Title of Project Living at the Intersections of Race and Gender

Grant Category Campus Climate

Name and affiliation of primary project lead: co-leads

Dr. Kelly Coogan, Lecturer, Women’s and Gender Studies
E-mail kcoogan@ewu.edu
Phone 359-4382
Fax 359-6902
Mailing address 207 Monroe Hall, EWU, Cheney, WA 99004-2428

Dr. Robert Bartlett, Director, Africana Education Program
E-mail rbartlett@ewu.edu
Phone 359-6412
Fax 359-2820
Mailing address MON 204

Names and affiliation of all project partners/co-participants:

Dr. Sally Winkle, Director, Women’s and Gender Studies
E-mail swinkle@ewu.edu
Phone 359-2409
Fax 359-6902
Mailing address 207 Monroe Hall, EWU, Cheney, WA 99004-2428

Carol Vines, Manager, Women’s Studies Center
E-mail cvines@ewu.edu
Phone 359-2898
Fax 359-6902
Mailing address 207 Monroe Hall, EWU, Cheney, WA 99004-2428
**Project Summary**

*Living at the Intersections of Race and Gender* will bring five black women to campus to share their lived experiences as women of color living and working in the Inland Northwest. Specifically, these women will talk about their lives at the intersections of race and gender. Oftentimes universities specify the terms of diversity in a one-dimensional manner, meaning that one category of diversity, such as race or gender, is privileged as the singular or primary marker of student, faculty, and staff diversity. This conception of diversity excludes those persons who are marginalized within two or more diversity categories and who have no choice but to live multiple minority statuses simultaneously.

Importantly, our project will enable the EWU campus community to complicate and thicken their existing conceptions of diversity. Students, faculty, and staff who are marginalized in multiple senses will be able to see and hear their lived experiences reflected back to them within the esteemed public venue of the university. This validation of their own lived experiences will enhance other university efforts to retain faculty, staff, and students of color on this campus.

Disciplines such as Africana Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, which prioritize the study of diversity, examine the relationship between lived experience, knowledge, and truth. Our project provides a platform for the entire campus to participate in interrogations of how lived experience can be valued as a form of knowledge constitutive of larger truths about culture and society.

This project utilizes regionally based experts on intersectionality and diversity; it thus fulfills the EWU mission by drawing upon the region’s resources and helping to prepare students as “broadly educated . . . citizens” who can “make contributions to a culturally diverse society.”

**Detailed Proposal**

**Statement of Issue or Problem**

Racial minorities, who are also women, constitute an extremely underrepresented population on this campus. Therefore, pedagogically, it is very difficult to speak to and teach the lived experiences of women of color in the classroom context, especially if the professor is not a racial or ethnic minority and cannot directly relate to the experiences of her racial and ethnic minority students. Students in underrepresented groups, in turn, should not have sole responsibility for educating their peers in matters pertaining to the livelihoods of racial and ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, students learn best when concepts and ideas come alive for them. By bringing women of color who live in the intersections to campus, the sheer complexity and multifaceted character of diversity as a lived phenomenon will become alive for students, making their learning experiences more memorable and lasting than mere textbook examples.

It is important to note that the lack of racial and ethnic diversity on EWU’s campus is paradigmatic of that of the Inland Northwest. Thus, as a university community, we have an even greater challenge to intentionally create and facilitate learning experiences about diversity that are sensitive to a myriad of worldviews, learning abilities, and ways of learning. *Living at the Intersections of Race and Gender* will accomplish this creation and facilitation of diversity in
culture and pedagogy by equipping students with a variety of conceptual tools to better understand how diversity is lived by human beings in a simultaneous and intersecting manner. This exploration is contrary to how diversity is oftentimes studied across the social sciences and the humanities, which is in a compartmentalized, analytically distinct manner: gender diversity is typically studied separately from racial diversity, which is studied separately from socioeconomic diversity, and so on.

Project Objectives

The objectives of Living at the Intersections of Race and Gender are as follows:

- In sharing their experiences of living at the intersections, women of color guest speakers will demonstrate how to begin thinking about ourselves in ways that forge connections between our personal experiences and the larger social institutions and cultural practices in which they occur.

- By offering new conceptual tools to forge connections between individuals and society, these speakers will broaden our ability to study and understand the lives of women within an intersectional framework, that is, the ability to link the study of women to the social categories of race and class. Thus, the university community will be afforded the opportunity to question core assumptions and presuppositions we make about individuals and groups profoundly different from us.

- On a concrete level, students, particularly minority students, will have the opportunity to make broader connections and network with the speakers, thus augmenting their ability to translate what they learn in college into pragmatic lessons for the world outside of the academy’s walls. Students, faculty, and staff will have the opportunity to meet others in attendance who share in their interest and passion for augmenting diversity on campus.

- Importantly, students will be afforded the opportunity to see how personal experience can serve as a vehicle for better understanding the complexities of our world.

Project design

We will invite five black women, all Inland Northwest community members, to speak at the Cheney campus in Africana Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies courses about the intersections of gender and race and about how that intersectionality is lived. These presentations will be open to the university community and will be held in a campus lecture hall that can accommodate students from several different courses in one hour. The speakers will visit campus on five different days in February.

