



“Proposal for Gender-Targeted Vagina Memoirs Open Call”

Proposed Motions: *“Approve the proposal for gender-targeted Vagina Memoirs open call.”*

Sponsor: *Cristina Rodriguez, VP for Diversity*

Persons of Contact: *Sara Richards, Women’s Center Vagina Memoirs Coordinator*

Date: *October 15th, 2014*

Attached Document

There are no supplementary documents to this proposal.

Background & Context

This proposal is being brought to the board due to the fact that the Vagina Memoirs is a targeted event formed to help raise awareness and a sense of empowerment surrounding gender issues. The Vagina Memoirs has been recognized as one of the Women’s Center most powerful events amongst campus for the past eight years. In fact, the 2010 production of the Vagina Memoirs won an international award from the Association of College Unions International for the Student-Driven Program of the Year. Historically, the open call and cast has been targeted specifically towards those with marginalized gender identities, so people who may never have had the opportunity to share their experiences previously can do so in a space for those who have been silenced because of their gender. This performance is put on in hopes of raising awareness of many underrepresented identities, and is open to people of all identities to provide education and community-building. As an event that is targeted, it requires board approval every year.

Summary of Proposal

The Women’s Center is proposing that the Open Call, taking place on November 3rd-6th, be an event targeted to those of marginalized gender identities, or more specifically, to women, trans* folks, and gender non-conforming people. Due to the gendered nature of how we view issues of silencing, oppression, bodies, and gender-based violence in our society, we believe it is valuable to offer this program and process to gender-marginalized students. However, we strongly support people of any identity to attend the final performances on February 25th-February 28th, as these performances will reflect important perspectives and experiences that may not commonly be heard or known of. This proposal fulfills the Women’s Center’s office goals and mission by providing a safe space for women, trans* folks, and gender non-conforming people while providing educational opportunities for people of all identities.

Fiscally

The Vagina Memoirs was approved last year as a grant and is no longer part of the Women’s Center budget. The Women’s Center Vagina Memoirs Facilitator, however, is paid a salary and the position was created specifically for this event.

Rationale

The benefit of the Vagina Memoirs Open Call being a targeted event is that marginalized identities may be given the opportunity to share a multitude of experiences and perspectives that are not commonly heard or recognized, and to provide a safe space for those of marginalized identities. In addition, the final performances will give the cast members an opportunity to amplify their silenced experiences, while gaining self-empowerment and also providing education for all those who attend. The Women's Center finds it crucial that people of all identities attend this event so that light is brought to a multitude of commonly silenced issues, and a broad coalition for feminism and gender equality can include all identities.