



President's Commission on the Status of Women  
Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-2503  
<http://oregonstate.edu/groups/pcosw/>

**Oregon State University  
President's Commission on the Status of Women  
Bylaws  
Adopted May 9, 2008**

**Article I. NAME**

The name of the commission is the Oregon State University (OSU) President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCOSW).

**Article II. MISSION AND PURPOSE**

As an independent commission responsible to the President, PCOSW advises the President, other administrators and the OSU community of the status of women within the University. PCOSW is composed of a cross-section of the University community, both men and women, including faculty, staff, students and administrators.

The Commission is appointed by the President to actively advocate for and promote a positive climate for all university women students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The Commission works to create equal educational and employment opportunities for OSU women, promotes an environment free of sexism and discrimination through policy, advocacy and education and acts as a unifying voice against sexism and institutional violence.

The focused goals for the Commission are to support women in the OSU Community, to support the development of parity across campus and for OSU; and to maintain full support for OSU Women's Studies, the Women's Center and the Office of Women's Advancement and Gender Equity.

The Commission achieves its goals by:

- holding the university community accountable to the stated institutional mission of assuring equity for all those affiliated with the campus by recommending and promoting policies that improve the status of women and ensure an environment of equal education and employment opportunities;
- recommending policies related to the status of women to the OSU president, to other university administrators, and to OSU administrative and governance groups;
- collaborating and developing alliances with existing organizations and structures within the university community for the purposes of promoting an environment free of sexism and discrimination; improving the integration of women, regardless of working role, within the university community and actively working on issues;
- addressing the under-representation of all marginalized women and working towards greater diversity by championing the recruitment, employment, salary equity, promotion

and retention of women students, faculty, staff and administrators through data collection, dissemination of information and promoting strategies to address disparities;

- promoting safety for all women on campus by recommending policy and programs as well as supporting other community efforts and initiatives to reduce violence against women;
- advancing educational opportunities and professional development for all women affiliated with the university by initiating and supporting educational outreach programs and materials that help women develop their skills, continue their education and increase their networking opportunities

### **Article III. MEMBERSHIP**

#### 1. Membership

##### a. General Members

General membership shall consist of: OSU students (undergraduate and graduate), staff, and faculty (full- and part-time).

##### b. Ex-Officio Members

Ex-Officio Members are standing Members representing other campus organizations and departments that have similar goals and can assist PCOSW in furthering its mission. Ex-officio Members are non-voting Members but are expected to participate in PCOSW's work. Some Ex officio Members are: the ASOSU Saferide, ASOSU Women's Affairs, Counseling and Psychological Services, Director for Community and Diversity, representatives from the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity, OSU Women Studies, the Women's Advancement and Gender Equity Director and the Women's Center Director. See Appendix C for more.

c. No annual dues are required.

#### 2. Appointment of Members

##### a. General Members

i. Faculty and classified staff Members are appointed by the President of OSU. This is handled through a call for volunteers sent out by the OSU Faculty Senate Office. Those interested may indicate their wish to serve on PCOSW by submitting the Faculty Senate Committee Interest Form during Spring Term of the previous year.

ii Student Members shall be appointed by the Associated Students of OSU (ASOSU) through the Committee Interest forms available in Student Involvement (MU East 149).

#### 3. Replacing Members midterm

If a general Member leaves the Commission prior to the end of the term of appointment, a new

general Member will not be replaced unless they are a chair or leadership team Member or a committee liaison.

#### 4. Term of Office

##### a. General Members

Faculty, staff and student Members serve for one three-year term. Student Members may be appointed for a one-year term if they are in their final year at the university.

##### b. Officers and Chair(s)

Term of office for the Chair or Co-Chairs shall be two years. The Chair or Co-Chairs may serve only one consecutive term. Terms of office for the Co-Chairs shall be staggered so that at any one time one Co-Chair shall be serving the first year of their term in office and the other Co-Chair shall be serving the second year of their term in office. Term of Office for the Secretary shall be two [one] year{s} and the Secretary may serve no more than four consecutive terms. Terms of office for the other Officers shall be one year and each Officer may serve no more than four consecutive terms in the same office.

