President’s Commission on the Status of Women

2017 Annual Report

As prepared by Melanie-Angela Neuilly (Past Chair, Interim Co-Chair), Katie Cooper (Chair Elect, Interim Co-Chair), and Lindsay Lightner (Past Past Chair)
Executive Summary

This year’s annual report of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) summarizes the past year’s work (AY 2016-2017) and presents our recommendations to the President and Executive Vice President. The report begins with the chairs’ report from this year’s co-chairs, Melanie-Angela Neuilly and Katie Cooper, followed by detailed reports from CSW’s subcommittees. Each subcommittee report contains several recommendations which we list below. We should note that CSW underwent a sudden leadership change mid-year when the 2016-2017 chair stepped down from her duties. Past-Chair Neuilly and Chair-Elect Cooper served as co-chairs for the remainder of the term. Despite this abrupt transition, CSW redoubled its efforts to maintain its commitment to increased equity and the enhancement of the status of women at WSU.

Summary of Recommendations:

- Establish a working group to implement Washington State’s new paid family leave law
- Include CSW in new initiatives on campus culture and climate
- Increase transparency in hiring committee selection processes
- Conduct comprehensive study of possible gender inequity in faculty salaries
- Adopt data collection best practices needed to conduct salary and employee satisfaction surveys
- Provide a new, though temporary, organizational home for the Women’s Recognition Luncheon and Symposium
- Expand the Women’s Recognition Luncheon and Symposium to include leadership conference/training opportunities offered in a larger venue
- Continue centralizing CSW budget and administrative tasks within the President’s Office
- Sustain support of high quality and affordable child care accessible to all members of the WSU community
- Endorse training, mentoring and leadership development opportunities for staff
- Consider adoption of centralized peer mentorship program

The following pages provide the full details of the recommendations and reports in each of our priority areas:

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President’s Commission on the Status of Women

Chairs’ Report

For the Commission on the Status of Women (henceforth referred to as either the Commission or CSW), the year 2016-2017 was marked by a number of wonderful events in the face of some unforeseen challenges. Throughout the year, CSW has been involved with the coordination of three energizing, high-profile events (a Welcome Tea with Dr. Noel Schulz, the University of Idaho’s Women’s Leadership Conference, and the Women’s Recognition Luncheon), an unprecedented membership drive, and a university-wide ad hoc task force on paid family leave, all the while conducting routine subcommittee work and dealing with some unforeseen leadership transitions.

Celebrating our Successes and Addressing our Challenges

The Welcome Tea with Dr. Noel Schulz event was held on October 12, 2016, at the Lewis Alumni Center, spearheaded by CSW, with collaboration from the Women’s Resource Center and the Association for Faculty Women. The goal of the event was to welcome First Lady Noel Schulz and give her the opportunity to meet the women of Washington State University. The event was a success and gathered two dozen or so women who had the opportunity to engage in some lively exchanges with the First Lady, CSW leadership, as well as with each other.

The University of Idaho’s 2017 Women’s Leadership Conference planning committee met throughout the year to prepare for the day-long event on March 30, 2017. Melanie-Angela Neuilly, as Past Chair and Interim Co-Chair of the CSW was asked to participate in the planning committee and secured sponsorship for the event from the Commission ($1,000), WSU ADVANCE ($500), and the WSU Women’s Resource Center ($1,000). Dr. Kelly Ward was invited to be the opening speaker, and Dr. Noel Schulz was invited to participate in the plenary panel session. The Commission also put together an information panel which was very well-attended. Over half of all conference attendees were from Washington State University. It is noteworthy that the high level of interest from WSU has led organizers to limit the scope of the next conference to the University of Idaho community, potentially leaving the WSU community without such an outlet. We propose avenues in the next section to address this need.

For the second year in a row, CSW was instrumental in ensuring that the Women’s Recognition Luncheon took place. In the midst of continued transition in the Women’s Resource Center leadership, CSW members stepped in and provided fundamental event organization to a degree unprecedented in the luncheon’s history. This high-profile, university-wide event is important to campus life and critical to one of the CSW missions, which is to recognize the WSU Women of Distinction and Woman of the Year each year. In spite of these challenges, the luncheon was once again a success. Dr. Noel Schulz addressed a crowd of over 500 in a sold-out CUB Senior Ballroom, and a slate of eight deserving women were recognized out of an unprecedented pool of 70 award nominations. This would never have been possible without a
concerted effort on the part of CSW, the Women’s Resource Center, and the Office of the President.

Indicative of the increased recognition and elevation of CSW’s profile within the WSU community, we had a strong membership drive this year. Every spring semester, we hold a membership drive to replace outgoing members or fill vacancies. This April, nineteen candidates applied for membership. These candidates included existing members renewing membership as well as new applicants. We saw an increase in applicants from WSU Spokane and within representatives from administrative professionals at the Pullman campus. The success of the drive is likely linked to the continued success of the high profile Women’s Recognition Luncheon, but also the heightened awareness of the importance of diversity and engagement within the campus community. This drive has refreshed our voting membership with enthused members eager to start work this upcoming academic year.

Support from the Office of the President this year has gone beyond the Women’s Recognition Luncheon. Faced with an unforeseen leadership change when the CSW 2016-2017 Chair stepped down mid-year, Past Chair Neuilly and Chair-Elect Cooper stepped in as co-chairs and reached out to the President and his office for administrative support. As a result, the Office of the President agreed to provide administrative support to the Commission, especially around the Commission’s busy times (during the summer for member appointments, website updates, and room reservations and in the spring for award nominations and the membership drive), as well as a financial home. This move will provide some needed stability and a clearinghouse for CSW finances. As a volunteer organization, CSW does not have an office by design, and leadership and membership fluctuate. While this ensures the Commission remains relevant, nimble, and independent, it is problematic for audits. With support from the Office of the President, the Commission will ensure financial accountability, while also freeing its leadership to focus on work central to CSW’s core mission.

