

## **Grant for Additional Position in the AS Womxn's Identity Resource Center (WIRC)**

**Proposed Motion:** "The AS Board grants \$20,355 from reserve funds for a period of 3 years to fund the newly developed Womxn's Identity Resource Center position of Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy and Peer Support."

**Sponsor:** VP for Diversity, AS ROP Director

**Persons of Contact:** Abby Ramos, Casey Hayden, Aleyda Cervantes

**Guest Speaker:** Abby Ramos and/or Casey Hayden

**Date:**5/15/17

**Attached Documents:** 1) Womxn's Center Restructure Board Proposal; 2) Draft job description of the WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy and Peer Support (on following pages);

### **Background & Context**

This grant funding request falls in line with the newly approved structure of the WIRC. The AS Board just recently passed the enclosed proposal of a new name, structure, and statement of purpose for the Womxn's Center. However, we delayed the vote of the funding component to allow the Budget Committee to review this as well. The Budget Committee deferred their option to review the grant proposal and are allowing it to now come to the Board for a vote.

### **Summary of Proposal**

The proposal calls for a grant for 3 years of funding of this new position (Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy and Peer Support) with a small budget for printing and committee needs. Feel free to see the entire proposal below. The new job description is also coming to the AS Board as a personnel/consent item.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

Our intent is to request a 3-year grant to pay the annual salary (at Asst. Coordinator level) for the WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy & Peer Support position. This would allow an easy approval of this new position without an immediate impact on the operational budget, while building in a wise step of requiring that the position and new structure be re-examined in the third year to determine if and how it should then be operationalized.

Asst, coord. Salary - \$6,435 x 3 = \$19,305.00

Programming for Advocacy - \$350 x 3 = \$1050.00

*(small programming fund - printing \$50, office resources \$150, advocacy committee meeting food occasional \$150)*

Total for the 3 years of grant funding being requested: **\$20,355.00**

### **Rationale**

(see proposal document below)

# AS Womxn's Center Restructuring Proposal

Prepared by: Abby Ramos (ROP Director) & Casey Hayden (Coordinator of Student Activities)

## Proposal Outline

- I. Summary of Proposal
- II. Background & Context
  - a. Timeline of Restructuring
  - b. Recent Trends and Evolutions of the Womxn's Center
  - c. On-going Challenges / Areas of Need in the Womxn's Center
  - d. Resources & Evidence Drawn Upon in this Process
- III. Name Change
- IV. Statement of Purpose Change
- V. Overview of Position Changes
- VI. Fiscal Impact
- VII. Suggested Motions for the Board of Directors

## Summary of Proposal

In this proposal you will find all the necessary components to renew the Womxn's Center and make it more able to meet the needs of current and future students, including: a name change, statement of purpose change, and position description changes. These changes have come out of a long period of research and collaboration between folks inside and outside the AS. The WC is one of the oldest programs in the AS, and it has only experienced smaller, incremental changes in recent years. With these changes being proposed we thoroughly believe the center would be able to better serve womxn, womxn of color, and other marginalized folks on campus.

## Background & Context:

### Timeline of Restructuring

**Fall 2015** - Womxn's Center (still officially named the AS Women's Center) begins the AS Assessment Process ("SPAC")

**Winter 2016** - After completing about half of the required sections of documentation for SPAC, the office gets approval to remove itself from this process in order to do a longer and more thorough study of the needs of current students and to initiate a broader overhaul of the program than is typical for SPAC.

The idea is raised of hiring a specific employee to conduct assessment and light research to make progress toward this restructuring.

Several mission-oriented and philosophical conversations are had between WC staff and advisor to name the challenges facing the program.

WC Coordinator, Elva Nitereka, begins gathering feedback from woman-identified students, primarily students of color, on what their perceived needs are from a campus womxn's center. Elva holds a listening session event for this purpose.

**Spring 2016** - Funding was secured and a position description drafted and approved for the temporary "AS Women's Center Research Assistant" position that would work over the summer to maintain the positive momentum of the WC restructuring and assessment.

At the very end of the quarter, Elva Nitereka, who had graduated that quarter, was hired for this newly-created non-student, part-time position, slated for 150 hours of work to be completed during the summer.

