

The Women's Centre Constitution

(Revised March 2002)

ARTICLES

Article 1: Name

To be known as the "University of Victoria Students' Society Women's Centre".

Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of the Women's Centre is:

1. To provide a women centered physical space to facilitate networking among campus women.
2. To offer program and promote issues in keeping with the centre's mandate and vision for members and/or general public.
3. To provide a central location for the distribution of information.
4. To maintain a resource library for student and public use.

Article 3: Mission and Vision Statements

Mission - To be a strong, radical, feminist voice on campus.

Vision - To create social change through political action, education and support of University of Victoria women students.

Article 4: Authority

Nothing in this Constitution and Bylaws shall be considered in variance with the University of Victoria Students' Society Constitution.

Article 5: Dissolution

In the event of a dissolution of the Women's Centre, funds and assets remaining after any debts and liabilities are cleared shall be used solely for the establishment and maintenance of a scholarship and/or bursary fund to provide assistance to women enrolled as students at the University of Victoria. Criteria for awarding such scholarships and/or bursaries shall be determined by the Women's Centre Collective at the time of dissolution.

BYLAWS

Bylaw 1: Interpretation and Definitions

In the Constitution and Bylaws of the University of Victoria Students' Society Women's Centre:

"the Women's Centre" or "the Centre" means University of Victoria Students' Society Women's Centre;

"radical" means patriarchy sucks, let's get rid of it;

"feminist" means a mode of analysis that recognizes the right of every woman to develop to her potential free from oppression;

"member" means a general member of the Centre, in accordance with Bylaw 2.1;

"Collective" means the Women's Centre Collective, in accordance with Bylaw 3;

"General Meeting" means an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

"thirdspace" is an autonomous feminist publication affiliated with and based out of the UVSS Women's Centre.

Bylaw 2: **Membership**

1. General Membership: All registered University of Victoria female students who have paid the Women's Centre fee, commencing on payment of the fee.
2. Associate Membership: Female faculty, staff and alumni and women of the community at large provided they ascribe to the purposes of the Women's Centre.
3. Rights of Members:
 - a) All general members (as defined in Bylaw 1) shall have voting privileges at General Meetings of the Centre.
 - b) Associate members shall have speaking privileges but not voting privileges at General Meetings and are encouraged to attend.
 - c) Only general members shall be eligible to be on the Collective (with the exception of the Coordinator, who may or may not be a general member).
 - d) General and associate members shall be entitled, upon request, to a copy of the Constitution of the Women's Centre.

Bylaw 3: **Women's Centre Collective**

1. Women having met membership requirements as outlined in Bylaw 2.1 who attend two consecutive Collective meetings and must sit on one organizational committee;
2. Organizational Committee Reps, Thirdspace Reps, and women representing other Women's Centre committees;
3. Women hired under the Work Study program who are directly involved with the Centre;
4. Women's Centre Coordinator.

Bylaw 4: **Signing Authority**

1. The Women's Centre shall elect by consensus two signing authorities from the Collective.

Bylaw 5: **Duties of Collective Members**

It is the duty of the Collective to:

1. Uphold the spirit and intent of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Women's Centre in matters respecting the Centre;
2. Ensure the mission and vision of the Women's Centre are being followed;
3. Ensure minutes and agenda are kept and available to the membership;
4. Liaise with the UVSS Board of Directors on issues of concern to women;
5. Hold Collective meetings no less than once a month;
6. Manage, administer and control the space, revenue, business and affairs of the Centre;
7. Supervise Work Studies and unionized staff and ensure that the activities of staff are appropriate to the purposes of the Centre;
8. Appoint standing committees, ad hoc committees and task forces to carry out functions specified by the Collective. The Collective reserves the right to make final and binding decisions in all matters.
9. Develop policies and procedures for the Centre and ensure they are current and practiced;
10. Ensure Organizational Committees are active and each Committee has a representative.

Bylaw 6: **Organizational Committees**

1. The Organizational Committees of the Women's Centre shall be: Anti-discrimination, Finance, Personnel, Organizational Development, Volunteer, Fundraising, Activities and Library.
2. Organizational Committees shall be composed of general members and associate members who uphold the spirit and intent of the Women's Centre.

