

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Interoffice Communication

Date: May 7, 2003

To: Benjamin J. Allen
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Women's Leadership Consortium

Re: Report on Women in Leadership at Iowa State

Late in the fall semester of 2002, you asked the Women's Leadership Consortium to study the role of women in leadership positions at ISU and to report back to you in the Spring of 2003. The Consortium appointed a subcommittee (Elizabeth Beck, Dianne Bystrom, Susan Carlson, Mary Huba, Julie Manning, and Karen Zunkel) to review the situation and recommend actions.

This subcommittee has been meeting since January to review available data, both at ISU and at other institutions of higher education, and to review institutional options for increasing the involvement of women in leadership. The result of the group's work is the attached report, approved today by the entire Women's Leadership Consortium. We have identified some major deficiencies in the role of women in the institution and have offered you several recommendations that will begin to address these deficiencies.

The subcommittee would like to meet with you to discuss our findings and suggested strategies. Susan Carlson has agreed to be the contact person to set up a meeting time.

We are encouraged by your appointment of this subcommittee and look forward to taking part in some much-needed institutional change.

Subcommittee on Women and Leadership

The 2002 report on the Status of Women at Iowa State University clearly demonstrates that women are not adequately represented in senior leadership¹ positions. A number of initiatives (e.g., administrative internships) to include more women in university leadership positions have been implemented over the years; others (e.g., Shared Leadership for Institutional Change) are currently in place; and new initiatives (e.g., additional administrative internships) are being proposed. However, the evidence shows that these initiatives have not led to substantial changes in the male-dominated culture of senior leadership at Iowa State.

The Subcommittee on Women and Leadership (from the Women's Leadership Consortium) has concluded that more widespread change will happen only when the broader university culture is accepting and supportive of women in senior leadership. This type of change cannot happen solely when the initiatives come from the bottom up. Nor will it come by appointing numerous committees of women to study and make recommendations for proposed change. This type of change can happen only when the senior leadership is committed to making it happen.

To effect a change in Iowa State University's leadership to include more women, the Subcommittee on Women and Leadership proposes the following goal, objectives and strategies:

GOAL: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Objectives to meet this goal:

- 1. Senior administrative officers shall take ownership and responsibility for changing the campus culture.***
- 2. The President and Provost shall communicate that recruiting, supporting and encouraging women to take senior leadership positions is an important priority of Iowa State University.***
- 3. The President and Provost shall hold administrative officers and search committees accountable for helping the university diversify its senior leadership to include women.***

¹Senior leadership includes the President, Provost, Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, Deans and their Associates and Assistants; Department Chairs; and Center and Program Directors. See the ISU Administrative Officers list at <http://www.provost.iastate.edu/documents/adminofficers.html>

Strategies to meet these objectives:

1. Implement actions within the institution's operations and procedures.

Leadership/Accountability

- a) Set benchmark goals for women's leadership in senior administrative positions.
- b) Evaluate units that report to the President and Provost on their progress in women's leadership.
- c) Require that each college prepare a clear-cut diversity plan like that in the College of Agriculture.
- d) Respond to the guidance offered through various reports and studies already conducted.
- e) Issue an annual report card on ISU's progress toward diversity goals.
- f) Set up an annual meeting of the President and Provost with the Women's Leadership Consortium to report progress on increasing the number of women in senior leadership.

Hiring/Appointing

- a) Hire an Associate Provost for Women's Issues and provide secretarial and graduate assistant support to provide ongoing administrative coordination, oversight and resources for women's leadership initiatives and actions.
- b) Ensure that women are encouraged and seriously considered for appointment as department chairs and interim chairs.
- c) Ensure that women are not only placed on central committees, but also that they chair a percentage of them.
- d) Utilize cluster hiring to increase the number of women in departments and provide them with a support group.
- e) Appoint SLIC graduates to leadership positions, search committees and other central committees. (100 women and minority faculty and staff will have participated in the program by the end of 2003.)
- f) Create endowed chairs for women.

Administrator Development

- a) Train chairs of search committees on topics such as how to conduct equitable searches, how to evaluate criteria and qualifications, how to detect subtle bias in the screening process, etc.
- b) Implement training programs for all administrators that address topics such as (1) the culture and climate for women on campus and (2) ways in which administrators can create environments that support women's success.
- c) Send male administrators to relevant off-campus diversity training.
- d) Ensure that chairs and directors receive sufficient mentoring.

2. *Gather and report information comparing ISU to its peers in terms of women's leadership participation.*

- a) Prepare and disseminate an annual report, comparing ISU to its peers in women's leadership at the senior administrative level, including presidents, provosts, vice presidents, deans, directors and chairs. Use these data when setting benchmark goals for women's leadership at ISU. (Attached is a current analysis of leadership at ISU and its peer institutions. This shows that while ISU has a comparable percentage of women in dean's positions, it lags behind these AAU institutions in the percentage of women in university officials positions (0% at ISU compared to 18.3% at the other institutions); other administrators (19.2% to 30.6%); and overall administration (19.5% to 27.6%.)
- b) Conduct annual discussions or focus groups with former and current women administrators about their experiences as women in power in order to deepen the central administration's understanding of the factors that promote or interfere with women's success.

3. *Provide professional development opportunities for women interested in leadership.*

- a) Financially support the administrative internship program as proposed by the Women's Leadership Consortium.
- b) Financially support women's attendance at training workshops and seminars off-campus. Have the participants report back on their experience.
- c) Financially support a new version of SLIC after Kellogg funding expires at the end of calendar year 2003.
- d) Create and support a central source of information (e.g., website) on women's leadership development opportunities.