Faculty Women's Caucus Annual Report, April 2002.

Prepared by 2001-2002 Chair, Misao Dean.

1. In late August and early September Caucus volunteers acted as buddies for thirteen new regular female faculty.

2. The Wine and Cheese Party was held on Thursday September 20th. We were pleased to welcome VP Academic Jamie Cassels, as well as Equity Officer Linda Sproule-Jones and Susan Shaw of the Harassment Office. On the basis of refreshments served, I estimate about 70 Caucus members attended, and a good time was had by all.

3. In November, Caucus members drafted a letter in support of Dr. Sunera Thobani. This letter was circulated via e-mail and endorsed by 38 Caucus members. Copies were sent to Dr. Martha Piper, President of UBC, the Chair of the UBC Women's Studies Department, the CAUT Bulletin, and to Dr. Thobani herself. The letter and signatories' names were published in The Ring on November 15th.

4. In January we sponsored a visit by Wendy Robbins, Vice-President for Women's Issues of the HSSFC, and founder and co-moderator of the feminist research listserv PAR-L. Wendy gave two presentations, one on research funding and one on PAR-L, and attended a pot-luck supper held at my home. Wendy brought with her a "postcard" of facts regarding employment of women faculty in Canadian universities, including:

•while women are now granted 58% of the undergraduate degrees, they only earn 33% of the PhDs.

•in 1998-99, women constituted 26% of the full-time faculty in Canadian universities; but 13.7 % of the full professors, and 29% of the associates.

•even when disparities for age are taken into account, on average women faculty still make only 94% of the average earnings of male professors.

•Women principal investigators were awarded 42.8% of the dollars available for SSHRC standard research grants, and 42.7% of the money awarded for strategic theme grants, in 2001.

•Yet, of the 268 Canada Research Chairs awarded in 2001, only 38 went to women.

Dr. Robbins is particularly concerned about the overwhelming bias toward men in the application and awards process for Canada Research Chairs; she pointed out that because the program awards chairs based on an institution's previous success in gaining research funding, the program itself is biased towards the sciences and against those disciplines in the university (such as humanities) where women are beginning to be a significant proportion of the researchers. Rather than accepting this bias as inevitable, Dr. Robbins suggests we should question the

relationship between the "feminizing" of disciplines and their status both on campus and in the wider community. She also pointed out that a review of applications showed that institutions were hesitant to propose women as Senior Chairs, and that many women who were qualified for Senior Chairs were proposed at the Junior level. Dr. Robbins' presentation on PAR-L emphasized the way that the listserv can function to replace face-to-face support and consultation during an era in which funding for conferences, research and co-ordinating organizations for women is being cut.

5. Linda Sproule-Jones of the Office of Equity Issues asked me to consult with the Steering Committee about her new "Equity Policy for University Employees," then in draft form, intended to replace the University Equity Policy. The steering committee felt that the new policy was not specific enough about faculty issues for it to replace the "Equity Policy for Female Faculty," a view I conveyed to Linda Sproule-Jones, who assured me that when her policy is considered by Senate it will include the statement that the Equity Policy for Female Faculty remains in effect. The Steering committee suggests that an important project for the Caucus in the coming year should be to work with the new Faculty Association Equity Committee on creating an Equity Policy for Faculty which would retain protection for feminist research and specific provisions for encouraging participation of women in university administration, and extend those provisions to the other "designated groups."

6.The Academic VP has yet to appoint a replacement for the Women's Advisor, and I have met with him twice and participated in a half-day "retreat" organized by his office in order to discuss this issue. The Steering Committee is particularly concerned that under Dr. Codding's leadership the position had become identified almost solely with staff issues, and that events like the Women's Conference and "Lightness and Kindness Week" organized by the office of the Women's Advisor were perceived as having little relevance for Faculty Women. In addition, Caucus members articulated their sense that legitimate professional issues for Faculty Women, such as perceived bias in the awarding of salary increases and individual department- or faculty-wide issues of climate for faculty women and for faculty with family obligations were being overlooked.

At the half-day retreat attended by invitees including myself, Lynne Marks (FA Status of Women Chair) and a number of administrator and representatives of staff groups, a wide-ranging discussion of ways of addressing equity issues settled down on the role of the Women's Advisor in resolving individual disputes, including those between faculty and staff. This was quite at odds with the Steering Committee's view of the position as an advisor to the VP Academic (rather than to individual university employees). Both Lynne and I emphasized our position that the Women's Advisor, should the position be continued, should spend at least part of her time and (very limited) budget doing research on professional and systemic problems that affect female faculty. The "dispute resolution" portion of the Women's Advisor position may also be affected by the creation of the new Faculty Association "Advising and Dispute Resolution" Committee process; I am currently consulting with the Faculty Association President Bill Pfaffenberger, about making a joint submission to the VP Academic concerning this matter.

7. In November the Caucus co-sponsored a "Lunch for Faculty with Small Children" in concert with the Faculty Association Status of Women Committee, to create an opportunity for faculty to

meet each other and discuss issues of common interest. Topics which surfaced included the difficulty of arranging accommodation for child care needs in some departments (for example, education, in which some courses are always scheduled as evening classes) and the importance of publicizing the newly negotiated policy on the occasional cancellation of classes for child illness. Some "horror stories" were recounted, for example clashes between faculty members and their chairs over attendance at departmental events scheduled in the evening, and administration ignorance of accommodations required by law, both of which emphasized the continuing effort faculty must make to educate administrators on university policies and practices. Other attendees reported experiencing hostility from peers unwilling to see accommodation for child-care as a legitimate request. Our work-study student, Kevin Cryderman, is continuing to work with me on a web-site to offer information and support to faculty with small children.

8. I attended the February meeting of the Faculty Association and brought to its attention research done at McGill University on gender-based salary differentials among faculty, and at University of California at Berkeley on the effects of family status on career success for faculty (the latter study pointed out that women who have children within five years of earning their PhD are the least likely to achieve tenure, while men who do the same thing are the most likely of all groups to achieve tenure). I suggested that the current salary negotiations should include a study to determine if gender-based salary differentials exist at UVic.

9. On April 1st Jamie Cassels sent an e-mail to Lynne Marks (Chair of the Faculty Association Equity Committee) and I telling us that he had indeed responded to our request to ask institutional analysis to do a study of gender-based salary inequities. We will be meeting with him in the near future to discuss the results.

10. In closing, I would like to make a few remarks on my experiences as Chair of Faculty Women's Caucus this year. I have been surprised to encounter on several fronts the attitude that "we've done women"; that women have already achieved equality on campus and that resources used to address equity for female faculty are misplaced. At one meeting, a staff member confidently cited the statistic that half of the university employees are female to support her contention that there was no longer any need to address equity for women (this after she had just heard a colleague in administration lament that she is the only woman at most of the meetings that make up her workday!). While I would be the first to agree that white faculty women on campus are privileged relative to the other 'designated groups' (visible minorities, First Nations and disabled), I think the statistics as well as anecdotal evidence confirms that not even this relatively privileged group has achieved equity uniformly across campus, and that the experiences of female faculty who belong to visible minorities or First Nations, who are disabled or are members of sexual minorities are only beginning to be addressed.

It's my experience that equity processes which address "employee groups" and are thus dominated by staff representatives may have little interest in issues which pertain specifically to faculty (such as the evaluation of research, leaves, accommodation in teaching assignments, unclear reporting or supervisory hierarchies, tenure and promotion processes). I would suggest that in future the Caucus work closely with the Faculty Association Equity Committee to create an Equity Policy for Faculty which addresses our issues specifically.