**Summer 2016** - Elva conducted assessment and research with frequent check-ins with Casey, the ROP advisor. She gathered input from past employees, synthesized the meaning of several articles and campus research studies, and compiled a final report that provided strong guidance for the staff continuing the redesign work in this current academic year.

In early August, Elva completed the position and shared findings with Abby (incoming ROP Director), Aleyda Cervantes (VP for Diversity), and Casey (ROP Advisor).

**Fall 2016** - New WC staff is informed about the on-going challenges and feedback from past years' student employees and is asked to begin thinking about mission changes and reformatting the office.

Elva's work is shared with the current WC staff.

**Winter 2017** - Abby read and distilled the major points of a book on campus women centers called University and College Women's Center: a journey toward equity

Casey utilized and disseminated the information found in the CAS Standards for campus women & gender equity centers (CAS = Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education).

The ROP Restructuring Committee holds a half-day "retreat" (in the VU on Sunday, February 5) to put substantial collective brain power into making a great progress on restructuring the Womxn's Center. With the help of the full committee including the AS Assessment Coordinator; the full WC staff; Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies professor Vicki Hsueh; and one student at-large from Vicki's WGSS classes, we were able to accomplish a great deal, culminating in this proposal.

## **Background & Context:**

### **Recent Trends and Evolutions of the Womxn's Center**

- Desire for a name change for the program for a few years, with informal adoption of "Womxn's Center" in Winter/Spring 2015
- Since Fall 2014, a significant increase in the number of WC staff who are students of color, resulting in a much-needed and successful shift in programming to center non-white, non-affluent, and non-U.S.-born voices and experiences (while there is, of course, more work to be done in this direction)
- Intentional shift to reduce the number of events being programmed and attempt to increase the attention given to advocacy and maintaining updated resource information
- Altering the Vagina Memoirs event to drop the word "vagina" to increase inclusion, and to no longer hold the large-scale public performance and instead allow cast members to express themselves via a gallery exhibition
- Examining barriers to participation in the Labyrinth journal publication for potential exclusionary or elitist structures that might inhibit a wide representation of submissions to the journal
- Merging the programming of Memoirs and Labyrinth into one experience for students as well as one position to implement that program

## **Background & Context:**

### **On-going Challenges / Areas of Need in the Womxn's Center**

These 10 items have consistently been echoed across two and half years of Womxn's Center staff. These became the basis for the February 2017 retreat.

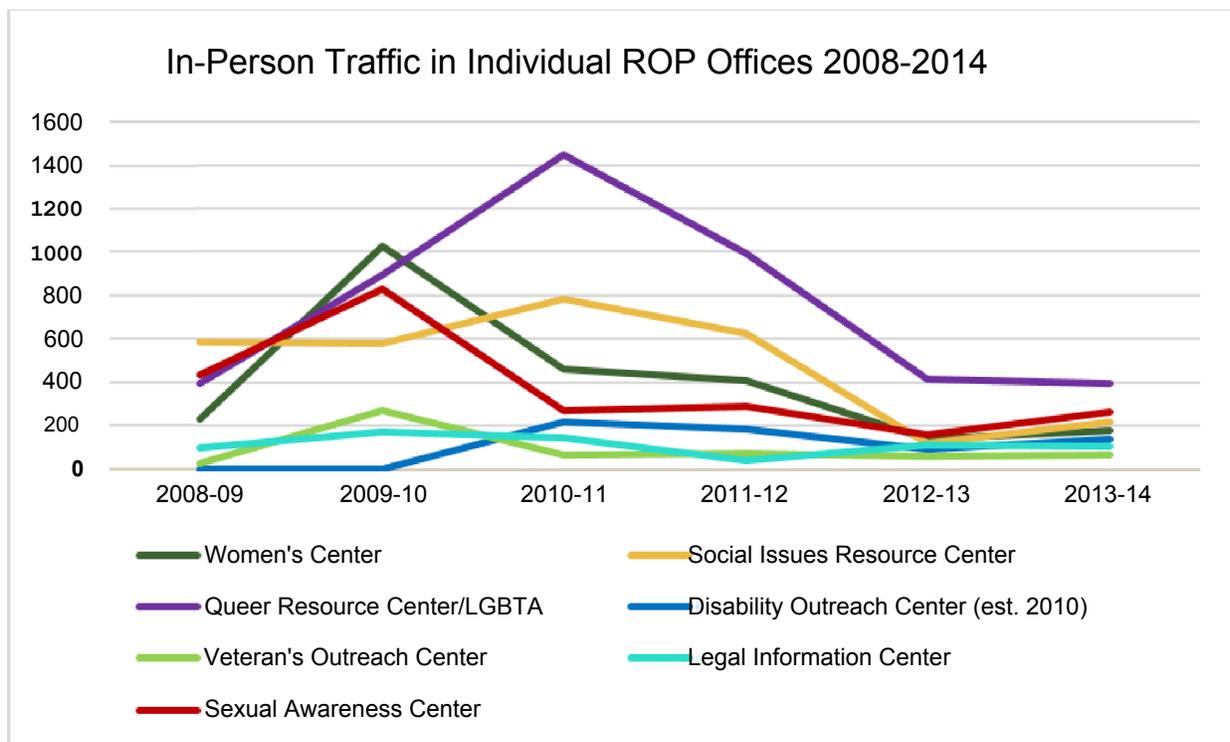
1. Greater Focus on Advocacy (over programming)
2. Updated Library/Resources
3. New Name/New Mission
4. Better Training for WC Staff on Peer Support/Advising
5. Programming Fewer Events
6. More Professional Staff Support
7. Improved Facility for the Center (more inviting, warm, fosters healing, less bureaucratic)
8. Focus Beyond Cis, White, Hetero Experiences
9. Increase Utilization by Students
10. Better Outreach Efforts to Students/Campus

