

**Giving Voice to the Concerns
on the Status of Women
at Minnesota State University, Mankato**

Report to President Richard Davenport

July 2003

The President's Commission on the Status of Women

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The President's Commission on the Status of Women serves the president of Minnesota State University, Mankato in an advisory capacity on issues of concern to women faculty, staff, and students. Permanent members include the chair of the Women's Studies department, the director of the Women's Center, an administrative liaison to the President's Office, the Affirmative Action officer, and representatives of excluded administrators and campus bargaining units (AFSCME, IFO, MMA, and MSUAASF). In addition, at least one graduate and one undergraduate student serve on the Commission. The Commission is chaired by an excluded administrator and a bargaining unit representative.

Timeline of work and activities addressing the status of women at MSU

1994 – 1995 President Richard Rush appointed a Task Force on the Status of Women to assess the campus climate and formulate an agenda for enhancing the status of women at all levels of the university.

October 1995 The task force submitted its Report on the Status of Women. The report pointed out the critical paradigm shifts that must occur within the university as a whole if campus climate is to be reshaped in meaningful and significant ways (see Appendix A). The five areas addressed are: 1) appreciation of divergent perspectives; 2) institutional recognition and support for family responsibilities; 3) enhanced communication; 4) emphasis on citizenship; and 5) expanded advocacy services. The task force made 37 preliminary recommendations concerning recruitment, retention, and advancement of women students, faculty, and staff and the creation and maintenance of an affirming and supportive campus environment.

Spring 2000 Among the October 1995 task force recommendations was the establishment of a permanent Commission on the Status of Women. This recommendation was implemented five years later, when President Rush established the Commission and appointed the Vice President for Academic Affairs as his administrative liaison. The Commission was activated in April 2000. The three-fold charge to the Commission included the following responsibilities:

- to identify and define relevant issues on the campus;
- to make recommendations and review progress made toward those recommendations; and
- to provide advice and guidance on matters of particular concern to women throughout the university.

The Commission has sponsored and co-sponsored annual events, including a spring research colloquium, a fall reception for new women employees, and receptions for the recognition of the extraordinary contributions of women students, faculty, and staff at MSU. The Commission has also provided professional travel grants for faculty and students (details in Appendix B).

The major task confronting the Commission, however, has been research into gender equity: campus policies and procedures for reporting and dealing with sexual harassment; personnel issues; family and work issues for women students, staff, faculty, and administrators; and interlocking issues of concern around gender, class, race, sexuality, and age. An important area of concern centers on issues of “chilly climate” (Hall and Sandler, 1982) for women students, faculty, and staff.

Fall 2002: A new president, Richard Davenport, renewed the institution’s commitment to assessing the status of women at MSU. He reiterated the original charge to the Commission, appointed a new administrative liaison, and funded the Commission’s request to retain a consultant with expertise in the process of conducting a formal climate scan.

December 2002: Dr. Bernice Sandler (biosketch in Appendix C) was selected as the campus consultant and conducted an all-day planning retreat with the entire Commission on December 10, 2002. One overriding concern was to satisfy President Davenport’s request for information by the end of the academic year. The group examined data-collection strategies and decided to begin the process with open meetings, supported by paper and online survey options. Dr. Sandler has found that open meetings have the potential to serve a larger population than focus groups and to yield a better participation rate than survey methods.

Spring 2003: Data gathering methods were designed and implemented between February 26 and March 20, as follows:

Open Meetings: Seven meetings were advertised and held, with at least two for each of three specific constituencies: students, faculty, and staff.

Paper Survey. To obtain input from people who attended the open meetings but were not emboldened to speak, a paper survey was distributed and participants were encouraged to give copies to colleagues and fellow students. The survey, also offered online, was modeled after the University of Arizona’s focus group questions on campus climate for their Millennium Project. Very few paper surveys were returned.

Commission Web Site: The Commission’s web site benefited from a direct link on the President’s web page. All survey responses received were submitted via the web site. In addition to demographic information, the survey format incorporated open-ended questions and invited all other comments.

Results of Spring 2003 data gathering efforts

Several times during the open meetings, Commission members were asked what would become of the various comments and issues brought forward. The Commission's response was that it was trying to get a sense of what issues were on the minds of the MSU community, to "give voice to the issues."

The Commission heard echoes of concerns that were stated in the 1994-95 report, as well as some new concerns. The data gathering efforts had several limitations, both in gathering quantitative data and in generating campus input. Attendance at the open meetings was less than hoped for; however, during this period the nation went to war in Iraq, the IFO was hosting campus discussions about the firing of a tenured faculty member, and campus communications are always a challenge, especially when the goal is to generate attendance at an arbitrarily scheduled meeting. The numbers could also reflect a perception that the open meeting is not a "comfortable" or "safe" forum for discussion of climate issues. Indeed, fear of retaliation was expressed in confidential postings to the Commission's website.

Collection of quantitative data regarding recruitment, hiring, and retention of women faculty and staff and recruitment, admission, and retention to graduation of women and other underrepresented groups was significantly hampered by the inaccessibility of the data. However, many records previously kept on campus are now being kept system-wide by MnSCU, including such basic information as promotion and tenure statistics for women faculty. The Commission had planned to compare data from 1994 with the most recent reporting period, but abandoned this effort after consulting with a number of campus offices engaged in data management. Our university would benefit from a thorough examination of the current methods of data collection and analysis with respect to women faculty, staff, and students, and the accessibility of key information to the MSU community.

Voices, concerns, and specific recommendations

Whose voices were heard during this first semester of renewed focus on the status of women?

The open meetings were attended by 13 staff, 15 faculty, and 2 students. Of the 30 total participants in the seven meetings, one was male. The website generated 36 responses, 13 from staff, 13 from faculty, and 10 from students (5 undergraduate, 5 graduate). Of these, four responses were from men and 32 were from women. Very few paper surveys were received.

What concerns were identified for further consideration?

Six broad topics surfaced; additional issues that were specific to faculty and staff were noted, and the lack of input from students and administrators was highlighted as the Commission compiled its findings. The Commission discussed these topic areas, looked for correlation with the 1995 report, noted progress that had been made, and identified current concerns. In each area, at least one improvement was noted. The concerns summarized here include those articulated during Spring 2003 and remaining concerns from the 1995 report that need further study.

1) Chilly climate: National concern, local impact

For more than two decades, scholars have been studying the academic phenomenon of a “chilly climate” for women students, faculty, and staff, meaning the less overt, often inadvertent or unconscious ways that women’s contributions are overlooked or trivialized, and the ways in which lesser expectations for women than for men are subtly communicated. (Hall and Sandler, 1982.) Although a number of areas of progress are noted at MSU, chilly climate issues continue to exist on this campus in two separate and distinct arenas: classroom and workplace. The Commission heard evidence of a consistent lack of appreciation for the different communication styles of men and women. This is also true with respect to cross-cultural communication styles.

Concern:

All of the issues related to chilly climate could be addressed with a variety of training modalities and accountability for improving the campus climate for women. This has not been addressed.

2) Workplace abuse and bullying

Reports of workplace abuse and bullying emerged from discussion among Commission members and also in open meetings with faculty and staff. The university must a) establish a climate of fairness and of direct attention to employee complaints that may not “qualify” for discrimination or other grievance procedures, b) properly equip administrators and supervisors to guide these concerns to resolution, and c) clearly communicate specific steps an individual can take to address problems.

Concern:

This new issue may be related to the inadequacy of the response to “chilly climate” issues. In addition to training, there is a need for new policy and processes to address abuse and bullying.

3) Safety Concerns: An environment free of sexual harassment and assault

A) Sexual harassment

Concerns:

- The 1995 report recommended sexual harassment training for all work-study students. Student comments reaffirm the need for that recommendation and the urgency with which it should be addressed.
- No formal or informal support networks or systems exist for individuals who feel they are victims of harassment.
- Information about campus policy on sexual harassment at MSU is not sufficiently communicated.
- Both the complainant and the accused can be frustrated and intimidated if they do not learn the outcome of a complaint in a timely manner, if at all. Inconsistent communication leads to a lack of trust that the university has dealt with complaints, or will do so in a timely manner.
- MSU has no university policy on consensual relationships between students and faculty.

B) Sexual Assault

Concerns:

- The Commission notes that establishing MnSCU policy on sexual assault will be helpful, but will require campus action, including a violence-prevention plan, education outreach, training for students and staff, and a year-round 24/7 resource for victims of sexual violence.
- No mechanism exists for an institutional response to hate crimes or incidents of public harassment. A Personal Safety Committee exists but is rarely convened. The role of this committee has never been adequately defined.

4) Interlocking systems of discrimination

Concerns:

- The recruitment, admission or hiring, and retention of women and all diverse groups must be improved. Networking with other local colleges and with existing community groups may help to decrease the sense of isolation experienced in Mankato by women and others underrepresented in a particular discipline or profession.
- Insufficient data are available to effectively determine the status of women on this campus and the status of other underrepresented groups. Although such data are never 100% authoritative because individuals cannot be legally required to provide this information, benchmarks must be established if progress is to be measured.
- As in other areas, the university must improve training and communication of policies and resources related to diverse populations in general and discrimination issues in particular.

5) Balancing family life and work

Concerns:

- Despite appreciation for the new facilities for breast-feeding mothers in the Student Union, affordable and culturally sensitive childcare on or near campus is a persistent need.
- A professional Work and Family Life Coordinator, or a task force dealing with this issue, is needed.
- Consistent institutional policies are needed on family-friendly issues such as parenting and family leave, job sharing, flexible work schedules, telecommuting, interruptions to tenure clocks to allow for family leave, and hiring of significant others of university employees. The university must work at all levels to change any perception in the campus culture that a woman or man who takes advantage of flextime, family leave, and similar options is failing to be professionally serious and committed.
- Scheduling of classes and campus activities could be more family friendly to diminish the perception that the MSU community does not promote family life and family activities.

