

**TITLE: Proposal to Transfer the Center for Research on Women and Gender from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research to the College of Medicine**

**Sponsors: College of Medicine, UIC  
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, UIC**

**Date: October 24, 2016**

### **Executive Summary:**

The Center for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG) is an IBHE-approved, permanent center in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR). After extensive conversation with the OVCR and the College of Medicine, UIC (COM), the two entities propose the transfer of the CRWG from the OVCR to the COM. While the CRWG has a history of collaboration across colleges and disciplines, the center is primarily supported by external grant funding related to health research, including a training grant to mentor junior faculty in the conduct of women's health research. This transfer will provide improved infrastructure support for the purpose of grant development and implementation, and promote the interdisciplinary growth of the CRWG.

The proposed transfer has been approved in concept by CRWG Director Stacie Geller, Vice Chancellor for Research Mitra Dutta, and COM Dean Dimitri Azar (see attached letters).

### **Description and Justification:**

Established in 1992 at UIC, the CRWG is an IBHE-approved, permanent center housed in the OVCR. The CRWG has a mission to promote collaborative, multidisciplinary research related to women and gender, with an emphasis on work, health, and culture. To accomplish this mission, the CRWG collaborates with researchers from across UIC, and from institutions in the US and around the world, state agencies, and community organizations.

Women's health and sex/gender differences research have been primary foci of the CRWG since its founding. In 1998, UIC, housed within CRWG, was designated a National Center of Excellence in Women's Health by the U.S. Public Health Service Office on Women's Health, in collaboration with UIC's six health science colleges at the time. The UIC Center of Excellence in Women's Health is housed within the CRWG and was a catalyst for improved clinical services, expanded interdisciplinary women's health research, promotion of leadership and mentoring for women in the health sciences and women's health researchers, and expanded community-based research to improve

women's health. In 2007, the CRWG received a Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH) K12 award from the National Institutes of Health to support junior faculty conducting women's health research (currently in its second five-year funding cycle; and currently under review for a third competitive renewal). Over the nine years of funding, the BIRCWH has supported 18 junior faculty scholars from 8 UIC colleges.

The CRWG is also home to the award-winning Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program, which supports pre-college and undergraduate women to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines.

Discussions about the transfer of the CRWG from the OVCR to the COM began in September 2016 at the initiation of the VCR and the CRWG director. A series of discussions ensued among CRWG leadership/staff; and among the CRWG leadership, the OVCR leadership, and the COM leadership. All parties agreed that transfer of the CRWG is a way to ensure the CRWG can continue to maintain and expand its research and operations. Transfer of the CRWG to COM will strengthen capacity within both the CRWG and the COM to conduct women's health and sex/gender differences research, and will offer a benefit to COM students, residents, fellows, and faculty with an interest in these areas. Since its founding the CRWG has become increasingly reliant on external grant funding to be sustainable. The COM offers the CRWG multiple opportunities for collaboration related to funding opportunities, something that was not available through OVCR. Also as part of the COM, the CRWG will be able to maintain a larger portion of its ICR escrow which is critical for enhancing and maintaining sufficient numbers of staff to support collaborative research across UIC, for developing pilot studies to enhance our program of research, and for our community outreach programs. Lastly, as a small research center, we currently lack the ability to support permanent information technology (IT) staff. The COM is able to provide IT support for the CRWG to provide expertise and expand our computing abilities and website.

Given our long history of collaboration, the CRWG leadership and staff do not anticipate that transfer to the COM will have a negative impact on our ability to continue to collaborate. It is anticipated that the CRWG functioning will be similar to other COM Centers, including the University of Illinois Cancer Center, the Center for Clinical and Translational Science, and the Center for Global Health, which facilitate collaborative scholarship.

### **The transfer of the CRWG will result in the following changes:**

Personnel: In transferring the CRWG to the COM, all current positions/employees will be transferred. There are currently 12 active employees (8.55 FTE). Three of the employees are faculty members (including the CRWG Director) with joint appointments in CRWG. Two of the faculty members' home departments are in the COM, and the other faculty member's home department is in the School of Public Health. Five

employees are academic professionals, two are civil service employees, one is a postdoctoral research associate, and one is a graduate research assistant. In addition to the current 12 employees, we also have a vacant academic professional position (1.0 FTE) for which we are currently recruiting to lead the WISE program.

The justification for the transfer of all personnel is that the current CRWG employees are essential to completing the goals and mission of the CRWG and executing current sponsored projects.

CRWG staff will maintain their lines of reporting. The only exception is that the CRWG Director, Stacie Geller, will now report directly to the Dean of COM, Dimitri Azar.

Space: The CRWG will retain its current space on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Disability, Health, and Social Policy Building at 1640 W. Roosevelt Road (rooms 503, 504, 505, 505a, 505b, 505c, 505d, 506s, 506n, 507, 524, 525, 527, 536,). The CRWG will also retain its current space in the Science and Engineering South at 845 W. Taylor Street (room 205 and 205D).

