

# President's Commission on the Status of University Women 2013-2014 Annual Report

During the academic year 2014 the President's Commission on the Status of University Women (PCOSUW) was actively engaged in issues related to the strategic plan. The Executive Committee met monthly and there were two meetings (one per semester) of the overall Commission. The majority of the work took place in the standing committees (Policy, Communications, Recognition, Assessment, and Nomination). There was the addition of the Work/Life Integration Task Force as an ad hoc committee to the PCOSUW at the request of Provost Potvin. The PCOSUW continues to act as the internal advisory committee for MSU's NSF Institutional Transformation ADVANCE grant Project TRACS.

The Commission held two general meetings during the academic year, minutes from the meeting can be found on the website. At the fall meeting minor changes to the by-laws to clarify membership on the standing committees were made.

As a reminder, the strategic plan for 2012-2015 is as follows:

*Goal 1: Engage in ongoing monitoring and assessment of gender equity and inclusivity within the MSU System.*

**Strategy 1:** Working with appropriate partners (e.g. Affirmative Action and/or HR offices on each campus), assess gender equity for all employee categories.

- Activity: Assemble existing gender and diversity data.
- Activity: Identify appropriate external benchmarks for success.
- Activity: Create easily interpreted reports and disseminate findings.

**Strategy 2:** Conduct a systematic assessment of university policies for unintended bias or adverse effects on women and diverse communities.

- Activity: Participate in the 3 year Legal Council policy reviews.
- Activity: Flag specific policies that may need closer review.
- Activity: Create a process for the university community, organizations, and groups to suggest to the commission policies they believe need review.

**Strategy 3:** Conduct an MSU system-wide evaluation of gender equity and inclusiveness through a climate study.

- Activity: Develop or adapt an assessment instrument that will enable widespread participation and reliable results.

*Goal 2: Lead a collaborative effort within and among key stakeholders and partners and actively participate in shared governance.*

**Strategy 1:** Serve as a central clearinghouse for efforts on inclusion and diversity.

- Activity: Create an online clearinghouse of activities, resources, and partner organizations.

**Strategy 2:** Identify and build partnerships with key stakeholders through communication and collaboration.

- Activity: Ensure commission seeks and provides input to key University-wide committees.
- Activity: Work with employee governance groups, offering expertise and resources on gender equity issues.

**Strategy 3:** Maintain a strong relationship with the University Vice Presidents, Deans, and other Leadership Positions.

- Activity: Advise the President and campus on gender issues through a widely distributed annual report.

*Goal 3: Improve campus climate through education, visibility and the celebration of gender equity and diversity in the MSU system.*

**Strategy 1:** Promote and host workshops, focus groups, webinars and other educational opportunities to foster awareness of unconscious bias.

- Activity: Work in collaboration with current MSU system offices that provide training to employees.

**Strategy 2:** Develop a centralized resource of information on gender equity and diversity.

**Strategy 3:** Investigate a mechanism for an award structure that recognizes success in increasing and supporting diversity and people who promote diversity within the MSU system.

- Activity: Include a list of award winners in areas related to gender equity and inclusiveness in the annual report to the President.
- Activity: Link to other gender equity programs' highlights and award winners.
- Activity: Increase gender equity in applications of current campus awards.

*\*Note: All data gathering and information requests should include web based and non-computer based approaches to ensure all employee voices are heard.*

Progress is reported on the basis of the activities of each of the standing and ad-hoc committees

**Policy Committee Highlights:** Chair, Lynda Ransdell

Childcare for parents participating in graduation ceremonies was initiated for the December ceremony in 2013. In spring 2014, the ADVANCE team and the Provost's Office provided funds so that the first twenty families would receive this benefit free of charge. Additionally, work began on investigating the policies about dependents/partners accompanying an MSU employees on domestic and international travel (existing policy: Non-State Employee Travel Policy 570.00

[http://www3.montana.edu/policy/business\\_manual/bus500.html#570.00](http://www3.montana.edu/policy/business_manual/bus500.html#570.00). Joy Honea (MSU Billings) compiled data and information from other colleges and universities (Northwestern, Brown, Princeton, Stanford, Cornell, Appalachian State, Texas A & M and University of California-Irvine) as comparators for policies that can be applied to MSU. Work continued on the opt-out vs. opt-in approach for tenure clock extensions. The committee also promoted University access to Care.com. Another point of progress was to offer training to family advocates at MUS campuses. The group continues to work on the implementation of a sick leave donation pool policy. Suggestions for policies that need investigation can be made via the link on the PSOSUW website.