6) MSU's physical environment

Concerns:

- Despite progress in recent efforts to improve air quality in Trafton, this remains an area of concern for faculty and staff who work there.
- Air quality is also an issue in all buildings where smokers congregate near air intake vents; smoke and carcinogens are then “ventilated” throughout work and study spaces.

7) “Special issues”: Staff and faculty

A. Staff-specific concerns:

- Staff reported significant morale issues and a clearly expressed fear of retaliation for speaking about climate issues.
- There is no consistent staff development program at MSU to provide opportunities for staff members to learn other skills or prepare to move into different or progressively responsible positions. Faculty and administrators are typically provided specific professional development funds; staff members are not. Staff may not be encouraged to participate even when opportunities are available.
- Training programs are needed for supervisory personnel.
- Inconsistent enforcement of university policies with respect to such things as leave requests and working hours leads to significant feelings of inequity among staff.
- A significant feeling of pay inequity persists in the staff ranks. Concerted effort is required to clarify issues of equity in classifications and pay scales of traditionally “female” work categories.

B. Faculty-specific concerns:

- Gender and other forms of discrimination exist in the hiring and retention of faculty.
- Departments report difficulty in recruiting and retaining women faculty in general. However, data are needed to determine the extent of this problem and the reasons women choose not to come to MSU and why women leave.
- Since seniority is based on years of service, faculty who work three-quarters time or take unpaid parental leave lose seniority status. The burden of career delays and relocation for personal reasons falls disproportionately on women.
- Teaching evaluation forms are not gender sensitive. They do not reflect different communication styles and do not permit analysis with respect to the gender of the faculty member or of the student. For the benefit of both faculty and students, teaching evaluations should assess the way in which the instructor handles issues of climate and uses varying communication styles in the classroom.

8) “Missing data” populations: Students and administrators

Concerns:

- Although some faculty and staff members spoke on behalf of students, more student voices must be heard before the issues confronting traditional undergraduate women students, non-traditional students, and graduate students can be confidently stated.
- The process of data analysis revealed a need for a specific approach to gathering information about women in administration. It became clear that “administration” is ill-defined in comments made to the Commission and that women administrators face unique pressures when support is not forthcoming from upper management or college/administrative structures.

What does the Commission recommend as a result of this effort?

The Commission on the Status of Women recommends that the president take three actions for 2003-04 as part of his commitment to gender equity at Minnesota State University, Mankato:

- 1) **Support a further study of campus concerns** remaining from the 1995 report and those heard in Spring 2003. The Commission requests a complete assessment of the 37 recommendations contained in the 1995 study and systematic exploration of the concerns heard during Spring 2003. Based upon the president's response to this report, and in accordance with his strategic priorities, the Commission will establish a priority list of the most significant areas of concern and the recommended actions. With a full year to work, the following plan is suggested: review carefully each of the 1995 recommendations and 2003 areas of concern, gather related data from the appropriate sources, determine the implementation and/or action taken, assess the impact on the status of women, and finalize recommendations of action steps for the future.
- 2) **Take steps toward establishing a University Ombuds Office.** The Commission heard numerous concerns regarding conflict between university employees and between students and employees, echoing the 1995 recommendation for improved advocacy. At present, there is no designated office or complaint procedure on campus to handle concerns that cannot be classified as “discriminatory”; the formal grievance processes are the only recourse. Ombuds intervention as an alternative method of conflict resolution on other university campuses shows a significant decrease in the number of formal grievances and lawsuits filed.

According to the Ombudsman Association, *The mission of the organizational ombudsman is to provide a confidential, neutral, and informal process which facilitates fair and equitable resolutions to concerns that arise in the organization. In performing this mission the ombudsman serves as an information and communication resource, upward feedback channel, advisor, dispute resolution expert, and change agent.* The ombudsperson can also serve as a facilitator and should therefore be well informed about all services and offices on campus. As an informal listener, the ombudsperson should be able to identify issues and propose possible solutions. Adherence to university policy is another facet of ombuds work. An ombudsperson can be helpful in assuring that policy is either adhered to or that a policy and its implementation are reviewed as needed when non-compliance exists.

- 3) **Encourage the Chancellor to establish a system-wide Commission on the Status of Women,** for the purpose of bringing MnSCU campuses together to talk about changes needed within the system on issues that affect women and other underrepresented groups. This recommendation is supported by the following considerations:
 - Diversity is one of Chancellor McCormick’s strategic items.
 - Diversity is one of President Davenport’s priority items.
 - Many of the personnel issues relating to gender are systemic.
 - Some of the recommendations that could be made to address personnel issues involve bargaining unit contracts.
 - Members of the President’s Commission will be working with their respective bargaining units to bring forward the request for this MnSCU Commission.
 - MSU could be the campus within the MNSCU system that takes a lead in this effort.

Introduction

The President's Commission on the Status of Women serves the president of Minnesota State University, Mankato in an advisory capacity on issues of concern to women faculty, staff, and students. Permanent members include the chair of the Women's Studies department, the director of the Women's Center, an administrative liaison to the President's Office, the Affirmative Action Officer, and other representatives of excluded administrators and campus bargaining units: MSUAASF (2), AFSCME (1), IFO (2), and MMA (1). In addition, at least one graduate and one undergraduate student serve on the Commission. These students are nominated by faculty to serve for a minimum of one year. The Commission is chaired by an excluded administrator and a bargaining unit representative.

Work and activities addressing the status of women, 1994-1999

During the 1994-95 academic year, President Richard Rush appointed a Task Force on the Status of Women to assess the campus climate and formulate an agenda for enhancing the status of women at all levels of the university.

In October 1995, the task force submitted its Report on the Status of Women. The report pointed out the critical paradigm shifts that must occur within the university as a whole if campus climate is to be reshaped in meaningful and significant ways:

- appreciation of divergent perspectives;
- institutional recognition and support for family responsibilities;
- enhanced communication;
- emphasis on citizenship;
- expansion of advocacy services.

The portion of the task force report that addresses this need for a "new paradigm" is attached as Appendix A. The task force made 37 recommendations, within the action categories of 1) the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women students; 2) the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women as faculty, excluded, unclassified, and classified employees; and 3) the creation and maintenance of an environment that affirms and supports the educational and professional goals of all its members.

Among the task force recommendations was the establishment of a permanent Commission on the Status of Women. This recommendation was implemented five years later, when President Rush established the Commission and appointed the Vice President for Academic Affairs as his administrative liaison.

Commission on the Status of Women, 2000-2003

Spring 2000: The work of the Commission began in April 2000. The charge to the Commission included the following responsibilities:

- to identify and define relevant issues on the campus;
- to make recommendations and review progress made toward those recommendations; and
- to provide advice and guidance on matters of particular concern to women throughout the university.

A budget was developed and modest resources were allocated for FY01 to support the work of the Commission. Since the fall of 2000, the Commission has sponsored and co-sponsored many annual events, including a spring research colloquium, a fall reception for new women employees, and receptions for the recognition of the extraordinary contributions of women students, faculty, and staff at MSU. The Commission has also been able to provide professional travel grants for faculty and students. These activities are documented in Appendix B, which includes programs for the research colloquia and receptions and a list of the travel grants awarded.

The major task confronting the Commission, however, has been ongoing research into issues concerning gender equity: campus policies and procedures for reporting and dealing with sexual harassment violations; personnel issues; family and work issues for women students, staff, faculty, and administrators; and interlocking issues of concern around gender, class, race, sexuality, and age. An important area of concern centers on issues of “chilly climate” (Hall and Sandler, 1982) for women students, faculty, and staff. Briefly, “chilly climate” refers to the more subtle and perhaps inadvertent ways that men and women are treated differently.

Fall 2002: With the arrival of a new university president, Minnesota State University, Mankato directed renewed energy to more than a decade of concerns about the status of women at MSU. President Richard Davenport reiterated the original charge to the Commission, appointed a new administrative liaison, and funded the Commission’s request to retain a consultant and explore the process of conducting a formal climate scan of the university.

President Davenport requested that a consultant meet with the Commission as quickly as possible and that the initial steps toward a campus climate scan take place early in the new year. This request was consistent with the president’s wish to collect as much information as possible during his first year on campus. Therefore, the Fall 2002 Commission activities included planning for a retreat with a national consultant.

A review of climate scans performed at several major universities (Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin, UCLA, and MIT) over the preceding five years suggested Dr. Bernice Sandler as the Commission’s consultant of choice. In addition, one member was personally acquainted with Dr. Sandler’s work and highly recommended her as the consultant for a planning retreat.

Dr. Sandler is a Senior Scholar at the Women's Research and Education Institute in Washington, DC, and adjunct faculty at Hahneman School of Medicine. With more than 2,000 campus presentations and more than 60 articles on sex discrimination, she is well

known for her expertise in women's educational equity. Indeed, her research team coined the term "chilly climate." Further information about Dr. Sandler is contained in Appendix C.

December 10, 2002: Dr. Sandler conducted an all-day planning retreat with the entire Commission. The goal for the day was to identify specific issues that had come to the Commission's attention over time and to examine different strategies for data collection in anticipation of a formal climate scan at Minnesota State University, Mankato. One overriding concern was to satisfy the President's request for information by the end of the academic year. Of all methods of gathering information available to the Commission, it was decided to begin the process with open meetings, supported by paper and online survey options. Dr. Sandler has found that open meetings have the potential to serve a larger population than focus groups and to yield a better participation rate than survey methods.

