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OUR WOMEN'S COMMISSION: A CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Gabriela Pozzi and Cindy Mader

The newly established GVSU Women's Commission is equally representative of all the groups who work for and study at Grand Valley. Our mission, in consonance with the New Agenda for Women in Higher Education, reads:

To insure an environment that supports the rights of women at GVSU, the Commission is committed to working in partnership with the University on the development of policies that remove barriers that impede women's learning, professional growth, creativity, employment, and society. The Commission also seeks to create opportunities for interactions among all women on campus.

We have started our work on several fronts. During this year we will investigate overall university policies and procedures which may affect women negatively: e.g., employment practices, salaries, curriculum and instruction. We have already received requests to look into the status of faculty outside the tenure system. We will also examine the campus climate in general. For these purposes we are inviting key people on campus to speak to us. As the year continues, we hope to learn of other concerns that affect work and learning. By the end of this semester, we plan to target distinct issues for each faculty, staff and student group, and these will inform the agenda for next year.

One of our main tasks will be to determine the structure best suited for the Commission and the strategies we should use in examining and overcoming problems. We have begun to look at other institutions for models. Some universities have a Dean for Women's Affairs, some have a fully staffed Women's Resource Center, and some have only an office and a full-time coordinator; but they all have a physical space and at least one full-time staff member. We have no place of our own, but plan to request one as well as funds for its operation. Some institutions organize workshops and sponsor speakers. We may ask the Teaching and Counseling Centers to collaborate with us in such efforts. Additionally, our by-laws require that we participate in candidate interviews for upper-level positions and organize an annual awards ceremony.

The establishment of a Women's Commission on our campus marks a major commitment from the University administration to improve the climate and conditions for women. As we approach the twenty-first century, we must all work towards equity in our society. For the Commission to succeed, we must gather as much information as possible and hear from all the areas of our community. We are your

representatives, and we urge you to contact one of the following members of the Commission if you have ideas or concerns:

Administrative and Professional:

Cynthia Mader, School of Education
Pam Potter, Administrative Computing
Brenda Robinson, International Affairs
Mary Seeger, Academic Resources and Special Programs

Clerical, Office, and Technical

Alice Emmert, Bookstore
Lorna Holland, Student Employment
Marie Noe, University Relations
Betty Searle, Math and Statistics

Faculty

Jacqueline Johnson, Sociology
Gabriela Pozzi, Foreign Languages
Star Swift, School of Business
Charlotte Torres, School of Nursing

Public Safety and Plant Services

Brandon DeHaan
Carol DeWitt
David Durell
Diane Roper

Students

Krista Evans
Christine Grohowski
Aaron Hubner
Kristen Palma

Ex Officio Members

Christine O'Connor, Psychology, Co-Director of Women's Studies
Doris Rucks, Sociology, Co-Director of Women's Studies
Michael Woods, Director of Affirmative Action