



Working Group Meeting

Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 12:00-2:00pm

[Online Meeting Zoom](#)

Chair: Nancy Krieger

AGENDA

Participants: Cristina Alonso, Nancy Krieger, Sherine Andreine Powerful, Sabra Katz-Wise, Elizabeth Janiak, Eli Godwin, Anne Caroline Danielsen, Cindy Chwa, Emily Harrison, Gwen Feeny, Kate Meyer, Katie Laurila, Elizabeth Boskey, Mai-Han Trinh, Tamara Rushovich, Jackie Jahn, Lissah

- **Introduction [12:00-12:10pm]**

- **Welcome, brief introductions**

- The purpose of this meeting is to reflect on what went well and what didn't go so well this year
- We'll hear from our subcommittees and use these reports to infuse our understanding of the coming year, which is going to be different given that the fall, and maybe the spring, will be remote
- It has been heartening to see how engaged people still are after the transition online
- We are having this meeting at this time of civil unrest, and we acknowledge the connections between police violence, structural racism, and anti-LGTBQ violence. Therefore, we are grateful that everyone is able to be here.
- Nancy will provide an update on HSPH positioning on the Movement for Black Lives
- *Participants introduced themselves*

- **Evaluation of past year and planning for next year**

- Taking into account COVID-19 disruption
 - The last event that was held in person was International Women's Day. After that we didn't do any events, and we had one class that transitioned remotely. Our concerns focused on how we could provide support to the courses and plan for next year.

- **Review of 2019-2020 activities and accomplishments [12:10-12:35pm]**

- **WGH Course Ratings AY 2019-2020**

- WGH courses had very good ratings (average = 4.5; range: 4.0 to 5.0)
- Liz Janiak: A comment from the course evaluations was flagged. There are a lot of ongoing challenges with white students in the class because they have trouble and resistance to understanding their own privilege, white fragility, and how racism affects access to sexual and reproductive health. The question was posed whether anyone else was experiencing this in their classes. Liz's feeling is that the school should offer training on white fragility and related topics at orientation. Without

this training students struggle in courses, especially in the SBS department, as students don't have the foundation to understand what we are talking about. This is a common issue among some students who are missing vocabulary and understanding.

- Sherine: The comment in the evaluation is a pretty common sentiment that I've heard from white students in my classes; it doesn't always get voiced out loud, but people think it. In a way, this kind of comment helps us to pinpoint the importance of the work we do with WGH, namely how we incorporate multiple systems of oppression into our courses and events. Yes we have to figure out, how can we hold space for students who are just beginning their journey in understanding these concepts, but mainly, we need to focus on, how do we also challenge students as public health practitioners, because this is a harmful feeling to have.
- Nancy: There will be an HSPH Town Hall at school on the 16th, I just put in my questions for that Town Hall and will add that suggestion for orientation. We also have a new person for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. This is a good time to put this issue on the town hall meeting agenda, as it will play out in WGH and SBS courses as well.
- Sherine: We do encourage students to give us feedback, and while we approach things mainly from a gender and health lens, we treat public health as complex and our work should be addressed from many lenses; this is often one of the strengths of our courses.
- Other courses: review of courses and ratings
 - We have had to fight for these courses so we appreciate when people sign up for them and are pleased with enrollment numbers.
 - Experience of WGH 207 online: Overall, it went really well.
- **WGH Events for AY 2019-2020**
 - **Take Action Tuesday highlights**
 - We lead advocacy efforts every week on Tuesday. Since we have gone online we rely on the newsletter and Facebook to disseminate our actions.
 - We addressed a wide variety of topics this year- from immigration, detention, and DACA to access to midwives. In the spring we have worked on voter registration. Once COVID started we focused on human rights and COVID, and recently on anti-racism actions.
 - About 10-15 people are engaged in each event in person
 - We just posted about Take Action Tuesday to the incoming student Facebook group so hopefully we will be getting new incoming students
 - **WGH hosted events and attendance**
 - *Past year's events were reviewed*
- **WGH Conference Stipend Awards for AY 2019-2020**
 - *List of Fall 2019 award recipients was reviewed*
 - No stipends were requested for Spring 2020 as most conferences were canceled
 - Stipends support students to go to a conference to present or learn about gender and health, using a gender analysis. The requirement is that they must present at a WGH meeting about their experience.

