ANNUAL REPORT
President’s Commission on the Status of Women
Mary Banach and Tricia Hanley, Co-Chairs
September 2012 - June 2013 MEMBERSHIP

Chairs
Tricia Hanley, Associate Director/Director of Training, Counseling Center
Mary Banach, Associate Professor/Department of Social Work

Women's Commission Membership

- Lauren Banker, Undergrad Student
- Michelle Bronner, Sr. Associate AD Compliance/SWA, Athletics
- Amy Cunningham, Educational Program Coordinator, Discovery Program
- Amanda Daly, Ph.D. Candidate, Dept of Natural Resources
- Barbara Jago, Associate Professor, Communication Arts, UNH-M
- Emily Klein, Graduate Student
- Cynthia Nizzari-McClain, Educational Program Coordinator, WSBE
- Joelle Ruby Ryan, Lecturer, Women's Studies
- Raelene Shippe-Rice, Emerita, Associate Professor, Nursing
- Ruth Varner, Research Associate Prof., Earth Systems Research Center
- Jill Varney, Publications Coordinator, Institute on Disability
- Kerryellen Vroman, Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy
- Jessica Wojenski, Undergrad Student
- Jenny Wu, Undergrad Student

Ex-Officio Members

- Sylvia Foster, Educational Program Coordinator, President's Commission's Office
- SHARPP: Mary Mayhew, Director, and Amy Culp, Direct Services Coordinator
- Kimberly Persson, Project Director, NH Institute for Health Policy and Practice
- Donna Marie Sorrentino, Director, Affirmative Action and Equity Office
- Janice Pierson, Senior Program Assistant, President's Commission's Office

WOMEN'S COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the UNH President’s Commission on the Status of Women is to advance equal educational and employment opportunities for UNH women by promoting an environment free of sexism and discrimination through policy, advocacy and education in which our learning community engages its diversity of experiences to generate inclusive excellence in employment, curriculum, classrooms and programming. The commission achieves its goals by creating policies that improve the status of women and ensure an environment of equal education and employment opportunities for women at UNH; by recommending policies related to the status of women to the UNH president, to other university administrators, and to UNH administrative and governance groups; by collaborating and developing alliances with existing organizations and structures within
the university community for the purpose of promoting an environment free of sexism and discrimination; by informing the university community of the status of women on the UNH campus by collecting and disseminating data, initiating and supporting educational and outreach programs, and preparing and disseminating informational publications; by providing informational and educational programs and resources to help women on the UNH campus develop their skills, continue their education, and increase their networking opportunities.

2012 -2013 Commission Advocacy Efforts and Initiatives

COMMITTEE WORK

Membership Committee
Nominations for the Women’s Commission membership are generated by consensus of the group as a whole. This year, new members Mary Banach, Barbara Jago, Amy Cunningham, Amanda Daly, Raelene Shippee-Rice, Jill Varney, Jessica Wojenski and Jenny Wu began their work with the Commission beginning in September 2012.

In December, co-chair Ruth Varner completed her tenure as a co-chair. Mary Banach was elected as the new co-chair.

Publications and Publicity Committee
This Committee continues to update and maintain the Women’s Commission website and WC Facebook pages. The Facebook pages have been updated, and it has become a vital informational resource site for news on important issues and events.

Programming Committee
This Committee continued work on two initiatives started during the 2012 -2013 academic year.

1) Production of two educational videos on why word choice matters. The committee worked with WildActs Social Change Theatre Troupe and filmed scenes from a list of storyboard ideas garnered from the student survey data collected in 2011. The videos have been released and are available for use as teaching tools for Women’s Studies and other freshman and sophomore classes. A presenter’s guide is in the process of being developed to provide talking points and ideals for suggested wrap-ups including how to be a bystander, ally, advocate, and/or otherwise change harmful social systems and dynamics. In addition, Joelle Ryan is working with a group including representatives from all four commissions to produce the Guide to Bias-Free Language, a resource accessible to all, inviting conversation on the use of affirming, inclusive communication.