Bylaw 7: **Duties of Organizational Committee Representatives**

- **Finance:** Ensure the proper keeping of financial records; ensure the preparation and adoption of yearly budget; sign financial statements presented at General Meetings.
- **Personnel:** Act as liaison between Collective and staff; sit on hiring committee; coordinate staff reviews; ensure staff concerns and/or grievances are addressed. Unionized staff grievances shall follow procedures outlined in the Collective Agreement between the UVSS and the United Steelworkers of America, local 9288.
- **Organizational Development:** Maintain and update policies and procedures manual and constitution; coordinate General Meetings.
- **Volunteer:** Recruit volunteers; maintain an active volunteer list and schedule; ensure new volunteers are trained.
- **Fundraising:** Maintain a record of past and present donors; coordinate funding proposals for Centre projects and activities.
- **Activities:** Create and maintain activities calendar; compile list of programming ideas and requests; act as liaison between standing committees and Collective.
- **Library:** Monitor book loans; maintain inventory; coordinate book and subscription acquisitions; collect current information for resource files; ensure library is user friendly.
- **Anti-discrimination:** focus on and act on issues of discrimination within the Women's centre; reflect on the exclusive reality of the history of the feminism practiced in the Women's centre; stimulate awareness and educate around the issues of discrimination on campus through alliance building with other organizations on and off campus.
- **Outreach:** design and implement outreach programs which raise awareness and use of services, increase volunteers programs, network with other Women's Centers and Social Justice groups, on and off campus, co-ordinate women's centre publicity, assist in evaluation component of outreach programs, and raise awareness of Thirdspace.
- Reps from each organizational committee and Thirdspace will make written or oral reports at Collective meetings and at General Meetings.
- Duties of organizational committees other than those listed above shall be determined by each committee at its onset.
- An Organizational Committee Rep position may be declared vacant if; the Rep misses meetings that are regularly held in the period of one month without reasonable excuse; the Rep resigns from the position or will be absent for an extended period of time.
- Where a Rep's position has been declared vacant, the Collective shall, through consensus, elect someone to the position until the next AGM.

Bylaw 8: **Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors**

1. Position of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors

Pursuant to the Bylaws of the UVSS, a member of the Women's Centre shall be selected as a Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors and shall also serve as a voting member of the UVSS Board of Directors, and shall also serve as an *ex officio* member of the Women's Centre Collective.

2. Term of position of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors

The term of the position of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors shall be in accordance with Bylaw 5, Article 2 (b & d) of the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws.

3. Selection of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors

The Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors shall be selected at the Semi-Annual General Meeting of the Women's Centre. Candidates for the position of Representative shall meet the same eligibility and conduct requirements as those outlined in Bylaw 2.1 and Articles 2 & 3 (*Purpose, Mission and Vision statements*) of the Women's Centre.

4. Duties of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors

In addition to fulfilling those duties prescribed by the Bylaws of the UVSS Board of Directors, the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors shall:

- a. Represent the interests and concerns of members of the Women's Centre and thirdspace
- b. Have an understanding of and promote the rights of women and other traditionally marginalized persons or groups in the UVSS and in society at large;
- c. Attend collective meetings of the Women's Centre; and
- d. Make a report to the membership at each General Meeting.

5. Abandonment of Position and the Removal of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors

The Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors may be removed from the position in accordance with Bylaw 10, Articles 1, 3, and 5 of the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws. As per Bylaw 10, Article 2 of the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws the Women's Centre Representative shall be permitted to take a leave of absence in order to participate in cooperative education work terms. When there is a vacancy in the position of the Representative on the UVSS Board of Directors, the Women's Centre shall hold a by-election at the next General Meeting, or may call a Special General Meeting for the purpose of holding a by-election. The Women's Centre Collective may choose to select, by consensus, at a collective meeting, a temporary representative on the UVSS Board of Directors. This representative's term will not exceed more than six weeks, from the time of appointment. During this 6-week period the Women's Centre will hold a by-election at the next General Meeting, or may call a Special General Meeting for the purpose of holding a by-election.