Women’s Recognition Luncheon

While the Women’s Recognition Luncheon (WRL) was, once again, a success this year, we feel strongly that some of the issues that arose in the last two years need to be addressed. First of all, the WRL does not fall under the purview of the CSW: historically CSW is only responsible for the awards that are given during this event. WRL has long been run by the Women’s Resource Center, serving as a marquee event to raise awareness about the Center’s role and work. The luncheon’s organization requires significant institutional knowledge, fundraising and logistical resources, and person-hours. As a volunteer organization, CSW is ill-equipped to fill those roles, despite having done so to a significant degree in the past two years. In the midst of leadership transitions at the Women’s Resource Center, it is unclear whether WRL will remain housed in that office. Considering the luncheon’s popularity and CSW’s vested interest in seeing the event continue as the perfect vehicle for the Women of Distinction/Woman of the Year Awards, we recommend that the luncheon be temporarily housed in the Office of the President or with University Events until the Women’s Resource Center has permanent leadership.
The past two years’ successes also bring to our attention the possible need for a change of venue for the event. As this year’s luncheon was sold out, this year’s planning committee, along with the Office of the President, has discussed the possibility of moving the event to the Beasley Coliseum. This, in conjunction with this year’s record WSU involvement and interest in the UI Women’s Leadership Conference (and subsequent decision to limit future iterations of the conference to the UI community), leads us to also recommend the WRL be rethought of as a longer, perhaps day-long event, including a luncheon, but also a leadership conference and other professional development opportunities for women. The WRL is formally titled the Women’s Recognition Luncheon and Symposium, and the enactment of the term “symposium” has varied throughout the years. We propose a more expansive understanding of it be advanced in the next iteration of the event on March 8, 2018.

**Task Force on Paid Family Leave**

In the 2016-2017 CSW report, the Employee and Student-Parent Life subcommittee recommended an expansion of the WSU shared leave program to include childbirth as a qualifying condition. As a result, Interim President Dan Bernardo requested a University Task Force be formed to examine the feasibility of such a policy change. Throughout the following year, the Task Force’s focus shifted from shared leave expansion to paid family leave and resulted in a White Paper written at the behest of President Schulz. In the White Paper (see Appendix 1), the Task Force identified practices pertaining to paid family leave at current top 25 public research universities, as well as in some of Washington State’s highest profile employers. The results outlined the wide variation in policies, from availability of compensation distinct from other benefits, length of time covered, mode of financing, or type of employees covered. What was uniform was how much more generous private industry in Washington State was than any of the top 25 public research universities examined. Concurrently with the Task Force’s efforts, the Washington State Legislature introduced several bills on the topic during their 2017-2018 session. One such bill was passed in June 2017 and signed into law by Governor Inslee in July 2017. The newly adopted law provides for twelve weeks of paid family leave at 90% pay up to $1,000/week. *It is the Task Force’s recommendation that a working group be put in place to establish optimal implementation of this new state law within the university, as well as develop ways to compensate employees beyond the state requirements in order to be more competitive with private industry in Washington State.*

**Initiative on Campus Culture and Climate**

CSW commends WSU’s recent efforts to improve campus culture and climate. We are excited by the new initiative and its proposed actions. We have reached out to Provost Bernardo and Vice President Mary Jo Gonzales offering our assistance and willingness to partner on any of the actions. While we have received confirmation that CSW members will be included in the process, we have not had any updates since June and, in the meantime, the search committee for the new associate vice president was formed. We appreciate that the process of committee formation and selection is time consuming and requires careful deliberation. However, we do want to ensure that representatives from women-focused groups (whether from CSW, Coalition
for Women Students, the Women’s Resource Center, or the Association for Faculty Women) serve on these important search committees.

In addition, we would like to address one of the concerns mentioned within the preliminary report on campus climate efforts - “The unavailability of annual progress reports from WSU departments and committees responsible for enhancing faculty and staff diversity” (from WSU’s press release on campus culture and climate; June 1, 2017). CSW releases our annual report publically every year. We distribute the annual report to the President’s Office, circulate it on our listserv and post it on our webpage. These reports are also archived on our Sharepoint drive. We do acknowledge, however, that we could make a more direct effort to share our reports with affinity groups across campuses. *We will make this a priority for the upcoming year as we agree that sharing our efforts will not only increase transparency on campus, but help grow and build collaborations.*

Related to WSU’s new initiative, CSW continues to actively engage with hiring practices across the campuses. Part of the duties of CSW’s “Search Committee/Affirmative Action Liaison” executive committee officer is to select ad hoc representative of the Commission to serve on university search committees. While successful in some efforts to provide representation, we have found it difficult to identify the steps to follow to remain informed of the various upper administration hires and search committee processes. This often limits the Commission’s ability to conduct one of the primary charges of the committee: to advise on “matters pertaining to women employees such as job opportunities, hiring practices, career advancement, salary equity, appointments to key committees in leadership roles.” This also extends to efforts ensuring a diverse applicant pool by contributing to the creation of the position description and dissemination of the position advertisement.