#### 5. Beginning of term

The term of office begins and ends in August for both general Members and ex-officio Members. Members joining the Commission midterm will end their terms in August. Student members are generally able to begin service in October.

#### 6. Reappointment

General Members may serve two (2) consecutive three -year terms by completing the spring committee interest form. If an officer is unable to complete a term, the Chair or Co-Chairs may appoint an interim officer to serve the remainder of the term.

### **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

1. The Commission will be governed by a Leadership Team consisting of: a Chair or Co-Chairs, a Marketing Officer, a Membership Officer, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Website Officer. The Leadership Team will serve as formal liaisons to various OSU offices and organizations as appropriate.

a. Chair or Co-Chairs – The Chair(s) shall enforce all rules and regulations relating to the administration of the Commission and its officers; appoint chairs of all standing and special committees; and facilitate communication with the OSU President.

b. Membership Officer – The Membership Officer shall establish means to build membership incentives; keep a current membership roster; maintain mailing lists; and distribute notices to the Members as needed.

c. Marketing Officer – The Marketing Officer shall assist each officer in determining marketing needs of the Members and the Commission. They shall manage publicity with assistance and input from the membership. The Marketing Officer will assist the Chair or

Co-Chairs in planning, recommending, and implementing programs, professional training, and development experiences.

d. Secretary – The Secretary shall record all resolutions and proceedings of the monthly meetings; perform secretarial duties on behalf of the Commission, including keeping meeting minutes, posting meeting minutes to PCOSW's Blackboard site, making approved changes to the Bylaws; and assist the Chair or Co-Chairs in conducting all correspondence relating to the Commission.

e. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall disburse all moneys payable by the Commission; give a financial report at the monthly meetings; and report in writing annually to the President.

f. Web Officer – The Web Officer shall maintain the Commission's website and be responsible for the upkeep of the site, including the website design; adding and deleting content on the site; and maintaining current links from the site. The Web Officer shall update and maintain PCOSW's Blackboard site. The Commission Members are responsible for developing the content for the website.

## 2. Elections.

Commission Members shall form an ad-hoc elections committee to solicit nominations for vacancies within the Leadership Team. This committee shall be selected by request for volunteers at the February meeting. Volunteers shall submit their names or a list of candidates to the ad-hoc elections committee to be voted on at the April meeting. Elections shall be by closed ballot and the candidates receiving the most votes shall be named in their respective offices.

## **Article V. COMMISSION PERSONNEL**

### 1. Graduate Student/Student worker

#### a. Appointment

This person is hired by the Leadership Team the Spring prior to formation of the new Leadership Team. This person can work for as long as there is money. Should the person leave, 2 weeks notice is asked. The Leadership Team may hire a replacement.

#### b. Responsibilities

Work is normally conducted August-May. The responsibilities include but are not limited to facilitating and organizing the work of the Commission and administering the daily business of the Commission.

## **Article VI. MEETINGS**

### 1. Types of Meetings

#### a. Regular

Regular meetings of the Commission membership will be held monthly from October until May on a day and time established by the membership. The Secretary, Graduate

Student or Student worker is responsible for distribution of an annual schedule of regular meeting dates to all Commission Members and for distribution of all regular meeting agendas prior to each meeting. Leadership team Members will rotate facilitation of regular meetings. A quorum for a regular meeting consists of attending Members.

All Commission Members are expected to attend and participate in all regular and special meetings of the Commission. A Member who cannot attend a regular or special meeting is responsible for notifying the chair(s), or Commission support staff of absence and for learning what transpired at the meeting.

#### b. Annual Retreat

The current and the new Leadership team will hold a retreat before the end of the academic year to evaluate Commission activities of the ending academic year and to set goals for the upcoming academic year. (See Appendix A for suggested planning process.) Retiring and new Commission Members may also attend the annual retreat.

