring additional resources to our campus. The possibility of putting together a proposal will be on our agenda this fall.

We are excited about the completion of our first full year of activities, and we feel that this commission has been a valuable addition to our campus. We would like to thank the Chancellor and Provost for your support, and we hope to continue to serve our campus well. We have an ambitious agenda, but we are hopeful that we can make significant strides toward

reaching these goals. We greatly appreciate your continued support of the commission and for providing us the opportunity to work on such important issues facing our university. I am happy to meet with you if you think it would be helpful at any point.

Thank you.

Amy Farmer