*CSW recommends increased transparency in committee selection processes and representation from women-focused groups serving the university. CSW would like to reiterate our willingness and desire to partner with the university in its initiative to improve campus climate and culture.*

**Projections for the Upcoming Year**

As we start the new academic year, the CSW leadership projects several emphasis areas. We anticipate engaging in campus climate efforts, both within our own subcommittees and as part of university-level activities. We look forward to partnering with the new WRC director, once in place. We also will work to strengthen our connections with other affinity groups on campus such as GIESO, GPSA, CWS, and ASWSU. We will refresh our ex officio membership list as well as reach out to groups looking for ways to couple on projects moving CSW’s mission forward.
President’s Commission on the Status of Women

Women of Distinction & Woman of the Year Awards Committee

CSW has recognized members of the university community as Women of Distinction and WSU’s Woman of the Year for two decades, and during this time the awards program has gone from strength to strength. In 2016, the Awards Committee received 40 award nominations, a new record; in 2017, the number of nominations soared to 70. Increased visibility for the awards and luncheon in the past several years likely led to this increase, perhaps along with heightened national attention being paid to women’s issues.

CSW appreciates the awards committee volunteers, university staff, and community members who support the awards program, and are grateful for the support of the President’s Office in providing a budget that supports the presentation of these awards. The awards have become a major way that the university recognizes the work and contributions of women to WSU. Each nominee and awardee inspires others and truly makes WSU and Washington State a better place.

CSW is fortunate to have had the Women’s Recognition Luncheon and Symposium (WRL) as a venue in which to present these awards annually. Even in the years of budgetary crisis following the Great Recession, campus stakeholders maintained the luncheon as a public venue in which to celebrate the awardees’ accomplishments and contributions. As the luncheon continues to grow and experience the fruits of past successes, it also runs the risks of outgrowing its current space and of becoming too large to carry off well given the limited Women’s Resource Center staffing that has been available to lead this event’s planning and execution. In light of this, CSW recommends the following measures:

- **Planning and execution of the 2018 WRL by people with complex event-planning capabilities, such as University Events, with programmatic input from CSW and other stakeholders/past planning committee members;**
- **Moving the luncheon to a larger locale, such as Beasley Coliseum;**
- **Developing the luncheon into a more comprehensive event in order to add a leadership development component.**
WSU Children’s Center (WSUCC)

CSW would like to express our appreciation for the WSUCC’s leadership, who have continued to make positive changes to support the WSUCC’s growth as an early childhood education provider. CSW strongly commends the positive developments that have been noted in the past year including the following:

- Improved learning environments, including replacing classroom books, and enhancing spaces for learning that share materials economically while contributing to children’s learning.
- Improving outdoor learning spaces has been a priority this year and will be a continued focus in the coming year to ensure a safe and inviting learning environment for children and families.
- Receipt of one-time funding from the S&A Fees Committee to enhance WSUCC’s small toddler play area.
- Communication and outreach with other departments within the University to connect with those interested in establishing student project sites, activities or research at the WSUCC.
- Evaluation from the Early Achievers program with a rating of 4 (on a 5 point scale) and overall positive feedback.
- Completion of a USDA study evaluating the high quality food service provided by WSUCC through family style dining practices and a nutritious menu. In April, the Children’s Center received its triennial review of its implementation of the USDA Child Care Food program. This program provides reimbursement for food costs, based on the number of children whose family income makes them eligible for free and reduced-cost lunches. The review includes examination of one month’s records and observation of the classroom food service procedures. The review indicated good record keeping processes and high quality implementation of family-style dining procedures that are required by the USDA food program. In the review month, which is representative of the academic year, nutritious breakfasts, lunches, and suppers (for evening care) and snacks were served to 166 children. Of this total, 45% were income eligible for free or reduced price lunch, which results in a reimbursement of about $7500.
- Appointment of the new Assistant Director, Michael Chapman. Michael has been an integral part of the WSU Children’s Center as a preschool teacher for over 22 years and was also a recent recipient of the Crimson Spirit Award.

WSUCC will begin the self-study phase of accreditation through the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs. This is a two year self-study process. The National Accreditation Commission has 91 Standards divided into 6 component areas. The
standards with their indicators are organized by component area into the Administrator’s Report and Classroom Observation. Standards are the criteria used to identify high-quality outcomes for young children.

Unfortunately, the WSUCC is anticipating a significant reduction in funding this year as a result of changes made in the federal Department of Education’s Child Care Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) grant availability. This grant provides a subsidy on preschool tuition to student parents who are income eligible. Qualifying students can apply for a 30% discount in addition to the 30% of the preschool tuition that is covered by their S&A fees. Last year, 60 students qualified and were funded this way. Loss of this grant will likely have a substantial effect on the ability of these families to afford WSUCC’s services. WSUCC did submit an application for continued funding to the Department of Education’s CCAMPIS program in June 2017. However, the total amount to be dispersed is half that of what was offered in the last round four years ago. Funding will be dependent on the outcome of federal budget decisions still pending. WSUCC leadership remains hopeful and will keep CSW and the President updated about the outcome of the application.

The WSUCC leadership has been very involved in the CSW this year, regularly attending general membership meetings and sharing updates on improvements and initiatives with both the general membership and the Employee and Student-Parent Life subcommittee members. CSW looks forward to continued collaboration and anticipates more positive growth for WSUCC in the future.

Childcare at WSU Spokane

Our student led initiative has been successful. We were able to get a survey sent to staff, faculty, and students this past spring and received 458 responses, with responses from 95 faculty, 161 staff, and 202 students. The overwhelming majority supported an on-campus childcare facility, which is our long-term vision. When asked about using student fees to subsidize childcare, the majority of students responded that they would support the use of student fees to subsidize access to childcare. We have been working closely with James Mohr, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and through Student Affairs, requested $12,000 from S&A fees for a reimbursement program to start this coming fall semester. Students would apply via a form on CougSync for a childcare reimbursement and would potentially receive a grant of up to $600 for the school year. That would allow 20 students to apply for a total of $12,000. The $600 cap is not set in stone. It has yet to be settled and depends on how many students apply. The Academic Support Center in Student Affairs will handle the applications and the reimbursements.

