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UMaine Women in Academia makes presence on campus with upcoming presentation

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This Monday, Dec. 7, the group University of Maine Women in Academia will be hosting a presentation highlighting "Gender and Intersectionality in Higher Education."

UMaine Women in Academia is a new organization that just got recognition from the UMaine Graduate Student Government.

"We were trying to create a group where women could come together and discuss issues that women in academics deal with, also create a supportive environment and a way to network with women across campus," Theodora Ruhs, a graduate assistant in the Department of Communication and Journalism, said. "Also a place where we can bring in people who can provide advice and be mentors to graduate student women ... Reaching out I think is really important."

The presentation that will be taking place on Monday was sparked by ongoing discussions of different topics the organization is interested in, such as job searches and resumes, and the connections that member, Elisa Sance has with the women's gender, and sexuality studies program.

"I think [gender and intersectionality] is something that we don't talk about enough. Since we are obviously a Women in Academia club, I think it is a very important topic to bring up and see what feminist studies and gender studies can do to help our practice," Andrea Mercado, a graduate assistant for Project Reach, said. "Because I am what you consider a minority, so I am Hispanic, and I know there is a lot of talk and research about intersectionality, and being at UMaine where there is a minimal amount of minority students or students of color, I think that is an important topic for everybody to shed some light on."

"I also think it is good to kind of become aware and talk about or think about obstacles that other people might be facing that you may not be yourself," Ruhs said.

"A lot of us are future instructors so it's also how do you address that in the classroom with students when we have majority of white students, and only one or two students that are minorities in the classroom. You don't want to single them out, at the same time the material has to be relevant," Sance said.

The members of UMaine Women in Academia hope that the presentation will spark some interest in the topics that will be discussed and raise awareness. They hope that the presentation will "start a discussion."

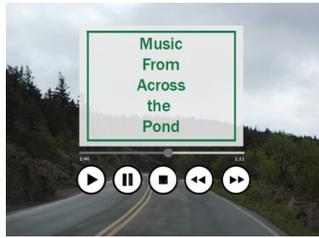
As a new organization present on campus, UMaine Women in Academia has big plans for the spring semester. They are planning to hold meetings and discussions once a month centering around a new discussion topic each time. Some of the topics that will be featured in their events planned for the spring include how to dress for interviews, as well as exploring leadership and hoping to bring in faculty as guest speakers.

UMaine Women in Academia will be holding their presentation on Gender and Intersectionality in Higher Education this Monday, Dec. 7. The event will be hosted from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Margaret Chase Smith Center in York Village. The event is open to everyone and light refreshments will be provided as well.

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