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Minutes of Reproductive Health Interest Group Meeting

January 15, 2003

I. Food and Introductions

The meeting began with food and brief introductions by RHIG members. Dr. Pamina Gorbach from the Epidemiology Department spoke about her research projects in Asia and the US. Dr. Ruth Roemer from the Health Services Department spoke about her course offerings.

II. Report of RHIG Subcommittee on Reproductive Health International Internships

Subcommittee chair Taraneh Salke announced that a meeting sponsored by the Bixby program for all SPH students interested in International Field Placements will take place on **Thursday, January 29th, from 12:00-1:15 in the Dean's Conference Room**. The meeting will provide students with contacts for potential summer internships abroad and also give suggestions for how to find internships. (Note: All CHS students should also plan to attend the Field Work Orientations scheduled for early February.)

III. Registration of RHIG as a Campus Organization

Bixby Program Assistant Lissette Flores announced that several RHIG members would be meeting with Pam Cysner from the Student Activities Center in order to register RHIG as a formal campus group. This would permit RHIG to qualify for funding to bring in speakers, etc.

IV. Presentation on Tanzania Summer Internship

Aika Mongi (EPI) made a brief presentation about her internship in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, this past summer which was sponsored by the Bixby Program. A description of Aika's internship experience will be posted on the Bixby Program website shortly.

V. Report of RHIG Subcommittee on Reproductive Health Courses at SPH

Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Alejandra Aguirre and Mona Jhawar, reviewed the goals of the Reproductive Health courses Subcommittee. Last year, the Subcommittee surveyed students and developed a guide to

classes with a reproductive health component. The following gaps in the MPH curriculum were identified by the Subcommittee: a) Foundations of Reproductive Health, b) Reproductive Health Policy and Advocacy, c) Domestic Reproductive Health Issues.

The Co-Chairs stated that the long-term goal of the Subcommittee is to achieve a reproductive health specialization at SPH, either within one department such as CHS or across several departments. While this is a long-term goal, there are a number of short-term activities that could help move things forward toward the long-term goal. They proposed the following activities that RHIG could engage in:

- An assessment of student and faculty interest in new reproductive health courses and in a specialization.
- Attendance by students at the CHS Chair Candidate presentations to voice interest in a reproductive health specialization.
- Meeting with the Dean and the current CHS Chair to ask for guidance on how to move the specialization forward

Long-term goals:

- Increase number of Reproductive Health courses offered at SPH
- Encourage faculty teaching existing courses such as “Politics of Health Policy” or refugee health to address reproductive health issues
- Place syllabi for all courses with a reproductive health component on the Bixby Program website

Follow-up: Subcommittee will develop a survey and will ask the Dean and CHS chair for feedback and input on the survey before it is distributed to students and faculty

VI. Report of RHIG Subcommittee on Service and Advocacy

Subcommittee co-Chair, Sarah Kuljian, discussed several activities planned by the Subcommittee:

1. March for Choice. The Bixby Program will be assisting SPH students, faculty, and staff to participate in The March for Choice on Sunday, April 25th, 2004, in Washington, DC. The Bixby Program will be able to underwrite, in part, the cost of airfare and ground transportation. The Subcommittee will be exploring options for reduced group fares from airlines leaving Friday April 23rd and returning Sunday evening. More information will be available at the next RHIG meeting.

(NOTE: For students planning to test for the CHES exam, you can designate your testing site in the DC area. Students must designate their testing site 30 days in advance.)

2. 34 Million Friends of UNFPA. RHIG has been part of this campaign in the past. Sarah distributed talking points for a Letter Writing Campaign to the Oprah Show to get the 34 Million Friends of UNFPA founders, Jane Roberts and Lois Abraham, to appear on the show. Students were asked to e-mail the Oprah Winfrey Show to encourage them to invite Lois Abraham and Jane Roberts of the 34 Million Friends of UNFPA to be guests of the show.

Follow-up: You can make your suggestion to the Oprah show by going to: www.oprah.com.

3. Emergency Contraception at UCLA. While the Ashe Center currently prescribes EC, students must know about its availability in order to request it. The Subcommittee seeks support in recommending that the Ashe Center systematically inform students about EC and that they pre-prescribe it to students who request it.

Follow-up: The Subcommittee is encouraging students to use the “Comment Form” and let the Ashe Student Center to make EC more accessible to students. You can drop off the Comment Forms at the Ashe Center.

VII. Announcements

- The Medical Students for Choice is celebrating Roe v. Wade with various on-campus activities on January 20-22, 2004.
- Dr. Chandice Covington, Professor at UCLA School of Nursing, will be giving a presentation on her work on alternatives to breastfeeding for HIV positive women in Kenya. The presentation will take place on **Thursday, January 29, 2004**, at 2 pm in Bunche Hall 11377.
- Dr. Paula Tavrow, Director of the Bixby Program and Visiting Associate Professor in the CHS Department, will be giving a presentation on her research with adolescents in Western Kenya on **Friday, February 6, 2004, at 2 pm** in Bunche Hall 10383. More information will be posted on the Bixby website.
- A conference on adolescent reproductive health will be taking place on **April 16-17th, 2004** in Los Angeles, with partial sponsorship by the Bixby Program, the Pacific Institute for Women’s Health and WYSE. More information will be posted on the Bixby website.