

# CHANCELLOR'S COMMISSION

*on the* STATUS *of* WOMEN



## 2020-21 Commission Report

2020-21 Commission Report.....	1
2020-21 Membership.....	2
2020-2021 Highest Priority Recommendations .....	2
Administration of the Commission .....	3
Recommended Charge to Commission .....	3
Recently Addressed Prior Recommendations .....	3
2021-22 Nominations and Proposed Membership .....	4
Review of 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 recommendations .....	4
Reports from Working Groups .....	5
Campus Climate and Work Life Alignment Working Group .....	6
2020-2021 Members .....	6
Summary of Activities .....	6
Recommendations .....	6
Child & Family Care Working Group .....	8
2020-2021 Members .....	8
Summary of Activities .....	8
Recommendations .....	8
Pay Fairness Working Group .....	9
2020-2021 Members .....	9
Summary of Activities .....	9
Recommendations .....	9
Violence against Women Work Group.....	11
2020-2021 Members .....	11
Summary of Activities .....	11
Recommendations Fall 2020 .....	11
Violence Against Women Proposal for Post-Doctoral Fellow .....	11
Women in Leadership Working Group.....	13
2020-2021 Members .....	13
Summary of Activities .....	13
Recommendation .....	13
Proposed Job Description – Post-Doctoral Fellows.....	14

## 2020-21 Membership

Marie Barnard  
Marcia Cole  
Jennifer Fos  
Phillis George  
Jennifer Holt, Volunteer Administrative GA  
Kelly Houston, Vice Chair  
Jessica Hughes  
Le'Tosha James  
Abby Johnston  
Kate Kellum, Chair  
Annette Kluck

Natcha Knight-Evans  
Kendall McDonald  
Danielle Noonan  
Molly Pasco-Pranger  
Meagan Rosenthal  
Whitney Tudor Sarver  
Laura Sheppardson, Past Chair  
Briana Simms  
Carrie Smith  
Theresa Ann Starkey

## 2020-2021 Highest Priority Recommendations

We request that an individual be specifically assigned to each of the recommendations below. This person would serve as a point of contact for the commission to enable status tracking and to communicate any plan of action (or inaction). We ask that this designation be made by the beginning of the fall semester and communicated to the Commission's Executive Committee.

- Implement the Child Care Initiative proposed plan, including: hire a Family Resources Manager; establish the UM Early Learning Center; apply for the CCAMPIS grant; create Student-Parent Resources and begin collecting student-parent data.
- Charge centralized committees or other multi-level governance bodies to regularly
  - Update and review all procedures and policies related to gender and violence, including but not limited to Title IX investigations and Student Conduct hearings.
  - Provide a transparent mechanism for pay equity and fairness grievances to be reviewed and addressed.
  - Ensure the equitable application of and review of the implementation of flextime and telework policies across campus.
- Develop and publish supportive, clear, and equitable policies for flextime and telework, informed by faculty and staff feedback on their experiences with existing policies and ad hoc arrangements.
- Support statutory changes at the State Legislature in conjunction with IHL sister institutions concerning donated leave policies, particularly expanding the eligibility requirements to all FMLA medically qualifying events.
- Establish an Employee Assistance Program that includes financial and legal counseling, similar to the University of Mississippi Medical Center.
- Reinstate the Employee Emergency Fund in cooperation with the University of Mississippi Foundation, Human Resources, and the Career-Life Initiative, and expand eligibility for assistance from this fund.
- Hire post-doctoral fellows to support the Commission's efforts to provide opportunity for women leaders and reduce violence against women.
- Ensure that pay equity data are continuously examined and available for review by employees

### Administration of the Commission

The commission met using remote meeting technology September, October, November, January, March, & April. A scheduled meeting for February was cancelled as the university was closed due to weather.

The commission operated with a chair, immediate past chair, vice chair, and a volunteer graduate administrative assistant as the executive committee and working groups to address specific issues.

The Executive Committee met with Chancellor Boyce prior to the start of the academic year to review recommendations from previous years and in December for a mid-year update. The final meeting with Chancellor Boyce is scheduled for July 7, 2021.

2020-2021 Working Groups with conveners included:

- Campus Climate & Work-Life Alignment, Molly Pasco-Pranger
- Child & Family Care, Whitney Tudor Sarver
- Pay Fairness & Equity, Kendall McDonald
- Violence Against Women, Carrie Smith
- Women in Leadership, Marie Barnard

### Recommended Charge to Commission

Following Allies Training provided by the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, the chair met with the trainers to discuss ways to make the Commission more inclusive. The trainer recommended several minor modifications to the Commission's charge. These were discussed, revised, and approved at the March 2021 meeting.