**Background & Context:**

**Resources & Evidence Drawn Upon in this Process**

QUANTITATIVE & STATISTICAL

Womxn's Center	# of events	# fall	# winter	# spring	# co-sponsored	attendance
2005-06	19	6	9	5	10	3,761
2006-07	21	8	7	6	10	5,200
2007-08	25	9	8	8	11	3,475
2008-09	21	5	7	9	5	3,194
2009-10	25	6	7	12	16	4,721
2010-11	16	6	7	3	9	3,187
2011-12	20	5	7	8	17	4,816
2012-13	16	6	3	7	8	3,737
2013-14	14	4	6	4	10	2,501
2014-15	13	3	8	5	7	2,454
2015-16	8	3	5	1	5	1,680



## QUALITATIVE / ANECDOTAL

- Student staff feel under-prepared / Insufficiently trained to handle peer advising when students are in crisis
- Resource library contains many outdated books (progress has been made to remove these)
- The office space does not function well for comfortable, community-building space, or really anything other than workstations
- Event programming tends to over-shadow advocacy efforts
- The office needs to shift to more clearly demonstrate its commitment to gender inclusion (e.g. gender non-conforming, trans students, agender, etc.)
- The office won't be able to do serious and meaningful feminist work that includes perspectives that are transnational, immigrant inclusive, healing, and decolonizing until the space is transformed into one that is more warm, welcoming, and able to let staff members flourish in a healthy workspace that doesn't use student employees like raw materials set to produce a defined product.
- There should be more outreach and collaboration with various offices and departments that intersect with the work of the WC, such as CEED (Center for Education Equity & Diversity), ESC (Ethnic Student Center), WGSS (Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), CASAS/PWS (Consultation and Sexual Assault Support), and the Blue Group.

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (September 8, 2015), 9<sup>th</sup> Edition
- University and College Women's Center: a journey toward equity
- Evans, S. Y. (2007). Women of Color in Higher Education. National Education Association (NEA): Thought and Action. Retrieved from [https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/TAA\\_07\\_13.pdf](https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/TAA_07_13.pdf)
- Linder, C., Rodriguez, K.L. (2012). Learning from the Experiences of Self-Identified Women of Color Activists. Journal of College Student Development. John Hopkins University Press, 53(3), 383-398. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0048
- Rakin, S. R., Reason, R.D. (2005). Differing perceptions: How students of color and white students perceive campus climate for underrepresented groups. Journal of College and student development, 46(1). Retrieved from <http://www.brvmawr.edu/diversitycouncil/documents/Rankin.pdf>
- Shabazz, K.A. (2015). Black Women white Campus: Students Living through invisibility Retrieved from [https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/19819/Shabazz\\_indiana\\_0093A\\_13420.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/19819/Shabazz_indiana_0093A_13420.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Oregon State University, University of Washington, Washington State University, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Portland State University, University of California-Santa Cruz, Davis, University of Wisconsin

### **Name Change**

Currently the "AS Women's Center" is not all inclusive of many identities, and serves mainly white cis-women. We believe it is important to begin with a name change that creates better opportunity for students to see what we offer. We are proposing to change the center to "**AS Womxn's Identity Resource Center (WIRC)**". This name best represents the new center, in focusing on identities other than white women, it gives room for what the center really is (a resource), and also tries to combat patriarchy within language.