### **Work- Life Integration Task Force Highlights:** Chair, Susan Dana

The Work Life Integration Task Force was created in the fall 2013 as an advisory body to the PCOSUW. The task force is charged with proposing revisions to existing, and drafting proposed new, policies and procedures to address the work-life integration needs of faculty, staff and students at MSU-Bozeman. The task force membership consists of representatives from administration, tenure track and NTT faculty, staff, students, Human Resources and other appropriate units.

The task force is currently evaluating several policies submitted by the PCOSUW and ADVANCE Project TRACS, including several amendments to address challenges experienced by pregnant students and their partners, and a revision to P&T policies to make a tenure clock extension normal practice for faculty experiencing a birth or adoption. Other policies to be evaluated in the future include a faculty modified duties policy for caregiving leave, dual career/spousal hire policy, sick leave donation policy and a student planned leave policy.

### **Recognition Committee Highlights:** Chair, Marilyn Lockhart

The Recognition Committee gave two awards this year:

- 1) The Faculty/Staff Award was given to Jessi Smith Associate Professor in Psychology and Special Assistant to the Provost/Director of ADVANCE.
- 2) Lindsay Murdock senior and President of the Associated Students of Montana State University.

For next year, the Committee would like to gather and assess information about other awards given throughout the university as part of the mission of the Commission to evaluate and work to improve issues related to gender equity and diversity on Montana State University's four campuses.

### **Assessment Committee Highlights:** Chair, Becca Belou

After collecting data and assessing the Departmental and Unit Self-Studies, with the purpose of understanding what the challenges and successes involving diversity and equity are at MSU Bozeman, the Assessment Committee created the content and website for the Self-Study Supportive Feedback, found here: <http://www.montana.edu/president/universitywomen/self-study-feedback.php>. The Provost's Office sent out the Department Self-Study and PCOSUW leadership sent out the Unit Self-Study, in an electronic format (Survey Monkey). During the next year, the Assessment Committee will speak to the other campuses to involve them in future dissemination and assessment for a system-wide understanding of the climate surrounding diversity and inclusivity. The feedback document will be updated with any new issues that may arise, and the committee will brainstorm other ways that the PCOSUW can help address any needs around campus.

### **Nomination Committee Highlights:** Chair, Anne Camper

PCOSUW membership has been assessed and groups/individuals contacted for participation on next year's Commission for two year terms. Lynda Ransdell is the incoming chair, Anne Camper will serve as past chair and will lead the Nomination Committee. President Cruzado has named Tracy Sterling to serve as incoming chair.

### **Communication Committee Highlights:** Chair, open

The committee worked on improving the website and organizing an informational session on the PCOSUW. Discussions have been held on how to raise the visibility of the Commission and how it partners with the NSF ADVANCE Project TRACS.

### **ADVANCE Project TRACS Highlights:** Jessi Smith

ADVANCE Project TRACS continued to implement processes and programs, all of which can be reviewed on our website, <http://www.montana.edu/nsfadvance>

Selected highlights from 2013-14 include:

Enhancing research capacity and opportunity:

- Micaela Young, The Grant Submission and Training Coordinator worked with TT and NTT faculty alike to submit 98 research proposals. She also organized two 8-week Grant Writing Bootcamps (modeled after the successful EHHD summer bootcamp)
- Coming up: Organizing and supporting NTT and TT women faculty into Interdisciplinary Research Groups; Research Mentoring Workshop in May
- Challenge: need more people to assist with development and implementation of events/programs.

Enhancing work life integration

- Care.com/montanastate now available to all eligible employees at MSU-Bozeman; new lactation space in Leon Johnson; 8 TT and 7 NTT partner accommodations.
- Coming up: Policies considered by the Work-Life Task Force; A focus on dual-career issues, considerations, and strategies
- Challenge: Implementing a process to donate to the sick leave pool

Enhancing cultural attunement:

- Institutionalizing the empirically validated "MSU broadening your search" toolkit that resulted in 50% of new TT faculty hires in STEM/SBS were women; launching of the 25 member strong team of MSU Equity Advocates
- Coming up: Engaging discussions about affirmative action; an expert-speaker series; and fundraising for sustainability
- Challenge: Getting the word out about Equity Advocates