Sponsored Project Activity: The CRWG's average grant expenditures over the past three years has been approximately \$730,000 per year (*based on the most recent FY13-FY15 published data by OBFS*). As of today's date, the CRWG has eight open sponsored project accounts, which will be transferred to the COM.

Responsibility to students: The CRWG does not offer courses or degree programs, so the transfer of the CRWG to the COM will not affect student's pursuit or completion of their degrees.

Additionally, the CRWG offers an annual dissertation research award to students from across campus. The award is funded by an Endowment, and will continue to be offered to any UIC doctoral candidate with a dissertation focus on women and/or gender.

Finally, the CRWG offers graduate research assistantships and other research experiences for students based on current projects and resources. These opportunities will continue.

Responsibility to funders: The CRWG receives several external research grants. A transfer from OVCR to COM will not affect its current grants or its potential to win new grants from funders. The CRWG will continue to work on its grants and contracts throughout the transfer process, minimizing disruption to projects as much as possible.

Research: Once the transfer is complete, new research opportunities will be developed via new collaborations between CRWG staff and COM faculty as well as continued collaborations with the other UIC colleges.

### **Catalog Statement:**

This section is not applicable to the current proposal because CRWG does not offer credit-bearing courses and it does not award degrees.

**Minority Impact Statement:**

This transfer would have no impact on minority students, as no procedures are being changed regarding students.

The CRWG conducts research with girls and women from traditionally underrepresented groups, and will continue to do so.

**Budgetary and Staff Implications:**

The CRWG will be transferred with existing State funding (based on FY16 level), all ICR and gift accounts and balances, as well as a self-supporting fund, existing staff, and inventory. Additionally, CRWG will maintain the current rate of ICR return – which is 35%. An MOU detailing the agreement regarding accrued vacation/sick leave liability; existing staff appointments; existing space and equipment; and existing funding accounts will document the transfer.

The liability for accrued vacation/sick (*projected through January 15, 2017*) is approximately \$26,000; and the liability for accrued vacation/sick (*projected through August 16, 2017*) is approximately \$40,000. The current model for liability of this accrual will not change in that CRWG is responsible for any State-funded portions; and liability for any grant-funded portions will remain at the college level (from OVCR to COM).

**Space implications:**

The CRWG will retain its current space on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Disability, Health, and Social Policy Building at 1640 W. Roosevelt Road (rooms 503, 504, 505, 505a, 505b, 505c, 505d, 506s, 506n, 507, 524, 525, 527, 536). The CRWG will also retain its current space in Science and Engineering South at 845 W. Taylor Street (room 205/205D).

**Approvals Required:**

The proposed transfer was approved by the Center for Research on Women and Gender on September 23, 2016; the Vice Chancellor for Research on October 28, 2016; and the Dean of the College of Medicine on January 11, 2017 (see attached letters).

**Contact Persons:** Stacie Geller, PhD, Director  
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Stephanie Thompson, Director of Operations  
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**Proposed Effective Date:** January 16, 2017



To: UIC Senate Research Committee

From: Dr. Stacie Geller, Director, Center for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG)

Re: Move of CRWG from OVCR to College of Medicine

Date: October 24, 2016

As Director of the Center for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG) I hereby request moving the Center from Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) to College of Medicine (COM). After extensive conversation with the OVCR and COM, we propose the transfer of the CRWG from the OVCR to the COM for the continued growth of the research within the Center. While the CRWG has a history of collaboration across colleges and disciplines, the Center is primarily supported by external grant funding related to women's health research. This transfer will provide enhanced collaboration with COM research and clinical faculty as well as improved infrastructure support for grant development and implementation, and promote the interdisciplinary growth of the CRWG. We have discussed this matter at CRWG staff meetings and all staff and faculty approve the move.

The CRWG has a mission to promote collaborative, multidisciplinary research related to women and gender, with an emphasis on work, health, and culture. To accomplish this mission, the CRWG collaborates with researchers from across UIC, and from institutions in the US and around the world, state agencies, and community organizations. This will be unchanged with the move.

There are several natural synergies between the CRWG and the COM related to women's health research and mentoring of junior faculty and staff. The COM is also home to other interdisciplinary centers including the Cancer Center, the Center for Clinical and Translational Science, and the Center for Global Health. The CRWG currently collaborates with all 3 of these centers related to scholarship, mentoring and research.

A good example of the close collaboration and support from COM is the Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH) K12 award from the National Institutes of Health to support junior faculty doing women's health and sex/gender based research (currently in its second five-year funding cycle; and recently submitted an application for competitive renewal). Over the nine years of funding, the BIRCWH has supported 18 junior faculty scholars from 8 colleges. The Dean of Medicine offers infrastructure dollars to support the functioning of this program.