Spring 2003: Data gathering methods were designed and implemented, as follows:

- **Open Meetings:** As far as possible in the time available, the Commission attempted to be sensitive to the fact that there are separate distinct "climates" in the university. Seven open meetings were held between February 26 and March 20, with at least two meetings for each of three specific constituencies: students, faculty, and staff. These meetings were advertised in official campus email announcements and an ad in the *Reporter*, with a schedule posted on the MSU homepage.
- **Paper Survey.** To obtain input from people who attended the open meetings but were not emboldened to speak, a paper survey was made available to participants. People at open meetings also took survey forms for distribution among colleagues and fellow students on campus. The survey, also made available online, was modeled after the University of Arizona's focus group questions on campus climate for their Millennium Project. Very few paper surveys were returned.
- **Commission Web Page:** All of the survey responses came from confidential postings on the Commission's web page. The Commission appreciated having a direct link from the President's page to its web site. Pertinent demographic data was requested, including gender, employment classification, length of employment at MSU, and ethnicity/nationality. (The input form also allowed respondents to voluntarily give their name and email address.) The following questions were included as a stimulus for thought and some respondents chose to answer these particular questions. Others opted to write their own comments.
 - How would you describe the working/learning environment on campus?
 - How effective are the policies and procedures for addressing a violation of conduct on campus?
 - Do you feel adequately supported in your pursuit to balance work and family life?

- Do you feel that MSU has reached the goal of being an “equal access, equal opportunity” institution?
- Do you feel valued as a member of the university community? What are some of the ways in which this occurs?
- What is your impression of campus leadership related to issues of women?
- From your perspective, what are the five most critical challenges or obstacles that women face on this campus?
- From your perspective, what are the major causes of these challenges or obstacles?
- What would help women at Minnesota State University, Mankato?

Results of Spring 2003 data gathering efforts

Several times during the open meetings, Commission members were asked what would become of the various comments and issues brought forward. The Commission's response was that it was trying to get a sense of what issues were on the minds of the MSU community. It had been determined at the outset that any information gathered during the Spring 2003 activities would be referred to as "*giving voice to the issues.*"

The Commission heard echoes of concerns that were stated in the 1994-95 report, as well as some new concerns. The data gathering efforts, compressed into one semester, suffered from several limitations, both in gathering quantitative data and in generating campus input. Attendance at the open meetings was less than hoped for; however, during this period the nation went to war in Iraq, the IFO was hosting campus discussions about the firing of a tenured faculty member, and campus communications are always a challenge, not least when the goal is to generate attendance at an arbitrarily scheduled meeting. The numbers could also reflect a perception that the open meeting is not a "comfortable" or "safe" forum for discussion of climate issues. One does get a sense of this concern when reading confidential responses from the Commission's website which speak to the fear of retaliation.

Collection of quantitative data regarding recruitment, hiring, and retention of women faculty and staff and recruitment, admission, and retention to graduation of women and other underrepresented groups was significantly hampered by the inaccessibility of the data. This report to the president definitely should include promotion and tenure statistics for women faculty. However, many records previously kept on campus are now being kept system-wide by MnSCU. The Commission had planned to compare data from 1994 with the most recent reporting period, but abandoned this effort after consulting with a number of campus offices engaged in data management. Our university would benefit from a thorough examination of the current methods of data collection and analysis with respect to women faculty, staff, and students, and the accessibility of key information to the MSU community.

Voices, concerns, and specific recommendations

Whose voices were heard during this first semester of renewed focus on the status of women?

The open meetings were attended by 13 staff, 15 faculty, and 2 students. Of the 30 total participants in the seven meetings, one was male. The website generated 36 responses, 13 from staff, 13 from faculty, and 10 from students (5 undergraduate, 5 graduate). Of these, four responses were from men and 32 were from women. Very few paper surveys were returned.

What concerns were identified for further consideration?

In this section, we report on six broad topic areas that were raised in our qualitative data-gathering efforts, followed by any signs of improvement (or lack thereof) observed since the 1995 report and a list of specific concerns in each area that came to the Commission's attention. The seventh part of this section highlights concerns that were specific to faculty and staff, and the final part reflects the need for more effective methods of capturing the voices of students and of administrators, who are the "missing data" populations in the current analysis.

1) Chilly climate: National concern, local impact

For more than two decades, scholars have been studying the academic phenomenon of a "chilly climate" for women students, faculty, and staff. Chilly climate deals with the less overt and perhaps inadvertent or unconscious ways that women's contributions are overlooked or trivialized, and the ways in which lesser expectations for women than for men are subtly communicated. For example, after posing a question a professor might look more often or for a longer time at the males in the class, as if expecting a response from one of them. Another common scenario observed both empirically and anecdotally on many campuses is that a male student makes a comment which is encouraged by follow-up comments and more questions. Then a female student makes an equally valid comment that is barely acknowledged. (Hall and Sandler, 1982.)

There is persuasive evidence that women are strongly affected by the supportiveness or chilliness of their campus environment, particularly in the classroom, where most of the research has been focused. Researchers have examined the subtle and not-so-subtle ways men and women are treated differently and the behaviors that result. To give a recent example of how the phenomenon pervades the student culture on our own campus, in Fall 2002 representatives of Guatemalan coffee growers held a series of open forums at Minnesota State on the relationship between coffee growing and environmental issues. They expressed bewilderment to MSU faculty about the lack of female contribution to any discussion. At one point they even specifically invited female contribution: "*Are there any women who would like to ask a question?*" There was no response.

Climate issues emerged very forcefully among faculty on the Commission web page and also in the open meetings, and a need was expressed for frequent scans of campus climate and of salary equity. A climate issue of particular concern is that women faculty are sometimes penalized for a style of teaching that may be more acceptable when used by men. Women faculty are expected to be unfailingly nurturing and motherly; they are often criticized when they set high standards for their students.

Discussion at one open meeting for faculty dwelt for a considerable time on the manner in which, over the past 20 years in the culture at large and at MSU, gender discrimination and other forms of discrimination have become less overt and harder to pinpoint, yet have nevertheless remained very effective in preserving the status quo. Many people took part at this stage of the discussion, which attempted to pinpoint and clarify the methods used

to silence dissent and neutralize change. A male faculty member referred to “the white Midwestern male power structure at MSU” and gave several examples from his own experience of the ways in which this alleged power structure at the department level perpetuates itself unchanged. Other people gave examples of how decisions about various matters, including retention, promotion, and the hiring of new faculty, are sometimes made, not in open forums, but “under the table and behind the scenes.” Ostensibly, the correct procedures are followed; but the reality of decision-making appears to be very different. Cases were reported of search committee members being pressured and intimidated by various means to resign from a search committee or otherwise to go along with decisions they did not agree with. People expressed fears that such pressures and “bullying” can result in a faculty that is less diverse than it might otherwise be.

In department meetings and hallway conversations, as well as in the classroom, female faculty also experience a chilly climate. For example, departmental meetings regarding searches were cited as occasions when clearly inappropriate comments are made regarding women candidates, such as references to a woman’s ability to attend to work because of children or family obligations or the communication style of the woman candidate. These are not qualifications for employment.

In a similar vein, a male graduate student wrote to the Commission’s website, *“Overall, I have found women [here] to be less empowered than other women I have known. It seems that both men and women here have a disheartening expectation for women to fit into the archaic, un-empowered roles of the ‘traditional’ woman.”*

A veteran staff member’s website comment referred to *“the CLASSIC double standard on our campus”* and listed *“the stereotypes women have to deal with every day: women shouldn’t be assertive, ambitious, opinionated, political, direct, appropriately confrontational. Females in leadership roles have succeeded when they are nice, quiet, deferent, and conciliatory.”*

A female staff member with more than 10 years of service echoed this sentiment: *“The climate on campus is a fall-back to the 1950s. Assertive women have problems here. In order to be effective, you need to adapt a deferential, nurturing style and act in stereotypical ways to engender the support of men (at all levels of the organization) and [of] those women in the classified ranks who prefer male bosses. Many men in positions of authority ignore and trivialize women’s comments at meetings. They take credit for women’s ideas. They make inappropriate gender-based comments. Women have to work much harder for half the recognition. Women’s shortcomings are exaggerated while men’s shortcomings are overlooked.”*

Progress made on chilly climate issues

1. MnSCU has determined that all campuses should undergo a Comprehensive Climate Survey. This will provide additional data for use in framing future concerns and recommendations.

2. The cultural diversity components of the new General Education requirements, specifically courses that include a focus on gender and sexual orientation, are resulting in increased awareness of relevant issues such as chilly climate and different styles of communication.
3. Many of the programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Women's Center, such as the Brown Bag Lunches, the receptions for Women of Courage and Vision, and the support for women's athletic events, are educating the campus about climate issues and at the same time enhancing the sense of support and encouragement for women.
4. Encouragement, support and education about climate are also enhanced by the events co-sponsored by the Commission, Women's Studies, and the Women's Center, and by professional travel grants for faculty and students provided by the Commission.
5. The Student Code of Conduct has been revised to deal more explicitly with issues of bias and discrimination against specific groups.
6. Women have held highly visible leadership positions at MSU over the past 20 years, including a woman president for more than a decade and women serving as academic and student affairs vice presidents and as deans and directors.

Concern:

Despite the institution's record of placing women in leadership positions and supporting a number of campus initiatives, chilly climate issues continue to exist on this campus in two separate and distinct arenas: classroom and workplace. The Commission heard evidence of a consistent lack of appreciation for the different communication styles of men and women. This is also true with respect to cross-cultural communication styles. All of the issues related to chilly climate could be addressed with a variety of training modalities and accountability for improving the campus climate for women.

2) Workplace abuse and bullying

Unfortunately, the Commission noted a sobering new issue that may be related to the inadequacy of the response to "chilly climate" issues. It has become painfully evident from the open meetings and from the responses to the Commission's website that many women (both faculty and staff, but particularly support staff) are experiencing a climate that might better be described as "hypothermic" rather than chilly. Some women described being overworked, badgered, harried, and intimidated. A staff member reported that "*individuals use their size, position and their impressive vocabulary to bully, intimidate, belittle and keep people in line.*" At one of the open meetings for faculty the word "bullying" was used several times and it also was used occasionally on the website.