Bylaw 9: Collective Meetings

1. The Collective shall meet no less than twice per month between the months of September and April and no less than once per month between May and August. All members are welcome to attend Collective meetings.
2. Quorum for Collective meetings shall be four Collective members.
3. Collective meetings shall use consensus as a decision making process.

Bylaw 10: General Meetings

1. There are three types of General Meetings:
 - a) Annual General Meeting (AGM);
 - b) Special General Meeting;
 - c) Semi-Annual General Meeting.
2. There shall be at least seven days notice prior to a General Meeting consisting of a minimum of 30 notices posted on campus and a notice published in the student newspaper.
3. Scheduling of General Meetings:
 - a) The AGM is to be scheduled between the first day of classes in September and November 30 as determined by the Collective.
 - b) Special General Meetings may be scheduled as required by the Collective.
 - c) The Semi-Annual General Meeting is to be scheduled in March.
4. Quorum for General Meetings shall be a minimum of ten (10) general members of the Women's Centre.

5. Rules of Order: The Women's Centre shall use consensus with a fallback of a 75% majority rule in the case of irreconcilable differences. Meetings shall be facilitated by an outside resource person, as agreed upon by the Collective, who is practiced in the use of consensus.

Bylaw 11: Policy

1. Women's Centre policy shall be established through consensus at Collective Meetings or a General Meeting.
2. All policy will remain in effect until it is changed or retracted through consensus.

Bylaw 12: Amendments

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Women's Centre may be amended through consensus at a General Meeting in accordance with Bylaw 10.5.

EW/as
28/03/02
Women's Centre
UVSS-CFS Local 44

UVSS Women's Centre Accessibility Policy (January 2007)

Policy

- 1) The UVSS Women's Centre is committed to creating an accessible space and accessible events for self identified women on campus and advocating for these issues on campus and in the community.
- 2) The Women's Centre is committed to ensuring accessibility for all self identified women, including but not limited to women with (dis)abilities, mothers, etc.
- 3) The Women's Centre recognizes the history of inaccessibility within the feminist movement to the needs, voices and concerns of many women. We also recognize the diversity of women's experiences within the feminist movement and are committed to fostering an environment that is both environmentally and socially accessible for self identified women to enter the space, organize for social change and communicate about the realities of their lives and experiences.

Procedure

- 1) The Women's Centre will adhere to the following Access Checklist (from the DAWN Ontario Access Checklist):
 - Hosting child-friendly events;
 - Organizing the layout of the Centre to facilitate ease of movement and accessibility
 - Seek to provide resources in languages other than English
 - Offering free or low cost events;
 - Ensuring that all public events have sign language interpretation.
 - Using "accessibility" budget line item when planning finances for the Centre and events for services such as sign language interpretation, attendants, Braille translation and captioning;
 - Choosing locations for events that are safe and accessible, i.e. elevators, washrooms for persons with (dis)abilities, gender neutral washrooms, large rooms for easy movement; non-slip ramps with gradual gradient, wheelchair accessible parking, lowered pay phones, reserving front row seats for deaf or hearing impaired attendees;
 - Reducing and/or eliminating background noise during Collective and committee meetings whenever possible;
 - Asking women in the Centre to refrain from using strong scents;
 - Allowing time for women with disabilities to arrange transportation and to prepare for other needs when attending events or meetings and clearly stating when events begin and end so arrangements can be made;

- Using access symbols on publicity materials if we are providing the service; as well as a line which states “Please contact us with any accessibility concerns or inquires”
 - Providing an “accessibility needs” form outside the Women’s Centre door with a drop box/folder, so women can describe their accessibility needs confidentially without being expected to approach the Collective;
 - Asking new volunteers to name their accessibility needs on the anonymous volunteer training evaluation forms they receive when they are being oriented to the Centre;
 - Providing clear and visible signs in the Centre using contrasting colours and large print;
 - Recognizing that some women have (dis)abilities that are not visible and never questioning a woman who uses services such as ramps, special entrances, or elevators that are reserved for persons with disabilities.
- 2) Volunteers, staff and the Collective are responsible for creating an accessible space; however, we also welcome any input or feedback from women who have specific needs which have not been addressed in this policy.

