How to Start and Maintain a Robust WIMS Organization

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October 2013
Your WIMS Organization

• Getting Started
  ▪ Identify Missions
  ▪ Develop Infrastructure
  ▪ Establish Support

• Essential Elements of a WIMS organization
  ▪ Programs
  ▪ Recognition

• Maximizing Participation

• Building Future Stability
  ▪ Officer Elections
  ▪ Succession Planning

• Frequently Asked Questions
Getting Started
Identify Your Mission & Goals

• Bring interested faculty members together to discuss ideas and define who you are as a group.

• Formulate a mission statement and set goals for your organization.
  ▪ What is your primary purpose?
  ▪ What basic steps will you follow to achieve your goal?

• Define your target audience.
Develop Infrastructure

• Resources: participants (leaders and members), official and volunteer staff, funds, facilities.

• By-laws: rules, membership, committees and committee missions.

• Build: personally invite people to serve 1-2 years as officers and committee chairs.

• Establish routine:
  ▪ Monthly meetings
  ▪ Agendas & Minutes
  ▪ Event Calendars
  ▪ Communications tools or resources
Establish Support

WIMS leadership should:

• Meet with institutional leadership (dean, chancellor, etc.) on a regular basis.
• Develop relationship with the AAMC.
• Subscribe to the GWIMS Listserve.
• Contact GWIMS leaders for guidance/speakers/ideas.
• Join network with WIMS from other institutions.
Establish Support

Did you know?

• In 2011, 39% of U.S. medical schools provided salary support for a GWIMS representative to the AAMC.

• 83% of U.S. medical schools provided financial support for programs to support the professional development of women in 2011.

• Financial support per medical school for the professional development of women in 2011: average $104,802; median $53,638.

Data from 2012 Women in Medicine and Science Report - AAMC
Your WIMS Chapter: The First 6 Months

• Hold an initial meeting of interested faculty.
• Begin to discuss and establish your WIMS’ mission & goals.
• Meet with the office of professional development or faculty affairs at your institution to ascertain existing resources and programs.
• Generate a survey regarding women’s faculty needs.
• Establish an interim executive council and schedule regular meetings.
Essential Elements
Programs

• Determine categories of events which support your WIMS’ mission.

• WIMS programs and events should strive to:
  ▪ Provide content.
  ▪ Increase visibility for women faculty and their concerns.
  ▪ Highlight internal/local speakers.
  ▪ Encompass academic and non-academic topics (wellbeing, personal health, work-life balance).

• Survey participants after events to gauge program success.
Programs

• An event or invited speaker on your campus can spark interest in beginning a WIMS chapter.
  ▪ Look to the AAMC for suggested speakers & topics.
  ▪ Tap internal speakers if funding is limited.

• Survey faculty to understand what programming and mentoring needs exists on campus. From KU SOM WIMS faculty survey, 2011.
Programs

Annual Career Development Conference

• If funding is available, plan a half, single, or two-day conference with keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions on pertinent topics for both clinical and basic science faculty.

• Establish:
  ▪ Budget
  ▪ Theme
  ▪ Target audience

• Invite local, regional/national experts.

• Couple event with a dinner to celebrate the year’s accomplishments.

Start planning early!
Recognition

- Identify and/or create mechanisms to highlight faculty.
- Nominate candidates for internal & external awards.
- Identify and support candidates to apply for and attend the AAMC Early and Mid-career Women Professional Development Seminars.
Recognition

• Strive to create scholarship from your WIMS’ activities:
  ▪ Submit abstracts to the GWIMS section of the AAMC annual meeting.
  ▪ Consider sending relevant content to be included in the *GWIMSWatch* newsletter
  ▪ Write a chapter for the GWIMS Toolkit!

• Alert institutional communication outlets (websites, newsletters, Facebook) about member news and awards.
Maximizing Participation
As primarily a volunteer organization, it will be necessary to carve out the time to commit to WIMS, and to ensure it is a value investment for all members.
Maximizing Participation

• Demonstrate why WIMS is relevant today:
  ▪ Women assistant professors hold 43% of faculty positions at U.S. medical schools, but only 20% of all full professor faculty positions.

• Capture the need for WIMS through faculty surveys.

• Establish credibility and a strong reputation for leadership on campus – others will want to join in!
Maximizing Participation

• Don’t waste anyone’s time: ensure meetings are effective, include an agenda and action-oriented minutes after each meeting.

• Include a variety of events and some that target a focused audience (i.e. grant writing for Ph.D.s) and others that are of interest to all faculty (i.e. negotiation skills workshop).

• Plan programs and events at different times of the day (morning, lunch hour, 5:00 pm) to reach broad & diverse audience.
Maximizing Participation

• Know your mission, know your target audience – do not spread your group too thin.

• Avoid a top heavy organization and officer burnout – distribute work load by defining job responsibilities and tasks.

• In the beginning, less is more: deliver a few quality programs that make a lasting impression.

• Stay on message.

• Make the WIMS message a positive one. Focus time and energy on your supporters, not your detractors.
Finding WIMS Champions

- Leverage relationships between senior women faculty and male chairs/leaders to convey the WIMS message.
- Invite male leadership and male faculty to events and include them on panel discussions.
- Engage the most senior leadership in your institution to attend events, promote the organization.
- Invite national speakers to your institution to emphasize the need for WIMS programs.
Building Future Stability
Officer Elections

- Solicit nominations from all female faculty/WIMS members for officer positions.
- Establish a nominating committee to slate election ballot.
- Limit terms of WIMS officers to one year, but establish officer-elect positions to create continuity and smooth annual transitions.
- Hold an electronic election with all WIMS members as voting faculty.
Succession Planning

Annual WIMS officer and committee chair training

• Clearly define and refine job descriptions and duties.

