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Voices Raised, Issue 02

University of Dayton. Women's Center

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From the Director's Desk

• "We all have a stake in diversity" -Women's Center Director Lisa Rismiller shares her thoughts

"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it."

Margaret Fuller

The University of Dayton is celebrating several anniversaries this year, and UD women have played vital roles in many of them.

The fall semester of 2003 marked 25 years of the Women's Studies Program (WST), which was established in 1978 by three female faculty members, Betty Perkins, Doris Drees and Elaine Dreidame.

The Women's Studies Program came about as a result of the perseverance of these women and many others. A major impetus to its evolution was the Title IX legislation which prohibits discrimination in education based on gender.

WST has been a minor since 1978 and now consists of 26 courses from 12 academic disciplines.

In only the past five years, 114 students have earned minors in women's studies, and more than 450 students have taken women's studies courses each year.

WST professors agree that the program is invaluable to the academic and spiritual growth of students who participate.

Women's Studies Today

Dr. Betty Youngkin, the current Director of the Women's Studies Program, has been interested in women's studies since it was referred to as "the woman question" in the 1960s and 1970s.

Youngkin finds the field valuable in helping her acknowledge her own sense of independence.

She became involved in WST when Dr. Linda Majka, then-director of the program, invited her to sit in on a meeting.

A few years later, Youngkin applied for and received the position of Women's Studies Director.

One of Youngkin's main aspirations as director is simply to maintain and

"Women's Studies gave me the conviction to stand up for myself and for women's rights."
Tara White

enhance the already well-established program.

Youngkin believes "women need to be recognized in our culture for their accomplishments" and that "the discipline of women's studies has changed every other discipline."

Youngkin sees the faculty within the program as playing a vital role in the program's success and growth. It is they who are responsible for guiding students in their studies and searches for self-growth through women's studies, Youngkin said.

The women's studies faculty and staff find a lot of support through the program, she said, through speakers on topics of interest, conferences, networking, and participation in professional groups such as ACWI, POP and AFW.

In addition, many women's studies faculty, staff and students are involved in community service through organizations such as Artemis House and Womanline, whose goals are to serve women in need.

The work of WST must "continue on all fronts," Youngkin said, in addressing the need for ongoing change and development within the discipline.

"The nuances and subtleties of a 'woman's place' are difficult to detect," Youngkin said. "Some people say that the

problem is over and in some ways, yes it is; in many other ways it is not."

According to Youngkin, the challenges facing 21st century college students are both those that faced past generations and new ones.

The "subtleties of power" is the new issue, she said, and there is more attention devoted to international women's rights, as well as gay/bisexual/lesbian/transgender issues.

Ushering Women's Studies into the 21st century

Dr. Linda Majka, a professor of sociology, has been involved in the Women's Studies Program since 1981, first lecturing in the Focus on Women course and later establishing the first Sociology of Women course.

Majka was the director of WST from 1995 through 1999 and helped bring it through the 20-year milestone.

"People thought it (the program) would go away - that it was a fad - but it didn't. It has become better," Majka said.

Majka said she considers helping UD develop its "Statement on Dignity" to be her biggest accomplishment as director of WST. The statement formalized the university's stance against harassment and for fair and equal treatment for all people, and it addressed the

The Women's Center mentoring program was officially launched in October and received a good response in the form of mentee applications and mentor volunteers.

Being the pilot year of the program, the cohort of mentors/mentees was limited to 12. The twelve women mentees were selected on the basis of their needs and goals as stated on their applications.

Mentors in the program are volunteers; men and women from throughout the University who were matched with mentees on the basis of the mentees' needs and goals and the mentors' skills and experiences.

The program kicked off with a training session for both mentors and mentees on Nov. 17. Dr. Daniel Curran welcomed the participants and spoke of his support for and the value of a mentoring program for UD women.

"Not only will you (mentors/mentees) reap

What's Going On?

Mentoring gets a positive start, high hopes for the future



Photo by Lisa Rismiller
Dr. Erin Shiner and Dr. Timothy Davis of the UD Counseling Center conduct a training exercise at the first Mentoring training session.

personal benefits, but UD too will be better for your participation," Curran said. "We too will be beneficiaries of the new knowledge you come away with and the new relationships you make."

