Current Annual Report

Annual Report of the Academic Women's Caucus 2008-2009

Events

The annual Wine and Cheese event, held at the end of September, was a major success, with approximately 100 academic women attending. They enjoyed chatting and networking with each other, as well as celebrating the promotions of their colleagues. At the Wine and Cheese we also launched the new website for the Caucus.

This year the Caucus sponsored six small group lunches in the fall, as a way of bringing together different constituencies of the Caucus, and as a way for the Chair to discover the concerns of Caucus members, and what they wanted to see the Caucus doing for them. The lunches were for junior faculty, for sessional instructors, for faculty and sessional women with young children, for senior women, for LGBT women, and for women in Science and Engineering. These lunches were very successful. Most of them were fully subscribed (maximum of 10 participants). Women enjoyed meeting colleagues from other parts of campus and learned from each other.

The Caucus held an end of term lunch event at the University Club, open to all Caucus members, which had a relatively large turn-out.

In February the Caucus organized a lunch forum on academic women's health, titled "Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Academic women's work and health". We had three speakers, Pamela Moss and Kathy Teightsoonian from UVic and Michelle Brady from the University of Alberta. Their talks were well received and generated useful discussion. This event was kindly co-sponsored by the Dean of Human and Social Development.

In March the Caucus held a full day event for International Women's Day. In the morning we had a panel on "UVic Women's Passions for Teaching and Research", with a number of fascinating presentations. This was well attended and generated a great deal of interest from those present. We then had a celebratory lunch for Caucus members and female doctoral students.

In the afternoon Lil Blume, a facilitator from Toronto, gave an excellent workshop, helping academic women to set goals. The day's events were co-sponsored by EQHR; the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Learning and Teaching Centre, the VP Research and the UVic Faculty Association.

In the spring the Caucus co-sponsored (with the Learning and Teaching Centre) a workshop on dissertation completion for our sessional members.

The Caucus also held an end of term pizza party.

Other Activities

As Chair I have published four issues of Purple Prose over the past year. I have also been active on the Employment Equity Committee of the UHRC and the Provost's Equity and Diversity Committee, as well as in working with the steering committee of the Caucus, and meeting with individual academic women who seek advice. I linked up buddies for last fall, as part of the Caucus's ongoing mentorship program for new faculty. I also set up "Publish without Pain" groups for interested academic women, where they meet with other women, to help them meet their publishing goals.

I have also worked with interested faculty in trying to improve access to childcare on campus, and helped to found the UVic Childcare Action Group. I have also worked with the Diversity Advisor, Jan Nolan and Cindy Player in trying to develop plans to improve the working environment on campus. This environment is excellent in some areas, but is quite difficult for junior faculty and faculty of colour in some parts of campus. We developed proposals for a series of departmental workshops to help educate people about questions of inclusivity.