2009-2010 Annual Report: Women's Resource Center

1. Executive Summary: During the Academic Year 2009-2010 the Women’s Resource Center (WRC) offered a variety of programs meant to engage both the Loyola and greater New Orleans communities. As director, I work to offer programming that reflects the interests and meets the needs of the Loyola community. I have continued to focus on establishing partnerships with other units on campus as well as with organizations from the outside community. I have found that, in terms of reaching the widest audience and building community, the most successful programs tend to involve partnerships. Partnership programming is also an effective way to make the most of limited resources.

2. Profile Summary:

2.1 Mission Statement: The mission of the Women’s Resource Center is to provide Loyola women and men with a positive college experience by responding to their needs as gendered human beings and by fostering an environment that is free of sexism and other forms of institutional and individual oppression.

2.2 General Statement: The Women’s Resource Center strives to create a supportive and inclusive campus environment through programming, services, and advocacy. The Center supports the educational mission of Women’s Studies through programming and services: it offers opportunities for students to explore questions and concerns and provides opportunities for intellectual, personal, and professional development and empowerment through programming; it encourages and promotes the interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge about women amongst faculty; and it seeks to include and respond to the needs of staff members.

2.2.1 Staff: One full time director, 2 part time work study students.

3. Assessment

3.1 Methods of Assessment: discussion and feedback from Women’s Studies Committee and Women’s Resource Center Student Advisory Board; “exit” meetings at the end of programs with partners in the program; informal discussion with students, faculty, staff, and community partners about programming; and pre and post evaluation forms for workshops.

3.2 Program and Staff Goals for 2009-2010:

- Firmly establish the WRC as a place that helps to educate and empower the women students on our campus.
- More actively reach out to faculty and staff, working especially to support the Women’s Studies Program and the faculty who do research on gender and women’s issues.
- Continue my community outreach efforts by maintaining already established relationships and building new ones.
My objectives to meet these goals:

- Establishing a WRC Student Advisory Board
- Providing guidance for the WIO (Women’s Issues Organization) students to help them make it a more visible and active student organization.
- Organizing and promoting a discussion group for Women’s Studies faculty and their students
- Working to promote co-programming for the Women’s Studies’ program with other programs on campus
- Maintaining the WRC’s relationships with the local community organizations Metro, Crescent House, and Jeremiah
- Expanding outreach efforts to other groups
- Continuing to cultivate relationships with local women leaders
- Maintaining and cultivating the WRC’s relationship with The White House Project

4. Summary of Achievements

4.1 Unit as a whole:

**Fall 2009**

*Love Your Body Week (September 21-25)*

This event was co-sponsored with University Ministry, University Counseling, Dining Services, Athletics and Wellness, and included the involvement of Loyola faculty, a guest speaker from another university, and local healthcare experts.

*Take Back the Night (Tuesday, October 27)*

This event is co-sponsored with University Counseling and Tulane University and involves the participation of a number of units (e.g Residential Life, University Ministry, etc.) and student organizations from both campuses.

*20th Anniversary Celebration of Women’s Studies (Thursday, October 8)*

*2nd Annual Women’s Retreat (Saturday October 10 – Sunday, October 11)*

This event for undergraduate women is co-sponsored with University Ministry.

*2nd Annual Team Loyola–ACS “Making Strides” (Saturday October 10)*

This event to support the fight to end breast cancer is co-sponsored with Residential Life and Athletics and Wellness.
Spring 2010

WRC/AAUW workshops:

Campaign College (February 20)

Colleges from around the country applied to have this workshop on their campus. Ten were chosen, Loyola among them. This workshop is meant to empower women on a number of levels and so requires significant student involvement in the planning stages. The specific focus of the workshop is to encourage young women to run for student government office which ideally will inspire them to later run for political office. AAUW will be doing this workshop with us again next year. They have revised the workshop a bit and renamed it to “Elect Her.” (This workshop is fully funded by the AAUW.)

