Women’s & Gender Studies Advisory Council (WGSAC)
MINUTES
November 14, 2012
History Conference Room (104 Copeland Hall)

Present: Pari Ford, Carrie Kracl, Jeanne Stolzer, Janice Fronczak, Tone Mendoza, Monica Mueller, Linda Van Ingen (chair)

Absent: Julie Campbell, Grace Mims, Deb Freedman, Tami Moore, Trish Holen, LeAnn Obrecht, Amber Lewis, Jenna Jorgensen (student rep).

Van Ingen called the meeting to order at 4pm.

Minutes from October 10, 2012 were approved by email on 10-24-12 and sent to Faculty Senate and Kenya Taylor.

A. Co-Curricular:

- OMA: Mueller reported that the “Social Justice” group has been officially recognized as a student group and will be focusing on many issues, including homelessness. She also reported that “Sister-to-Sister” is planning to do an event for Women’s History month next semester. There may be interest for collaboration with other groups like Triota and the History Honors Society, Phi Alpha Theta.

- Triota Update: Triota will be holding a November Rag session on Chicana History on Monday, November 19, with speaker Amber Lewis (6-7pm, Coph 140).

- Event Co-sponsorships: After some discussion, members opted not to co-sponsor a speaker event, “That’s Gay” due to lack of clarity of the topic.

- V-Day: Fronczak is working with the new student director. Instead of doing the “Vagina Monologues” they may select a new Eve Ensler script. It is still part of the V-Day campaign, but it allows men to participate, and it will draw an audience which may have already seen the 8-year run of the “Vagina Monologues.” Tentative dates have been scheduled for February 1 & 2, 2013.

- No Limits: 2014 at UNK: members discussed ideas for the conference, including the possibility of a Native American speaker heard at a conference in Pine Ridge who would help highlight the “intersectionality” of gender, race, and class. Mueller and Fronczak will follow-up to get the name of this speaker for a multicultural theme of intersectionality.

- “No Limits” 2013 at UNL: Van Ingen will send out the CFP by announce email.

B. Curricular Update:

1. Library Resources: Van Ingen reported that $500 has been allocated for WGS library purchases, and she suggested that members forward title suggestions to her. Mendoza urged members to complete half the order by November 26. She also pointed out the while there are many titles in WGS, there is a need for new and updated resources.

2. Creating a major (approved last meeting Mims/Freedman): Members discussed the possibility of creating a combined major with Ethnic Studies. Van Ingen suggested thinking in terms of either a BS Comprehensive with emphasis areas in Women’s & Gender Studies or Ethnic Studies or perhaps a combination of both, or it could be a BA with a combination of courses in both areas. Regarding the merits of a merger, members brainstormed the following pros and cons:
   a. Pros:
      i. Overlapping mission statements: The web sites for the national associations for each area have overlapping parts in their mission statements, showing how and why the two programs can merge.
ii. **Minority women:** Merging the two programs provides a space for minority women (students and faculty) who may be marginalized in WGS (which historically emphasized white women) and Ethnic Studies (which historically emphasized minority men).

iii. **Increase Resources:** Sharing resources (money, time, faculty, classes) with Ethnic Studies as well as generating on-line revenue created by the combined major will boost the existing WGS and Ethnic Studies programs which currently exist on very limited resources.

iv. **Student interest:** Student enrollments may increase for the new major and both minors.

v. **Keep the minor degrees:** The major can co-exist with the minors that UNK already offers in WGS and Ethnic Studies.

vi. **Timely:** Combining the two programs to create a major coincides with some new academic scholarship about the “intersectionality” of race, class, and gender as well as scholarship about greater “inclusion” of those historically marginalized.

vii. **Approval from Administration:** A “Women, Gender & Ethnic Studies” major would be unique to the UNK campus; neither UNO nor UNL offer this particular combination. This may enhance its appeal for approval from U-wide Administration levels that will grant the final approval for a creating a new major.

b. **Cons:**

i. **Watered down?** Will adding Ethnic Studies mean losing focus of a women-centered subject of inquiry?

ii. **Losing identity?** Will the Women’s & Gender Studies program lose its historic identity?

iii. **Administrative challenges?** Will running a combined program pose difficult administrative challenges for the directors of the two minors? Is there an administrative model for a combined program?

After some discussion, members voted in favor of creating a new major that combines the Women’s & Gender Studies Program with the Ethnic Studies Program (Fronczak/Kracl). What this major will look like (in terms of BS or BA) will be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5pm (Stolzer/Mendoza).

The next meeting will be held January 16, 2013 at 4-5pm in the History Conference Room.