The Nov. 17 training was conducted using in-house resources. Dr. Erin Shiner and Dr. Timothy Davis from the UD Counseling Center conducted a unique interpretation of the Myers-Briggs Personality Assessment. Richard Walsh of the Center for Leadership and Executive Development facilitated a Mentoring Short Course for mentors and mentees.

As a result of the training session, mentors and mentees came away with an action plan and a set of mutually agreed upon goals and objectives that

they would like to achieve through their relationships.

Based on feedback given in post-training evaluations, the session was a very beneficial experience for the participants.

"This is a great opportunity to develop and become a greater asset to UD," said Jeannie Perry, Human Resources.

Through the duration of the program, mentors and mentees will come together as a group on two more occasions to share experiences, concerns and get additional information and resources.

"I see this as a forum to bring individuals together to assist one another," said Lisa Warren, Career Services.

It is hoped that the program will become an integral part of the UD culture as it is re-launched in the fall of 2004.

• Tarika Daftary
Mentoring Program Coordinator

Mentoring Participants

- Lisa Beutel
Center for Leadership and Executive Development
- Patricia Delamer
Ryan C. Harris Learning Center
- Joyce Dean
Office of Annual Support
- Courtney Deutsch
Alumni Relations
- Richard Ferguson
Raymond L. Fitz, S.M. Center for Leadership in Community
- Denise Gorman
Marycrest Food Services
- Jessica Gonzales
Admission
- Melinda Greer
Chemistry Department
- Emily Hicks
Roesch Library
- Jolly Janson
Educational and Special Programs
- Lisa Kloppenberg
Law School
- Michael McCabe
UDRI
- Kara Maicher
Athletics
- Jennifer Minch
UDRI
- Debra Monk
Residential Programs
- Celine O'Neill
Office of Human Resources
- Judith Owens
Office of the Provost
- Frances Pestello
Sociology Department
- Jeannie Perry
Office of Human Resources
- Judy Scheidt
Chemistry Department
- William C. Schuerman
Student Development
- Paula Smith
Dining Services
- Teresa Thompson
Communication Department
- Lisa Warren
Career Services

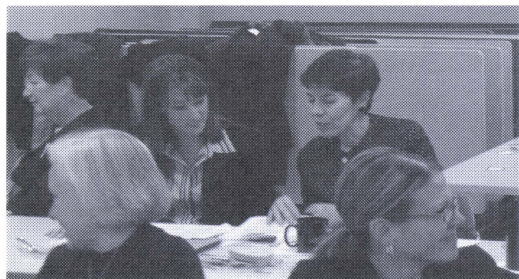


Photo by Lisa Rismiller
Mentors and Mentees worked together to plan goals for the year.

For more information on the Mentoring Program, contact Tarika Daftary at daftartz@notes.udayton.edu, or at (937)229-5334, or visit the Women's Center Web site at womenscenter.udayton.edu.

Women's Studies impacts the campus climate for women and men

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need for a violence-free campus.

"The Statement on Dignity (was) a way of articulating community standards...even though people might have resisted a formal statement, it (was) an opportunity for common standards on compassion and dignity," Majka said.

Throughout the program's history, the WST director and faculty have strived to uphold the quality of their program and improve the campus climate for women, through participation in a number of important campus movements such as the establishment of the Women's Center, creating policies for family leave, building a grievance process for faculty and advocating tenure for UD's first specialist in women's history.

The late 1990s was a period of growth in the Women's Studies Program, in which it achieved the highest number of students in the minor, according to Majka. And while there have never been many men who earned a Women's Studies minor, male students take courses in the minor and cluster annually.

Majka considers the Women's Studies Program essential for gender equity.

"(The program) is a testing ground that allows us to ask, is education available to all on the basis

of equality and opportunity?" Majka said.

She believes Women's Studies is a key to understanding the commonalities in women and men.

Women's Studies in Action

Tara White, class of '97, majored in Spanish and had a strong interest in women's literature and women's roles and perceptions in Latin American cultures, as well as the treatment of women in those cultures.

