

Action Plan Addressing Findings and Recommendations of Task Force for Consideration of Policies and Practices Regarding Sexual Harassment and Consensual Relationships

April 27, 2005

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #1

Dissemination of Report

“The report of the Task Force will be made available to the campus community immediately.”

ACTION ITEMS

- Recommendation has been implemented
- The report was posted on the WOU Website together with relevant correspondence (April 21, 2005)
- An e-mail was sent to all students, faculty and staff (including retirees and emeritus faculty) announcing the availability of this information and inviting comment from the WOU community (April 21, 2005). Comments will be forwarded to the Committee to be established pursuant to Recommendation #2
- Website link of Task Force report and related correspondence to be communicated to alumni in the next alumni email contact

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TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #2

Creation of Committee for Oversight of Sexual Harassment Prevention

“A campus-wide committee of faculty, staff, and students will be established before the end of the academic year to monitor and oversee the process of revision, training and communication and to build campus resources.”

ACTION ITEMS

- President’s Staff has begun process of forming a Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Improper Consensual Relationships (April 25, 2005 staff meeting agenda item and presented to Faculty Senate April 26, 2005)
 - Chaired by Vice President for Finance and Administration (Mark Weiss)
 - Proposed Membership: 5 faculty, 3 staff, 3 students, and Chairperson
- Initial Charter for the Committee:
 - Receive and synthesize input from Staff, Faculty and Student Senates
 - Review and recommend changes in policies and procedures
 - consider Task Force recommendations
 - assure compliance with applicable laws and regulations
 - Review content and process of training plan
 - Develop effective strategy to instill a culture where sexual harassment is not tolerated

- Establish goals and objectives for survey on sexual harassment/consensual relationships; Coordinate with ongoing survey activities and Institutional Research Office
 - assure unbiased, scientific methods
 - evaluate results and recommend actions based on findings
 - publish results for WOU community
- Committee to meet by June 1, 2005 and determine timetable for its activities

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TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #3

Review and Refinement of Policies and Procedures

“The campus will begin a revision of sexual harassment and consensual relationship policies and procedures. This process should include an external evaluation of the policies, procedures and implementation practices. The process should address the concerns and recommendations from the campus community contained in this report and from other sources of information and discussion. Of particular importance is communication, record-keeping, timelines and the structure of how the investigation of a complaint is carried out. Western Oregon University will implement the changes and revisions to policies that result from this revision process.

The ad-hoc survey committee will administer the sexual harassment/consensual relationships survey this spring term and will report the results to the campus community.”

ACTION ITEMS

Planned Administrative Actions

Policies

The Faculty, Staff and Student Senates will be asked to give further consideration of existing policies for possible modification and refinement during the 05-06 academic year

Note: WOU’s Office of Human Resources surveyed comparable policies at other institutions to identify best practices for inclusion in WOU policy. OUS legal counsel and Oregon Department of Justice were consulted for recommended changes. The University Senates (Faculty, Staff and Student) were asked to evaluate and recommend modifications to policy in 2004. Those changes were consolidated and incorporated into the:

1. Discrimination & Harassment Policy, dated January 4, 2005
2. Consensual Relationships Policy, dated January 28, 2005

Procedures

- Human Resources will document current processes that enable students and employees to report harassment and receive assistance (by May 15, 2005)
- Human Resources will recommend changes to procedures to identify, report and follow through on sexual harassment concerns and to recommend ways to provide resources (by May 22, 2005)

- Human Resources and Student Affairs will develop a plan for training a core group of faculty/staff/student advocates who can advise students on issues relating to harassment
- Formalize complaint process by May 20, 2005:
 - Establish formal system and documents for process
 - Establish timeframe for process

Resources:

- Consultation with third-party experts, other OUS Universities and OUS Counsel will be sought as deemed appropriate

Proposed Committee Actions

In parallel, the Committee will review ongoing administrative activities, and Provide input on:

- Policies
- Procedures
- Use of experts
- Recommended changes

Oversee survey process:

- Assure survey will measure attitudes about harassment at WOU
- Utilize internal expertise or consider whether independent input is needed for a valid, scientific survey
- Determine method of administering, reporting and follow-up of findings and conclusions

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TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #4

Improvement of Communication

“The University administration will sponsor visible, consistent, accurate and informative information about the sexual harassment and consensual relationship policies. This should include brochures available in every office on campus and multiple places on the campus Web site with easily identifiable links, including on the home page and a new affirmative action Web site. The information should be a part of the faculty handbook. Specifics should be included in the collective bargaining agreements for faculty and staff and be part of the collective bargaining process.

