

Wayne State University President's Commission on the Status of Women Records

9.5 linear feet (9 SB, 1 OS)

1969-2006, bulk 1975-1994

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Finding aid written by Alexandra A. A. Orchard on January 13, 2015.

Accession Number: WSR000757

Creator: Wayne State University President's Commission on the Status of Women

Acquisition: The Wayne State University President's Commission on the Status of Women Records were donated to the Reuther Library on December 15, 2000.

Language: Material entirely in English.

Access: Collection is open for research.

Use: Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library *Rules for Use of Archival Materials*.

Notes: Citation style: "Wayne State University President's Commission on the Status of Women Records, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

Related Material: Reuther collections: Wayne State University Association of Faculty Women Records, Wayne State University Women's Resource Center Records, Wayne State University Faculty Wives' Club Records, Mildred Jeffrey Papers.

Recordings of COSW meetings on audiocassettes and several VHS format videocassettes were transferred to the Reuther's AV department.

History

Wayne State University President William Keast established the President's Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) in 1971. The Commission's creation followed fourteen months of discussion between Keast and women staff members concerning inequities facing women at the University. According to "Making Progress: A History of the President's Commission on the Status of Women 1971-1991" (found in the collection), COSW's creation was likely also spurred by a HEW communication. This communication required documentation of equal opportunity of employment for women by all universities holding federal grants and contracts from HEW agencies.

COSW's initial years were focused on gathering data and investigating various issues including affirmative action, pay equity, discrimination, over/underrepresentation in various ranks, lack of benefits, maternity leave, and retirement inequities. COSW then made recommendations based on their findings, resulting in some immediate remedies including salary increases, and training. In addition to this work, COSW was active in the university community, helping to establish a Women's Center, publishing a newsletter, sponsoring events, and continuing work addressing issues impacting women including career-needs and affirmative action. However, due to a series of events, COSW became inactive in spring 1978.

In 1980, President Thomas Bonner reestablished and reorganized COSW, providing the new practice of self-nomination, rather than the previous procedure of appointment, to ensure a more diverse membership more accurately reflecting the campus community. Soon after, COSW became an official University committee.

After its reestablishment, COSW once again focused on the needs of the women on WSU's campus. COSW sponsored numerous events and programs including career workshops, conferences, film series, mentoring, sexual harassment training, publications, receptions, and more. It also collaborated with groups internal and external to WSU to help further women's rights. Additionally, COSW helped to ensure the adoption of important statutes, resolutions, and executive orders at WSU, including those concerning sexual harassment and fair position postings.

Scope and Content:

The Wayne State University President's Commission on the Status of Women Records documents COSW's activities from its creation in 1971 primarily through the mid-1990s, although some of the documents are as recent as 2006. Much of the materials are in the form of record books, composed of meeting agendas, minutes, correspondence, flyers, etc. There are also annual reports, rosters, committee records, and research (including questionnaires and survey responses) documents created during COSW's activities. In addition to materials created by COSW, there are records created by Wayne State University. These are predominately affirmative action reports, and items documenting the universities then current policies, likely used by COSW while conducting business. Additionally, there are a variety of subject files on topics of interest to the COSW including feminist organizations and women's groups, higher education, sexual harassment, women's health, Title IX, and the ERA. Finally, there are some audiovisual materials including photographs of COSW events and audiotapes of meetings.

Important Subjects:

Affirmative action
Discrimination
Equal rights amendments
Feminism
Pay equity
Rape
Sexual harassment
Title IX
Wayne State University
Women – Health
Women – Pensions

Important Names:

Adamany, David
Gullen, George
Jeffrey, Mildred, 1911-2004
Keeney, Marissa Dr.
Moran, Cleo
Schlossberg, Nancy

Series 1: President’s Commission on the Status of Women, 1971-2006

Primarily contains record books, agenda, meeting minutes, correspondence, annual reports, research, reports, and related materials created during the work of the committee.

Series 2: Wayne State University, 1969-1995

Composed mostly of reports, policy documentation, studies, and publications. Prominent topics include affirmative action, women’s studies major, WSU’s Women’s Resource Center, childcare, and Title IX.

Series 3: Subject Files, 1970-1995

Includes articles, clippings, and other materials focused on topics related to the work of the Commission. Prominent subjects include Michigan and National women’s groups, discrimination, sexual harassment, women and higher education, women and politics, women and career, Title IX, affirmative action, and the ERA.

Series 4: Audiovisual Materials, 1980-2002

Audiocassettes of COSW meetings and VHS format videotapes.

Arrangement

Arranged in 4 series – Series 1 (Boxes 1-6), Series 2 (Boxes 6-7), Series 3 (Boxes 7-8), and Series 4 (Boxes 8-9). Folders in series 1, 2, and 4 are arranged chronologically, and folders in series 3 are grouped by subject.

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- 4 COSW Information Services Task Force, 1971-1980
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- 15 "The Status of Women at Wayne State University, 1972-1992"
- 16 COSW Proposals, 1992
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- 19 WSU, "Women's Studies, News," 1992
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- 46 "Detroit Now," 1976
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- 48 "Chronicle of Higher Education," 1976 July
- 49 Women's Institute of Alternative Psychotherapy (WIAP), 1977
- 50 "In the Running," 1978-1979
- 51 "OU Network News," 1979 November
- 52 "Women Today," 1980
- 53 "Comment," 1980 June
- 54 "White House News on Women," 1980 July
- 55 "National NOW Times," 1985
- 56 "Michigan Women," 1985-1992
- 57 "Detroit NOW Times," 1986 March-June
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Series 4: Audiovisual Materials, 1980-2002

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- 25 "The Secret to Change by Millie Jeffrey," VHS Tape, 2000
- 26 "WSU President's Commission on the Status of Women 30th Anniversary -
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