- **WGH Concentration Completion Letters for AY 2019-2020**
 - *List of 2019-2020 WGH concentrators was reviewed*
 - We had 4 concentrators this year, considerably less than last year
 - We hope that next year more people will be able to complete the concentration
 - We typically send a certificate and a gift bag, and this year we sent plants since we couldn't give them the gift bags in person. Email copies of the certificates were sent to concentrators. Official copies will be mailed once campus reopens in Spring 2021.
 - Overall comments or experiences related to the concentration:
 - Sherine: WGH has some of the best classes I have taken because of the intentionality and the varied lens that the professors take. Professors are warm and welcoming and are deeply committed, even if the courses not being their main area of work. Classes are great, and we get constructive feedback from students. Cris and I can increase advertising of the classes and ensure the courses are known by more students.
 - Nancy: It is really important to understand we aren't a department, we are interdisciplinary within 4 departments. All 4 departments need to approve WGH courses, all of which, as WGH courses, must bring in perspectives of human rights and gender analysis in relation to racism, class, national, and international issues. Classes must be global in focus as well as U.S. based. We work with the faculty that exists, we cannot hire so we are always looking for new faculty who come to the school who can become involved in WGH.
 - Question: Is there a list of past conferences that WGH students have attended with stipends?
 - We don't have a list but we could look into making it and having it be public on our website.
- **Review of WGH 2019-2020 budget [12:35-1:00pm]**
 - **WGH Budget Review 2020-2021**
 - When school is on remote basis, it will limit what we need to spend for events. Most of our event spending has been catering, so we need to be creative with how the budget will support us going online.
 - We have a signed letter and agreement between the school for US\$20,000 a year for four more years total for the WGH budget. The question about whether carryforward will be allowed or not, is unknown; there has not yet been any clear statement of policy. To change our signed agreement regarding our US\$20,000 a year allocation, the school would have to discuss this with Dr. Krieger, and we haven't received any communication suggesting that there will be changes to our funding.
 - When we think about the budget going forward, it may be the case that we're allowed to have in-person events again in the spring. There might be other public gatherings, e.g. a picnic with people 6 feet apart, so we might be able to use some funds going forward, but everyone is going to be concerned about flying, regardless, unless a vaccine is developed quickly, so it is very unlikely we will be bringing any speakers in.

- Our recent underspending reflects events being canceled. With everyone shifting to webinars, there's a different structure.
 - We always want to be very transparent about how our funds are allocated. These kinds of allocations are what has made sense in the past, but as a working group we decide how to allocate all of this. These amounts can be moved around. We have had a budget that's based on a past of having people be physically around, but this may only be for half a year as remote education may only be in the fall.
 - Liz- question: Is the school doing anything to supplement the cost of the internet or doing a tuition cut, is this something WGH would be interested in offering students, so they have the capacity to attend our events? For students who have a need to apply for aid, it doesn't seem like it should fall on us, but this is an equity issue for students who might be attending our events. Is this something to prioritize if we're moving money around?
 - We should think about this for both courses vs. events.
 - Liz- comment: Everybody made conferences free if they moved them online this spring. They will be charging fees in the fall, so students will need stipends to attend these.
 - Nancy- APHA is planning a hybrid conference, so there will still be some in-person events potentially happening. *[UPDATE: on June 10, the day after our WGH summer meeting, APHA announced it will be a 100% virtual conference this fall.]*
 - Confirmation of the process for obtaining the funds
 - We've done a lot of work to get the budget in shape, so that the recording of expenses is error free, with a good process in place going forward.
 - Sabra- Do salaries include instructor salary for WGH 207?
 - TA stipend is its own line item. We will keep this as its own budget line unless we get any directives otherwise. There are conversations underway at school about allowing for more TAs with remote teaching; more discussion about TAs and class-size to come.
 - Part-time staff for Spring 2021 for training
 - We have established that we will be able to hire new students to take over from Cris & Sherine in the spring; they will be trained via the buddy system, with overlap in the spring, and then assuming full responsibilities during the summer.
- **Taking stock of how we work & planning for next year [1:00-1:20pm]**
 - WGH Student Staff
 - Continuities with Cris and Sherine
 - Cris and Sherine will be continuing- Sherine has been with WGH since October 2018, Cris since January 2020, and both Cris and Sherine graduate in May 2021. We received authorization to continue their employment as annually appointed "temporary workers" (their official employment status), despite the COVID-19 hiring freeze prohibiting any new hires.
 - We have a buddy system for training- we will be looking to bring on two new student staff members in Spring 2021, as described above. Ideally we would want to recruit two doctoral students, since they are in school for a number of years.