Discussions about the transfer of the CRWG from the OVCR to the COM began in September 2016 at the initiation of the Vice Chancellor for Research and the CRWG Director. A series of discussions ensued among CRWG leadership/staff; and among CRWG leadership, the OVCR leadership, and the

COM leadership. All parties agreed that transfer of the CRWG as a way to ensure the CRWG can continue to maintain and expand its research and operations. Transfer of the CRWG to COM will also strengthen capacity within the COM to conduct women's health and sex/gender differences research, and will offer a benefit to COM students, residents, and fellows with an interest in these areas.

Given our long history of collaboration, the CRWG leadership and staff do not anticipate transfer to the COM will have a negative impact on our ability to continue to collaborate. It is anticipated that the CRWG functioning will be similar to other COM Centers, including the University of Illinois Cancer Center, the Center for Clinical and Translational Science, and the Center for Global Health, which facilitate collaborative scholarship.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me at [sgeller@uic.edu](mailto:sgeller@uic.edu) or the CRWG Director of Operations, Stephanie Thompson at [sat@uic.edu](mailto:sat@uic.edu).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Stacie Geller, PhD

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is 'Stacie' and the second signature on the right is 'G William Arends'.

G William Arends Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Director, Center for Research on Women and Gender  
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October 28, 2016

To: UIC Senate Research Committee

From: Dr. Mitra Dutta, Vice Chancellor for Research

Re: Move of CRWG Center from OVCR to COM

This memo supports to proposal to pursue the transfer of the Center for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG) from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) to the College of Medicine (COM).

As a result of conversations between myself and Dr. Stacie Geller, Director of CRWG, a mutual decision was made that the Center would be a more appropriate fit for COM than OVCR. Further discussions with Dr. Dimitri Azar, Dean of COM, confirmed this notion.

CRWG currently fosters many collaborative relationships with faculty and researchers from COM. As such, moving CRWG to COM would only serve to enhance this natural workflow and spirit of collaboration. CRWG would join the Cancer Center, Center for Clinical and Translational Science and Center for Global Health as members of COM.

All affected parties (CRWG, OVCR, COM) have provisionally agreed to this move. An additional Memorandum of Understanding that will outline the logistics related to space, funding and personnel will follow.



**Dimitri T. Azar, MD, MBA**  
*Executive Dean*  
*BA Field Chair of Ophthalmologic Research*  
*Distinguished Professor of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences,*  
*Pharmacology, and Bioengineering*

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131 College of Medicine West Tower  
1853 West Polk Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60612-7333

January 11, 2017

TO: UIC Faculty Senate  
RE: Proposal to Transfer the Center for Research on Women and Gender to the College of Medicine

The purpose of this memorandum is to support the proposal to pursue the transfer of the Center for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG) from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) to the College of Medicine (COM).

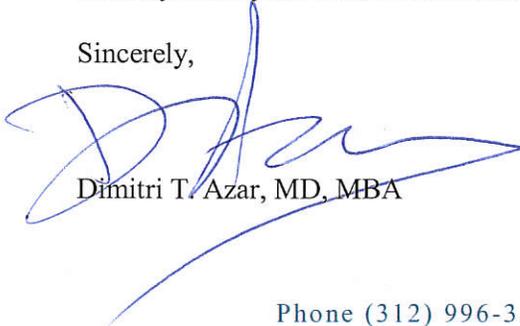
Discussions among CRWG leadership, the OVCR leadership, and the COM leadership about the transfer of the CRWG from the OVCR to the COM began in September 2016. The proposed transfer has been approved in concept by CRWG Director Stacie Geller, and Vice Chancellor for Research Mitra Dutta. All parties agreed that transfer of the CRWG as a way to ensure the CRWG can continue to maintain and expand its research and operations.

I am very supportive of the transfer to COM. Given the long history of collaboration with COM faculty, relocation to the COM will improve the CRWG mission “to promote collaborative, multidisciplinary research related to women and gender, with an emphasis on work, health, and culture by collaborating with researchers from across UIC, and from institutions in the US and around the world, state agencies, and community organizations.” The transfer of the CRWG to COM will enhance the COM’s growth in conducting research on women’s health and sex/gender differences, and will offer opportunities to COM students, residents, and fellows with an interest in these areas.

The CRWG will function similar to other COM centers, which facilitate collaborations for research and scholarship. In transferring the CRWG to the COM, all current positions/employees will be transferred, since those employees are essential to completing the goals and mission of the CRWG and executing current sponsored projects. CRWG staff will maintain their lines of reporting. The only exception is that the CRWG Director, Stacie Geller, will now report directly to the Dean of COM, Dimitri Azar. The CRWG will be transferred with existing State funding, all ICR and gift accounts and balances, as well as a self-supporting fund. Also, the CRWG will retain its current space on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Disability, Health, and Social Policy Building.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,



Dimitri T. Azar, MD, MBA