OPERATING POLICY 1.9.13 – WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY NETWORK (WGEN)

1. MISSION/PURPOSE

1.1. To educate the McMaster community and continually work toward the goal of a campus free from rape culture, sexual violence, and prejudice and discrimination on the basis of gender expression and/or gender identity;

1.2. To serve as a participant in supporting survivors of gender-based discrimination, sexual assault, and/or similar forms of violence;

1.3. To provide a physical safe space and contact point for women, trans individuals, those who identify outside the binary, and survivors of sexual assault;

1.4. To continue to develop and strengthen relationships between McMaster students, staff, and the members of the surrounding communities by providing information, resources, programming, and on-campus advocacy around gender-based oppressions and the aforementioned societal issues (rape culture, sexual violence, gender-based harassment).

2. OPERATING PARAMETERS

2.1. The WGEN will cater to all students and members of the greater McMaster community, and those from the surrounding areas;

2.2. The WGEN shall work with various University departments and relevant stakeholders to ensure the safety of students and a high quality of service within the University;

2.3. The WGEN shall offer a safe(r) space in its associated spaces for women, trans students, folks, those who identify outside the gender binary, survivors of sexual assault, and their supporters to come and feel welcome and secure.

2.4. The WGEN shall provide structured social events to create a sense of inclusion and community among women, trans people, folks, those who identify outside the gender binary, and survivors of sexual assault, and their supporters. Social events will reflect the diversity of the community;

2.5. The WGEN shall provide formal support services regarding harassment, sexual violence, domestic and intimate partner violence, and gender-based discrimination and/or violence. The support shall include, but not be limited to, discussion groups, referrals, and peer support through active listening;
2.5.1. Any personal information divulged at these meetings shall be held in the strictest confidence and will not be shared outside of the support session without written permission or threat of imminent danger to the parties concerned.

2.6. The WGEN shall be involved in and advocate for the elimination of rape culture, sexual violence, social injustices, and instances of institutionalized discrimination at McMaster University and ensure the safety and equal treatment of all people on campus and in the community.

2.7. The WGEN will operate with both women-only hours as well as fully open hours;

2.7.1. The scheduling of these hours will be set by the Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.

2.8. The WGEN and its personnel shall operate within an Anti-Racist, Trans-Inclusive, and Anti-Oppressive, and Intersectional Feminist Framework.

2.9. To ensure confidentiality of sensitive disclosures, the Coordinator, executive members and volunteers must:

2.9.1. Be bound by law and ethics to safeguard service user’s privacy and the confidentiality of their personal information and disclosure of a sexual assault;

2.9.2. Be able to identify students in crisis in order to provide them with support, and be able to protect the University community. If there is reason to believe that a student is a danger to themselves or others, that information may be communicated to the appropriate Health Care and Emergency services. This service is also bound by privacy legislation.

3. PERSONNEL STRUCTURE

3.1. The WGEN Personnel Structure shall consist of:

3.1.1. The Part Time Manager (Coordinator) position;

3.1.2. Five Executive positions selected by the WGEN Coordinator through an application and interview process;

3.1.2.1. The Executive positions would be that of the Community Social Events and Planning Executive, Social and Political Advocacy Executive, Resources Coordinator, Promotions Coordinator and the Volunteer Coordinator.

3.2. The Coordinator, who shall:

3.2.1. Oversee overall activities of the WGEN;

3.2.2. Attend monthly PACBIC VAW-GBV, PACBIC and AVN meetings and receive consultation about programming and events;

3.2.3. Act as a consultant in the various university committees about violence against women, trans-accessibility, consent, and gender;

3.2.4. Perform duties outlined in the WGEN Coordinator job description;

3.2.5. Be hired by a hiring committee struck by the Executive Board that shall consist of:

3.2.5.1. The outgoing Coordinator;

3.2.5.2. The Vice-President (Administration);

3.2.5.3. One (1) Executive Board Member.

3.3. The Community Social Events and Planning Executive (2 executive), who shall:
3.3.1. Be responsible for creating fun and inclusive logistics of planning events for women, and trans folk, those who identify outside the gender binary, survivors of sexual assault, students and other members of the WGEN;

3.3.2. Perform duties outlined in the WGEN Social Community Events and Planning Coordinator job description;

3.3.3. Oversee a group of volunteers who will act as a planning committee, assisting the executives in the planning of events.

3.4. The Social and Political Advocacy Executive, who shall:

3.4.1. Be responsible for imparting change while building awareness on campus about various social and political issues relevant to women and trans students;

3.4.2. Perform duties outlined in the WGEN Social and Political Advocacy Coordinator job description;

3.4.3. Organize the actions and oversee the planning of working groups (McMaster Womanists, Trans Collective) alongside other McMaster services.

3.5. The Volunteer Coordinator, who shall:

3.5.1. Be responsible for the outreach, scheduling, and coordination of volunteers;

3.5.2. Perform duties outlined in the WGEN Volunteer Coordinator job description;

3.6. Resources Coordinator, who shall:

3.6.1. Be responsible for the creation, maintenance of an online and offline resource library for McMaster University;

3.6.2. Connect with clubs, services, and groups on campus and in Hamilton;

3.6.3. Coordinate articles in The Silhouette and coordinate with Fierce Magazine the production of WGEN’s zine.

3.7. Promotions Coordinator, who shall:

3.7.1. Be responsible for advertising social events and campaigns through various media;

3.7.2. Be responsible for the coordination of WGEN’s Social Media pages;

3.7.3. Be responsible for the creation of promotional material for social events and campaigns.