Other names considered but found less appealing were:

- a. Womxn & Gender Resource Center
- b. Womxn, Gender, & Sexuality Center
- c. Womxn & Gender Justice/Race Center
- d. Womxn's Intersectional Resource Center
- e. Womxn's Identity Resource & Advocacy Center
- f. Womxn's Identity Justice Center

### **Statement of Purpose Change**

Current: "The AS Women's Center is committed to supporting, educating and connecting all people on campus around gender related interests and issues. We provide a safe space to share experiences, resources and referrals, and programs that raise awareness and spark dialogue. The WC promotes gender equality, solidarity against violence and a healthy, inclusive culture for people of all identities." Nowhere in the current mission does the word "womxn" even come up. It is most definitely important to also change the purpose of the center.

New: The AS Womxn's Identity Resource Center (WIRC) supports and enables students who hold marginalized gender identities and expressions to fully and actively participate on WWU's campus. We strive to build a community that promotes: exploration of identities through an intersectional lens; solidarity against violence; and critical thinking around gender, race, culture, and other aspects of identity and social issues. We invite you to join us in our resistance.

## Overview of Position Changes

Currently we have three allocated positions in the center

1. WC Coordinator
2. WC Assistant Coordinator
3. WC Asst. Coordinator for Creative programming
4. (formerly, until this year) Had a 4<sup>th</sup> position solely for Coordinating the Memoirs event

We believe these positions do not best fit what the WC could be. The positions are also not fully clear on who is to do what and there is often confusion over job responsibilities because of similarities. The new positions we are proposing are:

1. WIRC Coordinator: The coordinator will be in charge of the internal workings of the center, they will be in charge of staff meetings, coordinating the volunteer program, oversee office and space management, etc.
2. WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy & Peer Support: This position will be in charge of working on campus and outside of campus around issues that revolve around womxn, gender, sexuality, etc. This position is charged with representing the WIRC in relevant university committees.
3. WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Events: This position will be the lead in event planning for the office; they will plan and implement events and will get occasionally assistance from the coordinator.
4. WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Creative Identity Programming: This position will be in charge of developing a community-building and identity exploration program (along the lines of Memoirs) that may be quarterly or annual. The community program will be specifically to ensure that there is a community for womxn and other gender identities.

## Fiscal Impact

Our intent is to request a 3-year grant to pay the annual salary (at Asst. Coordinator level) for the WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy & Peer Support position. This would allow an easy approval of this new position without an immediate impact on the operational budget, while building in a wise step of requiring that the position and new structure be re-examined in the third year to determine if and how it should then be operationalized.

Total for the 3 years of grant funding being requested: **\$20,355.00**

**Asst, coord. Salary - \$6,435 x 3 = \$19,305.00**

**Programming for Advocacy - \$350 x 3 = \$1050.00**

*(small programming fund - printing \$50, office resources \$150, advocacy committee meeting food occasional \$150)*

The other three positions will correspond to the same pay rates at the three existing positions (1- Coordinator level and 2- Asst. Coordinators).

## **Associated Students of Western Washington University**

### **AS Resource and Outreach Programs**

#### **AS WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy & Peer Support**

##### **About the Position**

The AS WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Advocacy & Peer Support is responsible for developing and implementing goals to advance the needs and issues facing womxn and other marginalized gender and sexuality identities.

##### **Position Classification**

Assistant Coordinators provide programming support to the Associated Students as a whole and facilitate events, offices and groups throughout the Western and Bellingham community. Assistant Coordinators report to department coordinators. Specific duties include but are not limited to assisting with event programming, coordinating specific office functions, performing administrative work and maintaining and updating programming resources for the department.

