

Gender Equity Council hosts listening sessions

by **David Williams - Friday, November 14, 2008**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1468/gender-equity-council-hosts-listening-sessions/>

The campus community will have two chances next week to hear updates from the Gender Equity Council and have their own suggestions heard.

A pair of Nov. 18 listening sessions slated for 10-11 a.m. in Dempsey 215 and 3-4 p.m. in Dempsey 220 will address the needs of pregnant University of Wisconsin Oshkosh employees and students as well as those with young children. The dialogue will pick up where it left off at listening sessions held in April.

“Last time, we really didn’t know what topics were going to come up. We had organized the sessions to figure out women were thinking about gender equity on campus,” said LGBTQ Resource Center Director Liz Cannon, a member of the Gender Equity Council.

After the April sessions revealed a need for improvements for employees and students who are pregnant or have children as well as climate issues with women faculty and classified staff, the council met with University administration to relay the concerns and comments.

“The administration is aware of the concerns that the participants brought up and are looking into actions that will address them,” Cannon said.

One purpose of the follow-up sessions is to report the results of the April sessions to those who contributed then and to anyone else who wants to attend.

“We want to show them that we didn’t just shelve the information they gave us last time, that we’re following through on it and report back about the direction the administration hopes to go,” said Cannon, adding that administrators presented the council with follow-up questions.

For example, participants at the April session asked for the campus’s childcare center to be open later in the evening. Cannon hopes to get a better idea of what the preferred hours would be at the upcoming sessions.

All are welcome to attend the Nov. 18 sessions, including those who did not attend in April. The floor also will be open to new subjects of concern. Confidentiality will be observed; only general concepts will leave the room.

“Our main goal is to listen to what others have to say,” Cannon said.

To RSVP, send an e-mail to gec@uwosh.edu.

The Gender Equity Council has a four-fold mission:

- Increase administrator, supervisor and campus-wide awareness of issues related to all women.
- Advocate for increasing opportunities for women to fill administrative roles.
- Continuously explore ways to improve campus climate and working conditions to increase the retention of women employees.
- Expand opportunities for female students.