

COSOW (Committee on the Status of Women) Report to Faculty Council

March 2020

COSOW Committee Members

Chair:

1. Elizabeth Dickinson (Business)

Members:

2. Misha Becker (Linguistics)
3. Sarah Birken (Public Health)
4. Karen Booth (Women & Gender Studies)
5. Ana Felix (Medicine)
6. *Stephanie Forman (Employee Forum Rep, Gilling's)
7. Hallee Haygood (City Planning, Public Admin)
8. Jennifer Larson (English)
9. Kenya McNeal-Trice (Medicine)
10. Brent Wissick (-'21)

Guest:

11. Gloria Thomas (Carolina Women's Center Director)

Charge

"The Committee addresses ongoing concerns of women faculty members, identifies obstacles to achievement and maintenance of equality in the representation and status of women on the faculty, and proposes steps for overcoming these obstacles." (Faculty Code, 4-22)

Report of Activities for 2019-20

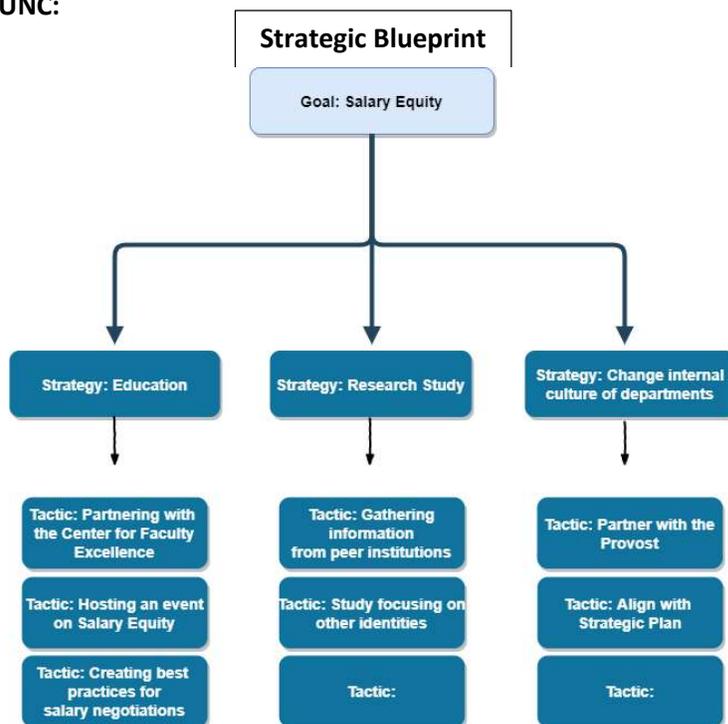
1. Update: COSOW's Study of Gender and Salary at UNC:

In 2019, COSOW conducted the study, "Re-analysis of Gender Pay Inequity at UNC-CH." We have met with the Provost and are working with him and as a committee on a strategic plan to address these issues.

Our biggest effort has been to identify clear goals, and then specific strategies and tactics to achieve those goals.

For example, as the chart to the right shows, we hope to provide a wide-spread educational strategy to help educate administration, departmental chairs, and faculty members on the various mechanisms at play that influence how faculty are paid.

When we reconvene next, we will hopefully develop a multi-year strategic plan to address



the various goals, including salary equity and how to create a better work environment for UNC's women faculty

2. **Other Topics:** In addition to salary equity, COSOW has addressed and discussed the following topics:
 1. **Teaching Evaluations:** COSOW has been supporting the Fixed Term Faculty's (FTF) investigation of instructor teaching evaluations. Teaching evaluations have been shown to have gender (and other) biases that disproportionately affect women faculty. The FTF has been working closely with Ron Strauss by collecting a database of research that shows how this gender (and other) bias affects women (and other) faculty.
 2. **Exit Interviews:** COSOW has talked about ways to make the exit interview process more complete. This is important because UNC currently does not have a comprehensive system to survey faculty who leave about why they are leaving. The goal is to match our peer institutions and what they do with exit interviews.
 3. **Culture Change:** On our radar, we've talked broadly about the following topics that would create positive change for all UNC faculty, women faculty in particular: an on campus child care center, keeping up on our current lactation stations, working with departmental chairs to create positive environments to attract, retain, and promote women faculty.