##### **About the Department**

The Associated Students Resource & Outreach Programs (ROP) provides information, advocacy, activities and peer-to-peer education to Western students. The five centers within the ROP strive to empower and support all members of Western's diverse community. The ROP also provides the opportunity for Western's students to gain valuable work and life experience.

The AS Womxn's Identity Resource Center (WIRC) supports and enables students who hold marginalized gender identities and expressions to fully and actively participate on WWU's campus. We strive to build a community that promotes: exploration of identities through an intersectional lens; solidarity against violence; and critical thinking around gender, race, culture, and other aspects of identity and social issues. We invite you to join us in our resistance.

##### **Terms of Position**

This is a three quarter position. This position starts the Monday two weeks before the start of classes fall quarter and ends the Friday of finals week the following spring quarter. This position works an average of 15 hours per week. The position holder may work more some weeks and less other weeks depending on the office's needs. The position holder is neither required nor expected to work during intersession, winter break or spring break.

##### **AS Employment Qualifications**

- Maintain a minimum credit load throughout term of position of 6 credits for undergraduates and 4 credits for graduates.
- Maintain a minimum of a 2.00 cumulative grade point average.
- Ability to complete the entire term of the position.

##### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Ability to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all Western students including those of marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds.
- Knowledge and passion about gender issues
- Experience with event planning.
- Organizational and time management skills.
- Personable demeanor that makes people feel welcome at events and at the office.
- Ability to communicate and work effectively with a wide variety of people on Western's campus and in the Bellingham community, including underrepresented student populations.
- Ability to work independently and responsibly, while supervising others.
- Ability to work collaboratively with multiple people and organizations.
- Ability to work within deadlines and problem solve.
- Able to work flexible hours.
- Budget management knowledge or experience
- Basic knowledge of department and position specific responsibilities.
- Experience with group facilitation

### **AS Employment Responsibilities**

Serve the diverse membership of the Associated Students in a professional and ethical manner by:

- Being familiar with and upholding the AS Charter, all WWU policies, and all AS policies including the Employment Policy, Code of Conduct, and Program Standards.
- Attending all AS staff development events including, but not limited to: pre-fall orientation, pre-winter, pre-spring, and mid-quarter staff developments.
- Being knowledgeable of the AS organization and its general operations.
- Serving on search committees as designated by the AS Personnel Director.

Ensure the legacy of this position by:

- Working with supervisor and Personnel Director to revise and update position job description.
- Working with the previous position holder to complete a minimum of 15 hours of unpaid internship as well as providing a 15-hour internship to the incoming position holder.
- Developing and maintaining a legacy document as required by the AS Employment Policy.

### **Resource and Outreach Programs Responsibilities**

Empower and support the Associated Students membership with information, activities, and peer education by:

- Maintaining 10 regular posted office hours for students to utilize office safer space, access resources, and seek peer education.
- Providing unbiased, nonjudgmental, and accurate information and services to students.
- Maintaining up-to-date records and information of on and off campus services in order to provide effective referrals.
- Providing a confidential, safer, and inclusive space for students.
- Maintaining client confidentiality in conversations, written correspondence, and any other forms of communication.

- Updating office libraries, magazine and journal subscriptions, and contacts for library cataloguing.

Ensure the smooth, effective operations of the Resource & Outreach Programs by:

- Attending weekly ROP staff meetings, office check-ins, and any additional departmental activities.
- Promoting teamwork and collaboration throughout all the ROP offices.
- Assisting with the coordination of activities, materials, and tabling schedules for ROP involvement in campus events such as VU Late Night, Red Square Info Fair, and AS Job Fair.
- Establishing and maintaining active working relationships with other ROP team members.

Provide the most relevant and effective resources, outreach, and programming by:

- Developing and maintaining tracking systems in order to assess client use, frequently asked questions, concerns, office visits, and other usage statistics.
- Collecting and inputting office traffic forms.
- Collecting and inputting audience evaluations, which should include demographics, promotion success, relevance, and success of the program in meeting needs of the student body, and other important statistics.

**Women's Center Responsibilities**

Develop and enhance the teamwork, communication, and effectiveness of the WIRC by:

- Attending all office meetings as scheduled.
- Establishing and maintaining an effective working relationship with all WIRC staff.
- Plan short- and long-term goals for the WIRC with office staff and the ROP Director.
- Continually receiving feedback from participants of events and services.
- Maintaining continual communication with all WIRC staff outside of meetings.