#### c. Leadership Team

The Leadership Team will meet monthly during October through May to plan regular Commission meetings and to plan the Commission's work for the year. The Leadership may choose to begin meeting sooner, especially for planning purposes. Other Commission Members may be asked to attend. Minutes will be recorded and kept. The Leadership Team will decide dates and times for meetings and chair(s) will distribute agendas prior to meetings. Binding decisions will be communicated to the full Commission in a timely manner. Quorum for a Leadership Team meeting will be 60% of the Leadership Team.

#### d. Special meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Commission officers or upon the written request of five Members of the Commission to the Chair(s) of the Commission. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in the case of an emergency, at least seven day's notice shall be given. The Chair(s) is responsible for notifying all Commission Members of special meeting times and for distributing an agenda prior to the meeting. A quorum for a special meeting consists of one-fourth of the Members of the Commission. Should a quorum of Members not be present at a special Commission meeting, a binding decision cannot be made.

## 2. Decision Making

#### a. Consensus model

Decisions of the Commission will be made by a consensus of a quorum of the Membership. Consensus is defined as reaching a decision that is most beneficial for the group as a whole through considering all the many viewpoints and concerns of the group. Consensus implies that each individual within the group respects differences and is willing to reconsider their own position to move toward a position that everyone in the group can support. (See Appendix B for an outline of consensus decision making.)

#### b. Voting

If consensus cannot be reached on a question, assuming that a quorum of Members is

present, the membership may agree to vote. At least 51% of the Members present must agree to change to a voting process. If this change is agreed upon, a decision can be made with a 51% majority vote.

## **Article VII. COMMITTEES**

### **1. Member Participation**

#### **a. Selection**

Commission Members are expected to work on an action project or to join a standing committee and to further its work. Members will select their project, group and/or committee, at the first regular meeting in the fall or at the Annual retreat of the prior spring. All standing and ad hoc committees will file a report of work accomplished each May with the Commission's Secretary.

#### **b. Project Leadership**

Members will select the leadership of each group. General Commission Members are encouraged to take on leadership roles.

### **2. Standing Committees**

There are several standing committees. Each shall have a liaison to the Leadership Team. In general the work of the standing committees consists of:

#### **a. Strategic Planning & Leadership Working Group**

Update & maintain Commission focus on the strategic plan thus anchoring the Commission, providing long-term goals and setting long-range strategies. Create and/or revise the mission statement relevant to issues we face in 2007 and beyond. Promote setting a timetable for future salary equity studies, as well as keeping tabs on the positions women hold at OSU in all ranks. Oversee graduate assistant. Hold a strategic planning process or evaluation process every 3 years. The Leadership Team will lead this group.

#### **b. Awards & Recognition**

Provide opportunities for women in higher education to attend the OWHE conference & similar conferences. Determine the recipient(s) of the professional development award. Develop guidelines for requests for funding relevant to the advancement and/or education of women. Post professional development opportunities on the PCOSW website, OSU Today, the Barometer, etc.

#### **c. Campus Culture & Practices**

Monitor timetable for future campus climate studies. Form a small consultant group to assist any department, college or other unit interested in learning how they might incorporate gender issues into their Diversity Action Plans. Work with Outreach & Events to promote the Herstory project by raising awareness of it at campus events (such as the Vagina Monologues) & in classrooms. Collect new stories for the project. Promote the anti-sexual harassment training developed by Affirmative Action. Raise campus awareness of the LifeBalanceOSU project.

d. Outreach & Events

Build connections with OSU students in international programs. Create short and long-term plans for strategies to make the OSU and Corvallis community aware of PCOSW, its mission and the resources available through our organization. Raise campus awareness of PCOSW in order to recruit undergraduate and graduate student members to the Commission. Plan events allowing for interactions between and among women at OSU who may be interesting in building relationships, gaining ideas and offering opportunities for growth through team-building. Build connections with other women in the state and region, including but not limited to other university PCOSWs, Oregon Women in Higher Education and other women who are part of the Oregon University System Office.

e. Professional Development & Advancement

Follow up on the P & T (Promotion & Tenure) study. Determine the next steps and the direction of this committee (if any) once the P & T report has been delivered to all interested parties. Oversee the development of administrative internships for women students, faculty and staff. Raise awareness of salary inequities via the P & T study, public events & informative material distribution. Identify barriers to women's advancement.

