A CALL FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY ON CAMPUS

WRITTEN BY THE GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE, PART OF THE FOR A BETTER CWRU STUDENT-LED TASK FORCE

PROPOSED TO VP LOU STARK, VP ROBERT SOLOMON, AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

"UNTIL WE GET EQUALITY IN EDUCATION, WE WON'T HAVE AN EQUAL SOCIETY."
-SONIA SOTOMAYOR

OPENING STATEMENT

At CWRU, there are many resources and groups dedicated to supporting students. However, students still experience discrimination and feel as if they lack support. The ideas we propose work to tackle this gap, focusing on gender-based issues across campus.

Gender inequality affects all students, but especially those with marginalized gender identities. Gender discrimination and microagressions are seen everywhere, from classes and students orgs to athletics and Greek Life. If students, faculty, staff, professors, and administrators together work to eliminate gender inequality, CWRU will become a more welcoming and inclusive community for all.

While we understand there are constraints that may make these changes difficult, including restructuring, funding, and prioritizing, the outcome of these proposed ideas would be well worth the time and effort.

Edits to this proposal were made in response to community feedback in February 2021.

URGENT ACTION

- **Increase funding & staff for Mather Center for Women.**
  - Fully fund all Mather Center initiatives outlined in the strategic plan
  - Require all graduate programs and professional schools to share Women's Center resources each semester
- **Offer coursework open to all on gender inequality.**
  - Immediately create faculty/staff team from Mather Center, OMA, SJI to begin development
  - Cover all levels of intervention - cultural, structural, institutional, community, interactional, individual.
  - Focus on consciousness-raising, action-oriented learning goals
  - Make open to all community members - undergrad, graduate, staff
  - Or make it Teach-In style class, action-focused, consciousness-raising
  - Utilize students from important groups to speak to experience and realistic change to behavior for students; consider Teach-In model
  - Include of student-led discussions and peer leaders embedded in class
  - Adopt presentation-discussion model; guest speakers followed by discussion

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

- **Conduct a formal review of gender equity on all levels of the university*. Metrics must include:**
  - Report of sexual misconduct investigations, demographics of those involved, how incidents were reported, and an examination of equity in outcomes
  - Report of gender- and power-based violence in Greek life, athletics, academic settings, university housing
  - Report of women, women of color, and those of marginalized gender in leadership positions in academia & staff (separated by department)
  - Report of findings from an anonymous survey on gender discrimination of all community members
  - Report of findings of inequity and next steps for leadershipSet strategic goals and objectives for the university to close the gender gaps
  - Publish findings in an annual report beginning in 2021
  - Hold public meetings to present findings to and seek feedback from community members
- **Eliminate outdated requirements for students and replace it with social equity education.**
  - Redevelop SAGES to be an extended orientation model throughout the first year experience
  - Include all trainings on microaggressions, bystander action, & cultural concerns
  - Require coursework on gender & intersectional bias, importance of best practices of allyship such as pronoun use
  - Collaborate with residence life to tie into community guidelines
  - Create a united graduate student training curriculum

* Example from Ohio State:
https://womensplace.osu.edu/resources/status-report

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

- **Increase education on use of pronouns preferred vs. legal name***
  - Streamline process of identifying a preferred name
    - Above-board for students to navigate
    - Extend choices in SIS, apply across all systems
    - Improve and make cohesive changes across systems when changes are made in SIS, option to push an update across systems when change is made
  - Expand options for pronoun identification in all university systems
    - Able to select multiple pronouns and identify order
  - Special attention paid to first-year, incoming, and undergraduate students whose parents are communicated to from the university
  - Normalize use on campus
    - Include video on pronoun use in faculty/staff training
    - Standard syllabus statement on pronouns/preferred name use
    - Develop best practices for use of personal pronouns in foreign language courses
- **Centralize student resources and options for seeking support**
  - Support USG's CWRU resources app and information out initiative
  - Promote our committee's flowchart that includes all places students can go for support when they experience discrimination, bias, or violence
  - Highlight and explain the CCRS
  - Promote across the university community

*Supported by the LGBTQ+ Committee

FACULTY & DEANS

- **Increase representation of women, women of color, and non-binary folx in leadership**
  - In faculty departments, especially in STEM fields
  - Promote women and gender minorities to positions of leadership
  - Develop clear policies and practices to address bias and discrimination in hiring process
- **Create standardized policies for course syllabi**
  - Explain the CCRS, other support resources (link to central website)
  - Describe how to recognize microaggressions & bias
  - Statement on pronoun/preferred-name use
  - Best practices for inclusion
  - Require professors to discuss in the first course meeting
- **Ask about bias in course evaluations**
  - Add question about microaggressions
  - Ask students to rate the degree of respectful and comfortable environment
- **Require all professors to participate in training on gender equality/equity in the classroom**
  - Must be repeated annually
  - Discuss applying training to class setting, research setting
- **Promote positive behaviors**
  - Create awards & formal recognition for faculty for supporting students & promoting cultural change
  - Consider positive behaviors in tenure reviews, promotional considerations
  - Promote how-to resources to faculty departments through newsletters, official communications, department meetings
- **Require each college to provide a gender breakdown of faculty in each department**
  - Include tenured/tenured-track faculty, Assistant/Adjunct Professors, and Instructors
  - Utilize self-report tools to gather data

