**COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

Tuesday November 16th, 2021

8:30 – 9:30 am

**Individuals Present:** Cara Krieg, Pauline Palko, Elizabeth Garcia, Donald Bergmann, Billie Tadros, Sam Gurn, Lucia Alaimo

**Individuals Absent:** Peter Bouraphael, Maria Marinucci, Amy Atkinson, Jennifer Riccardi

**AGENDA**

1. Approval of minutes
2. Open forum: community concerns
   1. N/A- no community members present for meeting
3. Survey results and potential name change
   1. Near unanimous support for “Committee on Gender Equity” being the new candidate name.
4. Guest: Jean Harris
   1. Jean briefed the committee on the history on the committee’s creation. Discussion on various changes that have occurred in membership, budget, where the committee fits in the organization of the University, and whether the committee engages in programming.
   2. Jean discussed the history around a name change.
      1. Last discussion on this topic occurred shortly before the creation of the Council on Diversity and Inclusion. Name was not changed with the thought that CDI may be a better home for gender issues.
      2. Historically, there has been less pushback on expanding the scope of the committee to include gender generally. Instead, the pushback has been centered around the name. There is concern that losing women from the name may send the wrong message about women’s issues disappearing as a focus. Historically, having women in the title has been very important to staff.
   3. Jean and Billie- an educational component will be an essential part of a name change.
      1. Proposed meeting with the faculty/staff/student Senates at the time of a change to provide education on the meaning of gender in this context, the expanded scope of the committee, and an explanation that women’s issues are still central.
   4. Various committee member discussed the relationship between the CDI and this committee and the relationship we should have in the future.
      1. Scope of the CDI is much broader than just gender concerns. Current work has focused on issues of race and country of origin.
      2. This committee has a different structure, can take on slightly different work, and can move faster. With or without the change in name/mission, this committee makes sense as a separate entity and can help support the work of the CDI and vice versa.
      3. A long discussion occurred about whether this committee should change its name and become a subcommittee of the CDI.
         1. Billie- do we lose the option of having the open forum component of the meeting? What about programming?
         2. Don- do we run this risk of being resorbed or disbanded in the future?
         3. After discussions, group consensus was that we would like to remain an independent entity but have more formal lines of communication to facilitate collaboration and avoid “reinventing the wheel”. What this would look like is still unclear- someone from the committee is involved in the CDI meetings when topics of gender are on the agenda? Formal seat for a CDI member on our committee? Right now, we have that arrangement just by chance given who is on both committees. Making these lines of communication formal may benefit the work of both parties.
5. New business
   1. Next steps on name/mission change
      1. Billie will notify the steering committee for the Women and Gender Studies program that we are exploring this name/mission change. They may also be a resource for the education component that will follow this change.
      2. Liz/Jean will bring our desire for collaboration with CDI to their next meeting for discussion.
      3. Cara will review the mission and bylaws to determine language that would need to change if we become the Committee on the Gender Equity. Feedback from committee members will be solicited electronically.
   2. Sam- has collected some of the Pope’s comments on gender inclusivity. These will be distributed to members.
      1. Cara thanked all of those who had sent material on the Pope’s comments and practices at peer institutions.