White minored in women's studies after taking Philosophy of Women to fulfill her humanities requirement.

"The instructor, content and format of the course were unlike anything I'd experienced before," she said. "We were encouraged to participate and question each other, learn from each other."

Not only was she impressed by the teaching style in her women's studies courses, White described the content of the program as "eye-opening."

"I really began to understand the foundations of our patriarchal world and began to question its influence in my own life," White said.

After graduating, White found a way to combine her Spanish major and women's studies minor by working with Latina immigrants in the United States.

White said the most important benefit of minoring in women's studies is developing the ability to be a

critical thinker and evaluate the impact of gender, race, class, ethnicity and other societal roles in the situations she faces every day.

"Women's Studies also gave me the conviction to stand up for myself and for women's rights," she said. "If we want to eliminate violence against women and gender discrimination, especially in the job market, we need to educate people with a gendered lens."

Stephanie Coe, class of 2000, an alum of the Women's Studies Program, got involved in women's studies because she cares about issues unique to women.

Philosophy of Women with Dr. Amy Morgenstern and Women's History with Ann Little were two of Coe's favorite classes because she said both professors inspired and challenged her.

"Both women were young and really demonstrated in their attitudes and professionalism how to be a successful, outspoken woman while not losing their own feminine qualities," Coe said.

After graduating with a communication major and Women's Studies minor, Coe decided to go to law school at Ohio State University. She plans to be an advocate for children and believes that children's and women's rights are deeply tied.

Coe is excited to hear about the Women's Center and said she hopes it will bring women

together to have a stronger voice and that it will assist women in the community. "I think it is important for universities to recognize the contributions of women as a whole and to inspire a new generation to careers they never dreamed possible," Coe said.

The Future of Women's Studies

The next big step for the Women's Studies Program, according to Youngkin, is to develop a women's studies major.

Most of the courses that will support a major are already in place, she said, and more and more universities are establishing majors in women's studies.

"Doors are opening more and more to people who have women's studies majors... that is the future," Youngkin said. "Women who have moved through (the program) have so much to take into the future."

• Jennifer Rogers
Women's Center Intern

"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is; I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat."

Rebecca West

Women's Centers unite!...

For information from and about other Women's Centers around the country, check out these Web sites:

- Bowling Green State University Women's Center
www.bgsu.edu/offices/women
- Stanford University Women's Community Center
www.stanford.edu/group/womenscntr

A longer list of centers can be found at <http://creativefolk.com/wclinks/html/>

Write paper, buy dad birthday present, schedule meeting with professor, do laundry, write article.

Does it ever seem like life is just an endless "to do" list?

College is a busy time for everyone, and while there's never a dull moment, this type of chaotic lifestyle can generate a lot of stress.

Mastering stress management in college will help you become successful in the future.

What are some of the things that cause stress in your life? Can these things be helped?

"I have heard that women who take synthetic hormones may have many side effects including increased risk for heart disease, depression, and more.

Do you have any information on Human Identical Hormones?

Do women who need hormone replacement due to hysterectomy or removal of the ovaries need testosterone replacement as well? What can you tell me about hormone treatments?"

Rosalyn

Hormonal treatments are in a real transition now. It is only in recent years that there has been really good research that is double-blinded, prospective and on-going. The Women's Health

Once you have pin-pointed the things that lead to undue stress, you can then work to alleviate them.

Stress is a major factor in our

Here are a few tips from UD law professor Professor Vernellia Randall on diminishing your work in an anxiety-free way:

- Try studying difficult or boring subjects first, once these are finished you will be motivated to complete the rest.

- Use your time wisely, study between classes. This time really adds up.

- Don't study in an environment where you will be easily distracted.

- Make sure you get enough sleep. Studies have proven that a lack of sleep affects

everyday lives. The American Institute of Stress recognizes that, "stress can even help compel us to action. But as a negative influence, it can result

your proficiency during your waking hours.

- Write down your goals and put them somewhere you can view them often.

- Don't overwhelm yourself by thinking about the entire stressful work load. Take one task at a time, and then move on to the next one.

