

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Special Collections

10-31-1997

UMaine commits to classroom equity

Andrea Page

University of Maine

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social_justice



Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Page, Andrea, "UMaine commits to classroom equity" (1997). *Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion*. 764.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/social_justice/764

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Social Justice: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

UMaine commits to classroom equity

By Andrea Page
Special to the *Campus*

Several students addressed the Vision 2000 mission plan for changing gender equity at the University of Maine Thursday.

"Vision 2000 for University Women – And Reality" was the latest in the Socialist and Marxist Studies Luncheon Series.

Members of the panel made statements that were part of the Vision 2000 mission statement.

"Imagine that by the year 2000, all faculty were held accountable for including all learners into their teaching," UMaine student Charley Martin said.

Students gave accounts of experiences women have had here at UMaine through performances involving the audience. One performance dealt with a student experiencing harassment from a professor, and finding herself unable to do much about it.

"If women are harassed, they

can't take certain courses from certain professors. This limits their education and that is illegal. That is gender discrimination.

Also, sometimes a woman can't go to certain areas on campus. That is also illegal," panelist Stephanie Bailey said.

These student panelists felt that through most of the classes

See VISION on page 4



Tina Roberts (in black) and Charley Martin take part in a panel discussion concerning women's rights and roles on campus. (Eric Weisz photo.)

Vision

from page 1

they have taken, they are being educated through men's eyes.

"Everything is he. He's saying, 'He walks along' and you're trying to follow along and you're thinking this isn't how a woman would go about her day," student Janna Youngs said. "There are moments when you're kicked out of the picture. What if the other males in the class had a chance to read through she? That would be a beneficial experience for them as well."

Other students felt professors often try to integrate their classrooms with a balanced education, but only add a women's perspective by setting aside one day to focus on women, or by reading one book written by a woman.

Hope for these problems comes with the Vision 2000 plan, which is a statement authored by the New England Council of Land Grant University Women. Its nine broad-based recommendations set forth a vision of where women at the six institutions will be when the next century begins, said Ann Schonberger, Director of WIC and the Women's Studies Program.

"Vision 2000 speaks to the situations of women, faculty, staff and students at our university," she said.

One issue that comes up is that of accountability.

According to Sharon Barker, director of the Women's Resource Center, a traditional institution is not set up to ensure gender equity is something that is routinely addressed. What women need to understand is the responsibility of the institution as a whole to make sure this agenda moves forward and that they achieve true gender equity.

"It's our responsibility as a university to provide an education for our students that's relevant, that makes sense and that is state of the art education. That includes bringing all of the minds, all of the talent and all of the work to the discussion and that includes women as well as men," Barker said.

The panel found a variety of reactions from audience members, which included a balance of men and women.

"I found it very encouraging," professor Doug Allen said. "Women were always marginalized. It was always outside the institutional structure. Now it is part of the conversation within the institution and that there are a lot of voices that take this very seriously. It really shows the progress the Women in the Curriculum and many other programs have really made."

Sharon Jackiw said the message these speakers seemed to be stressing at the luncheon was that it takes courage to speak out, and only when other people see what's happening and speak out, does real progress happen.