The comments suggest that both women and men supervisors exhibit abusive behavior, but the recipients are overwhelmingly women. Bullying comes in many forms. A female staff member wrote, *“When we go to our supervisor with concerns, he often tells us if we don’t like working here we can look for another job. Obviously, problems do not get solved.”*

Another female staff member provided a detailed breakdown of all the hours of unpaid extra work she has been putting in for more than a year. She then goes on to say, *“The ‘temporary’ project has been extended through at least next summer, and it is being assumed that I will donate the necessary hours to get both jobs done.”* Last summer, when she asked for a week of vacation, *“My supervisor left on an extended vacation and left word with his associate that she may sign the leave slip after checking with me to see if ‘I really felt caught up enough on my work to take off a whole week.’ ”*

A faculty member with more than 20 years of service added, *“I almost did not respond to this survey because of fear of retaliation . . . In some ways I feel it is worse now on campus than ten years ago because the administration refuses to deal with real problems. People (victims) are now more afraid to speak out than ever because they will be labeled troublemakers . . . One woman told me she was afraid to speak to the Chronicle of Higher Education about the salary equity settlement because of it.”*

Perhaps the supervisors described are not abusive only to women. Perhaps male employees, if they happened to be working in traditionally “female” job categories, would be treated in the same way. Perhaps men would be equally hesitant to be quoted in the *Chronicle*. As far as the Commission is aware, there has not yet been sufficient research to be sure of the answer. However, after one of the open meetings, a male staff member mentioned that he had observed instances of bullying and intimidation against women, but was afraid to raise the issue for fear of retaliation against him for *“sticking up for the women.”*

A frequent complaint heard was that administrators who should deal with these issues fail to do so, leading to a lack of trust in the system. The following analysis is from a female staff member who has been on campus for more than eleven years: *“Under [the previous administration] problems were all pushed under the rug. Favoritism ran amok and individuals who should have been held accountable for egregious conduct were given free reign to abuse, bully and harass to their heart’s content. . . It will take the new president a long time to develop a culture of trust in the system.”*

Another female staff member with more than 15 years of service says that the problem is *“Sexist, unaware men in significant leadership positions.”* She feels that these administrators are helping to perpetuate or even cause problems. The same staff member points out that sometimes female administrators are hired to deal with the problems, but they are set up for failure from the beginning: *“There is a double standard in performance expectations for women. . . Supervisors look the other way and choose not to confront and deal with poor performance [by men], and then hire women to patch the performance holes.”*

Concern:

Of major concern to the Commission is the general consensus from women regarding the inability to get assistance. Numerous respondents cited examples of individuals who have gone to the Human Resources Office to discuss “non-discriminatory” workplace issues (e.g., bullying) and have been told “*there is nothing we can do*” or “*your only option is to get another job.*” As an example of petty behavior by a supervisor, a staff member who attended the appreciation event to which she had been invited to honor her years of service was called to task upon her return for being “gone too long.” When she went to Human Resources for help, she was told that it might be necessary to adjust to a new supervisor.

These insufficient institutional responses contribute to the abusive work environment that many employees are experiencing daily. The university must a) establish a climate of fairness and of direct attention to employee complaints that may not “qualify” for discrimination or other grievance procedures, b) properly equip administrators and supervisors to guide these concerns to resolution, and c) clearly communicate specific steps an individual can take to address such issues and who is responsible for decision making.

3) Safety concerns: An environment free of sexual harassment and assault

A) Sexual harassment

Hostile work environment sexual harassment is defined as conduct that is unwelcome, based on gender/sex, severe and pervasive, and alters the conditions of employment or learning. The best way to prevent sexual harassment is to establish a comprehensive policy that is clearly stated, communicated to the entire university community, and consistently enforced. Implementation of the policy must empower people who have sexual harassment complaints to come forward and must make victims aware that they have a choice in the manner of dealing with complaints. At the same time, it need hardly be said that reputations should not be besmirched or permanently damaged by frivolous or malicious complaints.

MSU’s current sexual harassment policy is neither widely known nor consistently enforced. Faculty and staff do not know where to make referrals. Students do not know where to go or what to do to get help, as reflected in three comments from female undergraduates:

“A friend of mine wanted to file a report when she was being sexually harassed, but she didn’t know who to talk to, where to go, or what to do.”

“Something needs to be done regarding male student workers on this campus who feel they have the right to harass female students!”

“Comments and body language regarding inappropriate sexual actions have happened by some workers in [Carkoski] cafeteria. ... the abusers are students here and work on campus. I believe that something needs to be done about this as I went through all of last year afraid of when I would eat in Carkoski . . . I felt more and more of my self-esteem and self-confidence deteriorate. . . . Something needs to be done!”

Much dissatisfaction with the implementation of the university policy surfaced on the Commission’s website and at the open meetings, with repeated references to “known harassers” who have not been held accountable, and of students who have been left at their mercy. The following, from a female faculty member with more than 15 years of service, is typical: *“We know that there are men on this campus, not a lot but very few, who sexually harass women. They are tenured and seemingly untouchable even when reported by female faculty . . . Frankly, you would probably need more than one signed formal complaint.”*

Another frequent concern expressed is the lack of training and consistency thereof on this issue. There has been some recent training of faculty. However, there has been no training of staff or administrators. “Administration” is viewed as having to not only model appropriate behavior, but consistently enforce the policy. Training must be consistent, targeted, and frequently offered, recognizing that new employees and students arrive each year and also that legal changes occur.

Progress made on sexual harassment issues

1. The Affirmative Action Office has been moved under the direct supervision of the president, thus giving the Affirmative Action officer the apparent and actual authority to take prompt action and giving the office increased visibility on campus. This should also begin to help with the consistency of implementation of current policies.
2. The Affirmative Action Office has recently been doing an excellent job educating academic departments about sexual harassment issues by means of a video followed by discussion. During many of these sessions it was clear that the discomfort and anxiety of some faculty members regarding the whole issue was alleviated by the frankness and clear communication of the affirmative action officer, especially the manner of dealing with complaints and the number of formal and informal actions that have been pursued by the office following harassment complaints.
3. The Affirmative Action Office also publishes clear, well-written brochures on the various types of harassment, including sexual harassment. These brochures are well distributed to every academic unit, individual faculty, all staff, and university offices such as the Women’s Center, the Counseling Center, and the LGBT Center. The brochures include a list of various places where one can get help. However, they are by nature brief communications,

may become outdated, and do not outline the process for reporting and resolving complaints.

Despite these examples of progress in Affirmative Action, significant concerns persist:

Concerns:

- The 1995 Report recommended sexual harassment training for all student employees. The cited comments from students reaffirm the need for that recommendation and the urgency with which it should be addressed.
- MSU suffers from a complete lack of formal or informal support networks or systems for individuals who feel they are victims of harassment. In many harassment situations, people simply want the behavior to stop. They do not want to file a lawsuit or even initiate formal action unless they feel that nothing else will work. Requiring that all complaints of sexual harassment be formally reported can have a chilling effect on people who might wish to resolve the problem informally.
- Information about campus policy on sexual harassment at MSU is not sufficiently communicated. Suggestions surfaced for improvement: The Affirmative Action brochures should be updated regularly to ensure current information, and should include a web address and other ways of locating a clear outline of the process for reporting and resolving complaints. The sexual harassment policy should be prominent in the *Student Handbook*, *Employee Resource Guide*, and on the university home web page with appropriate links to services, e.g. the Affirmative Action Office, university policies, and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- Great concern was expressed about the confidentiality of sexual harassment complaints and the outcome thereof. Both the complainant and the accused can be frustrated and intimidated if they do not learn the outcome of a complaint in a timely manner, if at all. Victims may be unaware of disciplinary action taken and those wrongly accused are uncertain whether their name has been cleared. Inconsistent communication leads to a lack of trust that the university has dealt with complaints, or will do so in the future.
- MSU has no university policy on consensual relationships between students and faculty. Although the MnSCU policy on discrimination does mention this issue and generally discourages such relationships, on the basis that although consensual relationships between legal adults do not *per se* constitute sexual harassment, there is always the possibility of real or perceived coercion or *quid pro quo* harassment whenever one individual has power over the other. Such *quid pro quo* harassment, or the perception of it by one of the parties, is particularly likely to occur if one party no longer consents.

Violation of existing MnSCU policies concerning conflict of interest may occur in situations where 1) third parties are adversely affected in academic or employment matters because of a consensual relationship between others; and 2) a consensual relationship creates a hostile and intimidating relationship for third parties.

Many universities do have policies on sexual relationships between instructors or supervisors and anyone they teach, advise, supervise, or have professional responsibility for. Examples are the University of Iowa, the Vermont State College system, the University of Virginia, MIT, and the University of Wisconsin.

The Commission believes that the best policy for MSU is one that focuses on conflict of interest, but also requires disclosure of relevant consensual relationships to the appropriate administrative supervisor so that arrangements can be made for objective evaluation and decision making with regard to the student or subordinate.

NOTE: A particularly useful resource for committees, commissions, and administrators developing policies on sexual harassment is *Sexual Harassment on Campus: A Guide for Administrators, Faculty and Students* by Bernice Sandler and Robert J. Shoop.

B) Sexual assault

The National College Women Sexual Victimization Study estimated that between one in four and one in five college women experience completed or attempted rape during their college years (Fisher, Cullen and Turner, 2000). It is clear that sexual assault and violence is one of the paramount issues facing college campuses today, particularly given that the director of the Center for Disease Control has indicated that sexual violence is a “major public health problem.”

Yet MSU, Mankato does not have any type of sexual violence training or prevention program. A Violence Prevention Center was eliminated when its grant expired. A committee was established to develop a violence prevention plan but has apparently been disbanded.

At present, no office on campus is given the resources to work legitimately on this issue. The Women’s Center does what it can, with limited funding. University Security does some limited work as well. However, due to staffing levels, they are unable to provide any formal response training or prevention programs. This is particularly critical when we realize that nine out of ten women raped on campuses do not tell anyone about the rape (Rape Treatment Center, Santa Monica, 1995).