- Be proactive. If you're stressed you can work it off by engaging in a physical activity.

- Think ahead. If you procrastinate or fail to do something will you be satisfied with the outcome?

in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke."

Depending on how we react to it, stress can either help us or hurt us. You are the only one who can decide how stress affects you.

If you are feeling stressed you may want to check out the Counseling Center, located in Gosiger Hall. Even if it's nothing major, they could help you talk things through.

So, take a deep breath and have a stress-free day. Wrote article: check.

• Jaimie Guerra

First-year communication major

Ask the Doc

Mary Buchwalder, M.D.

Initiative is the study that had the medical profession questioning some of its long-held assumptions about hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Now we are finding that HRT with both estrogen and progesterone is not protective against heart disease, and may actually increase risk for some.

That may not be true for those who take only estrogen (only recommended in women who have had a hysterectomy, as estrogen alone can cause precancerous endometrial changes). This part of the study is still in progress.

Human Identical (also called "Natural") Hormones haven't been prescribed much, not because doctors have anything particular against them; we just don't have much in the research literature that has used them. If there are no standard protocols for using them, how do I know

how much, what route (pill, cream, etc.), for what type of results (hot flashes, bone protection, heart protection)? The problem is that those questions haven't been answered.

HRT still is useful for hot flashes, and a woman and her doctor must decide how long to continue the treatment. HRT was our only option to prevent osteoporosis 15 years ago, and that was a disease that caused many problems and loss of independence for senior women. Today we have non-hormonal alternatives. Women who have had surgical menopause with removal of their ovaries do need some kind of hormone replacement, and, yes, many women do actually need a little testosterone replacement too.

I hope that covers the basics. The medical profession is

looking at hormone alternatives, but definitive answers are not yet available.

I think that as far as bone and heart health are concerned, the most important things are long-term lifestyle changes: exercise (cardiovascular for the heart, and weight-bearing for the bones) and a moderate-fat diet with adequate calcium. Older women, particularly petite, thin, white women who smoke or drink at least one alcoholic drink daily (those are the biggest risk factors for osteoporosis), should have their bone density checked to see if they need any further treatment.

Take care.

Dr.B

Women's Center Profiles

Charism 101: In step with Sr. Linda

Sr. Linda Lee Jackson, OP, didn't feel the call of a religious vocation until she was in her 30's. When she did take her vows with the Dominican Sisters however, she threw herself into her work of caring for other women, and she hasn't stopped working since.

Filling the role of Faith Development Coordinator for the Student Neighborhood, Sr. Linda is relatively new to UD. She arrived here this fall and says it has been a busy time for her, learning her job as she goes.

Sr. Linda's congregation, the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine de'Ricci, was founded in 1880 for the spiritual enrichment of women and has provided for their care through retreat ministry, residences for women, pastoral counseling, parish ministry and teaching. This group of sisters has a special sensitivity to women who are survivors of abuse, serious illness and recovering from addictions.

Its members have a deep appreciation of Mary, not only as the mother of Jesus Christ, but as a woman rooted in reality and strengthened by her faith, she said. This connection between the Dominicans and the Marianists was one thing that attracted Sr. Linda to the job opening at

UD.

Her former work as a retreat coordinator at a women's retreat center and encouragement by her fellow

sisters also gave her the confidence to apply for the position.

While Sr. Linda's job is rather broad, including responsibilities such as working with small discussion

groups, serving students on an individual basis and working collaboratively with the other campus ministers, she has one main focus: to help students understand their spirituality as they experience it in their everyday life.

"One of my dreams is to help students here get an appreciation of their spirituality – to help them learn to blend their everyday life with their spirituality," she said. "It's all about relationships. I would like the students to see that their spirituality is as easy as breathing."

Sr. Linda was drawn to the Dominican order because of their charism, she said. She had often wondered if she was meant for a vocation, but never felt compelled to take vows until she met a group of Dominican sisters and heard one give a reflection on the scriptures of Holy Week.

"I never knew where the journey would take me," she said of her decision to become a sister, "and I am both surprised and happy that it has brought me here to UD."

