

August 6, 2002

TO: Campus Community

FROM: Commission on the Status of Women
Pat Green, Chair
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RE: Strategic Plan for Addressing the Status of Women at ASU
Update on Progress

On April 19, 2002, the Commission on the Status of Women sponsored a strategic planning retreat with the purpose of developing a strategic action plan for the university that would prioritize key issues, needs, and goals affecting the status of women at ASU. At the retreat, participants identified goals for both immediate (“quick wins”) and longer-range action. The Commission on the Status of Women has been focused on the actions identified as immediate priorities and would like to share with you a report on the progress made thus far. A complete listing of the goals and priorities can be found in the preliminary report posted on our website (asu.edu/csw).

UPDATE ON “QUICK WINS”

1. Safety Escort Service hours of operation

We met with Christine Wilkinson, VP for Student Affairs, on June 25 and presented the issues raised at the retreat concerning hours of operation. Specifically, we focused on the 15 minute gap between SES closing hours (11:45pm) and the Library and Computing Commons closing times (12 midnight). This gap exists because the SES is housed in the MU. The MU closes early because of extensive security concerns in the building. A new office for the SES that would have had a separate outside exit was planned as part of the MU expansion, but with the cancellation of those expansion plans this opportunity is lost.

Additional proposals that have been floated for addressing the problem have included the establishment of SES satellite services, coordinating DPS after-hours services more effectively with SES, and utilizing community service aides to fill the gap. SES is a program of the Associated Students of ASASU. Therefore, any solution must involve ASASU officers.

Recently, Dr. Wilkinson reported to us that DPS Chief John Pickens has met with ASASU officers to discuss coordination of efforts. They are expected to meet again this

month to address specifically the issue of after-hours coverage and how best to enhance the service. We will continue to keep you posted on progress.

We also discussed the need for a long-term, holistic solution that would address a variety of gaps in both disabled cart and escort services, emphasizing that these services were a part of the climate not only for students, but for faculty and staff as well. We will continue this dialogue as part of the long-term strategic plan as well.

2. Residence Hall Safety Assessment

Residence hall safety assessment is a systematic and on-going process. Initiatives for improving safety occur on four levels: 1) the physical facility itself and the technological improvements to the building (e.g. door locks, exterior door locks, access cards, lighting and tree-trimming); 2) on-going and systematic crime prevention programming aimed at increasing student's personal awareness (includes mandatory sessions for students, Hall Coordinators, Hall Directors, and R.A.'s); 3) security patrols in residence hall areas (includes DPS patrols, satellite sites, community safety aides, and check-in desks); and 4) both regular and "surprise" safety inspections of the residence halls by Res Life and DPS staff. Safety is taken very seriously by all departments in Administrative Services (DPS, Facilities Mgmt) and by Residence Life.

Specific residence hall safety issues can be addressed directly to Sylvester Chestnut, Coordinator, Residence Life, 5-1523. Concern for the safety of students on the part of Residence Life is thorough and extensive, and they want to know if any stone has been left unturned.

3. Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Coordinator

At the time the first round of state budget cuts came through, the position of RSVP Coordinator was open. As a result of these cuts, the position was frozen. In the second round of state budget cutting, this position was eliminated. Much concern was expressed at the retreat regarding the potential effect of the elimination of this position on the student population: sexual violence is almost exclusively a crime against women. Thus, the elimination of the position could have negative consequences for female students.

We discussed this issue with Dr. Wilkinson at our meeting on June 25. She made it clear that, given the depth of state budget cuts, this position would not be restored. Furthermore, Student Health, in which this position was housed, has continued providing the education and services that this position entailed. The Office of Health Promotion has, in fact, done as many educational presentations throughout the 2001-02 academic year without a coordinator as they did the previous year with a coordinator. Student Health statistics show that there has been no gap in prevention programming, the primary responsibility of the coordinator position. In addition, DPS's Crime Prevention Unit also provides similar programming.

In our view, which we expressed to Dr. Wilkinson, while we concur that there has been no gap in prevention programming, there has been a gap in *visible* leadership and commitment to issues of sexual violence prevention. Again, since this is an issue that almost solely affects women, and since these kinds of crimes are so often not reported, visibility is extremely important. Dr. Wilkinson took these issues seriously. She reported to us that she has been discussing these issues with her staff and expects to identify someone with Student Affairs to take on visible leadership responsibility for sexual assault prevention education and response shortly.

