

Women of Color Academics 2018 - 2019

Closing Report

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Women of Color Academics originally formed in April 2016. WoCA is a collective of doctoral students, researchers, and scholars at the University of Utah. The mission of WoCA collective is to support a thriving academic community for women of color, indigenous women, and gender nonconforming people of color academics. Through regular gatherings consisting of professional development support and writing support across generations – faculty, staff, and graduate students – this group sees itself as creating a community of diverse people in the academy. WoCA is a thriving community due to the generous support of Office for Equity & Diversity.

I. Budget

Women of Color Academics received \$2,000 from Office for Equity & Diversity for the year 2018 – 2019. For an overview of the budget and breakdown of expenses, see Appendix A. The Office for Equity & Diversity has informed Dr. Fukushima that every year for the next three years (Starting July 1, 2019), WoCA will receive \$5,000 each year to support the collective's activities. To encourage broader support of WoCAs, Dr. Fukushima will send out an invitation to all WoCAs to apply for funds to support working / reading groups and / or other WoCA activities (see Appendix C). For other recommendations for how these funds may support a broader number of WoCAs, contact Dr. Fukushima at a.fukushima@utah.edu.

II. Collective

In its early founding, Women of Color Academics consisted of faculty and doctoral students in the College of Social Work (4 faculty members and 11 students). Since this early founding, Women of Color Academics has grown to consist of a list-serve that regularly updates 139 individuals from varying departments and colleges across the University of Utah.



III. Visioning & Creating Community

WoCA is a collective where the events are guided by the philosophy and vision that community may be fostered among faculty, staff, and students at the University of Utah. To foster such community activities were organized. Multiple community building activities were organized during the year 2018 – 2019.

- Launch Gathering. 26 WoCAs gathered for a launch gathering on September 28, 2018. At 4:30PM in Gardner Commons. Refreshments were provided from Corner Bakery. This launch gathering welcomed WoCAs to each other and was an opportunity for Dr. Fukushima to receive insights from WoCAs on the types of activities they hope to experience for 2018 – 2019.
- Hike. A fall hike on October 14, 2018, at City Creek Canyon, was organized by Dr. Cindy Fierros, “WoCAs on the Trail.” A few WoCAs embarked on a few hours of hiking.
- Annual brunch. Additionally, every fall Dr. Fukushima organizes a fall brunch. This year, the gathering, “Fall to Winter Brunch” convened at Zest on December 2, 2018, with 42 WoCAs RSVPing their attendance. Due to capacity, the group size was closed at 40.
- For the end of the academic year, WoCA organized a social at Bourbon House, “WMQTA Get Together!” – April 24, 2019. 25 WoCAs and friends convened for this get-together.

IV. Pedagogies

WoCA is committed to mentoring and creating dialogues surrounding race, gender and pedagogies. WoCAs heard from expert pedagogues on January 31, 2019, at “Women of Color Academics Roundtable – Pedagogies, Gender, & Race” hosted in the Tamalge John Building, with breakfast provided. The roundtable comprised of Drs. Theresa Martinez (Sociology), Natalia Washington (Philosophy), Irene Yoon (Education, Leadership, & Policy), and graduate student Liliana Castellon (Education, Leadership & Policy). Elizabeth Bond Rodgers of Office for Inclusive Excellence was invited to also provide WoCAs with more tools and resources. Collective members described experiences of hostility, racism, heterosexism and disrespect from students. Equally disconcerting was few WoCAs had the tools to respond effectively to such challenges in the classroom. The dynamic discussion amongst WoCAs led to an action item – WoCAs setting up a meeting with Dean of Students, Lori McDonald. Drs. Fukushima and Martinez and representative of OIE Elizabeth Bond Rodgers engaged in a thoughtful dialogue with the Dean of Students office. The conversation led the Dean of Students to create a “Tips on Managing Concerning Behaviors in the Classroom” (See Appendix B).