2) College to Career. The programming committee facilitated one Brown Bag panel discussion and one lunch during spring semester. Both sessions were open to undergraduate and graduate students. The aim of the programs is to provide additional resources for post graduation “life in the real world” preparation. The informal setting will be used to discuss various issues that affect women at work (pay equity, benefits, etc.). This first Brown Bag lunch attracted over 10 students and the series will be continued next year.
Awards and Celebration Committee

The Awards and Celebration Committee was involved in arranging the annual Women’s Commission Awards Ceremony on March 27, 2013. The theme for this year’s awards celebration was “What it means to be a feminist”. This predictably successful annual event honors our community activists. This year’s award winners were Courtney Marshall for the Faculty Award, Emily Klein for the Graduate Student Award, Faina Bukher for a Staff Award, Suzanne Sonneborn for a Staff Award, and the WildActs Social Justice Theatre Troupe for the Joyce Gibbs Award. The Awards Celebration participants were pleased to have Jessica Valenti as the keynote speaker and Christine Shea, Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Inclusive Excellence to deliver the call to action through her talk about the NSF ADVANCE initiative.

WORKING GROUP INITIATIVES

Workplace Bullying

As discussed in last year’s report, in the fall the Women’s Commission focused its efforts on composing a position statement supporting the need for a Workplace Bullying policy. This initiative was chosen to be one of the two initiatives put forward to the University Council for Inclusive Excellence and Equity. It is our understanding that this policy is being developed by Donna Marie Sorrentino Director, Affirmative Action and Equity Office, and Kathleen Nells, Assistant VP of Human Resources, and will include input from the University Council on Inclusive Excellence as well as the Women’s Commission.

Workplace Flexibility

Child Care

Although Peg Kirkpatrick and Nadine Berenguier completed their commission membership in May 2012, they continued to monitor the issue of the need for a campus childcare facility. The Child Care initiative has been included in the agenda of the University Council for Inclusive Excellence and Equity. At present, a representative group from UNH has been in discussion with an executive from Bright Horizons, a child-care provider. Bright Horizons has put forward a proposal that is being considered by the group.

Several campus offices and organizations are now collaborating on issues of workplace flexibility as part of the University Council for Inclusive Excellence and Equity strategic initiatives. Although workplace bullying and childcare initiatives have the Women’s Commission co-chairs named as people responsible, the Women’s Commission will continue to monitor other initiatives. Additionally, as issues or concern arise, the Women’s Commission co-chairs are committed to facilitate their inclusion in the University Council on Inclusive Excellence agenda and initiatives.

Social Media

This new working group was formed in the fall and focused on the benefits and potential pitfalls of the use of social networks. The group is working on identifying what programs will be most attractive and identifying what programs are needed. Programs on how best to communicate messages on cyber safety and security are
also being looked at, as well as the benefits of bystander education (using your voice to speak up about derogatory postings).

The group has met with a faculty member from Paul College and is planning to sponsor a workshop for students during fall 2013 on “How to Use Social Media to Your Advantage”. Aspects of potentially harmful postings will also be part of the presentation.

**Consensual Amorous Relationship Policy**

The policy was passed as a sidebar item to the AAUP contract, and the OS, PAT, and EE Councils have been provided with information about the policy. The new policy should be in place soon.

**WOMEN’S COMMISSION REORGANIZATION**

In the last few meetings in spring of 2013, the Women’s Commission began to discuss different ways to both organize initiatives and use meeting times more effectively. Since there were both Standing Committees and Working Groups, members showed interest in consolidating these under broader headings. In this way, individual members of the Women’s Commission will be encouraged to be active in at least one group. A review of all groups produced the new committee structure as follows:

1. Programming
2. Women’s Health and Wellness
3. Workplace Equity
4. Academics and Curriculum

Within each of these committees, all of the initiatives that the Women’s Commission has been involved in will be continued. The WC also decided that in order to further facilitate the work of the commission, each meeting would start with information sharing and then the committees would meet during the regularly scheduled monthly meeting time. This new structure will be further delineated and evaluated in the upcoming year.

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL**

As was true in 2011-2012, the Women’s Commission co-chairs participated in meetings as members of University Council for Inclusive Excellence and Equity. This past year, the Council has worked to clarify various strategic initiatives. As part of this master plan, goals, objectives, timelines, resources, and University Council Liaison have been identified. As noted, each of the Women’s Commission co-chairs has been named as a liaison for bullying awareness and childcare.