University Campus Security personnel have a legal obligation to report incidents of sexual assault and other crimes under the Jeanne Clery Campus Security Act. Without appropriate notification, training, and education individuals will not be aware of their mandated role in reporting these incidents to the University Security Department.

Aside from the necessary training and prevention programs, one of the best ways to prevent violence, both sexual and otherwise, is to prevent hateful language and conduct. The connection between hateful, humiliating language and sexual assault is evidently well understood by the man who wrote to the *Reporter* on March 4, 2003: “*I am writing about an item that appeared in your Pulse section on Feb. 25. It was asked, “If you could use a voodoo doll on anyone, who would it be and why?” One of the students answered, “My girlfriend. Just to humiliate her.” At first I wrote it off, but I kept hearing people*

talk about it. . . Violence against women and the humiliation (emotional abuse) of an intimate partner are not laughing matters.”

Women students made clear statements on this issue to the Commission:

“I’m surprised that this university doesn’t have a specific office that provides sexual assault prevention programs and training. Whoever puts up the red posters that tell of reported sexual assaults is doing a good job of keeping students informed. However, if there were an office that specialized in rape prevention programs and training, the school may not have to put up so many red posters.”

“MSU does not have an educated, paid staff member dedicated to sexual violence education. MSU seems to have no comprehensive, codified system response to sexual violence reporting, and seems to have no body [sic] to evaluate and ensure sensitivity and compliance. MSU gives very little sexual violence awareness education to incoming students at the beginning of their college career, when they are often most vulnerable. Yet we know that the rates of assault are very high in the US, and that primarily it costs women untold losses in education, work, and physical social well-being. It looks like MSU does not consider sexual violence to be a problem worth addressing seriously.”

A woman faculty member for more than a decade added, *“Women students often talk of the fear they experience as a result of violence against women. The university could go a long way toward educating the student body on the issues of violence. One suggestion that I have heard again and again from students is to include in freshman orientation education for women and men about gender roles and the dangers women face because of men’s masculinity being tied to violence. Rather than brush this uncomfortable topic under the rug and hope it goes away, the administration should take an active role in diminishing its occurrence.”*

The Commission also emphasizes the importance of taking seriously every incident of harassment, including apparently “mild” cases, in order to prevent sexual assault and violence. Stephen Wessler, who formed the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence at the University of Southern Maine and previously prosecuted hate crimes for the Maine Attorney General’s Office, points out that in every school-related case of hate crime that he investigated, “We would invariably find out there had been a history of escalating conduct . . . and it started with language” (Wessler, 2003). Additional resources are available from the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence at www.cphv.maine.edu and *Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing and Sexual Harassment in Schools* at www.aauw.org.

Progress made on sexual assault issues

1. Since the last report, the physical safety of the campus community has been enhanced by the presence of fulltime professional campus security officers, improved lighting, the installation of additional outdoor emergency telephones, CCTV cameras in the parking lots, the Escort Service, the Red Eye Shuttle, the

pedestrian/crosswalk assistants, and the option of nighttime gold parking stickers. *Many people have expressed their appreciation for these measures and their strong feeling that personal safety services like these must continue even in times of budget cuts.*

2. MnSCU is in the process of developing a system-wide policy on sexual assault, which will provide a good avenue for MSU to begin to deal more thoroughly with this issue.

Concerns:

- The Commission notes that establishing MnSCU policy on sexual assault will be helpful, but will require campus action, including a violence-prevention plan, education outreach, training for students and staff, and a year-round 24/7 resource for victims of sexual violence. Existing models for this kind of campus initiative include MSU's nutritionist, drug and alcohol educator, and general health educator, and the current efforts on this topic by University Security and the Women's Center. The Commission further notes that the Women's Center and the Counseling Center are not open evenings, weekends, or holidays, leaving University Security as the only place victims can go. University Security's role is to gather information and document reports. Trained staff are not available 24/7 and their facility is not designed to provide the needed support for victims.
- No mechanism exists for an institutional response to hate crimes or incidents of public harassment. A Personal Safety Committee exists but is rarely convened. The role of this committee has never been adequately defined.

4) *Interlocking systems of discrimination*

“You are short; you are a woman; you are a minority; you are a foreigner.” The realities of interlocking systems of discrimination are obvious to the faculty member who keeps a copy in her office of this student assessment of her “weaknesses” on a teaching evaluation.

Harassment, hostility, chilly climate and other inequities are not limited to gender. Harassment can be based on many factors, including ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, physical appearance, and perceived “subordinate” status. In fact, women who belong to one or more of these groups are more likely to be harassed than women who do not. One female faculty member wrote to the Commission’s website: *“As a white female who is heterosexual and tends to follow Midwest protocol, I have had an easy time as a faculty person. I would like more investigation and support of women of color and/or women who are homosexual. It seems they might need more support and consideration.”* Although the Commission’s work is necessarily focused on gender equity, we are deeply concerned by all forms of inequity and acknowledge the interlocking nature of oppression and/or discrimination.

Two students reported on the Commission web site: *“At a table in the CSU we have been harassed 3 times over the past year, each incident initiated by men we had never met.... For example, one man walked past our table and said to his friends, ‘Fucking dykes.’ The other men laughed and joked about us. . . These incidents left us feeling powerless and humiliated. We aren’t embarrassed to be lesbian, but were shocked and frustrated to be so openly harassed.”*

A new faculty member reported: *“Our Human Resources benefits session providing information about a new benefits package exclusively targeted heterosexual people who were married with children. In the workshop, only a brief mention was made of the (then existent) domestic partners benefits. The HR presenter skipped over 3-4 Power Point slides relating to domestic partner benefits, telling the audience, ‘We don’t need to spend time on this.’ However, plenty of time was spent answering questions about how to pay for a child’s orthodontia. This blatant disregard for the minimal interests and needs of GLBT employees, with or without domestic partners, is offensive at best.”*

A recurrent theme is that female faculty, administrators, staff, and students on our campus who identify as members of diverse communities feel isolated both on the Minnesota State campus and in the greater Mankato area as a whole. They report that they often feel they must live outside Mankato in an urban community where they feel less isolated. The lack of diversity in the Mankato area and on the Minnesota State campus in particular thus becomes a vicious cycle. Certain members of faculty search committees have explicitly stated (without apparent embarrassment) that since many university employees who are perceived as different from the majority experience loneliness and isolation in Mankato, that probable experience is a reason not to hire a particular applicant in the first place. It is imperative to break this vicious cycle.

Progress made on interlocking systems of discrimination

1. President Davenport has named diversity as a priority in the Strategic Plan of the university. A Task Force on Diversity has been named and action priorities are being determined.
2. The MnSCU policy against discrimination and harassment includes many forms: racial, sexual, sexual orientation/gender, and disability discrimination and harassment.
3. The cultural diversity and global awareness components of the new General Education requirements are resulting in increased awareness and sensitivity about interlocking systems of discrimination among students and faculty.

Concerns:

- The recruitment, admission or hiring, and retention of women and all diverse groups must be improved. Networking with other local colleges and with existing community groups may help to decrease the sense of isolation experienced in Mankato by women and others underrepresented in a particular discipline or profession.
- Insufficient data are available to effectively determine the status of women on this campus and the status of other underrepresented groups. Although such data are never 100% authoritative because individuals cannot be legally required to provide this information, benchmarks must be established if progress is to be measured.
- As in other areas, better training and communication of policies and resources related to diverse populations in general and discrimination issues in particular is needed.

5) Balancing family life and work

The academy has monastic origins and a predominantly male past that shaped its traditional culture. Institutions of higher education were established for unmarried male students, and administered and taught by men who, if they were not priests or monks, could be presumed to be the partners of full-time female homemakers who took full responsibility for childcare.

Although this is far from the reality today, these issues are of importance to women and men, policies and attitudes have a long way to go to catch up to the hard facts of contemporary work and family life. Institutional awareness of family life issues is particularly vital at institutions with a high proportion of non-traditional students. Furthermore, students who might appear to be “traditional” in age may also be parents, and perhaps single parents, and in this sense are non-traditional.

A number of respondents contributed comments on parenting and work:

“We’re expecting our first child soon and when [my partner] first came to work here, she directly asked an HR rep about family leave for having a baby. She was told nothing about being able to use disability insurance for family leave, so she didn’t take that as part of her benefits. Once she was pregnant she found out about this possibility, but since she had a ‘pre-existing condition’ it was too late. . . . I won’t even ask if the university provides family leave for a man,” from a male graduate student.

“It is APPALLING the lack of support [Children’s House] receives from the administration, and incredibly SHORT SIGHTED,” a female staff member with more than 15 years of service said. Another staff member added, *“Twenty-one years ago I petitioned to change my position from full-time to part-time. I was grateful for the opportunity to work three quarters time and flex my hours. . . . I was doing the same work for less pay, so I just pedaled faster.”*

An MSU faculty member has completed an ethnographic study of single parent graduate students that reveals the multiple strategies they must employ in order to cope, and the multiple pressures they experience in trying to fill their diverse work, study, and family responsibilities, compounded by money and health pressures. Often these parents also find themselves fulfilling the responsibilities of the “sandwich generation” and acting as caregivers for their parents as well as their children. They report that in order to cope they often resort to “breaking the rules,” for example, by bringing their children to work or class with them. The majority of the respondents in this study worked several jobs to support their children, and in addition worked as graduate assistants.

An important issue facing all parents, whether students, faculty, or staff, is childcare. The 1995 report pointed out the “desperate need for more affordable, culturally sensitive childcare on or near campus for full-time, drop-in, latch-key, and evening services.” The need persists. Many parents who desperately need childcare, including many students who are also single parents and feeling multiple pressures from their complicated lives, cannot obtain (and/or cannot afford) childcare at Children’s House, which has a very lengthy waiting list.