*Proposed charge:*

The Commission on the Status of Women is an assembly of faculty, staff, and students appointed by the Chancellor to serve in an advisory capacity, apprising them of the needs and concerns of women in faculty, staff, and student roles, and recommending ways that such needs and concerns might be addressed.

*With edits apparent:*

The Commission on the Status of Women is an assembly of faculty, staff, and students appointed by the Chancellor to serve in an advisory capacity, apprising ~~him/her~~ **them** of the needs and concerns of ~~female~~ **women in** faculty, staff, and student **roles**, and recommending ways that ~~their~~ **such** needs and concerns might be addressed

### Recently Addressed Prior Recommendations

The Commission was pleased to see progress on several key recommendations from previous work, including:

- Completion of an external pay equity review (AON) and development of a committee which reviewed identified pay differences.
- Progress on increasing the institution-wide minimum wage
- Implementation of pay equity raises for 2021-22 for 2 of the 3 tiers identified.
- Revision of Family and Medical Leave policy to allow two spouses to each take 12 weeks of leave
- Addressing ad hoc concerns from the commission

### 2021-22 Nominations and Proposed Membership

The Executive Committee solicited nominations for the 2021-22 Commission on the Status of Women by distributing a survey via UMToday (daily email digest). We received 26 unique nominations from faculty, staff, and students. The Executive Committee has made proposed membership available to the Chancellor.

Marcia Cole, Molly Pasco-Pranger, and Laura Sheppardson have served the commission well and are ending their terms. The Commission is particularly grateful for Dr. Sheppardson's leadership as co-chair, chair, and immediate past-chair in the last three years.

### Review of 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 recommendations

- Increase openness and transparency regarding violence prevention and sexual wellness, including a public relations campaign. Websites and other materials should be updated to better communicate how to access existing resources.
- Review the policies regarding the recruitment, selection, training, and utilization of Title IX advisors. Consider adding a peer education component.
- Communicate to stakeholders about pay equity issues, including encouraging AON to meet with authors of the 2017 Pay Equity Report and/or the Pay Equity Working Group, Faculty Senate, and Staff Council.
- Set aside funds annually to address staff and faculty pay equity issues, and develop guidance for chairs and managers in how those funds are to be distributed.
- Enrich the Employee Assistance Program by including financial and legal counseling, as well as an employee emergency fund.
- Remove from the University's FMLA policy the limitation that "If both spouses are employed by the University . . . the husband/wife together are limited to only one 12-week period during the 12-month period."
- Apply for a CCAMPIS grant in the next funding cycle (May 2020, pending appropriations). This award could provide child care subsidies for low-income UM students, provide salary support for a business manager for Willie Price and/or an additional children's center, and provide other support for expanded access to child care for students.
- Continuously collect data on student parental status in order to better serve the unique needs of student parents.
- Communicate the plan of action after completion of the child care center feasibility study.

## Reports from Working Groups

## Campus Climate and Work Life Alignment Working Group

### 2020-2021 Members

Marcia Cole, Kelly Houston, Jessica Hughes, Abby Johnston, Danielle Noonan, Molly Pasco-Pranger (convener), Briana Simms

### Summary of Activities

The main work taken up by the group during 2020-2021 has centered around a review of the Campus Climate Survey Report and identifying concerns and opportunities in the area of women's work life balance that were raised by the shift to working at distance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The two areas of discussion in the end overlapped significantly, as we gave attention to data in the CCS Report that indicated that staff report greater support for work-life balance from their direct supervisors than from the University (p. 234) and also identified a pressing need to ensure that revised policies concerning flextime and telework arrangements are supportive, clear, and equitably applied.

### Recommendations

The working group's primary new recommendations are that the University:

- quickly develop and publish supportive, clear, and equitable policies for flextime and telework, informed by faculty and staff feedback on their experiences with existing policies and ad hoc arrangements since March 2020.
- develop oversight and appeal process be established to ensure the appropriate application of these policies across units.

While Human Resources and the Work Strategies Task Forces are working on this priority, we believe it is imperative that broader employee feedback be collected and considered. Attached is a set of responses on this topic from an April 2021 survey of members of the Working Mother's Support Network which may serve as a starting point.