A group of faculty and staff who are willing to participate will receive intensive training and will then serve as members of a campus-wide resource network for sexual harassment. The existence of this campus-wide resource group and contact information for those available will be widely published on the web and in other campus information sources.

Many elements of WOU’s Strategic Goals and Directions support attention directed to faculty/staff training and improvement in information flow related issues addressed elsewhere in this report.”

ACTION ITEMS

Planned Administrative Actions

- Establish a Harassment Prevention Web Page by May 15, 2005
 - Content:
 - Policies and expectations
 - Procedures
 - Resources
 - Counseling
 - Filing grievance
 - Task Force report
 - Links from visible and strategic places in WOU website
 - Training plans
 - Committee composition and activity
- Link from strategic places in website
 - Campus Safety; Human Resources
 - Counseling Center; Student Affairs
 - Other appropriate units and groups
- Include notices, statements, reminders, web addresses, etc., in bi-weekly WOU Bulletin beginning with May 4 issue—info sources: Human Resources; Student Affairs; Committee
- Brochure to be developed by Student Affairs, Human Resources and Public Relations – obtain samples from other institutions and finalize a WOU document by June 15, 2005
- Prepare information fliers for posting by May 13, 2005
- Recruitment publications to include statement of no-tolerance culture
- New Student Week to include a program on harassment to be developed over summer '05 by Student Life
- Faculty Week to include a module on harassment
- ASWOU Cabinet Retreat (students) to include awareness sessions
- Peer Mentor Program to address harassment issues
- Residence hall advisors to be trained; will cover at floor meetings
- Continue to include policy summaries in student handbook and include in WOU Catalog

Proposed Committee Actions

- Examine and recommend other communication modes
- Determine effectiveness of communications activities
- Recommend effective and creative modes for communication and awareness of sexual harassment at WOU

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TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #5

Provision for Training at All Levels of the Campus Community

“The campus must adopt and maintain ongoing training for Deans, Division chairs, Department heads, faculty and staff members regarding faculty, staff and student roles, rights, and the grievance process. There should be an overview/training at departmental/division-wide orientation sessions each fall term for all employees (new, returning and student employees) and a mandatory training/orientation/overview of the sexual harassment and consensual relationship policies and procedures as part of New Student Week for freshmen. Sexual Harassment policies and procedures should be tied to other training sessions such as safety on campus and general policy overviews. The University will sponsor discussion sessions in which members of the campus community can explore issues of how best to support campus-wide training, as well as other recommendations contained in this report.”

ACTION ITEMS

Planned Administrative Actions

- WOU to host a recognized expert on sexual harassment awareness to address faculty, staff and students before the end of the year
- For Employees:
 - Develop a separate new employee orientation session on harassment topics to be developed through Human Resources by June 2005 orientation
 - Educational workshops: Sexual Harassment Module to be developed with the Employee Assistance Program by May 27, 2005 for all employees to begin as soon as possible
- For Students:
 - Presentation on sexual harassment as part of student orientation during New Student Week (September 2005)
 - Begin special student employee orientation program by mid-June 2005 (Human Resources and Student Affairs)
- Conduct and advertise discussion sessions for all employees and upperclass students during fall term 2005
- Train the Trainer sessions to facilitate pro-active implementation of sexual harassment training

Proposed Committee Actions

- Review training programs in place; Evaluate and recommend content and delivery to improve and increase effectiveness

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TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION #6

Enhancement of Counseling Services

“Counseling for campus community members who have experienced sexual harassment or inappropriate relationships and for those who are dealing with “fallout” from such cases will be assessed and enhanced if necessary.”

ACTION ITEMS

Planned Administrative Actions

- Document and describe counseling programs available and in place (Student Affairs by May 6, 2005)
- Assess adequacy of services and recommend and implement improvements (Student Affairs by May 20, 2005)
- Increase campus awareness of services available and implement in coordination with training and communication plans
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and medical referrals for faculty and staff to be highlighted as currently available

Proposed Committee Actions

- Determine if counseling services are adequate and recommend improvements