Policy amended and adopted: March 28, 2003; July 20, 2005

Date for policy review: July 20, 2006

Confidentiality Policy

Policy

- 1) The Women’s Centre recognizes the significance and importance of confidentiality. As Collective members, volunteers, and/or staff, each woman that is privy to confidential issues is expected to respect the privileged and confidential nature of the communication between participants.
- 2) Information of a confidential nature may surface in Collective meetings, committee meetings, interview sessions, telephone conversations, email messages, or in personal conversations. Examples of such information include but are not limited to Personnel discussions that involve performance reviews or disciplinary actions, or decisions involving the Collective’s relationship with other constituency groups or organisations in which financial or Personnel issues are on the table.

Procedure

- 1) Should a Collective member at any point identify an issue as confidential, she may declare so at or before the meeting in order that the proper measures be taken to ensure confidentiality (i.e. temporarily closing the Centre to non-Collective members, moving the meeting elsewhere, etc.).

- 2) A closed meeting must be held if agenda items are categorized as confidential.
- 3) Minutes will be kept on a separate sheet of paper, inserted into the “Closed Meeting Minutes” binder that is to be kept in the office and made available to Collective members only. These minutes must be dated (year, month, day) and signed by the minute taker.
- 4) Only Collective members will be present for closed meetings and the Centre door should be closed.
- 5) All issues discussed and decisions reached in a closed meeting must not be discussed outside of this setting, except among Collective members in confidentiality with one another. If a member has unresolved feelings or issues that need to be discussed further, they may be reopened at subsequent closed meetings.
- 6) In the case that an outside facilitator is needed, she must be aware of the confidentiality policy and agree to it.

Policy amended and adopted: November 29, 2001; March 29, 2004; July 20, 2005
 Date for policy review: July 20, 2006

Diversity Policy

Policy

- 1) As a constituency group under the UVSS, where the UVSS is understood to be a political organization that enforces policies in accordance with this status; and as per the Women’s Centre’s mission and vision statements which indicate its individual status as a political organization, we herein adopt and will adhere to the principles listed below:
 - a) We are opposed to sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, classism, ableism, fatphobia, ageism, heterosexism, * transphobia, or any other “isms/phobias” that result in the marginalization of individuals/groups.
 - i) *Heterosexism in this context includes, but is not limited to, that which is conventionally recognized as homophobia; however, the Women’s Centre recognizes that the term “homophobia” is derivative of an understanding of homosexuality as an illness or disease and as a label that is meant to degrade the individual to which it is applied; also recognized is the insinuation of the term “homophobia” that the onus is on the queer individual to rectify the situation; this is not an accurate account of the Women’s Centre’s position on the issue.
 - b) The Women’s Centre opposes discrimination based on the following: marital status, HIV status, citizenship, religion/spirituality, nationality, status or lack of status as per

the Indian Act, language, homelessness, family formation (i.e. with children, single, same-sex partner, non-nuclear family, etc.), education, appearance, sexuality, gender presentation and health.

- 2) The Women's Centre recognizes the rights and freedoms as per the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and herein adopts said Charter.

Procedure

- 1) The status of the Diversity Policy is herein recognised to be that of a so-called "umbrella policy," whereby all policies, actions, involvements, or other facets of the Women's Centre are in accordance with that which is adopted in this policy.
- 2) Although it may be much more efficient to have universal, objective standards by which violations of this policy could be measured, there is currently no such acceptable theoretical framework with which the Women's Centre is familiar. Thus, possible violations of this policy will be considered and deliberated on a case-by-case basis by the Women's Centre Collective.

Policy Amended and Adopted: May 26, 2003; July 20, 2005

Date for Policy Review: July 20, 2006

Donations Policy

Policy

- 1) The UVSS Women's Centre will fund women's projects, especially those which address the problems faced by marginalised women. The Women's Centre will NOT donate to any organisation, individual, event, service, or otherwise endorse anything that is contradictory to our Policies.
- 2) Any organization, individual, event, or service which requests a donation or endorsement from the Women's Centre, or that the Women's Centre is considering donating to or endorsing will be reviewed by the Women's Centre Collective. During this time the Collective members will reach a decision on whether or not the receiver of the donation or endorsement is in accordance with Section (1) of the Donations Policy.
- 3) Our funding priorities include:
 - a) Projects that will attempt to address injustices such as sexism, racism, heterosexism, ableism and other forms of oppression.
 - b) Projects that contribute to long term benefits for the cause.
 - c) Projects where the coordinators have made efforts to seek funding from other organisations as well.