• Train WIMS officers and chairs to:
  ▪ Prepare agendas.
  ▪ Write action-oriented minutes immediately following a meeting.
  ▪ Actively engage committee members.
  ▪ Plan yearly budgets.
  ▪ Effectively communicate within and outside the WIMS organization.

• At the end of the year, hold a Transition Meeting with both outgoing and incoming officers in attendance.
Succession Planning

• Prepare for rapid growth.

• Establish benchmarks for WIMS success by recording members’ promotions and new leadership positions.

• Publish annual reports to highlight programs, activities, members, and to recognize donors.

• Consider holding a WIMS leadership retreat and/or strategic planning session to refine the goals and mission of the organization every 12-18 months.

• Create visual identity with a WIMS logo for your institution.
Your WIMS Chapter: The Next 6 Months

• Plan a WIMS kick-off event to generate interest and visibility on campus (i.e. speaker coupled with a social reception, if funding exists).

• Establish WIMS committees and appoint chairs.

• Write WIMS bylaws.

• Approach institutional leadership for administrative or financial support – proposed budget in hand!

• Invite all female faculty to become active members of WIMS.
Frequently Asked Questions
FAQs

Q: Did you experience pushback from senior women that didn’t feel there was a need for this organization? From men?

A: There will always be some individuals that do not share your enthusiasm for WIMS. Do not waste time and energy on them but rather focus on those individuals that support and encourage your mission.
FAQs

Q: How did you obtain buy-in from senior leadership?

A: We engaged in thoughtful conversation with senior leadership from the beginning, sharing our vision and goals for WIMS. It is also important to learn the mission of senior leadership at your institution and find ways in which WIMS can support that mission (e.g. efforts to recruit and retain women faculty).
FAQs

Q: How is your WIMS organization structured, and how did you establish that structure?

A: Our WIMS organization established from the beginning an executive council of approximately a dozen women to include the president, secretary, treasurer, and three representatives from the School of Medicine, two each from School of Nursing and School of Health Professions. We also included chairs of our three committees: Mentoring, Recognition, and Program. As we expanded, we asked for interested women faculty to serve as representative for residents, medical students, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate students. Male leadership including our associate dean of faculty development and vice chancellor for academic affairs, were invited to join our executive council as well.
FAQs

Q: Where does your funding come from?

A: We receive ~$14,000 per year as a line item from the dean of the school of medicine’s budget. Always aware that those funds could be eliminated, we are trying to raise money through fundraising and increased donor support. We also include a representative from our endowment office on our executive council.
FAQs

Q: What conflicts arose as a result of including multiple schools, students and trainees?

A: With limited funding, we had to focus on programs targeted specifically for career advancement of faculty over trainees. Also, we had to limit invitations to trainee groups for certain programs and even social events due to limitations in funding. For Executive council positions, it was important to clarify who may qualify for serving and if it was open to all regardless of their school affiliation on campus.
FAQs

Q: What was the first program you put together?

A: We had a one time opportunity to apply $50,000 from the school of medicine dean’s office towards a city-wide career development conference. Julie Wei modeled this after what she experienced at the AAMC MidWIMS conference to include keynote speakers, small group and breakout sessions, as well as a dinner the night before. This was the key program which launched our WIMS network and provided us with high visibility as a reinvigorated organization.
FAQs

Q: What programs have been the most successful at your institution?

A: Our most successful program is our annual career development conference. This continues to be the most well attended and energizing event for faculty and trainees from across our campus and is also attended by faculty from other medical campuses in the Kansas City metro area.
FAQs

Q: How did WIMS gain visibility at your campus?

A: Our approach was multi-faceted: hosting key events, branding to include our WIMS logo on all fliers and email announcements, and creating our WIMS annual report with highlights, and messages from the president distributed electronically to all faculty on campus. We also partnered with other organizations on campus to increase our visibility and raise awareness for our mission.
Author’s Brief Biography

Julie L. Wei, M.D., is a Pediatric Otolaryngologist, a Division Chief of Otolaryngology at the Nemours Children’s Hospital, and a Professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at University of Central Florida School of Medicine. Dr. Wei was on faculty at the University of Kansas School of Medicine and Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City from 2003 to June 2011. In 2009 she recognized that she was in high degree of burnout, and after attending the 2009 AAMC Mid-WIMS conference, she was committed to changing the culture on her medical campus. She served as the President of KU WIMS from April 2010 to June 2012, during which time shared her passion about mentoring of not only trainees, but the concept of “Co-mentoring” amongst faculty. She shares “Managing Career Burnout” to many audiences. Dr. Wei’s energy are focused on patient/family/trainee education, mentoring, and clinical research and she is grateful for her husband and seven year old daughter Claire. She received her medical degree from New York Medical College followed by otolaryngology residency training at the Mayo Clinic, and fellowship training at Children’s Memorial Hospital in Chicago.
Paige C. Geiger, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology at the University of Kansas Medical Center. She is a Diabetes researcher examining the impact of diet and exercise on the cellular mechanisms of insulin resistance. Dr. Geiger is the PI on an NIH-funded research grant titled “Targeting stress kinases in the treatment of muscle insulin resistance” from the National Institute of Aging. She is a regular member of the Integrative Physiology of Obesity and Diabetes NIH Study Section for 2013-2017. Dr. Geiger particularly enjoys mentoring graduate students in the laboratory, serves on the Graduate Student Advisory Council, and as faculty advisor for the campus wide student organization “Exercise is Medicine.” She served as Secretary of WIMS at KUMC from 2010-2012 and as President from 2012-2013. Dr. Geiger earned a Ph.D. in Physiology from the Mayo Graduate School in 2001. She then trained as a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Florence, Florence, Italy and at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis prior to joining the faculty at KUMC in 2005.