Rachel Dolezal, Sr. Margaret Muchiri, Sandy Williams, and Tracy Ellis-Ward will present to both 9–9:50 and 11–11:50 classes on Tuesdays or Thursdays. This will include five different courses in Africana Education and Women’s and Gender Studies. Vee Ann Smith will present at noon in Dr. Scott Finnie’s Intro to African American Culture class. The project is thus designed to diversify the curriculum of six different courses taught in winter quarter while enabling faculty, staff, and students from across campus to participate in this unique educational opportunity. The impact on the campus
community will be strengthened by the large number of students who will have the chance to hear these speakers and participate in discussions following the presentations.

We selected a diverse group of black women from the Inland Northwest to speak on various aspects of living at the intersections of race and gender and other social categories. These women were chosen because of the unique nature of their multifaceted lived experiences, their speaking abilities, and their expertise as female leaders and community activists.

Explanation of Role and Expertise of Participants:

Rachel Dolezal is an artist, African Art History educator, and Curator and Director of Education for The Human Rights Education Institute. She has taught as an instructor at EWU and North Idaho College. Ms. Dolezal was also a recent target of a reported hate crime in Spokane. She will be able to speak on the intersections of race, gender, class, and multicultural identity.

Sr. Margaret Muchiri is a Roman Catholic nun and a native of Kenya, East Africa. She has a PhD in Leadership Studies. Her research area is Kenyan women and the practice of female circumcision in her native country. Dr. Muchiri is one of very few native Kenyan PhDs. Sr. Muchiri can speak on the significance of women and cultural traditions as well as transnational perspectives from her experiences in Kenya at the intersection of gender and race.

Sandy Williams has worked in numerous positions for non-profit organizations in the Northwest. She has been a peer educator and skill builder working in the area of suicide prevention and has served as the Interim Executive Director of Odyssey Center for LBGTQ Youth of Spokane. Her vast activist experiences range from HIV/AIDS prevention to work as radio talk show host. Ms. Williams can present on her lived experiences at the intersections of gender, race, sexuality, and spirituality.

VeAnne Smith is the long-standing President of the local chapter of the NAACP. She is a black woman, retiree, and long-time resident of Spokane, WA. She has been at the forefront in addressing numerous high-profile racial incidents and cases in Eastern Washington. Ms. Smith will speak on leadership at the intersections of gender and race.

Tracy Ellis-Ward is the Director of Gonzaga University’s Unity House Cultural Education Center. Unity House supports Gonzaga’s institutional commitment to diversity and an inclusive campus climate. Tracy is a black woman and ex-Division I basketball player for the University of Missouri where she was team captain and an All-American. She also worked for the National Basketball Association in New York City. Tracy can speak on her experience as a black female athlete.

Dissemination Plan:

The Women’s Studies Center has an e-mail list of approximately thirty large and small media resources and will send out press releases. Africana Education has a list of alum and current students from their program that will receive mailed information. The Women’s Studies
Center will distribute a newsletter to 350 community people and distribute in boxes on campus, send out several categories of campus e-mail, and advertise in GME. University Graphics will create flyers for the series that will be distributed across campus.

**Project Timetable:**

January 4—January 8: Contact speakers

January 11–15: Confirm titles, create and send contracts to speakers, design publicity

January 18–22: Send out publicity to media resources, mailing lists, and campus community

January 25-29: Continue with publicity, announce in classes, remind faculty

February: Speakers’ presentations on Cheney campus (tentative dates)

**Thursday, February 4, speaking at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Kingston 137**

Rachel Dolezal, speaking on the intersections of multicultural identity, gender, and class in the Inland Northwest

**Wednesday, February 3, speaking at noon, Patterson 103**

VeAnn Smith, speaking on the intersections of gender, race, leadership, and politics in the Inland Northwest

**Tuesday, February 9, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Kingston 137**

Sandy Williams speaking on the intersections of gender, race, and sexuality

**Thursday, February 11, speaking at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Kingston 137**

Sr. Margaret Muchaari speaking on the intersections of gender, race, and cultural values

**Thursday, February 25, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Kingston 137**

Tracy Ellis-Ward speaking on the intersection of gender, race, athletics, and body image

**Thursday, February 4, and Tuesday, February 16, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Kingston 137**

Alternate dates for either a Tuesday or Thursday speaker

**Wednesday, February 10, noon, Patterson 103**

Alternate date for Wednesday speaker
A detailed budget and brief rationale for all items

Itemized expenses:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four speakers</td>
<td>$200 each</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One speaker</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation for 2</td>
<td>$50.00 each</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td></td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Women’s and Gender Studies and Africana Education we feel very strongly that community representatives should be compensated for sharing their expertise in prepared presentations to classes and the campus community. These African American women are professionals who are taking time out of their busy schedules to prepare their talks and come to the Cheney campus to speak to large numbers of EWU students as well as faculty and staff. We are proposing honoraria of $200 each for the four speakers who will give presentations in classes at 9 am and 11 am, which will require at least a half-day time commitment. VeeAnn Smith, who will speak at noon will receive an honorarium of $100. Those speakers who live outside the Spokane-Cheney area will also receive $50 each for their transportation.

An Explanation of other funding

Matching in-kind contributions for newsletter and other publicity:

Women’s and Gender Studies  $140
Africana Education Program  $150

Name and e-mail address of one EWU reference person who is not a project participant and who can comment on the primary project lead’s work and suitability to conduct the project in a timely manner.

Dr. Scott Finnie, Associate Professor, Africana Education Program
E-mail: sfinnie@ewu.edu
Phone: 359-6152