4) Further to Section (3), the projects we fund will be prioritized according to the Following:

- a) Projects that are being actively pursued by a Women's Centre Collective member, especially those that are geared toward areas in which the Centre needs more development.
- b) Projects that are being co-sponsored by other UVSS Advocacy groups.
- c) Projects that are UVic-centered. If a project is not UVic-centered, then priority will be given to one focused on the local community.

Procedure

- 1) When deciding how much money will be allocated to the individual project we will keep in mind our budgeted amount for the year, taking note of the percentage that a single donation will take up.
 - a) In any given budget allocation term (excluding the summer term) the budget allows for two allotments of \$75 to be given to emergency needs based donation requests. This available resource shall be posted to the UVSS web site to ensure that folk who are not a part of the Women's Centre or collective can request access to such resources.
 - b) Donation requests from external organisations will be evaluated by the Collective on a case-by-case basis.
- 2)
 - a) Any individual/organization requesting funds are required to make a brief presentation either in writing or in person, and be available to answer questions either in person or by other means before a decision is made.
 - b) The applicant and all other interested parties are not permitted to participate or witness in any way the decision making process to avoid a conflict of interest.
 - c) Groups should expect to be contacted no later than one week after proposal to the Collective is made, unless special circumstances have been specified by the Collective. An option for a same-meeting decision can also be made.
 - d) Where applicable, individual recipients of a donation are to be requested to provide a workshop, debriefing or other form of presentation to the Collective based on the education and/or information gathered as a result of the donation.
 - e) This policy should be communicated to the applicant.

- 3) A Collective member who sits on the finance committee will be responsible to ensure that we do not donate more money than what has been budgeted for as well as have updated budget available at all Collective meetings.

Policy Amended & Passed: January 25, 2007; May 26, 2003; March 29, 2004; July 20, 2005

Policy to be reviewed: January 25, 2008

Gender Policy

Policy

- 1) Within the UVSS Women's Centre, the space is open to:
 - a) Anyone who self identifies as a woman;
 - b) For example, people who are transitioning male to female, transsexuals, transgendered, intersexed, and/or those who are pronounced female at birth.
 - i) "Transitioning" as referred to in Section (1.b) means a change in the way a person presents oneself in one's social environment and daily life, which involves a change in identification including but not limited to gender and pronoun.

Procedure

- 1) This policy will be enforced by and large by the "honour system," whereby any individual who wishes to utilize the women only space and/or services of the Women's Centre is invited to do so only if she identifies as outlined in Section 1 of the policy.
- 2) A sign will remain inside and outside of the Women's Centre in plain sight summing up the Women's Centres' Gender Policy and how this applies to who can and cannot utilize its space and services.

Policy Amended & Passed: May 26, 2003; March 29, 2004; July 20, 2005

Policy Review: July 20, 2006

Hiring Policy

Policy

- 1) The Women's Centre is committed to entering into hiring procedures that reflect feminist processes.

- 2) We recognise the marginalisation of many groups of women, and are therefore an Affirmative Action employer; employment equity is only as good as what is reflected in the staff and volunteers of the Centre.