4. **Provost Meeting (2020):**

In the fall and spring, the Provost Bob Blouin invited Elizabeth Dickinson and Misha Becker to brainstorming sessions to address inequity issues faced by UNC women faculty (and also faculty of color). In these meetings, we focused on three components: Recognize, change culture, and fund.

This information is listed below in order to record the work COSOW has done thus far:

1. RECOGNIZE the Issue by Adding to UNC's Strategic Plan: Achieving faculty salary equity across gender and racial/ethnic groups is integral to several new strategic plan initiatives:

1. **Build community together:** In Kevin's Guskiewicz's words, "make diversity real; don't wait to make changes." If we're to build community together, we need to recognize the inherent benefits of diversity (to the university and to its constituencies). Saying we'll treat all university community members fairly is a necessary first step.
2. **Promote career development:** Promote female faculty at the same pace as male faculty; provide equitable mentoring and opportunities and resources for all faculty (regardless of gender, race, ethnic, etc).
3. **Renew democracy:** A democratic institution succeeds when there is equity. When it fails, there isn't.
4. **Serve to benefit society:** We can be a beacon and trend setter within the UNC system, universities, and larger society about what equity looks like and how it's done.
5. **Optimize operations:** Community members are more productive and more likely to work for the betterment of the community when they are compensated and promoted fairly. Also, the current system of faculty retention is extremely sub-optimal.
 - ➔ **Takeaway: Recognition** by the administration that salary equity is a necessary ingredient in making the strategic plan successful is key to fostering cultural change.



2. CHANGE CULTURE via Education: Lack of Knowledge & Understanding: Many advocate for faculty diversity and salary equity. But, the fact that women faculty at UNC are still paid less than men at all ranks, and the fact that women are still promoted at a slower pace than men, shows that not everyone is on board or understands the complexity.

We're All a Part of the Problem: Life-long beliefs and assumptions about people affect how we think and decide. Every administrator who weighs in on faculty salaries, from the Chancellor to department chairs, should be encouraged to participate in a carefully planned educational program to help us understand how we are all a part of the problem and how to address it. General ideas:

1. First, **educate any administrators** who is involved in faculty salaries and/or retention, including the provost, dean of the college, all divisional SADs and SADs otherwise involved in finance and allocation of resources to faculty.
 2. Second, administrators can help **get the chairs on board**, having participated themselves.
 3. **Use UNC faculty with relevant expertise** in critical gender theory, intersectionality, etc. to help inform the workshops. There's so much knowledge among the faculty. Having the workshops be driven in part by the College's own faculty will help make it more palatable.
 4. **Pilot** the education
 5. Online & mandatory: diversity literature says online and mandatory training are largely problematic.
- ➔ **Takeaway: Culture Change via Education:** *We all have gender biases that affect how we make recruiting, hiring, mentoring, advancement (etc.) decisions. A cultural shift via education needs to happen in order to pave the way for concrete change at step 3.*

3. FUND: Dedicate Funding to Erase Existing Salary Inequities

1. We need more information on which departments/units are problematic [Lynn Williford will have more data soon].
 2. Guidelines for deans/chairs on best practices, how to implement changes given funds.
 3. Make this a part of chairs' annual report?
 4. UNC needs to develop a clear policy on faculty retentions (related to step 2 above, in cultural change)
 5. Someone needs to be appointed to lead educational workshops (e.g. course release for a relevant faculty person?). For example, can we fund an inexpensive graduate student research assistantship (such as an Economics or Statistics Student) to assist Lynn Williford's research efforts?
 6. Source of funds:
 - a. BOG/Legislature
 - b. Faculty view administrator salaries as excessively high. Disparity between administrator and faculty salaries creates low faculty morale and distrust. Administrators could forego raises and/or take a small salary cut and divert that money to erasing gender/racial salary inequity (Ex: James Moeser).
- ➔ **Takeaway: Funding:** *is needed to address these issues. Budgets are tight, but funding to correct current gaps is necessary. How can we create innovative solutions so that we can be the kind of institution that we say we are (and want to be)?*

Other Considerations: Being a "trend setter" | Transparency | Clear guidelines | Accountability | Positive media attention | Retention & counter offer issues | Family-friendly policies & practices | Tenure clock extensions | Family leave requests | Mentoring | What are other institutions doing?