Additionally, we have been working with the Association for Faculty Women of WSU Spokane as they are also interested in developing better access to childcare for faculty and staff, preferably via an on-campus facility. We have had discussions about a mid term goal potentially being to form a partnership with an established company like KinderCare or YMCA, with the hope of getting a sort of institutional discount, guaranteed number of admittance, and access to multiple locations. The long term goal then, would be to establish an on-campus facility, either
by working with the same company, or building something up from the ground, which may be more difficult and take more time, but could potentially open greater opportunities.

Chancellor Lisa Brown is fully supportive of this initiative and had recently hired a consultant to find out about opportunities for developing such an on-campus facility and how to establish and fund the educational component. One major issue raised is the idea of partnering with other interests in Spokane's University District, in order to create more partnerships to both give the issue weight and make a center more financially feasible. Another idea advanced is to attempt to procure funding from the state to establish an early childcare initiative.

Chancellor Brown is going to form an official committee tasked with issues related to establishing access to affordable childcare on this campus, and will nominate members to populate it, to include some of those who have already been working on this in an unofficial status. She will also inform incoming Chancellor Daryll DeWald of this committee, the work that has been done so far, and plans for the future.

*Childcare at WSU Tri-Cities*

CSW very much supports accessible and affordable childcare for WSU community members across the state, including at the WSU Tri-Cities campus. Following a community needs assessment, the Tri-Cities campus released a request for qualifications to solicit for a private child care provider earlier this year. A selection committee heard proposals from three providers this spring and is in the process of identifying a preferred provider to engage in further discussions. CSW will continue to monitor Tri-Cities campus developments regarding childcare and has offered to assist in implementation or provide membership to serve on the selection committee, since information about this committee has not been publicized widely and we want to ensure that there is representation from groups that represent diversity specifically (e.g., representatives from CSW or the campus’s Diversity and Inclusion Council.)

*Co-Chairs’ Note:*

Next year, we would like to see this subcommittee further explore campus specific surveys on child care use (both on and off campus) and investigate the possible use of a sliding scale for child care costs at WSUCC and/or other ways to support staff and students who use the center.

*CSW recommends that WSU continue to support high quality and affordable child care that is accessible to all members of the WSU community.*
President’s Commission on the Status of Women

Mentoring and Professional Development Subcommittee Report

The focus of the Mentoring and Professional Development subcommittee is to examine and make recommendations regarding those issues that further the University’s strategic goals of increasing productivity, creativity, and institutional effectiveness by providing leadership development and mentoring opportunities to faculty, staff, and students.

CSW supports the subcommittee’s efforts to identify avenues to provide a centralized peer mentoring program for faculty and staff. The subcommittee researched the top 25 universities to find out if such programs existed and found one institution (Brown University) that had a peer mentoring program through their HR division. Unfortunately we were not able to connect with an HR representative to learn more about the program, but through their website we were able to obtain a document outlining their Staff Mentoring Plan (see Appendix 2).

The subcommittee recognizes that there are challenges with oversight, administration and staff resources to implement such a program. This program seems to naturally align with the Office of Human Resource Services and the next step is to engage their leadership to determine if they believe this might be possible. If a peer mentor program can be developed, the committee recommends that staff involvement could be counted toward the allotted training hours that all staff may use annually.

**CSW recommends that WSU policies on personnel training and development be more strongly publicized and implemented for all WSU staff.**

The subcommittee also continued discussions on how best to track employee professional development requests to ensure that supervisors are accountable for reasons why an employee might not be approved for such requests. However, the subcommittee decided that an alternative solution would be to ensure that a list of resources be posted on the Human Resources website for staff seeking assistance with regard to denied professional development requests. Examples of resources the subcommittee recommends listing are OEO, the Employee Assistance Program, or Ombudsman’s Office.

We continue to recommend a conscious effort to educate all supervisors across the WSU system about the benefits of staff professional development during supervisor training. While new supervisors receive this message in the new supervisor staff development series, we recommend that all supervisors be reminded of the benefits of staff professional development and be encouraged to identify and promote appropriate development opportunities for their staff. CSW is excited to see several new professional development modules and opportunities for staff in the past year, such as the Research Administration series, and we encourage the further development and dissemination of modules to address ongoing staff development needs.
The committee will continue to promote peer mentoring relationships and networking among CSW members. The committee will continue to use the CSW Biography template for voting members and this information will be available on the CSW SharePoint site.
President’s Commission on the Status of Women
Institutional Climate, Oversight, and Administration Subcommittee Report

Introduction

Our main objective for this year was to evaluate the current availability of campus climate and faculty salary data. We took several steps in hopes of obtaining data to analyze, but came up short on individual level climate and salary data (see “Current Progress” section). These challenges in obtaining quality data mirror challenges of past years. For example, in 2015 and 2016, the Institutional Oversight and Administration subcommittee gathered data about WSU from Business Objects and from a project by Oklahoma State University (OSU). After analysis, a clear gender inequity in salary was found in both datasets, especially at the Associate Professor level. However, these data are very limited. The Business Objects data were individual level data, but they did not include department level information. By contrast, the OSU data had department level information, but were aggregated and unable to be analyzed at the individual level. For several years now we have tried to find data that is both comprehensive and at the individual level, but this task still remains a challenge. In order for us to make recommendations regarding both salary equity and campus climate, more comprehensive, individual level data are needed.