Procedure

- 3) When hiring a Coordinator, the hiring committee must include a minimum of two and a maximum of three Women's Centre Collective members who sit on the Personnel Committee, as well as a woman member of the UVSS Board of Directors and, where applicable (i.e. if union members are applying), a union representative. At the discretion of the Collective the Coordinator may be on the hiring committee.
- 4) Under no circumstances shall a person be hired without an interview.
- 5) The Hiring Committee shall use a consensus decision-making model.
- 6) A Hiring Committee shall be struck for all positions, although the composition may not always be the same. For example, work-study positions do not require a member of the Board of Directors or a union representative on the hiring committee. However, on hiring committees for a work-study position, at least one Personnel Committee member must be present, along with the Coordinator.
- 7) When resumes are received, they are treated as confidential material to be viewed by and discussed amongst Hiring Committee members only.
- 8) After the hiring process is completed, all resumes are to be kept on file for six months upon which time they are to be destroyed. If a job opening occurs within those six months, resumes on file will be considered in the hiring process.
- 9) Applicants who are not hired will be contacted and informed that their resumes will be kept on file for six months, and they will be considered should the circumstances arise.
- 10) Priority will be given to women from marginalized groups in Canada. Discrimination on the basis of a woman identifying with a marginalized group is not permitted.
- 11) In posting and recruiting for a position, the Hiring Committee shall ensure that marginalized women know about the posting. This involves contacting and advertising in non-mainstream venues, including but not limited to spaces that cater to women of colour, queer women, women with (dis)abilities and trans women. It is the responsibility of the Hiring Committee to make sure the Women's Centre receives applications from marginalized women. It is not sufficient to say, "we tried."
- 10) The Women's Centre reserves the right to post staff positions open to women only in Accordance with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Article 15.2.

Policy amended and adopted: March 29, 2004; July 20, 2005

Date for policy review: July 20, 2006

Library and Archives Policy

Policy

- 1) The purpose of the Women's Centre Library and Archives (hereafter referred to as the Library) is to provide feminist, women-focused, women-produced material to women accessing the Women's Centre as well as other individuals on campus and from the community.
- 2) The Library's primary goal is to carry material that is not otherwise available on campus or that is difficult to find. The Women's Centre shall strive to make the Library and the materials contained in it as accessible as possible to people with a wide range of abilities, and a diversity of interests and perspectives.
- 3) Material that is sexist, racist, ableist, heterosexist or otherwise in contradiction with the Diversity Policy will not be permitted in the Library, unless it is in a section labelled "Oppositional Perspectives" that can include such material as that which is focused on the backlash and opposition to achieving rights for women. Such a section shall be limited to articles, as books take up too much space and we already have entire libraries full of male-stream thought on women's issues.
- 4) Unlike the Women's Centre lounge and office areas, the Library is gender-inclusive space.
- 5) The Women's Centre's Library Committee should always be active. If there are no volunteers willing to keep this committee active, the duties of maintaining the library's basic operations shall fall to the Women's Centre Coordinator or another staff member.

Procedure

- 1) Those volunteers or staff members who are performing the operations of the Library shall be responsible for these operations, including but not limited to shelving, filing and sorting new and existing materials, checking in materials that have been returned, and ensuring that the loan information sheets are available for patrons. In addition, she/they shall be responsible for contacting people who have overdue materials.
- 2) The cataloguing and filing systems shall be kept as up to date and as accessible as possible.
- 3) Before checking material out from the Library, patrons must fill out the loan information sheets, including their name, phone number and/or email address, the material's title and call number, and the date.

- 4) The loan period is three weeks. After the loan period has passed, patrons will be contacted until the material has been returned.
- 5) A drop box for returned material shall sit at all time in the Women's Centre lounge area so that material can be returned when the Library is closed.
- 6) The Women's Centre's budget shall keep a budget line item for the Library. The priority for spending this money is on material that the library is lacking. Input from individuals using the Women's Centre and/or library is the primary way to get feedback as to what types of materials are most needed.

Policy Amended & Passed: May 26, 2003; March 29, 2004; July 20, 2005

Policy to be reviewed: July 20, 2006

Policy Formation

Policy

- 1) The Women's Centre's policies are not "written in stone" and can be changed to fit the needs of its Collective.
- 2) The Women's Centre is committed to keeping its policy initiation, development and amendment processes transparent.
- 3) Having written policies in accessible locations makes the processes and operations of the Women's Centre more transparent and open to volunteers and the general community.

Procedure

- 1) Initiation of the policy development and/or amendment process can be made by individual Collective members, the Collective as a whole, or Women's Centre staff members or committees.
- 2) a) Notice of agenda items related to policy amendments or adoption must be served one week prior to the Collective meeting at which the agenda item is being discussed. This includes an announcement at the prior Collective meeting and email notification.
 - b) If possible, email notices should have the draft policy attached.
- 3) a) All policies must be passed by the Collective.
 - b) Quorum for passing policies is seven (7) Collective members.