A two-year female staff member points out, *“The Children’s House is a department in the College of Education and has been expected to be self-supporting. When a deficit occurs, the College of Education must incur those expenses. The Children’s House serves the entire University, not just the College of Education. Children of undergraduate students, graduate students, staff and faculty attend the Children’s House. The Children’s House provides a service to the entire University by caring for these children and by providing opportunities to the many programs on campus that utilize the center for clinical experiences and classroom assignments, which include but are not limited to observations.”*

Progress made in balancing family life and work

1. Many people expressed appreciation that facilities for breast-feeding mothers have been provided in the Centennial Student Union.
2. A male respondent mentioned his appreciation for a professor who gave all parents of small children “permanent permission” to keep cell phones turned on during class.

The list of concerns on this topic, some of them a decade old, is quite long:

- Day care is not supported on campus in an equitable fashion. Specifically, there is a lack of sufficient financial support for the Children’s House.
- Affordable and culturally sensitive childcare near campus is lacking.
- A professional Work and Family Life Coordinator, or a task force dealing with this issue, is needed.
- Consistent institutional policies are needed on parenting and family leave, job sharing, flexible work schedules, telecommuting, interruptions to tenure clocks to allow for family leave, etc. The university must work at all levels to change any perception in the campus culture that a woman (or man) who takes advantage of flextime, family leave, and similar options is failing to be professionally serious and committed. Flextime should be allowed whenever possible so that employees can meet the needs of their families and private lives. If an employee is part-time, the part-time work schedule and responsibilities must be respected and enforced.
- There is no university policy on hiring of domestic partners/significant others of university employees. There is an MSU policy on conflicts of interest, but it does not address this specific issue. Stress on families increases when one partner or significant other is unemployed, underemployed, or has to commute long distances.
- Scheduling of classes and campus activities could be more family friendly. The current plan to revive Friday/Saturday class offerings is geared to providing classes for new traditional students who cannot attend the General Education classes they need. The university must also schedule classes needed by non-traditional students.
- Similarly, very few activities for students, faculty, and staff with young families take place on campus, limiting the opportunities for these individuals to fully participate in the university community. The perception is that the MSU community does not promote family life and family activities.

6) MSU's physical environment

Several concerns about the physical environment emerged in the Commission's study, all of which appear to be primarily women's issues. A concern about ventilation in Trafton remains almost completely unchanged since 1995, when it was mentioned in the task force report. The report noted, "Noxious fumes often get into offices causing burning eyes. ... Acrid smells and fumes are especially troubling to pregnant women." In 1995, the ventilation concern was raised by staff members (who are primarily women) and it was ignored. Even a complete change of the ventilation system in North Trafton did not resolve the problem. In 2003, faculty as well as staff voices were heard. Several times during the spring 2003 semester, laboratory hood alarms went off while night labs were still in session.

Another concern relates to the supposed "smoke free" environment in our buildings. If air intake vents are situated in areas where people congregate to smoke, the smoke and carcinogens are "ventilated" throughout work and study spaces.

Progress made in the physical environment

1. The ventilation system in North Trafton was completely changed in 1999; however, this did not resolve the problem.
2. Recently some work has been done by an environmental health and safety officer to correct some of the ventilation hood problems in Trafton. More work remains to be done for the short term.

7) "Special Issues": Staff and Faculty

In addition to the discussion of overall issues that apply to faculty, staff and students, a number of comments were specific to the faculty experience or to support staff.

A) Summary of staff-specific issues:

Low morale, lack of trust, and concerns about fairness were described by a number of women staff members. Contributing factors include:

- perceived lack of commitment to staff development in some areas of the university.
- the well-known fact that traditionally "female" work classifications are undervalued and underpaid.
- lack of involvement in decision-making. "[Women's] views also need to be taken seriously. This would also open up lines of communication for information that we desperately need to do our jobs in the most effective manner. I believe that this would also help with the low morale in the whole office. If other offices are also having problems, then maybe it could help all over the campus."

- lack of training for supervisors and managers, which limits support for staff development and recognition for work well done.
- lack of accountability for faculty and management, compared with hourly staff.
- experiences that give evidence of bias and gender discrimination in matters of hiring and promotion, including a general distrust of Human Resources.

Staff members have witnessed some faculty members deliberately not reporting sick leave used, which enables the faculty members to leave the University with a generous severance package; staff members are strictly held accountable for all absences. Another fairness issue surrounds different application of rules within the staff ranks. For example, it was reported that some departments allow their office assistants to work less than a full eight-hour day but offices across the hall require eight hours of work for eight hours of pay. Anyone can imagine how those putting in a full day's work feel about this.

Of major concern to the Commission is the continued expression by staff of the fear of retaliation or retribution if they speak out. A feeling of caution prevailed when staff members were asked to participate in the Commission open meetings. Job security and fear of retribution were of great concern to a number of women.

Progress made on staff issues

1. A few staff members said that they feel valued.
2. Staff expressed appreciation for employee recognition events that have been held.
3. Some staff members are provided opportunities for reduced work schedules.

Concerns:

- There is no consistent formal staff development program at MSU to provide opportunities for staff members to learn other skills or prepare to move into different or progressively responsible positions. Faculty and administrators are typically provided specific professional development funds; staff members are not. Staff may not be encouraged to participate even when opportunities are available.
- Inconsistent enforcement of university policies with respect to such things as leave accounting and working hours leads to significant feelings of inequity among staff.
- A significant feeling of pay inequity persists in the staff ranks. Concerted effort is required to clarify issues of equity in classifications and pay scales of traditionally "female" work categories.

B) Summary of faculty-specific issues

Two comments suggest different contexts for the issue of fairness with respect to faculty:

“If I were to write a book about my years at MSU I would title the chapter covering the past several years in my department as ‘Men get the privilege, women get the work.’ Double standards, hierarchy of privilege, old boy network hires and abuse of power continue but each incident by itself fails to be seen as part of a pattern.”

“I repeatedly requested that Academic Affairs identify and provide adequate space ... In [two] annual reports, I cited this concern and explained it at length. Almost immediately [after a new (male) director was named], a larger space was identified and provided. ... I question whether gender discrimination took place.”

Another woman at an open meeting for faculty said simply, *“You learn to be silent; there is too much to lose.”*

At the second open meeting for faculty, two women expressed concern that the Commission’s climate scan was drawing too much attention to problems related to gender. Although they did point out that *“Some students in [the departments] would like more female faculty, so that they would feel more comfortable,”* the concern of these faculty members centered more on maintaining collegial relations with their male colleagues, who greatly outnumber females in their respective departments. One faculty member stated, *“Gender is not the issue; power is.”* Certainly in some departments this may be true. Although the question of who is wielding this power inevitably arises, the fact remains that not only women suffer from abuse of power.

In some departments, to identify abuse of power as a gender issue alone could result in further alienation of some women from their male colleagues, contributing to an even chillier climate for women faculty. One female faculty member reported to the Commission: *“When asked why women faculty have left our department, I hesitated for a while. There were personal reasons but the major factor was the lack of support for these women and the overwhelming feeling that they did not belong. Both of these women were bright and articulate and brought new and creative ideas to the department. They were never rewarded for their dedication but instead were reprimanded for faults that were never fully revealed to them.”* However, this faculty member then went on to point out, *“Quite honestly this bullying is not gender specific, and it has created an unbearable working condition in our department.”*

Another concern at one meeting centered on family-life and work-life balance, specifically in the area of maternity (or paternity) leave. Although unpaid parental leave does not count towards seniority, sabbatical leave, which is paid, does count. In one sense, of course, sabbaticals and parental leaves are not equivalent, since sabbaticals are intended for the furtherance of research and other faculty development. However, a person who takes parental leave does not step completely out of a professional role. A process by which faculty taking parental leave could document their achievements in assessment areas 2 and 3 (Research and Continuing Development) could help them to count that activity towards promotion and/or tenure.

At present, the work environment at MSU can be extremely stressful and incompatible with family life. The stress is increased by hidden workloads and expectations -- and worsened this year with the loss of state work-study funds. One faculty member put it as follows: *“I recently asked a very bright student about her choice of a career. She had given very careful thought to the compatibility of that field with the ability to have time for her family. She then questioned me about my own career. I very honestly admitted that it was not at all compatible with family life, and that without a supportive partner it would be impossible to do both.”*

Stress and hidden load are also increased by the growing tendency to rely on the hiring of fixed-term and adjunct faculty to teach necessary courses. Not only can this tendency be exploitative of the fixed-term and adjunct people, it also puts increased stress on the probationary and tenured faculty, whether male or female. Search committees consume large amounts of time, and this multiplies rapidly with constant re-hiring (and training) of temporary faculty. Furthermore, fixed-term faculty are not expected to share equally in advising students or with committee work.

In addition to employing more tenure-track faculty, other measures could be taken to ameliorate stress on faculty and their families. Half-time and/or shared positions would be more attractive if it were possible for half-time personnel to receive health insurance and retirement benefits. Flexible schedules for teaching faculty could be achieved more often than happens at present. The Commission understands that some constraints on scheduling exist (e.g., lack of space, the need to be available to advise students, and credit generation issues). These are inevitable and cannot be easily overcome. However, some rigidity in scheduling is the result of outmoded, non-collegial attitudes. The amount of work that many faculty put in outside the classroom and the office may not be appreciated by the most vocal proponents of rigid scheduling. Some faculty have night or evening classes that, together with committee meetings, research commitments, and the like, result in 14-hour workdays. Refusal to consider the realities of scheduling all of the tasks in a faculty member's life can result in harmful limits on the availability of unstructured blocks of time for scholarly and creative work.

Inequitable workloads are another key issue for faculty. For example, faculty in many departments who specialize in preparing teachers are largely (though not entirely) female. In addition to a full load of classes on campus, many are also responsible for traveling around the state supervising student teachers. In most cases they receive no release time and no supplemental salary for this extra work and travel. The pressure, particularly on new faculty, can be tremendous. (Allegedly, senior faculty, who are more professionally secure, simply quit doing teacher supervision.) At least two relatively new tenure-track female faculty who found themselves under these pressures have resigned after a few years.