STUDENTS

- **Include anti-microaggression policy in student code of conduct**
  - Hold students accountable to this policy through mainstream disciplinary channels
- **Address gender inclusion & equity in Greek Life***
  - Create a policy in collaboration with GLO on non-binary student inclusion
  - Report to and update the entire CWRU community on incidents of fraternity & sorority involvement in sexual misconduct cases
- **Expand and diversify mental health services**
  - Women & gender/sexual minorities use counseling much more often than the general population
  - Expand services:
    - Hire many more therapists & lower caseloads
    - Require all therapists to have extensive training on serving diverse populations, bias & discrimination
    - Removing limits on number of sessions & frequency
    - Have no waitlist; maintain more open appointment slots
  - Diversify services:
    - Place mental health providers AND advocates, who can help students cope and take action in response to discrimination, in safe spaces for minority students - Women's Center, LGBT Center, OMA
    - Consult experts in Mandel School, graduate schools on how to best support students' mental health & oppression needs
  - Continue CWRU Cares services post-pandemic to provide for students over breaks and up to a semester after leaving campus
- **Increase support of students who are pregnant and parenting**
  - Centralize resources and accommodations
  - Publicize current resources and accommodations

*Supported by the LGBTQ+ Committee

MARGINALIZED GENDER IDENTITIES

- **Gender-inclusive educational materials***
  - Posters in bathrooms!
  - Reporting process for concerns - vandalism of materials in private spaces
- **All-gender bathrooms - more, more inclusive* ****
- **Fully fund LGBT Center caseworker - LGBT Center strategic plan***
- **Coordinated communication to entire campus on issues of bias, inequality, and injustice***

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Create policies against discrimination & microaggressions that apply to all faculty affiliated with CWRU**
  - Create a safe and anonymous complaint process available to all students & community members
  - Keep record of all complaints against individuals
  - Include disciplinary measures
  - Require faculty to demonstrate change following a complaint
  - Remove faculty who do not demonstrate change
- **Include contributions such as mentorship, cultural change, and intentionally inclusive behavior in tenure reviews and promotion considerations**
  - Consider gender/general inclusion complaints in tenure reviews & promotion considerations
  - Audit all tenure reviews and promotion considerations for implicit bias & discrimination

* Supported by the LGBTQ+ Committee
** Current list of gender-inclusive bathrooms:
https://case.edu/lgbt/resources/transgender-resources/bathroom-inventory

COMMUNITY TRAINING

- **Identify core competencies of a respectful, equitable, inclusive campus for all members of the CWRU community, including:**
  - Toxic masculinity and rape culture
  - Power-based violence
  - Microaggressions & bias
  - Structural inequality
  - Techniques for pronoun etiquette
- **Require all members of the CWRU community to participate in multi-day continuing education session on power-based violence, equity, and inclusion**
  - Must include intersectional feminist understanding of power and control on micro & macro levels
  - Must be required annually of all people
  - Include application specific to role in community: faculty, student, staff
  - Include discussion among classmates, faculty departments, offices, graduate schools on applying learning to community guidelines
  - Separate and in addition to redeveloped SAGES program for new undergraduates
  - Offer credit for all training sessions to compensate students for their time
- **Training on microaggressions & bias for anyone in leadership roles on campus, specifically on bias and equity in their role**
  - Academic leadership roles: TAs, SIs, faculty
  - Student leadership roles: any elected position
  - Managers and staff leaders
  - RAs and Orientation Leaders
- **Include issues of intersectional gender equity in all diversity trainings**
  - Including Diversity 360
- **Develop resources around best practices**
  - Navigating difficult conversations & confrontation
  - Pronoun etiquette and how to talk about it
  - How to Guides, shared via email & social media

CLOSING STATEMENT

We would like to thank the For a Better CWRU Executive Committee for their assistance throughout the semester.

Most of all, we want to thank all of the students at CWRU that have come forward in many ways to demand change. Admins of @cwru.survivors, @black.at.cwru, @cwru.mentalhealth, @disability.cwru, @lgbtqatcwru, and @sexismatcwru, thank you for your hard work in making sure students' stories are heard. OPs of these accounts, thank you for your bravery that has allowed other students to not feel alone. Students of the For a Better CWRU Subcommittee's, thank you for your work in demanding change from the source.

To all CWRU students, you are not alone. **You are welcome here.** We will work until change is made, even if we have to do it ourselves.