

Florida Consortium of Women's and Gender Studies
FCWGS
Steering Committee Meeting
Florida Southern College
11 August 2006
Minutes

Attendees: Josephine Beoku-Betts, Florida Atlantic University; Crystal Fickers, University of Tampa/University of South Florida; Judy A. Hayden, University of Tampa; James James, Community Activist; Carolyn Johnston, Eckerd College; Lisa Logan, University of Central Florida; Sharon Kay Masters, Florida Southern College; Mary K. Meyer McAleese, Eckerd College; Wairimu N. Njambi, Florida Atlantic University; Susan Stoudinger Northcutt, University of South Florida; Rhonda Ovist, Rollins College; Kim Vaz, University of South Florida; Tracie Welser, Polk Community College.

Rhonda began the meeting at 10:30am welcoming all in attendance. She presented a brief history of the FCWGS as a means to center us, reading excerpts from a paper she and others had worked on this summer. She asked Kim for comments.

Kim announced that a publisher (Cambridge Scholars Press) has invited FCWGS to submit a proposal for an anthology of papers from the conference last Spring. She also announced that the conference generated a profit of \$500.

After brief review of the agenda for the day, Rhonda turned to the first item, a discussion of the proposed (from 27 April) structure of membership fees/dues. Discussion ensued concerning the purpose and use of membership fees. What would members get in return? Ideas ranged from the need to cover start up and administrative costs (mailings, copying, telephone, etc), the creation of a network for members, and building seed money for future projects. At 11:20am, Rhonda moved the question to adopt the proposed fee schedule for individual membership dues only, leaving the question of institutional dues for a future discussion. Friendly amendments were accepted to add the category "Emeriti" to the fee schedule at \$25 per year, and to set the membership year to coincide with the general start of the academic year (1 September). Discussion also supported the idea of encouraging donations to sponsor a graduate student or other non-faculty membership to the Consortium (membership dues as a sponsorship). A vote was finally taken with 11 in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstention, carrying the amended motion to approval. The membership fee structure adopted is the following:

Faculty (by Salary):

Less than \$15,000 = \$15

\$15,000 - \$24,000 = \$25

\$25,000 - \$34,999 = \$35

\$35,000 - \$49,999 = \$45

\$50,000 and up = \$55

Emeriti = \$25

Student: \$15

Non-Academic Professional: \$55

Community Activist: \$25

At 11:30am, Rhonda turned to the next item on the agenda: a report from the Annual Conference Committee, chaired by Sharon Masters and Carolyn Johnston. Sharon noted three speakers are lined up for next year's conference (in February 2007): Rosie Tong, Anna Rodriguez, and Leticia Zavala. Kim asked for help with the call for papers, urging everyone to help get word out to their various networks. Postcards and email announcements will be sent out soon with paper proposal deadlines. Sharon and Carolyn asked for volunteers to help review papers/proposals and set the program; Mary volunteered and Wairimu expressed some interest; other volunteers are needed. Susan noted it is now time to begin thinking about planning for the 2008 conference (esp. dates) while Josephine noted the need to move the conference around the state in the future, to which there was general agreement.

At 11:40am, noting good progress on time, Rhonda turned to the next item on the agenda: Pressing Issues. Kim explained the process for getting started on a Ford Foundation Grant; an ad hoc Grant Writing Committee was formed to begin work on this. Judy, Kim, and Rhonda volunteered, and Josephine expressed a willingness to help with this committee by consulting on projects that link/integrate Women's Studies with the Florida curriculum. James noted there is a line in Florida statutes including the promotion of Women's Studies in the curriculum. Other ideas for grant projects included those that would pull academics and activists together along with librarians to diffuse Women's Studies literature (Carolyn), and those focused on integrating Women's Studies into the community (Sharon and Wairimu). Lisa raised the question of how to decide which universities (and which departments or programs) would get to be the sites for any grant awards.

After a short break, discussion resumed at 12:20pm, turning attention to cross institutional internet courses. Kim described two main models in use that could enhance course offerings in Women's Studies. Various questions arose, including: How would agreements between institutions work? Would they share professors, or would one professor share students? How could this be globalized? How might such courses conflict with the goal of growing one's home program, especially program hires? Which types of courses would work best (probably not intro courses)? General consensus indicated there are several conflicting goals and interests that require more thinking, but perhaps this technology could work with the curriculum integration or activist integration goals of the consortium. Rhonda and Kim will continue to shepherd this discussion to develop a pilot program.