- 4) Any woman constituent of the Women's Centre can join the Organization and Development Committee and attend its meetings. Likewise, the Collective and its meetings also operate on an "open door" policy.
- 5) All policies should be placed in the policy binder and any other relevant location.
- 6) All policies should be reviewed annually to ensure that they are still applicable and serving the needs of the Women's Centre.

Policy Amended and Adopted: September 1, 1999; September 18, 2003; July 20, 2005
Date for Policy Review: July 20, 2006

Referral Policy

Policy

- 1) Although we offer a diverse spectrum of services to UVic campus women, the Women's Centre does not offer a number of services that some women may require. In particular, we do not employ a trained counselor. Instances will arise when assistance is required that is beyond our sphere of knowledge and/or mandate. It is here that we can take advantage of other services in our network, including those on campus and those in the community, so we can refer women to the relevant organisations that offer whatever service is needed.

Procedure

- 1) The Women's Centre shall keep a thorough and up to date Rolodex in the office of a variety of services, societies and organisations that might be of use to our constituents. For example, medical services, shelters, other Women's Centres/advocacy groups, childcare services, legal services, etc. are all relevant categories that should be covered in the Rolodex.
- 2) In addition to the Rolodex, there are various resource books in the office and lounge that together offer a comprehensive listing of agencies for services ranging from abortion to violence-related acts. These are also helpful tools to consult when trying to ensure that women have access to the help they need.
- 3) If a request for help is unable to be met by the Women's Centre due to lack of information on our part, the necessary steps should be taken to ensure that this does not happen again and that whatever information we are lacking is gathered.

Policy amended and adopted: November 29, 2001; September 18, 2003; July 20, 2005
Date for policy review: July 20, 2006

Women's Only Space Policy

Policy

- 1) The Women's Centre is a place exclusively reserved for the use and occupancy of women. All self-identified women are welcome (please refer to the Gender Policy), as we encourage a safe, respectful environment for all women regardless of personal definitions of "womanhood".
- 2) The following are exceptions to Section (1) for persons who do not identify as women:
 - a) All genders are welcome in the library at all times.
 - b) With respect to groups or events sponsored by the Women's Centre or with an affiliated organisation that include all genders, the lounge can be used for meetings after hours (approximately 5 pm) with the door closed.
 - c) Service providers of all genders can enter the space on the basis of necessity.
 - d) If someone comes to the Centre seeking information from within the office, it is within the Coordinator's discretion (or that of a long term Collective member) to allow them in for a brief period while realising and making efforts to accommodate the sensitivities of any other women in the space.

Procedure

- 1) When non-self-identified women service providers enter the space, women within the Centre are to be informed beforehand. While they are in the office, the door is to be closed.
- 2) Visible signs must be displayed outside and inside of the Centre indicating we are women only space. Non-self-identified women are asked to knock for service, and are to be met in the hallway, library or other area whenever possible.
- 3) No one is permitted to ask a person's gender, even if the person's gender is unclear to anyone else in the space.
- 4) This policy is to be outlined to new volunteers and Collective members during volunteer orientations. All Collective Members must attend a workshop on trans inclusiveness.

Policy amended and adopted: November 26, 2002; May 26, 2003; July 20, 2005

Date for policy review: July 20 2006

Reproductive Freedom and Health Policy

Policy

- 1) The Women's Centre recognizes a women's right to reproductive freedom, wherei n a women in entitled to control over her body, including but not limited to matters pertaining to reproduction. Therefore, we are a "pro-choice" organization.
- 2) Every woman should have safe and equal access to the health care services of her choice.

Procedure

- 1) The Women's Centre will have resources available regarding reproductive health, including but not limited to information on abortion services and counselling.
 - a) The Women's Centre is committed to advocating for reproductive freedom on campus and in the community; this included but is not limited to providing education and support to individuals/groups.
- 3) The Women's Centre will have updated and accessible information on a wide variety of health care services and providers.

Policy Adopted: July 20, 2005

Date for policy review: July 20, 2006