Start Smart (April 17)

This workshop teaches young women how to negotiate for better salaries/benefits in the workplace. This event was co-sponsored with Tulane’s NCI. The workshop included a “train the trainers” session so we now have a group of Loyola staff/faculty who can lead these workshops in the future.

Women’s History Month: Writing Women Back into History

“Half the Sky”

Two events that focused on women in developing countries around the world. These two programs were co-sponsored with LUCAP and CIE.

- March 3: Lecture on women and poverty and disaster relief in Haiti
- March 4: Interactive movie event for greater New Orleans community at Elmwood Theatre

Louisiana Women (March 23)

A dinner and discussion with a group of scholars from around the country about their research on women in Louisiana history.

Twin Lenses (March 19)

Showing of the film “Twin Lenses” about the twin photographers Kathryn Abbe and Frances McLaughlin, followed by a discussion with the film’s directors – Nina Rosenblum and Dennis Watlington. This event was initiated by Carol Leake of Graphic Design and co-sponsored by Biever, Mary Mc Cay, Leslie Parr, William Quigley, and the WRC.
Rise Up (March 18)

This program gives our students an opportunity to listen to and talk with successful women in the New Orleans community. The focus is on women mentoring women. This was the second year of this event which was co-sponsored with Career Services.

Sexual Assault Awareness Week (SAAW) (April 12-16)

This year’s SAAW coincided with the Peace Conference and the WRC worked with the students organizing the conference to bring these two events together through programming and inclusion of issues of violence against women around the world in panel discussions. SAAW is co-sponsored with University Counseling and the Office of Co-Curricular Activities.

Events:

- The Clothesline Project
- Soup and Substance discussion on Sexual Assault with Dr. Emily Russell
- The Vagina Monologues (directed by students from Alpha Psi Omega).
- Crescent House’s walk to end sexual violence

Regular Monthly Programming

Brown Bag Lunches:

Fall 2009

September 14: Dr. JoAnn Cruz, Dean of the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences presented: "A Gendered Perspective on Learning and Teaching in the Middle East"

October 5: Nancy Bernardo of the Graphic Arts Department presented: "Dual Layers: Visual Conversations with the Body and Self"

October 26: Rae Taylor of the Department of Criminal Justice presented: "The Power to Kill: Power and Coercive Control as a Predictor of Homicide in Intimate Relationships"

November 2: Kathy Anzelmo of the Department of Biology presented: "Taking Care of Mother Earth"

December 7: Dr. Judy Deshotels, Jesuit Center Fellow, presented: "Jesuit Values and Women's Issues: What's the Relevance?"
Spring 2010

February 1: Sara Butler, Department of History, presented “Runaway Wives in Medieval England.”

March 1: Khedidja Boudaba, Department of Languages and Culture, presented “Algerian Women and the Press.”

April 12: Laura Hope, Department of Theatre Arts, presented “There Are No Irish Women Playwrights (Are There?)”

Women in Film Series

Fall: Women on the Move

Spring: Writing Women Back into History – Marie Antoinette, Rosa Parks (w/speaker Anthony Ladd), Becoming Jane (w/speaker Barbara Ewell), I Shot Andy Warhol.

For the spring semester, the WRC co-sponsored the film series with the student group Women’s Initiatives Organization (WIO). The students were responsible for choosing the films and inviting faculty to come speak.

Women Read

This women’s book group has been meeting for several years now. It is a nice opportunity for Loyola alumnae, faculty, and staff (both current and former) to gather. We meet once a month.

Women’s Studies Discussion group

This year the WRC began hosting a women’s studies discussion group for faculty teaching women’s studies courses and their students to have an informal forum to discuss women’s issues in an interdisciplinary way. Each participating faculty member leads the discussion once during the semester approaching the topic from the perspective of their discipline. In the fall the theme was “Violence against Women” and in the spring the theme was “Writing Women Back into History.”