In collaboration with the committee on Women’s Week, UMFA, A.C.M.E. lab, Women of Color Academic members, Drs. Franci Taylor (AIRC) and Annie Isabel Fukushima co-led a workshop with UMFA Director, Jorge Rojas, “Redefine: Dialogue on the International Tolerance Project.” This discussion led to a group of 15 convening to have discussions about the International Tolerance Project and gender.

V. Creating a Culture of Mentorship

Mentoring WoCAs encompasses workshops and activities that is envisioned in holistically supporting WoCAs. Therefore, for 2018 – 2019, two types of mentoring were prioritized: 1) on the market support and 2) healthy relationships.

In collaboration with Mary Anne Berzins, the Assistance Vice President of Workforce Planning for Human Resources, WoCA organized mock job talks for WoCA members.

- “Al Ahad: Speaking back to Islamophobic practices in school” by Dr. Ana Carolina Antunes on November 6, 2018 at 11AM in Gardner Commons.
- “Just being undocumented, you gotta find loopholes”: Uncovering power and privilege within policy enactment” by Liliana Castellon on January 15, 2019 at 9:30AM in Gardner Commons.

In addition to mentorship, interactive dialogue and on the market consultation from Berzins, faculty members supported the mentoring as respondents, including Dr. Veronica Valdez, Associate Professor, Education, Culture & Society and Dr. Irene Yoon, Assistant Professor, Education, Leadership & Policy. The mock job talks were successful in WoCAs who presented landed campus visits, as well as it offered informative information to other attending WoCAs who also have moved forward in their academic careers and building a strategy for their academic careers.

On February 13, 2019 at 9AM WoCAs gathered at the Tanner Center for Humanities, in collaboration with the Graduate School Diversity Office, through laughter, heart-felt engagement, and tears, about conversation on having relationships while working in academic institutions. The roundtable speakers were Victoria Cabal (Education, Leadership & Policy), G. Certola (College of Social Work), Charnell Dominique Peters (Communication) and Paisley Rekdal (English) who each reflected on the state of relationships, the struggles of being in relationship, balance and nurturing healthy relationships, and the cultural contexts that shape being in relation while navigating the academe as staff, faculty, and/or student.



VI. Research

Every year, WoCA members organize a writing retreat. This year, the writing retreat was an all-day gathering at Red Butte Gardens on March 30, 2019. The group comprised of graduate students (13), faculty (10) and staff (2). The writing retreat was organized by Dr. Fukushima. Dr. Franci Taylor (AIRC) welcomed WoCAs to the space. Writing discussions and prompts were facilitated by Drs. Shundana Yusaf (Architecture) and Marie Sarita Gaytan (Sociology). And throughout the day, multiple sessions of stretching and yoga was facilitated by Professor Erika George.

On June 21, 2019, WoCAs were invited to meet via go-to-meeting to launch Accountability groups. Accountability groups are a way for scholars/writers/academics/people to create support for moving their projects forward. The discussion focused on supporting successful writing. From the discussion 2 accountability groups were formed.

VII. Publicity efforts

To promote WoCAs activities the following mediums are utilized:

- List-serv (139 members): woca@lists.utah.edu
- Facebook (59 members): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wocaofUoU/>
- Canvas (created by Ilaheva Tuaone and Dr. Fukushima, 74 individuals joined):

VIII. Futuring

Due to the increase in financial support from Office for Equity & Diversity, WoCA will now begin supporting research and writing clusters organized by WoCAs. \$3,000 will be dedicated to these endeavors. See Appendix C for a sample of the call for proposed working and writing groups.

Appendix A

Expenses

Table 1: Summary of WoCA funds 2018 – 2019

	Amount	Origin of funds
WoCA Carry Forward	\$1,702.76	Social Work Transfer
WoCA Sponsorship	\$2,000	OED
Total Funds accrued for 2018 – 2019	\$3,702.76	
Closing Year Budget	\$2,161.76	
Start of 2019 FY Sponsorship	\$5,000.00	OED
Start of 2019 FY Budget	\$7,161.76	