It might be argued that many people, particularly women, who resign prematurely do so for “personal” reasons. At present, in both the culture at large and at MSU, the burden of career delays and compromises, relocation, career change, and even abandonment of profession for “personal” reasons falls disproportionately on women. Genuinely forward-

looking, pro-active affirmative action personnel policies are absolutely necessary to deal with this situation, beginning with revision of outdated notions of “nepotism.” The university must look seriously at developing policies by which employment for significant others who hold appropriate credentials shall affirmatively be made available to the significant others of MSU employees and job finalists. Such policies would also improve the hiring and retention of people of color.

Needed attention to matters of climate, equity, and family-and-work-life balance will improve the performance and retention of both female and male faculty, and will greatly enhance the working and learning environment at MSU.

Progress made on faculty issues

1. The recent settlement of the class-action IFO suit, in which Susan M. Burum was the named plaintiff, has identified and mandated solutions for serious problems with data collection and disclosure regarding faculty hiring, promotion and tenure. The settlement has pinpointed and solved – for at least the six years required by the agreement – one area of deficiency in data collection and disclosure at MSU, pointing the way towards the rectification of a serious source of gender inequity. The same agreement mandates that all candidates who receive offers for full-time faculty positions receive, with their appointment letters, the worksheet that explains the calculation of their creditable experience. The suit documented cases of abuse of this determinant of salary placement. In the past, male faculty members have been granted creditable experience for employment such as working in a gas station, whereas women have been granted less or no creditable experience for employment such as high school teaching. The new agreement should make such inequities less likely to occur in the starting salaries of new faculty.
2. The new Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is helping to build the needed culture of concern for the mentoring and professional development of all faculty, and especially new faculty.

Concerns:

- Gender and other forms of discrimination exist in the hiring and retention of faculty.
- Departments report difficulty in recruiting and retaining women faculty in general. However, data are needed to determine the extent of this problem and the reasons women choose not to come to MSU and why women leave.
- Since seniority is based on years of service, faculty who work three-quarters time or take unpaid parental leave lose seniority status. The burden of career delays and relocation for personal reasons falls disproportionately on women.
- Teaching evaluation forms are not gender sensitive. They do not reflect different communication styles and do not permit analysis with respect to the gender of the faculty member or of the student. For the benefit of both faculty and students,

teaching evaluations should assess the way in which the instructor handles issues of climate and uses varying communication styles in the classroom.

8) “Missing data” populations: Students and administrators

The Commission has a general concern about the lack of input received from two constituencies: students and administrators. Acknowledging this deficit, the Commission reports what voices it did hear from these two populations, or on their behalf. Future data gathering efforts must be directed at more effectively giving voice to these constituencies.

A) Students

Student issues are presented in two categories, traditional students and non-traditional/graduate students. It is apparent from the work of the Commission that issues facing these two groups are often different. However, the Commission notes a general concern about the lack of input received in open meetings and on the Commission's web site from traditional students.

Several faculty and staff members raised issues on behalf of students concerning mistreatment of students by both male and female faculty. For example, a female faculty member pointed out, "*Female students within the athletic training department have been denied traveling with the male sports teams. This should be part of the students' training and educational process.*" More targeted efforts to obtain information from traditional students will be necessary in the future.

1) Traditional student issues

Aside from the concerns about climate, campus safety, sexual harassment, and balancing family life and work that are dealt with in other sections of the report, three main concerns emerged from student comments. These concerns related to the quality of social life and male/female social interactions on campus, along with poor advising and orientation.

Progress made on traditional student issues

1. Thanks to the services provided by the Women's Center and the Counseling Center, there has been a marked improvement in an important area of student life that was identified as a major concern in the previous 1995 report. The Women's Center and the Counseling Center offer frequent workshops, training sessions and ongoing support for students with concerns such as eating disorders, body image, chemical dependency, relationship needs, family problems, sexual assault, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender identity.
2. One area of progress was noted by a male graduate student on the Commission's website: "*I have seen that the number of women in science/technology/math courses [is] significantly lower than its male counterpart . . . This university has taken several steps to fix this problem such as several scholarships just for women.*"
3. Women students are also being supported through specific learning communities.

Concerns:

- Systems for support of women students, such as the Women’s Center, need more visibility on campus and assurance of ongoing financial resources.
- Students feel physically isolated on campus. The architecture of the Student Union and other major gathering spaces do not promote healthy social interactions between men and women or among students of different ethnic backgrounds.
- Harassment, bullying and hostile climate are not always sexual in nature, and responsibility must be taken to deal with these abuses, whether the alleged perpetrators are male or female.

2) Non-traditional and graduate student issues

At present, the orientation process for transfer students, graduate students, and non-traditional students appears to be totally inadequate. One transfer student related that she was simply told to pick classes for her major although she had no idea what her major should be. She was given no guidance in this matter, no folder of resources, and no inside tour of the campus buildings. This was clearly a negative experience for her, and she explained to the Commission that immediately after this “orientation” she called her father to come and take her home.

The university could benefit greatly by thinking much more carefully about the orientation of transfer students, graduate students, and non-traditional students, as well as all older students who are not entering college immediately following high school. Many of these older students are also parents and the information and resources that they need access to may differ from the kind of information that is useful to traditional students.

As an institution, the university should educate faculty about the concerns of student parents. Many non-traditional students have expressed a desire to be more involved with their school community. Many of them (as well as many graduate students) commute, some from long distances. Currently, student activities and organizations hold their main events during evening hours, but most daycares are not open in the evening.

Students have expressed a strong desire to find methods such as these to help bridge the sharp divide that they and their children experience between school and family life, and to help non-traditional students overcome isolation by allowing them to cultivate relationships with other student parents.

One final issue raised was the abuse and overwork of graduate student assistants. It appears that there are frequent abuses of graduate students, such as expecting them to do personal errands or other work that is inappropriate, requiring many more hours of work than the 20 hours specified in their contracts, or asking them to “volunteer” on weekends.

Progress made on non-traditional and graduate student issues

1. In response to concerns expressed by the Commission about abuse and overwork of graduate students, the dean of Graduate Studies has drafted

a new graduate assistantship policy that will go into effect in July 2003. In the future this policy will be in the graduate bulletin in its entirety. It is important that the policy be provided to graduate assistants along with their letter of appointment and that it is readily available on the university web site.

2. The HUB is an office that many non-traditional and graduate students are able to utilize because the hours have been extended until 6:00 pm during the regular academic year to accommodate more students.

Concerns:

- Non-traditional students, especially those who are parents, do not get understanding from some individual faculty members and from the institution as a whole. Requirements such as service learning hours and other out-of-class activities can be impossibly difficult for these students.
- Hours of campus offices are not accommodating to all students. The Children's House is not open evenings.
- There is no easily accessible means of communication with graduate students.

B) Perception of Administrators and Supervisors

The Commission recognizes that insufficient information was obtained directly from administrators and from other employees regarding administrators. Although certain issues were apparent as the Commission processed information received, it was clear that the Commission did not specifically ask women administrators what unique issues they face. In the future, methods of hearing campus voices that attend more specifically to issues facing administrators are needed. It is telling that staff members complained that administrators fail to resolve issues and one administrator commented, *"I do not deal with issues well because I do not feel supported when I do. I do not get backed up."*

Some confusion exists over who exactly is being referred to in the term "administrators." Certainly, there are approximately 28 "excluded administrators" on campus. However, it is clear to the Commission that when people refer to "administration" it tends to refer generically to those who are perceived to have the power to resolve problems or issues, or to make decisions that affect the work life of other employees. All supervisors may be perceived as "administration."

However, if a central administrator's operational stance is *"I do not want to hear about problems,"* middle managers are put in the awkward place of not having support to be able to deal effectively with those problems. This has created a significant lack of trust on the campus. The only way to begin restoring this trust is for central administrators to be willing to address problems and to do so in a fair and equitable manner. There must also be some element of transparency to these determinations so that the campus community can understand what is happening and the reasons for it.

In numerous areas, this report has discussed the need for training related to various issues. However, nowhere is the need for training more apparent than with administrators or managers. Presently, most individuals undergo no training when they are put into supervisory positions. The MMA does require supervisors to obtain training. However, it is not uniform and there certainly is no training of senior administrators on any supervisory or management issues. This leads not only to the inability of the individual to deal effectively with problems, but also to a complete lack of consistency even when they try.

In addition, while there has been a directive from “administration” to train faculty on sexual harassment and discrimination, there is no evidence of any such training for administrators. This is problematic for several reasons. First, there is a need for everyone to have the same training so that everyone operates from the same information base. Second, there is an appearance that the faculty are being singled out if administrators do not undertake such training. However, it is clear that past problems with sexual harassment and discrimination have occurred at all levels. Thus, administrators should model appropriate behavior by participating in this type of training.

Concerns:

- There is not enough leadership and support for administrators “from the top” and from Human Resources when administrators and managers must deal with problems, including personnel issues.
- There is inadequate backup support in place “from below,” particularly at the deans’ level, to provide leadership and direction when a key administrator is absent.
- Administrators do not necessarily receive training on management and supervision of employees.
- Administrators do not necessarily receive training on sexual harassment and discrimination issues.
- Other parts of this report have dealt with issues that frequently face women administrators, including lack of understanding of differing communication styles, being forced to fit within a particular style in order to be successful, lack of support, lack of mentoring opportunities, and being set up to fail. The Commission needs to assess these concerns specifically as they apply to women in highly visible administrative positions.

What does the Commission recommend as a result of this effort?

The Commission identified more than 80 potential recommendations from the preliminary data gathering undertaken in Spring 2003. Three specific recommendations with broad impact are forwarded at this time.