The following items recommended by the working group in the 2018-2019 Commission report have still not been addressed and the working group agreed that they still merit recommendation. We recommend that the University:

- establish an Employee Assistance Program that includes financial and legal counseling, similar to the University of Mississippi Medical Center.
- reinstate the Employee Emergency Fund in cooperation with the University of Mississippi Foundation, Human Resources, and the Career-Life Initiative, and expand eligibility for assistance from this fund. It may be that the recent collection and distribution of COVID-19 emergency funds may provide useful models for how to accomplish this goal.
- support statutory changes concerning donated leave policies, particularly expanding the eligibility requirements to all FMLA medically qualifying events.
- support the creation of paid leave for children's educational activities, and/or remove the requirement of using 8 hours of personal leave, compensatory leave, or leave without pay before using medical leave for 12 month employees.

## Available Documentation

- UM Working Mothers Support Network Responses

## Child & Family Care Working Group

### 2020-2021 Members

Kelly Houston, Abby Johnston, Natcha Knight-Evans, Molly Pasco-Pranger, Whitney Sarver (convener), Theresa Starkey

### Summary of Activities

The main work taken up by the group during 2020-2021 has centered around the 2020 Child Care Initiative proposed five-year plan, which was delayed until 2021 due to the pandemic. The group has also initiated conversations with the Graduate Student Council (GSC) regarding child & family care issues.

### Recommendations

- In support of the Child Care Initiative proposed plan, we recommend that the University:
  - hire a Family Resources Manager;
  - create Student-Parent Resources and begin collecting student-parent data;
    - fund a position to be a student-parent advocate/advisor, who would be responsible for the resources and a website;
    - create priority registration for student-parents;
  - apply for the CCAMPIS grant;
  - establish the UM Early Learning Center.
- After discussions with the Graduate Student Council, we believe that there is a need for family study rooms on campus. We recommend that the University establish an initial family study room in the J.D. Williams Library.
- In support of our students, we recommend continuing conversations with the GSC to perform listening sessions to gain students' perspectives. Additional groups to include: ASB, BSU, and PALS (Parents Attending Law School).
- Elder Care is becoming increasingly important to our community. We recommend an increase in the conversations and presentations around elder care as facilitated by the Provost's Office and the Career-Life Connector Initiative.

### Available Documentation

1. UM Child Care Initiative Proposed Five-Year Plan
2. Minutes from meeting with GSC



## Pay Fairness Working Group

### 2020-2021 Members

Dr. Laura Sheppardson, Ms. Camie Rushing, Dr. Whitney Tudor Sarver, Ms. Kendall McDonald (convener), Dr. Karen Kate Kellum

### Summary of Activities

The Pay Fairness working group has tracked the progress of the Office of the Provost pay equity task force for accountability. The working group has also discussed next priorities, including the implementation of a transparent and accessible channel for pay inquiries and grievances, pay fairness for graduate and post-doctoral students, and mobilization around addressing the university's lowest paid positions.

### Recommendations

- The pay fairness working group expresses support for the work of the Office of the Provost pay equity task force. It also affirms and applauds the leadership of individual divisions, departments and offices seeking to address pay fairness issues through the enactment of their own compensation policies.
- It is imperative that the University of Mississippi make available and transparent a channel for pay fairness grievances to be addressed and rectified. The lack of a means for faculty and staff to seek review of pay, salary and raise decisions is an obstacle to pay fairness at UM.
- The University of Mississippi must ensure that data related to pay equity is continuously examined. A long-term commitment to collecting and evaluating this information should be implemented to further institutionalize positive pay fairness practices.
- The University administration should continue to set aside funds each year for gender wage corrections, with the following notes:
  - That funds go to staff as well as faculty
  - That funds be applied with special attention to those earning less than \$30k annually
  - That funds be disbursed not only to those women who ask to be considered but that deans, chairs, and directors identify those women with unequal pay for their level and merit
  - That deans, chairs, and directors examine whether women and men of color are disproportionately underpaid
  - That guidance is provided to chairs and managers about distribution of the funds that includes an active process of providing justification for pay inequities.
- Training must be provided for departments and supervisors related to pay fairness practices, particularly those units impacted directly by the corrections made by the Office of the Provost's task force.
- The compensation of graduate students and post-doctoral students should be critically evaluated, with the goal of bringing this compensation up to livable standards. In particular, addressing the following issues would alleviate significant challenges faced by graduate students at UM:
  - Expanded family insurance qualification for graduate students, including those in law and pharmacy programs;
  - Increased minimum stipend amounts for graduate students across programs;

- Expanded availability of mental health and telehealth services for graduate students.
- Positions within the university that are compensated at \$30,000 or less should also be further evaluated for livability and fairness.