Promote gender-related events and services to the campus community by:

- Being aware of and posting gender-related events to appropriate calendars.
- Publicizing WIRC services, programs, and events pertinent to position purview through social networking, Publicity Center requests, and other outlets.

Foster working relationships with pertinent campus and community resources by:

- Collaborating with all gender-related/sexuality clubs and organizations on campus.
- Regularly communicating and/or cosponsoring with appropriate organizations including, but not limited to, Prevention and Wellness Services (PWS), Western's Empowerment and Violence Education (WEAVE), Peer Sexual Health Educators (PSHEs), Consultation and Sexual Assault Support (CASAS),, Womencare Shelter, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS), YWCA, American Association of University Women (AAUW), organizations that focus on Women's health, etc.

Create an atmosphere of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity/race-inclusivity within the offices and programs by:

- Portraying a diverse representation of Womxn's identities.
- Striving to include all gender identities and expressions within the office.
- Outreaching specifically to marginalized genders.
- Outreaching to intersectional identities

Provide educational, social, and community building opportunities to the campus community in relation to the WIRC's mission by:

- Working with WIRC staff to develop 3-4 events per quarter which include the following annual events:
  - o Memoirs (the identity expression experience led by the Assistant Coordinator for Identity Expression)
  - o "The Sex Ed You Wish You Had" (or similarly titled inclusive sex ed program in collaboration with the Queer Resource Center and the Disability Outreach Center)

### **Position Responsibilities**

#### Foster working relationships with pertinent campus and community resources by:

- Building lines of communication with the student leaders of all gender- and sexuality-related clubs and attending club meetings in person at least once per quarter as a means of fostering collaboration and offering them guidance on accessing resources to strengthen their impact and development of community on campus.
- Regularly communicating and/or cosponsoring with appropriate organizations including, but not limited to: Equal Opportunity Office, BRAVE, CASAS, Peer Health Educator Program, Counseling Center and relevant professors.
- Attending regularly scheduled meetings with a designated representative from the Equal Opportunity Office, ideally the Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity.
- Attending regularly scheduled meeting with the Title IX Coordinator.
- Establishing and maintaining a strong connection with the Peer Health Educator Program to ensure peer support is available and accessible to student who also utilize the WIRC.

#### Provide educational, social, and community building opportunities to the campus community in relation to the WIRC's mission by:

- Gathering information from the womxn (and other gender and sexuality identities) community about issues pertinent on Western's campus.
- Developing goal(s) to focus on throughout the year, both independently as well as through means of group discussion, such as focus groups, committee work, etc.
- Creating a plan to work with University departments and administration to implement goal(s).
- Relaying information back to the Western community by various means of communication: posters, emails, small forum event, etc.
- Facilitating an on-going regularly recurring series of educational dialogues for students with the goal of increasing awareness and advocacy on issues and struggles facing marginalized gender identities.
- Providing residence hall educational programming as requested.
- Staffing informational tables to increase outreach to students in locations such as Red Square, Viking Union lobby, Vendor's Row, etc.

#### Ensure that the WIRC serves the diverse needs of the student body by:

- Assisting with the maintenance of resource and referral contacts for the WIRC.
- Aiding in the process of establishing short and long-term goals within the WIRC.
- Serving as a liaison to the Western community.
- Assisting with the coordination of the functions of the WIRC Assistant Coordinator for Event Programming, volunteers, and work-study employees.

- Being available for speaking engagements and newspaper and radio interviews as needed.
- Performing other duties as needed or assigned.

Create an atmosphere of confidentiality, inclusion, and accuracy within the offices and programs by:

- Portraying a diverse representation of gender & sexuality topics.
- Striving to include all gender & sexuality topics pertinent to students.
- Assessing and being responsive to students' needs.
- Ensuring that programs and publicity originating from the office are inclusive and span a wide range of identities.
- Reaching out to the Residence Hall Association and National Residence Hall Honorary to promote WIRC events and resource information about the campus' gender/sexuality community, such as clubs and committees.

**Salary**

Minimum annual salary of \_\_\_\_\_ (approximately \$ twice per month fall quarter and approximately \$ twice per month winter and spring quarters).

**Reportage**

This position reports directly to the Womxn's Identity Resource Center Coordinator.