The Commission on the Status of Women recommends that the president take three actions for 2003-04 as part of his commitment to gender equity at Minnesota State University, Mankato:

1) Support the Commission's further study of campus concerns remaining from the 1995 report and those heard in Spring 2003. The Commission will complete an assessment of the 37 recommendations contained in the 1995 study and systematically explore the concerns heard during Spring 2003. Based upon the president's response to this report, and in accordance with his strategic priorities, the Commission will establish a priority list of the most significant areas of concern and the recommended actions. With a full year to work, it is suggested that the Commission review each of the 1995 recommendations and 2003 areas of concern, gather related data from the appropriate sources, determine the implementation and/or action taken, and assess the impact on the status of women.

2) Take steps toward establishing a University Ombuds Office.

According to the Ombudsman Association, *The mission of the organizational ombudsman is to provide a confidential, neutral, and informal process which facilitates fair and equitable resolutions to concerns that arise in the organization. In performing this mission the ombudsman serves as an information and communication resource, upward feedback channel, advisor, dispute resolution expert, and change agent.*

From comments heard at the open meetings with the Commission regarding conflict between university employees and between students and employees, it became obvious that the university would benefit from such an office and its related services including the establishment of complaint procedures. Many workplace issues on campus do not meet the criteria for discrimination or harassment, and at present there is no process to deal with them. Many of these issues could be resolved or minimized with prompt and skillful intervention. Those involved may hesitate to become involved with the formal structures for resolution, such as Affirmative Action or Human Resources. The university does not provide a mechanism for informal, non-binding resolution of workplace or learning-place concerns. Previously, the State of Minnesota provided opportunities for mediation through Minnesota Alternative Dispute Resolution. Now, however, this program has been significantly reduced through budget cuts.

Experience with ombuds intervention as an alternative method of conflict resolution on other university campuses shows a significant decrease in the number of formal grievances and lawsuits filed.

The ombudsperson can also serve as a facilitator and should therefore be well informed about all services and offices on campus. As an informal listener, the ombudsperson should be able to identify issues and propose possible solutions.

Adherence to university policy is another facet of ombuds work. An ombudsperson can be quite helpful in assuring that policy is either adhered to or that a policy and its implementation are reviewed as needed when non-compliance exists.

Establishment of such an office would lend new credibility to administrative efforts to establish a more humane and supportive campus environment for work and study.

- 3) Encourage the Chancellor to establish a system-wide Commission on the Status of Women,** for the purpose of bringing MnSCU campuses together to talk about changes needed within the system on issues that affect women and other underrepresented groups.

This recommendation is supported by the following considerations:

- Diversity is one of Chancellor McCormick's strategic items.
- Diversity is one of President Davenport's priority items.
- Many of the personnel issues relating to gender are systemic.
- Some of the recommendations that could be made to address personnel issues involve bargaining unit contracts.
- Members of the President's Commission will be working with their respective bargaining units to bring forward the request for this MnSCU Commission.
- MSU could be the campus within the MNSCU system that takes a lead in this effort.

References

Hall, Roberta M. and Bernice R. Sandler. *The Classroom Climate: A Chilly One for Women?* Washington, DC: Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges, 1982.

Fisher, Bonnie S., Frances T. Cullen and Michael G. Turner. *The sexual victimization of college women*. National Institute of Justice, December 2000. Available at <http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles1/nij/182369.txt> (accessed June 30, 2003).

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APPENDIX A

TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM *-- from the 1995 Report to the President --*

Create a campus climate which supports and includes people of divergent perspectives and different ways of being.

All of us will need to rethink and relearn what we know about students. We must strive to better understand how gender, color, disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, nationality, geography, and other characteristics shape our students as learners and as community members. Faculty will be challenged to reexamine both pedagogy and actual course content. Administrators will need to reexamine their definitions of service and their approaches to serving students and other members of the University community. Our codes of ethics, professional conduct, and daily interactions with one another must be re-evaluated.

No longer can any one group assume that their preferences are the way that work will be done; rather, we will need to each identify what is important to us and what interferes with our ability to be a contributing member of this community. And with this knowledge we can redefine a campus community which supports and affirms all its members.

Recognize and affirm interpersonal and family responsibilities which have priority in each employee's or student's life.

At each life stage, we have relationships with a partner, children, parents, siblings and other family members who will require our care and support. The university and the community must support employees and students in fulfilling both family/interpersonal relationships and career commitments through flexible policies, benefits, and services.

Enhance communication.

Each member of the university community has the right to information about critical issues and pending decisions along with an opportunity to provide input into the institutional decision-making process. Communication of information and decisions is core to empowering employees to do their jobs productively.

Emphasize University citizenship.

To be an effective University community member, we must instruct employees and students in the values on which this community is based, provide knowledge to carry out their responsibilities, and build skills necessary to be a fully functioning community member. Education about University community standards and citizenship skills should

be an on-going effort of the university reinforced through the formal curricula, student training programs, faculty and staff development programs, and university-wide programs such as University Development Day and Worlds of Thought.

Provide advocacy.

Advocacy services provide information on alternatives, rights, policies, and procedures which empower an individual to take action on her/his own behalf. In some situations, the advocate can become more involved by supporting the individual as she/he pursues a course of action. Infrequently an advocate acts on behalf of employees or students to create needed change. Over time, based on the issues that students, faculty, and staff are raising, an advocate may recommend that particular functions or policies should be examined because they do not work as effectively as the university would like. The Commission believes there is a need for further study in order to define advocacy for this community and identify how the University can carry out this function.

In 1995, the Committee found that “The University is particularly assisted in promoting equity, access and human dignity through programs and services of offices like the Women’s Center, Women’s Studies, Affirmative Action Office, International Student Office, Disability Services, the Office of Cultural Diversity and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Center/Alternative Lifestyles Office. However, it is expected that all offices on campus share the responsibility to create and sustain an inclusive, hospitable, safe environment.”

APPENDIX B

COMMISSION-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES 2001-2003

Spring Research Colloquium

2000-2001

Dr. Winnie Mitchell
Professor, Anthropology

“Studying Andean Women and
Learning More About Ourselves”

2001-2002

Dr. Brenda Flannery
Professor, Business Management

“Determining Curriculum: Who
Decides What Matters Most?”

Dr. Nina Lenoir
Professor, Theatre and Dance

“The Status of Women Directors
in the Professional Theatre”

Elisabeth Jenssen
Student

“With Freedom to Love”
color photographs

Chelsea Hibbard
Student

“Womyn’s Marital Names: An
Examination of Identity, Sexism
and Language”

2002-2003

Dr. Susan Schalge
Professor, Anthropology

“Money is something else (Pesa
ni kitu kingine):” Women’s Work
And Cooperation in Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania

Jane Mugambi
Student

“The Impact of HIV/AIDS on
Kenyan Rural Women and the Role
of Counseling”

Suzanne Loen
Student

“Say Anything: An Examination of
YM (Your Magazine) Removing
Articles on Weight Loss”

Professional Development Activities:

2000-2001

Faculty

Suzanne Bunkers
Maria Bevacqua

History of Women Religion Conference
National Women's Studies Conference

Staff

Shannon Villwok
Dawn Leech
Annette Spiess
Yvonne Schmeling

Conference for Women, Mankato
Conference for Women, Mankato
Conflict Management Skills for Women
Conflict Management Skills for Women

Student

Colleen Graham

National Women's Studies Conference

2001-2002

Faculty

Afroza Anwary

Annual Meeting of Association
Of Asian Studies

Students

Jessica Giordani
Roberta Warneke
Vida Dotse
Janice Hibbs

Thesis
Doula Certification
National Women's Studies Conference
National Women's Studies Conference

2002-2003

None – Budget Constraints

APPENDIX C

BIOSKETCH: Bernice R. Sandler

Bernice R. Sandler is a Senior Scholar at the Women's Research and Education Institute in Washington, DC, where she consults with institutions and others about achieving equity for women and is also an Adjunct Associate Professor at MCP Hahneman School of Medicine. She has given over 2000 campus presentations, has written more than 60 articles on sex discrimination, and is well-known for her expertise in women's educational equity in general as well as in sexual harassment, the chilly classroom climate, and policies and programs affecting women on campus. She also serves as an expert witness in discrimination and sexual harassment cases.

She previously directed the Project on the Status and Education of Women at the Association of American Colleges and Universities where she published more than one hundred reports. She has a long [list of firsts](#) such as the first reports on campus [sexual harassment](#), gang rape, [campus peer harassment](#), and the [chilly climate](#) for women, including the first report on how men and women are treated differently in the classroom. She was the first person appointed to a Congressional committee staff to work specifically on women's issues and the first person to testify before a Congressional committee about discrimination against women in education. In the 1970's she filed the first charges of sex discrimination against more than 250 institutions at a time when there were no specific laws prohibiting sex discrimination in education.

Sandler played a major role in the development and passage of [Title IX](#) and other legislation prohibiting discrimination against women and girls in education, and has been associated with Title IX longer than any other person.

She holds a degree in counseling from the University of Maryland. She was the first Chair of the now-defunct National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs, having been appointed by Presidents Ford and Carter.

Sandler has served on more than thirty boards, has ten honorary doctorates and numerous other awards. She has been quoted in major media such as the *New York Times*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Sports Illustrated*, and has appeared on many talk shows including *The Today Show*, *Larry King Live*, and *Good Morning America*. In 1994 she received a Century of Women Special Achievement Award from Turner Broadcasting System. Among her recent publications are two books, *The Chilly Classroom Climate: A Guide to Improve the Education of Women* with Lisa A. Silverberg and Roberta M. Hall, and [Sexual Harassment on Campus: A Guide for Administrators, Faculty and Students](#) with Robert J. Shoop.

She also consulted with The Citadel on their "female assimilation plan," and is currently working on a project involving student-to-student harassment in middle schools. Sandler serves on the Women's Health Initiatives Advisory Board for the Bayer Corporation.