She finds a unique humor to

"If you want to love God; simply love God, and love God simply."

St. Francis de Sales

POP celebrates 10 years

Ten years ago, a group of women administrative office professionals at UD felt that a support group was needed in order to promote and enhance university administrative personnel.

These women put their heads together and created POP, Professional Office Personnel, an organization whose vision is "to inspire and equip all office professionals at UD to attain excellence by providing educational programs, researching human resource initiatives, mentoring services, informative literature, and recognition."

Both Jane Perrich, POP president, and Karen Rosati, President-Elect, got involved with the group when they were new to UD and unfamiliar with the campus and its policies.

Rosati said the POP mentoring committee helps by issuing new hire packets with information about UD, and by placing new hires with mentors to whom they can go with questions and for support.

Perrich said POP strives to contact new staff members within the first few weeks they are here.

"For a new person at UD, POP is very welcoming," Perrich said.

As POP began its 10th year in 2003, Perrich said the organization decided to try to revitalize itself by taking a new approach to recruiting members. A survey was done at the beginning of the year to see what members thought would help enhance the group.

As a result, POP is planning a series of brownbag lunches with guest speakers and

activities, as well as a larger membership drive.

Rosati, who will take over as president of POP next year, has even more plans to build the organization up. She said she would like to increase membership, as well as enhance POP's visibility on campus through its programs and activities.

She also "would like to see POP continue to be a part of administrative decisions when it comes to professional training for administrative assistants," she said.

Perrich emphasized that POP is a group that serves a variety of functions to its members, including social, professional and educational opportunities.

Rosati agreed that a benefit of POP is forming friendships and making connections with administration and other staff members.

"With this networking, I have experienced exciting exchanges of ideas, sharing of skills and friendship with many other administrative personnel that I would not have otherwise ever come in contact with," Rosati said.

"(POP) is an outlet for creative people," Perrich said. "We're not only an organization of staff members, but we're doing our best to be of service to the community by providing information, events and networking opportunities."

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• Jennifer Rogers
Women's Center Intern



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From the Director's Desk

We all have a stake in diversity at UD

Recently I had the opportunity to participate in a "diversity panel" addressing members of the current cohort of Leadership UD. I was, obviously, asked to represent the perspective of UD women – no small task, I might add, given the size and, well, "diversity" of that group.

The other panelists, Dr. Juli Burnell, Dr. Steven Dandaneau and Dr. Manoochehr Zoghi represented other traditionally "under-represented groups" at UD, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered people, those with disabilities, and international men and women. [For the record, a member of the UD African American community had also been invited, but was ultimately unable to attend.]

The Leadership UD organizers had provided the panelists with a short list of questions pertaining to the climate at UD for our various groups, including challenges each still faced, as well as progress that had been made.

As I listened to my fellow panelists answer these questions from their assigned groups' perspectives, a feeling of what I can only describe as "thankfulness" came over me. Listening to the very basic struggles each of these groups still faced at UD, I was reminded that there has been tremendous progress here for women. I knew this, and have tried to consistently acknowledge the commitment and sacrifices of those who have come before me and "fought the good fight" on behalf of UD women. But hearing the very difficult, often painful, struggles of other "diverse" members of the UD

community was a compelling reminder that while certainly progress has been made, as a community we still have a long way to go.

I wouldn't have thought it possible, but I left that Leadership UD meeting even more committed to the concept of diversity at UD. I left believing that until my fellow panelists could report that their groups had made similar progress to that of UD women, our institution's diversity work would not be done.

As we were wrapping up our panel, I tried to convey my feelings to the Leadership UD members when I answered their final question, "As leaders at UD, what can we do to better support your community?" I said simply, "Get involved." By that I meant don't leave the difficult work of making UD an inclusive, welcoming community up to those who are diverse. Many of us are in there already, working hard, but often feeling like we're "preaching to the choir."

What we really need are caring, committed people who aren't members of these under-represented groups to join our efforts. Together, as a real community, we can create the inclusive, supportive UD we envision.

• Lisa Rismiller
Women's Center Director

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Women's Center Newsletter

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