- We coordinate the subcommittees: We will be actively recruiting for all of these committees in the next year.
- Subcommittee Leadership
 - Concerns? Changes?
 - We will have to do everything online in the fall
 - Events Subcommittee
 - Dr. Liz Janiak, Eli Godwin, Ann Caroline Danielsen
 - Curriculum Subcommittee
 - We don't have a faculty advisor at the moment
 - Sabra Katz-Wise is willing to serve on the committee
 - This committee oversees the completion and management of the concentration- provides information and support, checks documentation, gives announcements about when students can take courses and submit forms. There's a set amount of courses that we announce, we help make posters and promote online and student news to get the work out. If faculty have questions on curriculum, canvas, student engagement, etc. as not all WGH classes have TAs, we assist with those. We also keep an eye on what else is being taught at HSPH and review the stipend applications
 - Take Action Tuesday subcommittee
 - Mai-Han Trinh and Manasi Mohan spearheading moving forward. Lissah is interested
 - We had 4 students this year: 2 graduated and are still working with us during the summer. We are recruiting two more for the fall.
 - Doing everything online makes engagement hard to track
 - TAT is one of the few social justice spaces at HSPH
 - Harvard Votes works to increase voter registration among students and will be important to highlight in the fall and TAT will connect with Harvard Votes.
- **WGH Course Offerings 2020-2021**
 - *WGH 210- Critical Issues in Mental Health*: will be newly taught by Dr. Elizabeth Boskey in Spring 2021, Wednesdays 8:00-9:30 a.m.
 - *WGH 201- Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice (Dr. Elizabeth Janiak)*: Moved to Tuesdays, 2-4:50 p.m. for Fall 2020
 - *WGH 211- Gender and Health: Introductory Perspectives (Dr. Brittany Charlton)*: Moved to Fall 2021
 - *WGH 250- Embodying Gender: Public Health, Biology and the Body Politic (Dr. Nancy Krieger)*: will be taught in Jan 2020
 - *WGH 220- Sexuality and Public Health (Dr. S. Bryn Austin)*: will be taught in Spring 1, 2021
 - *WGH 207- Advanced Topics in Women, Gender, and Health (Dr. Sabra Katz-Wise)*: will be taught in Spring 2, 2021
 - *WGH 300- Independent Study. (Dr. Sari Reisner [independent study to develop course on transgender health], Dr. Brittany Charlton [independent study in lieu of WGH 211], and Dr. Sabra Katz-Wise)*. Fall 2020.
- 2020-2021 Monthly Lunchtime WGH meetings
 - Continuing during lunchtime in the fall makes sense

- We hope in the spring we have these lunch meetings in person
 - Works best to have it as a regular time- schedule changes with online classes
 - Cris and Sherine: ask Whitney about when SBS seminar will happen, if it will be revived
 - First Wednesday of the month could be a good idea: 1:00 p.m. lunch hour
 - Will aim to get scheduled by end of June and will send out an email with all the WGH dates: for summer social, for WGH fall monthly lunchtime meetings, and for WGH events
- **Brainstorming for WGH events for AY 2020-2021 [1:20-1:40pm]**
 - Remote Planning Considerations
 - What activities should WGH do next fall given that in-person events are unlikely?
 - September and October
 - Election-related events that have to do with reproductive rights/LGTBQ rights on the line, candidates, their aides
 - Gender, gerrymandering and voting for Reproductive Justice + LGBTQ (special emphasis on Trans issues)
 - Gender, structural racism, and enduring change- spillover effect
 - November
 - “Morning after” the election event
 - Hopefully to celebrate. Could be mourning.
 - Date: Wednesday, November 4 (time: TBD)
 - Leave November open (post-election) for event planning because it depends on what happens in the elections
 - General Event Ideas
 - Sabra: Intersection on gender and race, or gender and the Movement for Black Lives
 - Sherine: Given that we will be doing remote events, and travel may not be an issue, since we have had previous discussions about providing honoraria to speakers as well as compensating people from historically and currently oppressed backgrounds for their time, can we bring in more Black, Brown, and Indigenous people who are doing the on-the-ground work, instead of only folks who are affiliated with academia or more well-known institutions?
 - Newly formed Birth Equity and COVID-19 task force- some of the members of the task force could be good speakers
 - ACLU Women’s Rights: opposition strategy with the new laws
 - Goal: overview of national picture of what is at stake and what the issues are, what are ways to plug in and get out the vote?
 - Panel: League of Women voters- focus on national and international audience
 - We can activate breakout rooms on Zoom
 - Different access to care that has been disrupted by COVID-19 screening, fertility, etc. from a global lens
 - What should our event frequency be to ensure participation?
 - At least once a month

- What is happening with non-COVID-19 related health issues?
 - We had these discussions before the most recent wave of police brutality. Gender justice and reproductive justice. Could be an important gap to fill.
- **Fall Orientation: Timeline, Logistics, Plans, Materials, and Events: [1:40-1:55pm]**
 - To Do: Schedule WGH orientation/welcome meeting
 - We can do a virtual booth- August 24th
 - WGH participation in schoolwide orientation event
 - Orientation is scheduled for August 24-August 28
 - Planning is still in early stages
 - Large-scale, in-person events will not be happening (given remote status)
 - Mix of live programming and asynchronous content likely
 - We usually have a booth where we give information and recruit
 - Cris and Sherine will promote WGH via Facebook, the WGH newsletter, and student news
 - If consistent with public health regulations in September, we will do a Fall Social off-site where we order food and people come together, we did it at the Puddingstone Tavern previously. We could host a virtual happy hour and orientation meeting
 - Do a breakfast and an evening on-line social hour to capture the most time zones.
 - Wednesday, September 9
 - Tuesday, September 15
 - Events committee:
 - 1st event: Week of September 21st
 - 2nd event October 14, 2020
 - 3rd event: November 12, 2020
 - During summer and fall: hold on-line WGH watch parties for the debates and for additional HSPH community members to connect with WGH
 - To Do: Schedule WGH first general meeting
 - First Wednesday lunch, September 2nd, 1:00 p.m. Record it
 - WGH brochure for 2020-2021
 - Final version available by July 15, 2020
- **Close of meeting [1:55-2:00pm]**