Our work has much justification, especially regarding the Drive to 25 Initiative. For WSU to be a top 25 research university, our campus culture must reflect diversity and inclusion. Having a campus climate that promotes diversity and inclusion, as well as salary equity, will help recruit and retain top faculty candidates and staff, facilitate an environment for more effective student and faculty research, and promote a healthy learning environment for students to reach their full potential. In order for WSU to improve in these areas and become a top 25 research university, a deeper analysis of salary and climate data is key.

In this report, we first discuss the work our subcommittee completed in the 2016-17 academic year. We also discuss the current challenges to obtaining quality climate and salary data. Lastly, we make recommendations for more transparent data practices at WSU and next steps.

Current Progress

In order to obtain data on climate and salary, we conducted a systematic search for faculty salary data that would allow us to answer relevant questions. This search included inquiries to the Faculty Senate, HRS, the Provost’s Office, and ADVANCE, as well as individual faculty members known to conduct similar work. In the course of such search, it became
apparent that these data cannot be found anywhere in complete or necessary formats, especially with regard to an examination of potential gender inequity in faculty salary.

The subcommittee met with Institutional Research to discuss the best options for data collection and analysis. IR informed us that a new system, ActivityInsight, will be in place for faculty next year and will contain nearly all variables of interest to the Commission (e.g., research productivity, number of students supervised, service commitments, etc.). This new system should allow for a more comprehensive study of possible gender inequity in faculty salary to be completed in time for next year’s annual report. And while there are a few variables of interest that are not encapsulated within ActivityInsight, it would be possible to add to it with some additional effort. This is further addressed in the “Recommendations and Next Steps” section.

**Recommendations and Next Steps**

We have several recommendations going forward, and would like to continue this conversation with President Schulz in the next academic year. These recommendations primarily involve more transparent internal data collection and reporting practices at WSU. Based on our work from this year, we recommend the following:

- **More detailed breakdowns of data regarding salary satisfaction and campus climate measures (e.g., HRS surveys).** Much of the online data we obtained do not break down salary satisfaction or other climate measures by gender or ethnicity. We request that all internal reporting of data, especially data concerning equity, have these breakdowns.

- **A central repository of raw data (with identifying information removed) collected at WSU.** This will allow data collected internally to be used for other purposes that give back to the institution instead of stagnating after projects are completed.

- **Departments who conduct employment or climate surveys (e.g., HRS) should consult with the Commission on the Status of Women and constituents from other on-campus organizations concerned about equity regarding questions to include in future surveys and other data collection means.** This initiative would help bridge the gap between data collection/reporting and the implementation of equity practices at WSU.

- **In collaboration with Institutional Research, begin collecting cohort-level data on new hires at WSU.** This data collection would likely involve such information as whether or not the new faculty member is part of a dual hire, their scholarly output at hiring, if they negotiated their starting salary, etc. It would likely be more qualitative in nature than the information offered by ActivityInsight, which could offer different, important insights.

- **IR has also recommended the university implement a comprehensive exit survey for faculty leaving the university.** It is entirely possible that those who are experiencing
gender-based problems at this university would not be captured in more traditional data collection, as that population is more likely to leave the university for other opportunities.

- **In order to facilitate the above goals, as well as work on the data not captured by ActivityInsight, the Commission requests a graduate research assistant of some variety to work in tandem with Institutional Research.** This would likely only need to be a one-time position, as the work required to catch the database up to current standards and develop new data collection procedures would be taxing initially, but mostly self-sustaining from that point forward.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Task Force on Paid Family Leave White Paper

Appendix 2: Example of Mentorship Program from Brown University
Executive Summary

National comparisons:
- Nine of the top 25 public research universities offer paid family leave for all employees; two other universities have paid family leave for their academic employees only;
- Most of these policies are internally funded, but two involve opt-in insurance, and three involve short term disability policies;
- Some universities without paid family leave use various accommodations as well as access to different types of pooled leave to ease FMLA;
- Where available, less than 2% of employees use paid family leave policies, most of them are non-academic staff;
- Lack of faculty participation in such policies when available may explain lack of traction on such issues with top universities;

Washington State:
- Large private sector employers in Washington State such as Amazon and Microsoft offer very generous paid family leave packages (up to 20 weeks at full pay);
- Washington State legislature is likely to pass 12 weeks of paid family leave policy as part of its 2017-2018 budget resolution;

WSU in context:
- Washington State University employees’ experiences with issues pertaining to family leave seem to rely too much on ad hoc solutions with varied degrees of success;
- Washington State University needs to address the complexity of the problem while recognizing that all Cougs, regardless of employment status, deserve family-friendly policies;

Recommendations for WSU:
- If the 2017-2018 Washington State legislative session does not lead to a statewide policy on paid family leave, it is this Task Force’s recommendation that WSU investigate using Short Term Disability and/or an expansion of shared leave to address gaps in FMLA coverage, with the caveat that such solutions leave employees devoid of any remaining leave and thus financially vulnerable;
- If the 2017-2018 Washington State legislative session does lead to a statewide policy change on paid family leave, it is this Task Force’s recommendation that WSU establish a working group in order to equitably implement such a state mandate across the rich diversity of employee classes and situations.

Preamble

The WSU Task Force on Paid Family Leave (henceforth referred to as the Task Force) was convened by then Interim President Bernardo as a result of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women’s (CSW) 2015 Annual Report. In this report, CSW recommended current qualifying conditions for shared
leave be expanded to be more equitable to women in the workplace, with the intent to provide more coverage for maternity leave.