## Violence against Women Work Group

### 2020-2021 Members

Marie Barnard, Jenny Holt, Le'Tosha James, Carrie Smith (convener), Theresa Starkey

### Summary of Activities

- The work group met 2 times outside of the regular meetings attended by all commissioners.
- The primary work of the workgroup was to write a proposal for the creation of a postdoctoral fellow to research issues related to gendered violence on our campus.
- We continue to hope that there is movement on the recommendations we made last year regarding changes to the Title IX and Student Conduct Processes.

### Recommendations Fall 2020

1. We recommend that updates to ALL webpages related to sexual misconduct policies, resources, procedures, etc. be visible, updated, and consistent and to the extent possible, streamlined, and easy to find. Further, we recommend that the University be more open and transparent about its intentions and goals regarding violence prevention.
2. Creation of a Task Force to update all procedures and policies related to gender and violence, including but not limited to Title IX investigations, Student Conduct hearings
  - a. Reasoning
    - i. There are multiple problems with the process (highlighted below)
    - ii. Changes have been made to the DoE's Title IX guidelines.
      1. For example, Title IX applies to faculty as of May 2020
    - iii. We have new data from the recent campus climate survey
  - b. Additional notes
    - i. We recommend that a member of the Violence Against Women Work Group be appointed to the task force
    - ii. We recommend that the task force to be comprised of multiple stakeholders

### Violence Against Women Proposal for Post-Doctoral Fellow

Campus community safety is a primary institutional concern. The Violence against Women Working Group of the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women is tasked with providing recommendations that will help the University both understand the nature and scope of gendered violence on campus and by extension, address and possibly prevent it. Gendered violence affects students, faculty, and staff and includes sexual assault/rape, stalking, and sexual harassment. The Working Group has attempted for several years to collect the necessary data and gain the perspectives of campus community stakeholders (e.g., Title IX, Student Conduct, Counseling Center) to be able to make informed recommendations. However, there are many key data points and multiple stakeholders that should be engaged (e.g., Equal Opportunity and Regulatory Compliance, University Police Department, Oxford Baptist Hospital) that the Working Group has not been able to engage. Of note, the recent campus climate survey represents yet another information source to be considered. Before the University can hope to identify and implement best practices tailored to our institutional environment and needs to address and prevent gendered violence on campus, it is imperative that we understand more about how, where, when, and why it is happening. Unfortunately, this is beyond the scope of a small working group serving on a volunteer basis.

In order to collect and synthesize all of the information pertaining to gendered violence at the University of Mississippi, we are requesting one-time funding support to conduct an environmental scan<sup>1</sup> – collecting and synthesizing information from multiple units and offices on campus and in the community to help us more effectively make data-based recommendations. We request support to engage a post-doctoral research fellow with expertise in quantitative and qualitative methodology and gender and violence. The post-doc would gather and synthesize institutional data, identify and interview stakeholders, review peer institutions' initiatives, and prepare a strategic report that can be utilized to support a data-driven approach to addressing and preventing gendered violence at the University of Mississippi. This initiative seeks to support the promise of the [UMSafe Letter to students](#), *“our campus is one where sexual violence is not tolerated, nor is it hidden from public awareness.”*

Funding request:

\$73,595(\$55,000 salary +\$18,595 fringe) for a post-doctoral research fellow for 12 months

\$4,000 for project-related costs (computer, transcription, incentives)

## Women in Leadership Working Group

### 2020-2021 Members

Dr. Marie Barnard (convener), Dr. Jennifer Fos, Dr. Phillis George, Dr. Annette Kluck, Ms. Natcha Knight-Evans, Dr. Meagen Rosenthal, Ms. Briana Simms

### Summary of Activities

The working group met multiple times across the academic year. The group determined that for several years the Women in Leadership Working Group has recommended proposed methods to enhance the preparedness of women faculty and staff to take on leadership roles within our campus community. To date, these recommendations have not been enacted. The recent campus climate survey indicated that a substantial number of employees have considered leaving the institution. It is unknown how many women have chosen to leave the University of Mississippi because of a lack of leadership opportunity. Further, it is unknown what the leadership development climate on campus is for faculty and staff. The UM 2020 Strategic plan included a specific 'Tactic for Success' to adopt policies and procedures for exit interviews to provide insight into factors negatively impacting retention of high-quality employees, however to the best of our knowledge this data has not been disaggregated by gender nor examined for leadership-related factors.