4.2 Achievements/Service of Director

- Maintaining contact with The White House Project (women’s leadership non-profit)
• Working with AAUW on programming here on campus and speaking at their Louisiana chapter conference this spring.
• Attending the NWSA conference. Making contacts with other Women’s Centers directors and keeping up with the current scholarship in women’s studies. (fall 2009)
• Speaking at the U.S. Attorney’s office about women’s issues and gender-based violence. (spring 2010)
• Meeting with directors/staff of other New Orleans universities’ women’s centers. (spring 2010)
• Participating in the Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau roundtable discussion on women and green jobs in the greater New Orleans area. (fall 2009)
• Established the Women’s Resource Center’s Student Advisory Board which was comprised of a diverse group of student leaders from across campus and included two recent graduates.

Maroon Article:

• November 6, 2009: “Give a Voice to Victims of Violence”

Advising:

• Advisor to Women’s Initiatives Organization
• Secondary advisor to Peace Conference

Committee Service:

• Member of WS committee (and steering committee)
• Member of HEAL committee
• Member of Diversity committee
• Member of Center for Faculty Innovation Advisory committee
• Member of the Student Leadership Awards committee

Community Service:

• Volunteering with the local non-profit Jeremiah’s housing initiative (fall 2009)
• Board member (board secretary) of Metropolitan Center for Women and Children
• Louisiana State Chair of CARE: Working with the non-profit CARE to promote awareness of poverty and women’s issues in the developing world with programming here in New Orleans as well as with participation in their conference in Washington D.C. At the conference I served as a group leader for our advocacy efforts around women’s issues on the Hill. I have also been invited to be their Louisiana State Chair. (spring 2010)
5. Budget

5.1 2009-2010 budget: $9,900

5.1.1 The budget for 2009-2010 made programming challenging as it was cut by 10% from the 2008-2009 budget of $10,900. Being creative and co-programming with other units helps to mitigate the budgetary constraints.

5.2 The upcoming year’s expected budget: $9,900. As of now the primary costs are associated with programming such as the 20th Anniversary of Take Back the Night, Love Your Body Week, Sexual Assault Awareness Week, and regular monthly/yearly WRC programs.

6. Planning and Goals for the upcoming year

6.1 General Statement:

The process of strategic planning for the upcoming year will be a combination of consultation with the Women's Studies Committee and Student Advisory Board as well as informal discussion with programming partners and faculty and staff.

6.2 The WRC support of the strategic plan of the University:

The goals and objectives and the programming that is created by the WRC to meet those goals and objectives keeps in mind the overall strategic plan of the University. Through its programming, the WRC intentionally responds to the stated values of our university of acting justly and thinking critically in a way that engages both our Loyola and our New Orleans community. Further, the WRC seeks ways to build on our strengths as a university, partnering with units across campus to provide excellent programming to our faculty, staff, and students. And as we move forward, we will build on our outreach efforts, with an increased focus on reaching out to other universities, to our New Orleans community and to communities beyond through organizational membership, service, social justice activism, and community partnering.

6.3 Strategic plan/goals:

- integration of gender considerations into campus programming and curriculum;
- establishment of positive policies and protocols that take into consideration gender and women's issues; and
- development of strong community relationships with a focus on girls' and women's empowerment
Objectives for 2010-2011

- Work with the Women’s Studies Advisory Group to conduct a comprehensive review of the Women’s Studies Program and develop a three-year strategic plan to enhance the program including co-curricular programming sponsored by the WRC;
- Work with the Freshman Year Experience program to develop a seminar in the area of women’s studies and associated FYE co-curricular activities;
- Work with the Office of Professional and Continuing Studies on reaching out to nontraditional women students and helping improve their retention and connection to the University;
- Continue to provide relevant programs and events and respond to the educational needs of the campus community;
- Continue to strengthen and develop collaborative ties with student organizations and other campus organizations/offices/centers/academic departments/colleges through co-programming and providing support of the WRC;
- Continue outreach efforts and community engagement activities both on-campus and off-campus;
- Continue committee work and service to the University; and
- Continue professional development activities/projects and professional contributions.