

February 24, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nathan Tublitz, President, University Senate 2010
Frances Dyke, Vice President for Finance and Administration

FROM: Deb Casey, Teaching and Learning Center, long-term member of the Child Care and Family Support Committee and Karen Logvin, Director of Work-Life Resources and staff to the Committee, on behalf of Members of the 2009-10 Child Care and Family Support Committee

SUBJECT: Status of the UO Child Care and Family Support Committee
(CCFS Committee)

As a university standing committee reporting to the university Administration and the University Senate, we are writing to you with an update and recommendation regarding the status of the CCFS Committee. As our 2009 year-end report notes, the CCFS Committee has figured centrally in the implementation of a variety of positive initiatives developed over the last twenty years. With unusual commitment and energy, the committee was intricately involved in planning the Vivian Olum Child Development Center, creating the work-family services administrator position, and promulgating several family-support policies. Over the years, the committee has been pleased, too, by the increase in family-oriented stake-holders on campus.

Consistent with the original impetus for the committee, these policies and practices have supported all constituencies of the university: faculty, staff and students, and their families. In addition, the committee generally has been included at least on a consulting level when work groups focused on family issues have been formed. On a related note, the committee met last year with Carol Stabile, Director of the Center for the Study of Women in Society, who has been asked by Provost Bean to convene a task force on gender equity. The task force plans to examine child-care issues as part of its work, a goal we have in common.

In recent years, the CCFS Committee has experienced declining participation and diminished effectiveness. As a consequence, we recently met to review the committee's mission, structure, and membership. The size of the committee and its broad charge seem to have contributed to less consensus, limited progress, diluted focus, and weaker commitment. Perhaps related to the stronger presence of family-support systems on campus, the committee's role within the university also seems less clear. In light of these factors, as well as the Provost's new task force on gender equity (which seems to be a focused rekindling of the Committee on the Status of Women—another standing committee that struggled with ineffectiveness and folded), we decided to recommend disbanding the CCFS Committee until a focused need is identified, its role defined, and membership revisited.

Since its inception as a task force in 1986, the Child Care and Family Support Committee typically has been an engaged and productive group. The university benefits from a strongly connected, broadly representative committee, serving to draw family advocates together to speak from one strong, informed position, serving all sectors of the UO. This is not currently the case: no instructional faculty volunteered or were named to the committee this year, an omission that underscores the need for change. Disbanding the committee is a loss of a united voice, yet makes the most sense. As new family-related policies, practices and programs are developed, we encourage consideration of broad perspectives, including consultation that includes the voices of students, staff, and others not within the tenure-track strand. We look forward to dialogues of substance in the years ahead.

Cc: Richard Lariviere, President
Robin Holmes, Vice-President of Student Affairs;
Carol Stabile, CSWS Director and Chair, Task Force on Gender Equity
2009-2010 Child Care and Family Support Committee