The Task Force, co-Chaired by CSW’s Past Chair as well as the Association for Faculty Women’s Past Chair, and supported mainly by the Vice-President for Government Relations, gathered a wide swath of WSU constituencies including but not limited to faculty, staff, graduate students, as well as various experts on issues pertaining to family-friendly policies in academia and beyond.

Upon convening, the Task Force opened its purview to consider issues pertaining to paid family leave more broadly than its initial focus on the expansion of shared leave.

With then incoming WSU President Kirk Schulz’s Drive to 25 initiative being announced in the fall of 2016, the Task Force focused its efforts on gathering family leave policy data from top 25 public research institutions. The Washington State 2017 Legislative session saw the introduction of seven bills pertaining to issues of paid family leave, thus slightly shifting the focus of the Task Force from exploring existing academic policies, to articulating academic policies in the possible context of a changing state law.

This white paper presents the state of paid family leave at top 25 public research institutions and articulates recommendations pertaining to both the state of Washington and WSU-specific conditions and needs.

**Paid Family Leave at Top 25 Public Research Universities**

Family leave at top 25 public research universities takes many different forms and follows varied approaches. Overall, only nine of the top 25 public research universities (as identified by the Center for Measuring University Performance\(^1\) at Arizona State University) had some sort of paid family leave policy available to all employee types as of 2016-2017. At those universities, the most common length of time provided through the paid family leave policy was six weeks, and it was funded either through individual departments, or through an opt-in insurance, at full or partial pay (see Table 1) (nota bene: included in Table 1 are also two universities with paid leave policies for academic faculty only).

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<th>University</th>
<th>Length of time</th>
<th>Funding mechanism</th>
<th>Full or partial pay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>6 weeks (birth mothers)</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Full pay</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 weeks (other parents)</td>
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<td>UCLA</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Opt-in insurance</td>
<td>55% pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Full pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan – Ann Arbor</td>
<td>6-8 weeks for staff</td>
<td>Short Term Disability</td>
<td>Full pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variable for faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota – Twin Cities</td>
<td>6 weeks for birth mothers</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 weeks for other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) https://mup.asu.edu/
policies are so rare to begin with. Indeed, as faculty often are the most visible class of employees to an average of 162 staff. The low faculty usage of such policies when they exist may explain why such Purdue University employees are non-offering paid family leave policies. Amount of information obtained, we estimate that less than 2% of employees in those universities offering paid family leave policies make use of such policies in a given year, and that most of those employees are non-academic staff. The most detailed account the Task Force obtained pertained to Purdue University – West Lafayette, where an average of 21 faculty used the policy each year, compared to an average of 162 staff. The low faculty usage of such policies when they exist may explain why such policies are so rare to begin with. Indeed, as faculty often are the most visible class of employees in

| University of California – San Diego | 6 weeks (with possibility for more) (academic employees only) | Unit (unless grant-funded) | Full pay |
| University of Pittsburgh | 6-8 weeks for birth mothers | Short Term Disability | 60% pay (after 30-day elimination period) |
| Purdue University – West Lafayette | 6 weeks | Unit | Full pay |
| Michigan State University | 12 weeks for birth mothers 6 weeks (other parents) (academic employees only) | Unit/Short Term Disability | Full pay |
| University of Arizona | 6 weeks | Unit | Unspecified |
| Rutgers University – New Brunswick | 6 weeks | Opt-in insurance (through state) | 67% of wages up to $633/week |

**Case study: Michigan State University**

As the land-grant institution in a somewhat similarly landscaped state, Michigan State University is often used as a comparison point for WSU. Because of this as well as its generous benefits package, Michigan State University provides for an interesting case study. Indeed, with the caveat that this benefit is provided for academic employees only, MSU affords eligible faculty with a full twelve weeks of paid parental leave. This is done through a combination of six weeks of paid parental leave and six weeks of short-term disability leave, and some possibility for modified work duties.

In the words of Jesenia Pizarro, then Associate Professor in the School of Criminal Justice:

Given the two policies, and the support of my chair (X), I had almost a year off [...]. [My son] was born in September so I took the 12 weeks after that which ended in January and was released from all teaching and service in the spring. I did not go back to full work responsibilities until the following Fall when [my son] was 11 months old.

**Inventive solutions**

While paid family leave policies are not the norm in the top 25 public research universities, it is worth noting that the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill allows for use of shared leave if birth mothers have not accrued enough sick or other leave to cover the entire length of maternity leave. The University of Florida has an “advanced sick leave” program through which employees can “borrow” sick leave to be repaid within six years.

**Fiscal impact**

In terms of fiscal impact of paid family leave policies, the Task Force has received very little feedback from top 25 research institutions (only three universities tracked such information). From the limited amount of information obtained, we estimate that less than 2% of employees in those universities offering paid family leave policies make use of such policies in a given year, and that most of those employees are non-academic staff. The most detailed account the Task Force obtained pertained to Purdue University – West Lafayette, where an average of 21 faculty used the policy each year, compared to an average of 162 staff. The low faculty usage of such policies when they exist may explain why such policies are so rare to begin with. Indeed, as faculty often are the most visible class of employees in
academia, and especially in research universities, their lack of engagement on the topic of paid family leave does not create much traction for universities to take action. There are several reasons why faculty may not participate in paid family leave policies or discussions, ranging from fear such policies may impact their progress on the tenure track, or perceptions surrounding the flexibility of a faculty’s work. These issues, however, have to be addressed as progress on the topic cannot move forward without faculty’s involvement.

2017-2018 Washington State Legislative Session

Washington state provides a fairly distinct political landscape. With the Seattle-area being home to large corporations such as Amazon and Microsoft (to only name two) where paid family leave packages include twenty weeks of full pay leave for birth mothers among other benefits, the pressures for paid family leave is one felt way beyond the walls of the ivory tower.