Table 2: Summary of WoCA Expenses 2018 – 2019

Date	Expense Venue	Event	Amount	Form of payment	# of participants
9/21/18	Corner Bakery	WoCA Kick Off meeting	\$164.00	P-Card	26
11/6/18	The Pie Pizzeria	WoCA Mock Job Talk	\$51.93	Afukushima Reimbursement	10
12/2/18	Zest	WoCA Brunch	\$401.00	P-Card	42
1/31/19	Einstein's Bagels	Women of Color Pedagogies Roundtable	\$60.19	Afukushima Reimbursement	25

2/13/19	Smiths	WoCA Healthy Relationships	\$66.36	Afukushima Reimbursement	10
2/13/19	Einstein's Bagels	WoCA Healthy Relationships	\$170.96	Afukushima Reimbursement	10
3/30/19	Red Butte Garden	WoCA Writing Retreat	\$500.00	P-Card	25
3/30/19	Ekamai Thai	WoCA Writing Retreat	\$565.40	P-Card	25
3/30/19	Even's stevens	WoCA Writing Retreat	285.6	P-Card	25
4/24/19	Bourbon House	WMQTA Get Together!	\$320.00	P-Card	25
		Total	\$1,541.00		225

Tips on Managing Concerning Behaviors in the Classroom

Serious disruptive and/or threatening behavior that needs immediate intervention should be reported to University Police: 911 emergency or 801-585-2677 dispatch

The Office of the Dean of Students (801-581-7066, deanofstudents.utah.edu) is available to consult with instructors about strategies for intervening with classroom behavior.

Addressing disrespectful, distracting behaviors (i.e. noticeable comments, scoffing, gestures, etc.) as soon as possible is best to curb the behavior. As soon as the behaviors are noticed, asking to meet after class and then telling the student what behaviors were noticed and asking about them is appropriate (i.e. *"I noticed that you rolled your eyes at this topic, can you tell me about this? It is distracting for me and other students. Please be aware of this and be more respectful in the future."*).

If distracting and disrespectful behavior becomes a disruption to the flow of the lecture or other class activity, put the student on notice that there will be consequences, including the possibility of being removed from the class. Document verbal notices with a follow up email when possible. Keeping notes about observed behaviors, witnesses, and conversations can be helpful if the situation escalates to adjudication.

If the disruption continues, the student can be told to leave the class immediately and report the disruption to Student Conduct & Community Standards in the Office of the Dean of Students: [online](#), by email: deanofstudents@utah.edu, or by calling 801-581-7066 to speak with a conduct staff person.

If a resolution cannot be reached that is educational, the student may need to be permanently removed from the course for the semester and, in some cases, the financial consequences may be reimbursed to the student (i.e. if the student-instructor relationship is irreparable, but not in cases where the student's misbehavior caused harm to other students, etc.).

Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence:

<https://ctle.utah.edu/>

Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities:

<https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>

Appendix C

Call for Proposals

Call for Proposals: 2019 – 2020 Writing & Academic Working Groups Deadline: Monday, September 2, 2019

The Women of Color Academics Collective at the University of Utah, announces the availability of small funds between \$200 to \$500 to fund faculty, staff and/or students and their research working groups or writing groups that address issues of race, indigeneity, decolonization, gender, sexuality, and ability. Groups that take a critical approach to intersecting issues that link race or indigeneity, and gender/sexuality will be prioritized. The goal is to create a welcoming campus climate by supporting endeavors that sustain the intellectual growth of marginalized communities, in particular women of color, gender nonconforming and non-binary people of color, indigenous women and non-binary and gender nonconforming indigenous people.

Example of a writing group: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/On-the-Value-of/245184> or <https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Rules-of-Writing-Group/126880>. Examples of working groups may be found here: <https://www.crg.berkeley.edu/news/crg-research-working-groups-2017-2018/>.

To submit a proposal, prepare the following:

- 1) Group name and description
- 2) Primary contact for the group
- 3) Proposed budget
- 4) Details of frequency of meetings and location of meetings*

*Funded groups must create an invitation email or flyer for forwarding to WoCA list-serv for open invitation to all WoCAs.

Questions, contact: Dr. Annie Isabel Fukushima at a.fukushima@utah.edu or 801-587-8295