3. Ad Hoc Committees and Working Groups

a. General policy

Ad Hoc Committees or working groups will be established to accomplish specific Commission actions, to plan strategy, program or to conduct research in project areas chosen by the Commission. Working groups will be established at the Annual Retreat, or as necessary. Members may join these committees or working groups during the annual retreat, regular or special meetings. These groups are responsible for informing the Commission Membership of plans, progress, events and assistance needed relative to their project areas. They are also responsible for filing a report on their activities with the Commission's Secretary in May.

**ARTICLE VIII. MEMBERSHIP EQUITY**

The Commission is committed to and promotes equal opportunity for all Members regardless of faculty/staff classification, status of enrolled student, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, sexual orientation, ability, age, or veteran's status in the conduct of its work and its governance.

**ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Commission in accordance with Article VI Item 2, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular or special meeting.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A. THE PLANNING PROCESS**

1. At the annual retreat, the Commission membership will begin developing goals and objectives for the next academic year. These goals and objectives will take into consideration the results of the Commission's work during the year just ending and the Commission's Strategic Plan. Depending on the goals and objectives developed and the availability of Members, Standing and Working committees may begin activities during the summer. Early in the fall semester, the Commission membership will reconvene. The membership will review summer activity by committees, and goals and objectives set at the annual retreat. Commission membership will develop an overall plan of action for the current academic year, including a time-line and committee responsibilities.

Midway through the academic year, the action plan will be reviewed and revised as needed. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees will present their progress to date, problems, and alternative strategies to the membership. Revisions to the action plan will be approved by the Commission membership.

### **APPENDIX B. CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING**

This framework is to be used as a tool for understanding and employing consensus. Consensus values the ideas and understanding of all participants. Consensus offers the possibility to work through differences to reach mutually satisfactory decisions. For this to happen, the input of all Members needs to be heard so the ideas and values of individual Members are not lost in the process. The fundamental essence of consensus allows all Members the right and obligation to express their ideas and feelings and assures the right of all Members to speak and to be heard.

During discussion, a proposal is put forward. Amendments and modifications are made to the proposal through discussion by the group. Open exchange of ideas is critical for the success of the consensus process. Members need to express their opinions and reservations clearly. It is the responsibility of those who are troubled by the proposal to provide alternative suggestions. The proposal should be modified to address the stated reservations if at all possible. When a proposal appears to be understood by everyone, and no new modifications have been proposed, the facilitator should ask if there are any further reservations with or objections to the proposal. If none are voiced, the facilitator calls for consensus by asking once more if there are any objections. After a moment of silence, if no one objects, consensus has been reached. If it appears that consensus cannot be reached, there are several ways to proceed. The proposal could be withdrawn. Those with reservations could:

- a. Express non-support ("I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along.")
- b. Express reservations ("I think this may be a mistake but I can live with it.")
- c. Stand aside ("I personally can't support this, but I won't stop it.")
- d. Block ("I cannot support this or allow the group to support this.")

If the group feels that the proposal merits action and cannot achieve consensus, the membership can agree to vote. Refer to Article VI.2.b. The role of the facilitator is to aid the group in defining the decisions that need to be made. The facilitator helps to direct the process



of the meeting, not its content. The facilitator: keeps the meeting moving; focuses the discussion on the proposal; ensures that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the discussion; and tests to discover if consensus has been reached.

### **APPENDIX C. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

Organizations the Commission has identified as those with which it would like to have a formal relationship include, but are not limited to:

- ASOSU Saferide
- ASOSU Women's Affairs
- Association of Faculty for the Advancement of People of Color
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Faculty Women's Network
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity
- Office of Community and Diversity
- Office of Women's Advancement and Gender Equity
- OSU Women Studies
- OSU Women's Center