The 2017-2018 legislative session, however, saw no less than seven bills pertaining to paid family leave get introduced to one or the other of the two chambers, some partisan, but several with strong bi-partisan support. As the second special session approaches a conclusion, it appears plausible that some sort of employment tax-based paid family leave insurance policy may pass. This could preempt some voter-initiative campaign similar to that seen recently for minimum wage. Indeed, latest updates seem to indicate a high likelihood of a 12-week employee/employer tax-based package.2

What Does This Mean for WSU?

Through extensive discussions with diverse university groups, it appears evident that the solution to paid family leave will need to recognize the complex landscape of Washington State University employee classifications. Indeed, while faculty in and of themselves constitute a group whose needs and responsibilities can visibly complicate any discussion surrounding paid family leave, the differences between civil service and administrative professional employees may cause even more difficulties, and this does not even take graduate students into account. This is probably why many top 25 public research universities offer some sort of policy to accommodate their faculty’s family needs, while excluding other classifications of employees. While we recognize that faculty’s work structure can be considered both an impediment as well as an advantage in designing family-friendly policies, it is this Task Force’s strong opinion that WSU ought to ensure that all employee classes be provided with equivalent protections.

With the special legislative session still pending any resolution, specific recommendations seem a bit premature. If no legislation is passed, then it is this Task Force’s recommendation that the university moves forward with an institutional-level solution to paid family leave. In this regard, it is this Task Force’s opinion that some sort of Short Term Disability insurance program might provide the most promising solution, while an expansion of shared leave3 could be used in combination with Short Term Disability, or possibly considered as a self-standing solution. These solutions would need to be articulated in ways that accommodate all classifications of employees, and faculty-specific needs should be addressed in addition through a modification of the Faculty Handbook for a uniform application throughout units. Such a solution, however, comes with a fairly large caveat that it leaves employees vulnerable upon their return to the workplace, as they will have now exhausted all their accrued leave.

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3 A brief from the Attorney General’s Office establishing the legal feasibility of this solution is attached.
This is particularly problematic for new parents, who then have to use unpaid leave for any follow-up doctors’ appointments and daycare-related illnesses that are bound to happen to young children.

If a legislative solution is passed, then it is this Task Force’s recommendation that a working group establish how to best apply the specifics of the new policy to the unique challenge of WSU’s employment landscape. Such a working group would need to include representation from all concerned offices and areas, including, but not limited to, the Provost Office, Human Resources, the Attorney General’s office, Faculty Senate, the Administrative Professional Advisory Council, and the Commission on the Status of Women.

In Cougs’ Own Voices

Finally, it is important to remember that policies have real impact on real people’s lives, and that while for many of us, our experience at WSU is a positive one, the lack of paid family leave policy has and will continue to create difficult situations for individual Cougs. Presented here are a few examples of how such policies can affect Cougs’ lives.

Marisa Naylor, Academic Coordinator II (no longer with WSU):

When I had my first daughter, I had been employed as a civil servant in the Summer Session office for 21 months. The most leave one can accrue as a first-step civil servant in that span of time is 336 hours; once you account for holiday closures, that amount is reduced to 272 hours; accounting for all prenatal appointments brings the total even lower to 250 hours. I saved diligently and believe I managed to have approximately 170 hours of leave to my name by the time that my daughter was born, but that number pales in comparison to the 480 hours that a 12-week leave period encompasses.

Before I began my maternity leave, I had contacted our HR department in regard to shared leave. At that time, I was advised that so long as my doctor advised against returning to work, that I would qualify for shared leave. I followed the steps, had my doctor provide a note and complete the paperwork, and make an appointment with HR to submit the formidable package, only to be dismissed and told I “shouldn’t even bother” to submit it because I “just had a baby; it’s not like you had cancer” (I use quotations because this is verbatim per the conversation). […]

Jessica Harris, Graduate Coordinator:

I gave birth to my daughter at 41 weeks on January 28th, 2017 after working the whole week past my due date. Despite working at WSU for just shy of two years, I had only accrued enough leave (annual and sick) to cover 4 weeks of leave. In order to cover our insurance premium and keep some money coming in, I elected to take a total of 8 weeks of leave using a mixture of LWOP and my accrued leave. I am aware that under the FMLA I was guaranteed 12 weeks of unpaid leave; and while I would have loved to take more time off to recover and bond with my newborn daughter, we simply could not afford it. I had considered applying for shared leave, but the eligibility requirements of an employee “suffering from an extraordinary or severe illness, injury, impairment, physical or mental condition which is serious, extreme, and/or life threatening” did not seem to apply to my situation. I know women who have applied for shared leave following a difficult C-section or severe post-partum depression, but I had a relatively simply natural deliver and minimal depression issues. I was left feeling pressured financially to return to work after only 8 weeks, which was emotionally and physically distressing. The only way that I was able to

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4 The stories included here provide only a snippet of the many other stories shared by WSU employees on the topic of family leave. More stories are available to share.
“afford” my 8 weeks of leave was by taking out two credit cards to cover the basic needs of my family that were typically covered by my full paycheck.

Cassandra Nichols, Faculty:

We learned that a birth mother chose us to be parents three days before my son was born. This was in December, I was teaching (in addition to working in the Counseling Center), going into finals week, and our son was in the NICU in Spokane (he wound up being there for 6 weeks.) Today he is a healthy and active 12 year old. I was able to use my sick leave and annual leave to take off the next few months and with little warning to my department. My department director and HR worked with me to return to work part time and I was able to work only 1 day a week for 8 months. I did not know about shared leave at the time (and wished I would have known that this might have been an option.) Other than that, I was very grateful to WSU and my department to find creative ways for me to work and get paid and for me to attend to my family. With adoption, parents often do not know until the last minute about whether or not they will be parents to a child (unlike pregnancy when employees have up to 9 months to prepare.) And most parents do not expect to have an infant or child in intensive care for 6 weeks, 80 miles away.

