



**Women, Gender, and Health  
Interdisciplinary Concentration  
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health**

**Working Group Meeting  
4 March 2020**

**Introduction**

- Budget: Is being reviewed and the spending items are being assigned the correct budget line.
- Logo: We discovered the logo did not say that we are housed at HSPH. That has been corrected.

**Events**

- 2 recent events that went really well.
  - 2020 census: Eve Millona went over the importance of the 2020 census, which brought to the forefront the importance of how resources are distributed. Differences between old and new census, brought concerns to the forefront.
    - Good turnout and non-HSPH faces. About 30 people came.
  - White nationalism panel: Turnout was also excellent. New people coming to WGH events and seeing how these issues should be shaped through a gender lens. The innovation of having Evelyn and Alex on Zoom ended up working, a good way to think about bringing in new speakers.
- Next speakers are all local.
- Next events
  - IWD event: Went with a theme of unions. We have participation from 3 unions who will lead with comments.
  - Possible event: Liz Janiak presented an idea.
    - Jennifer Nash: JD and African American Studies. She has written a lot of theory books in the past. Right now her project as a Radcliffe fellow is studying the use of doulas as an intervention to prevent maternal mortality, particularly in Chicago.
    - A lunchtime talk may be more feasible. We have nothing else in April, except the end of April. Maybe this could be earlier in April.
- New student recruitment: Looking for a new student for the events committee- no current students will be here next year. The events committee will write up a description on what the committee does and what the benefits are to be disseminated and recruit new committee members.
- Conflict with MCH: Avoid Monday lunch meetings because they conflict with the MCH seminar.

**Conference Stipend Presentations**

- Shea: Advancing Excellence in Transgender Health
  - Highlights: inclusion of people within and outside of medicine.
  - A way to challenge medicine's idea of making gender and sex dichotomous. People in the medical profession are taught to use science as a way to be objective about sex and gender and ignoring the fact that culture has confined us to these two categories.
  - Older professionals were taught to pathologize

- “Patient panels were my favorite, learning from people's experiences and their interactions with the medical field. I learned the most from the in-the-middle yucky situations. The way that the questions are asked leads to a yucky experience”.
- Serious research presented on cervical cancer and Trans men. The guidelines are based on cisgender women and the experience is already uncomfortable. How can we bridge the gap and screen for abnormal cells, for example self-testing for HPV cells to be more comfortable? Unique way to understand someone's relationship with their gender and anatomical body, rather than controlling somebody's healthcare.
- Samples that were self-taken were just as good as those collected by doctors. Could help to stop retraumatizing people.
- Jessica Huang: Helped organize a conference in Uganda
  - Context: Rhino refugee camp. Hoping to engage humanitarian practitioners and refugees in co-designing programs. Need to add more of a gender lens in everything and improve the accessibility of various activities. Focused on capacity building- so that men and women could access training. Several focal discussions were carried out including Gender Based Violence (GBV). There were lots of differences in team dynamics. We ended up co-creating a tool kit to help people think of power dynamics, gender and conflict resolution.
  - Added homes and markets to where the focus groups were held to make it easier for women to participate. We considered different levels of engagement.
  - We worked with the refugees to come up with new projects: a lot of the projects had to do with traditional societal norms, women would bring up growing and making food and crafts. Men would bring up things like energy- making charcoal. These norms still exist. We tried to recruit members to increase interest into other groups and mix up the genders.
  - We had women participate in electronics, metal and wood working teams: women were shy, started activities to bring women in using paper and alternative tools.
  - Focus group discussions: on GBV- domestic violence also happening to men, but mostly to women. GBV is high among those who are non-binary. Members of LGTBQ community coming to the camp from countries where homosexuality is illegal. They also discussed peacebuilding and maternal and child health.
  - Developed a tool kit on team dynamics: helps teams to address bias.

### **Take Action Tuesday**

- Last month: focused on the primaries and trying to help students to vote in their states, get themselves registered and help with absentee ballots and local election reminders. Awareness of “for the people” bill to expand voting rights. Tried to reach students to send a reminder to the senators who are representing this act. Created an event on Transgender asylum seekers under ICE detention who are facing physical assault and medical neglect. Students wrote to the acting Secretary of Homeland Security. ICE should comply with the fiscal spending and regulation.
- We ordered a map of the United States and “I Voted” stickers, were trying to distribute them yesterday. We will distribute next Tuesday as there are 6 states where primaries are still going to be held. We are creating a banner to use for the rest of the year and are happy about the approval of the budget request. We have what we need for primary season and also for the fall.
- We have 4 volunteers and are distributing the work. We recently used Facebook to reach out and recruit a new member.

### **Curriculum Committee**

- No faculty chair yet. Still hoping it will be resolved.
- Course updates:
  - WGH 220: 18 students
  - WGH 207: 12 registered and room for 20- distribute the flier at IWD on Monday. Make a pitch for it as part of “what IWD means to you”.
  - Action item: Send out another email reminder to the listserv next week apart from the newsletter.
  - We are still waiting to hear from Elizabeth Boskey and Bobby Gottlieb about transitioning professors for the WGH 210 class for the fall. The key thing is having them connect
  - Action Item Cris and Sherine: in 2 weeks send an email to E. Boskey to ask about if this class will be moved to another day in the fall.
- Student stipends: These are available for the next semesters.
  - Action item: Send a special email to remind students of this opportunity.
  - Action Item: The newsletter is getting too long.
  - Action item: Print a small statement about the stipends to distribute during IWD.
- Graduation: Don't forget to submit your documentation on time for graduation.
- For next year: there will be another iteration of the independent study around the Transgender health course being developed. Conversation needs to be resumed.
- For the course we have to ask Sari what his plans are. If it happens in the spring let people know if the fall. Tab it down in the summer meeting.

### Wrap Up

- Next meeting is on April 8.
- May 6 is the graduation party.
- Figure out what the summer meeting will be- ideas for a doodle poll and send to faculty and listserv. Purpose: sum up the year, look at the budget and plan the next year- themes, events, speakers. It is usually a two hour meeting that gives us a chance to focus. Usually it is held at the end of June. What are possible dates? Cris has a conference at the end of June.
- Action item: Send doodle poll this week and ask people to respond by 9th March about availability for a two hour meeting June 1-5 from 12pm to 2pm. We can pick whichever of those dates most people have sign up for. Cris will be here and we hope that Sherine can be here. We will do some planning in May to pull everything together.

*Meeting adjourned 2:00pm*