4. Campus Lighting and Police Presence in Lot 59

We met with Sheila Stokes, Executive Assistant to VP for Administrative Services, and DPS Chief John Pickens to discuss these issues. As a result of past CSW recommendations, campus lighting is assessed on an annual basis through a “lighting walkaround” conducted in the Fall semester. However, there had been a breakdown in including diverse campus organizations in this walkaround. DPS requested a list of interested groups and organizations which the CSW provided. CSW liaison groups and all members of the Diversity Alliance are among the groups that will be invited to participate in this campus walkaround. Disability Resources is also included.

In addition to uniformed patrols in Lot 59, Chief Pickens has been employing more plainclothes patrols. Although this may not be as comforting as actually seeing a uniformed officer, from a policing perspective it is a more effective way to catch criminals. Concerns about DPS patrols and/or campus lighting can be directly addressed to Administrative Services. They promise a quick response.

5. Advisory Body for Service Professionals and Academic Professionals

Service Professionals and Academic Professionals are two different classifications of employees. Academic Professionals already have an advisory body—the Committee on Academic Professional Status (CAPS). In addition, Academic Professionals are represented in the Academic Senate. The leadership of CAPS is working with the Provost’s Office to better utilize these leadership structures.

Service Professionals have no representative body at the present time. The CSW has initiated dialogue with Vice Provosts Mernoy Harrison and Gail Hackett regarding the issue of an advisory body for Service Professionals. We will be meeting with them in late August to discuss this proposal in more detail.

6. HR Website/“Family-friendly” web resources

This topic has been on the agenda of several different offices and entities. After meeting with representatives from HR and Administrative Services, it seemed that rather than redesign the HR website, what we needed was a kind of “free-standing” page that linked an array of “family-friendly” benefits and services, regardless of which department

provided them. This information would then be readily accessible to print for those employees who don't have access to computers.

As a result of this dialogue, a group has been meeting to outline what should be on such a page. A draft of this page had been constructed by Jake Kupiec in the Provost's Office, and there is every indication that this material will be available for distribution by early Fall. The page will identify Work-Family resources from the perspective of current employees, new employees and potential employees.

7. Domestic Partner Benefits

Several initiatives are underway to address these issues. First, all ASU policies that can be changed to incorporate established households have been changed. Secondly, the legislative decision to develop a plan for the self-insurance of state employees has opened a new door for including domestic partner health benefits. ASU, NAU, and UA all have representatives on the state committee tasked with developing this plan. Domestic partner benefits has been prioritized by ASU for inclusion in this plan. Gail Hackett will continue to keep Ubiquity informed on the progress of these developments.

8. Leadership & Supervisory Training ("Management skills for a gendered and diverse workforce")

The CSW initiated dialogue with Connie Wood and Laura Royal of HR regarding the current structure of the Leadership Academy and other HR conducted supervisory and management training. HR was extremely open to our suggestions for the incorporation of more case studies in their management training. Rather than one-shot diversity training, they thought it would be more appropriate to build diversity and work/life issues into case studies of specific management problems. They also intended to develop a section in which managers would have to write out their work/life philosophy. The timing for these recommendations proved auspicious as HR was already in the process of redesigning the Leadership Academy.

9. Accountability

The CSW has initiated dialogue with the Chair of Academic Chairs and Directors, Stephen Goodnick, and HR regarding approaches to building accountability structures for workplace climate and diversity. This dialogue is in the beginning stages, but there appears to be widespread agreement that, as a start, basic management skills would go a long way to resolving some of the workplace climate issues. The problem of accountability is a long-term project requiring the development of performance-based management competencies, performance evaluation tools related to those competencies, training in implementing a performance evaluation system, and accountability for completing performance evaluations. CSW will continue to work with these and other appropriate units in the development of a long-term strategy to address accountability. This is **the** critical issue identified at the retreat.

In addition to the actions taken above, the Commission on the Status of Women, in conjunction with the Faculty Women's Association, presented the findings of the climate study that formed the basis for the strategic plan to the Council of Deans on July 3. If a key element of accountability is the making of regular, public statements about the significance of gender and diversity to the overall success of the institution, then this meeting was an important step. The CSW, FWA, and the Provost all highlighted the issue of accountability, with specific kinds of questions and actions for Deans and Department Chairs. As a result of this presentation, we have been invited to present these climate findings and recommendations at the college-level.

Please feel free to contact Carolyn Forbes at 5-2958 or carolyn.forbes@asu.edu with any questions or comments. We will continue to keep you informed of the progress we are making on both the short and long-term strategies.