

CAWGS meeting notes

November 30, 2007, 1-3 PM

UIC Center for Research on Women and Gender

notes submitted by: Katy Weseman (send edits to gender@northwestern.edu)

In Attendance:

Stuart Michaels (U of C), Judith Gardiner (UIC), Sarah Shirk (UIC), Betsy Jones Hemenway (Loyola), Ann Kuzdale (Chicago State), Laurie Fuller (Northeastern), Katy Weseman (Northwestern)

First topic of discussion was a recap of the October Job/Internship/Volunteer Fair.

Overall attendance was up from last year. We estimated between 150 and 200 attendees. Break out sessions (with exception of Alumnae Panel) were not well attended, but still served a purpose. We discussed Ann Brigham's notes, see below (pages 4-5 of this PDF).

Some questions that we brainstormed include:

- Where to hold the fair next year – taking into account the taxing nature of hosting responsibilities on a given institution/person. We all agreed that the central location of Roosevelt was a plus to this year's fair. We discussed the possibility of Columbia as a host, but without anyone present from Columbia we did not want to volunteer the school. Betsy and Katy mentioned that Loyola and Northwestern have downtown campuses that could be looked to for possible sites. Sarah and Judith briefly discussed the new UIC events center, but reserving that space will likely be too costly.
- Trim down the program? We discussed the prospect of cutting the workshops to focus more on the tables and the Alumnae Panel (perhaps moving the panel to the middle or end of the fair so that more people can attend). Perhaps we would keep some workshops for the Young Women's Leadership Charter School students.
- Sarah suggested that piggy-backing the fair with some other event that is occurring in Chicago that same evening would be a way to up attendance. Thus we would be able to market the fair with the other event, advertising that people can stop by the fair on their way to the other event.
- We all agreed that we should discuss the logistics in the spring, as Ann B. suggests below, in order to get started on planning.

Next topic of discussion was the February 8 faculty development meeting/workshop.

The event will be held on February 8, 2008 from 2-4 PM at the Hull House dining room (I believe the address is 800 S. Halsted). In line with Sarah's above suggestion of piggy-backing events, we decided to offer tours of the Hull House Museum before the meeting and dinner in Greek Town after the meeting. Judith agreed to do a lot of work for this event since UIC is hosting it, she will contact Hull House about tours.

The discussion moved to the purpose of this meeting, the question was posed “What is the value of this event for Women’s and Gender Studies faculty?”

Brainstorm of discussion points:

- There is an absence of certain types of discussions in the field.
- The function of such an event should be to bring together different perspectives.
- What is Women’s and Gender Studies and what are the issues that the field faces?
- What is the intellectual grounding of Women’s and Gender Studies?
- Is queer theory usurping the field?
- What is the relation of theoretical to practical?
- Taking the example of the CIC schools survey and subsequent meeting in October at Indiana (Judith was present): that group has gathered statistical data, but hasn’t asked the theoretical questions.
- Perhaps the meeting could serve as a time for sharing of practical tools: i.e. syllabi exchange (if you want to share syllabi, Katy can put them on the website, please email her: gender@northwestern.edu).
- Examining the identity of the field: i.e. name changes from Women’s Studies to Women’s and Gender Studies, Gender Studies, Gender and Women’s Studies, Women’s Studies and Gender Studies, etc.

The discussion then moved to structural/logistical questions for the meeting:

- After much deliberation, we decided on a title for the event:
 - “Futures of Women’s and Gender Studies: Trans/National/Sexual/Formative?”
 - And the descriptive line: Join us for an informal discussion investigating theoretical and practical issues within these fields [women’s and gender studies].
- Readings: Everyone seems content with using the Blee article that Ann B. brought in at a previous meeting. Perhaps add one more that incorporates/discusses sexuality/queer theory. We also talked about the use of a reading merely to frame the discussion, but not to be the sole point of discussion, considering some people may not have time to read it and that everyone will bring their own perspectives to the discussion.
- Structure for the meeting: We decided that between 2 and 4 people would serve as plants/panelists, each giving about 5 minutes of comments to spark the discussion. These people should pose a diverse set of responses to the topic, each taking a specific position. We all brainstormed some colleagues who may be able/willing to serve in this role. Judith volunteered herself. Everyone agreed to think about/consult with potential respondents between now and the next meeting. Those who were not present should do so as well. Respondents should reflect and project as part of their responses, considering the title of the meeting implies looking toward the future of the field.

- Sarah will send out a save the date for the event soon and we will follow up with a more informative invitation in January.

Website

Lastly, Katy gave a quick website update. As we know, the site is fully up and running. Please visit it at <http://www.cawgs.org/>. If you have photos (Ann B. and Ann R.) from either of the past two Job/Internship fairs, please send them to me to go up on the website! As mentioned above, I am happy to add a syllabi sharing link if you all want to send me your syllabi. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for the site.

Next Meeting

Friday, January 18, 2008

1:30-3:30 PM

University of Chicago will host

Stuart will facilitate

Ann Kuzdale will take notes

See you all then!

Ideas for WGS Job, Internship, and Volunteer Fair planning
Submitted by Ann Brigham, 11/30/07

My main idea after hosting this event for the second time is that the distribution of tasks and expenses should be decided in the spring semester prior to the fair. That way, the host institution does not end up handling the majority of the work and the expense (or scrambling to cover expenses at the last minute). I can't speak for Ann Russo, but my perception is that in 2006, she did the vast majority of the work—and covered all the expense—when the fair was at DePaul. So, here are the tasks/expenses that I can think of that we could divide up among institutions. People might have others to add. There are some programs that can't make a financial contribution, which is absolutely fine; taking on some of the organizing work is just as valuable. I've indicated below the institution(s) that covered the work for the 2007 fair.

- Space reservation, set up, technology needs, and expense (if applicable)--Roosevelt
- Invitations to organizations--Roosevelt
- Organizations reservations and communication—DePaul
- Signage at the event—DePaul
- Organization and attendee registration at the fair—DePaul
- Program making and photocopying—Roosevelt
- Flyer making and distribution—Northwestern
- Food contribution and expense—Columbia, DePaul, UIC, Loyola, Northwestern, Northeastern, Roosevelt
- Breakout workshops conceptualization—everybody; facilitation—Columbia, DePaul, Northeastern [Laurie arranged for both external facilitators], UIC, Roosevelt
- Distribution of confirmed organizations descriptions to CAWGS listserv, high school, placement offices, and interested others—Roosevelt (using the excellent list made by DePaul)
- Alumni panel conceptualization—everybody; coordination with presenters and facilitation—Roosevelt
- Contact with high school (Chicago Young Women's Leadership Charter School)—Roosevelt
- Photographer at event—Roosevelt
- Evaluations of event by attendees and organizations, including final report—DePaul

What am I missing????

Also, I have one other question to raise for next year's fair: do we want to continue with the breakout workshops? I did not lead one this year, so I'm interested to hear from those who did. How was the attendance? Level of interest? What did people hear from students at their institutions? I heard from multiple students (many of whom I did not know) that their interest in the fair was focused on meeting people from the organizations. Although it's nice to offer the workshops, I wonder if they are the best use of our time and resources—and if they're having the effect we hoped for. Should we focus more on the fair and the marketing of the fair to students in and outside of WGS?

One last comment: Ann Russo mentioned the idea of sending a letter to Natalie Guerrero's supervisor at DePaul, and I just want to say, yes, let's do it!

Thanks to everyone for making this year's fair such a success!!