In order to address the challenge of increasing representation of women in leadership at the University of Mississippi, the working group requested one-time funding support to conduct a thorough review and analysis of existing relevant institutional data, to conduct surveys with current women faculty and staff about leadership development and opportunity, to conduct interviews with women faculty and staff who left the institution within the past four years to understand the potential role leadership opportunity played in their decision to leave, and to review initiatives at peer institutions to support women faculty and staff in advancing to leadership. We developed a position description and requested support to engage a post-doctoral research fellow with expertise in gender and higher education as we anticipate that this will increase the likelihood that former employees will provide candid responses. The post-doc would gather the institutional data, conduct and analyze the surveys and interviews, review peer institutions' initiatives, and prepare a strategic report that can be utilized to support a data-driven approach to build effective activities at the University of Mississippi to provide opportunity for women leaders. Ultimately, this initiative seeks to enhance retention of high performing women faculty and staff.

The position description was provided to the Chancellor in December 2020 and the working group looks forward to the opportunity to engage a post-doctoral fellow to move the efforts of this working group forward.

### Recommendation

- Hire a post-doctoral fellow to gather the institutional data, conduct and analyze surveys and interviews, review peer institutions' initiatives, and prepare a strategic report that can be utilized to support a data-driven approach to build effective activities at the University of Mississippi to provide opportunity for women leaders

# Proposed Job Description – Post-Doctoral Fellows

Fellows to support the work of the Commission on the Status Women, including Violence Against Women and Women in Leaders

## **Definition of Class**

This position conducts environmental scans, collects and analyzes data, and develops policy and programming recommendations related to gender and higher education within an institution of higher learning. The incumbent gains specialized training and experience in gender and higher education policy.

Two postdoctoral fellow positions are available. Position 1 will focus on the retention of high performing faculty and staff women. Position 2 will focus on gendered violence. The incumbents will have a primary appointment in The University of Mississippi Graduate School with an affiliate appointment in an appropriate department (e.g., Higher Education, Psychology, Public Health). Each fellow will have support and mentoring from a faculty advisor.

## **Examples of Work Performed**

- Identify, collect, analyze, and synthesize data from multiple sources, including from on and off-campus sources.
- Conduct reviews of policies, procedures, and programs.
- Write strategic reports that can be utilized to support data-driven approaches to issues related to the retention of high performing women faculty and staff (Position 1) or gender-based violence (Position 2).
- Ensure all work is compliant with relevant University and Responsible Conduct of Research policies and principles.
- Perform similar or related duties as assigned or required.

## **Essential Functions**

These essential functions include, but are not limited to, the following. Additional essential functions may be identified and included by the hiring department.

1. Identify, collect, analyze and synthesize quantitative and qualitative data.
2. Review policies, procedures, and programs
3. Write reports

## **Minimum Qualifications**

These minimum qualifications have been agreed upon by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in this job class and are based upon a job analysis and the essential functions. However, if a candidate believes s/he is qualified for the job although s/he does not have the minimum qualifications set forth below, s/he may request special consideration through substitution of related education and experience, demonstrating the ability to perform the essential functions of the position. Any request to substitute related education or experience for minimum qualifications must be addressed to The University of Mississippi's Department of Human Resources in writing, identifying the related education and experience which demonstrates the candidate's ability to perform all essential functions of the position.

**Physical Requirements:** These physical requirements are not exhaustive, and additional job-related physical requirements may be added to these by individual agencies on an as needed basis. Corrective devices may be used to meet physical requirements.

**Physical Exertion:** There are no physical demands in this position.

**Vision:** Requirements for this job include close vision.

**Speaking/Hearing:** Ability to give and receive information through speaking and listening.

**Experience/Educational Requirements:**

**Education:**

Terminal degree in related field (e.g., higher education, public health, psychology, sociology)

AND

Proficiency in both quantitative and qualitative methodology, including analysis of existing quantitative data sets, survey methodology, conducting interviews, and analyzing qualitative data.

**Interview Requirements**

Any candidate who is called for an interview must notify the Department of Human Resources in writing of any reasonable accommodation needed prior to the date of the interview.