Amanda Beardslee, Executive Assistant:

My personal experience with maternity leave has been a bit of a hurdle and quite stressful. I found out I was pregnant with my son the day after I interviewed for a position with WSU, very stressful. I ended up accepting the position and started my tenure with WSU August 9, 2010. As a new civil service employee I was only allowed to use my sick leave (not annual leave) during my 6 month probationary period, and had to use leave without pay during the university’s December closure. As my delivery would be a repeat c-section in March 2011 I applied for and was approved quite easily for Medical Leave for the required 6 week recovery period. As I would not have enough leave accrued to cover the required recovery period, I then also applied for and was approved for Shared Leave. As great as this sounds to receive Shared Leave you are required to completely exhaust all other means of leave and your personal holiday prior to shared leave kicking in. Which I’m sure works great in most instances, but as a new mom, with what ended up being a preemie (born at 36 weeks) I returned to work sending my 6 week preemie baby to childcare and then had to use leave without pay to cover doctors’ appointments and routine checkups until I had enough leave accrued. As a mom any assistance was appreciated, but the paperwork is VERY cumbersome and the whole process was a bit stressful. Not to mention as a new employee to the university at the time of delivery I was not eligible for FML, which was a bit scary not having that extra protection.

Jump ahead to 2015 and I was pregnant with my daughter, as my delivery would be a repeat c-section in October 2015, I applied for was initially denied Medical Leave. Denial reason, did not qualify as an extraordinary event. [...] After returning the paperwork to my doctor in which he had to explicitly write that it would be an extraordinary procedure (he actually asked me if I was kidding when I said he had to actually write it out). I was finally approved for FML, Medical Leave and Shared Leave on September 22nd, and had my c-section on October 6th.

Task Force Composition

Laura Lavine, Co-Chair, Past Chair, Association for Faculty Women, Assistant Director, CANHRS Office of Research, Professor, Entomology
Melanie-Angela Neully, co-Chair, Past Chair and Interim Co-Chair, President’s Commission on the Status of Women, Associate Professor, Criminal Justice and Criminology
Celestina Barbosa-Leiker, Association for Faculty Women-Spokane, Assistant Dean for Research, Associate Professor, College of Nursing
Deborah Bartlett, Director, Office of Procedures, Records, and Forms
Lisa Brown, Chancellor, WSU Health Sciences Spokane
Erica Carlson, Voting Member, President’s Commission on the Status of Women, Humanities and Social Science Librarian
Heather Davison, Voting Member, President’s Commission on the Status of Women, Contracts Specialist, Office of Contracts
Lauralea Edwards, Administrative Professional Advisory Council Member, Fiscal Office, Business Services/Controller
Mike Gaffney, Director, Division of Government Studies and Services
Judith McDonald, Chair Elect, Faculty Senate, Professor, Mathematics and Statistics
Sean Mossman, Graduate Student, Physics and Astronomy
Colleen Kerr, Vice President for Government Relations
Kristina Peterson-Wilson, Executive Assistant to the Provost
A.G. Rud, Chair, Faculty Senate, Distinguished Professor, Cultural Studies and Social Thought in Education
Christina Sanders, Associate Director, Division of Government Studies and Services
Kelly Ward, Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Recognition, Professor, Educational leadership, sport studies, and educational/counseling psychology
Joan Wu, Faculty Legislative Representative, Professor, Biological Systems Engineering
President’s Commission on the Status of Women

Appendix 2: Example of Mentorship Program at Brown University

Staff Mentoring Program (SMP)

This program will pair early- and mid-career professionals, with two or more years of service, with higher-level staff in a mentoring relationship to foster professional development and career growth while building an inclusive culture of diverse networks.

Mentee Target Audience: Professional staff with at least two years of service at the University as of September 1, 2016.

Program Roles:

- **Mentor**: Mentors will share their professional and organizational knowledge, experience, and contacts while serving as a sounding board and guide for career-focused conversations.

- **Mentee**: Mentees will share their professional skills, career, and network goals along with their individual development plans to direct the conversations and learning.

Required Program Elements:

- **Information Sessions**: All interested parties must attend one of the pre-application information sessions where we will discuss program details and answer questions.

- **Mentee Application and Selection Process**: Participants will apply to the program via a Google Form. If selected, participate in a short interview.

- **Mentor Intake Form and Selection**: Potential mentors will complete a brief questionnaire via a Google Form. All matched and unmatched mentors will be notified via email. All unmatched mentors will be asked to be part of the potential mentor pool for 2017-18.

- **Orientation/Match Day**: October 19, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., all matched pairs will attend a half-day orientation with a sessions designed specifically for mentees and a session for mentors. After the small-group program, the Center for Learning and Professional Development (CLPD) will host a Match Day event where mentees/mentors will learn their matches and participate in guided activities. Pairs will have the opportunity to have lunch together.

- **1:1 Meetings**: Mentoring pairs will meet on their own time for at least one hour each month (October 2016 - June 2017).

- **Full Mentor/Mentee Cohort Meeting**: Thursday, February 2, 2017, 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

- **Full Mentor/Mentee Cohort Meeting**: Thursday, April 6, 2017, 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.

- **Full Mentor/Mentee Cohort Meeting**: Formal Program Close, June 2017.