At 12:40pm, Rhonda turned the meeting to the next agenda item: Structure and Governance. With some brainstorming on the types of needed standing and ad hoc committees, the following (interim) offices, committees and volunteers were decided (pending the drafting and passage of our bylaws):

President: Kim

Vice President: Rhonda

Treasurer and chair of Budget Committee: Judy

Secretary: Mary

Standing Committees

PR/Website and Newsletter Committee: Tracie and Susan

Membership Committee: James (Chair) and Mary (member)

Curriculum Integration Committee: Sharon and Wairimu (co-chairs)

Grants Committee: Carolyn, Kim, Judy, Rhonda, and Josephine
Nominations and Elections Committee: TBA pending by-laws/governance committee work
Students Committee: Crystal Fickers

Ad Hoc Committees:

Mission Statement and Governance By-laws Committee: Lisa (Chair) and Rhonda

Internet Course Committee: Lisa, Rhonda, Kim, and Sharon

It was agreed that these committees would begin their work immediately and submit initial reports electronically within three months (15 November). Rhonda recommended using a five-point model or format for efficient email communications for any project within or between groups/committees:

1. What did I do?
2. How long did it take me?
3. What's the next step/What do I think needs done next?
4. What will I do next? (and what outcomes do I expect?)
5. Comments

At 1:25, after another short break, Rhonda turned to the next Agenda item: Setting Priorities for the Future. Broad, free-flowing discussion and brainstorming followed for the next two hours addressing the following:

- General ideas for themes to be included in the call for papers for the next conference (Feb. 2007), "Florida without Borders: Women at the Intersections of the Local and Global:" immigration, trafficking, human rights, poverty, globalization, health, education, activism, visual arts/representations of women (or feminist visual and performance arts), whether the global women's movement, feminism and the Florida curriculum, internationalizing and localizing women's studies in Florida
- Increasing Visibility:
 - Public relations committee can help here. Also invite women like Donna Shalala, Janet Reno, etc; develop achievement awards to Florida women like this. Also, start student activist awards. Media exposure.
 - In the longer term, work to establish a journal (peer-reviewed); perhaps the "Florida Journal of Feminist Studies;" perhaps on-line (saves costs).
 - Website: enhance with syllabus bank project, speakers' schedules around the state, membership list/directory including members' area of specialization (for resourcing, networking, mentoring); create bulletin boards pulling together stats showing importance of women's studies and women and stats for White Paper (infra)
 - Branding of FCWGS: tee-shirts, buttons (e.g., "I'm proud to do Women's Studies" or "I'm proud to support Women's Studies"); (Café Press can do this work inexpensively)

- increase membership, more PR, conference; membership drive (membership committee): membership form to be developed (Mary)
- Networking: Make connections with women in other disciplines; Women and science: how to integrate more women in science? Invite to the conference/conference panel; How to reach other academic women in Florida and non-academic women (e.g., professional women's organizations in the state)? Use our existing networks, develop new ones (longer-term priority/tabled for now)
- Fund-raising: Susan will develop some long-term ideas for fund-raising and philanthropy
- Governance committee to work on by-laws
- Increase university administrative support: organize a President's panel at conference or other venues; invite officers to breakfast
- Government support: study legislative issues; Women's Day trip to Tallahassee ("women's day at the capital"); link funding requests to service learning; serve as a clearing house for women scholars and activists. (tabled for now)
- More on Government (and visibility): Produce a White Paper on women's status in Florida: "Florida's Report Card" on the status of women in the state; start to gather information and place it on Website bulletin board
- Reach out to male supporters, male faculty (tabled for now)

Close to 3:30, this discussion wound down; Announcements were made, including:

- Josephine and Wairiku announced FAU and UCF are working on study abroad trip to Ghana next year (May): two courses and internship, or 6-9 credits with University of Ghana. Referrals welcome. Brainstorming ensued about linking students abroad with students in Florida (web-based chat rooms between students?)
- Moroccan Fulbright Scholar coming to Florida in October; visits to other campuses?
- Florida Commission on the Status of Women meets at USF on 7-8 September

At approximately 3:35pm, the meeting was adjourned.