

PROPOSAL FOR A WOMAN'S CENTER

It is now a commonplace that adult women labor under special socially imposed disabilities which prevent them from fulfilling their potential as human beings and as fully contributing members of the community.

Low-income women of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds struggle under particularly onerous conditions, as the pilot study conducted at Brooklyn College, Project Second Start (appended) amply bears out. Brooklyn College has a social responsibility to provide the resources and services which will enable these women to develop their strengths.

The most effective way to realize this goal is to provide a center which would coordinate diverse activities and provide a supportive atmosphere which encourages the development of skills and confidence. The Center is designed to administer programs, research, and services.

I. DESIGN

A. PROGRAMS: Flexibility is the keynote here. With a generous budget, the Center can offer a variety of high quality cultural events and innovative curricular experiences such as special lectures, art exhibits, theatrical performances and films, mini-courses, seminars, and self-defense classes.

B. RESEARCH: In addition to supporting the pioneering work being done in Women's Studies, the Center can create opportunities for field work in the community itself. For example, research in such areas as female work patterns, health services, working conditions, employment opportunities, prison conditions, changes in neighborhood and family relations, would provide a useful input for urban change and for encouraging informed local initiatives.

- 1) supplement faculty - { ind. budget -
- 2) develop grants in Q. St. for released time.

C. SERVICES: Crucial to the success of any of these activities is the establishment of a wide range of support facilities which include child care, a library, meeting rooms, a newsletter, transportation coordination, training programs, job placement and referral and financial aid. A major component of the service aspect is counselling: legal, medical, psychiatric, career, agency referral, further educational opportunities, marriage counselling and consciousness-raising.

## II. STRUCTURE

Ideally there should be facilities on each campus with a staff comprehensive enough to meet the needs of women on and off campus.

- A. SPACE: The Center should be able to accommodate a library and reading room, a child care facility, meeting rooms, a lounge and exhibit area, and offices and equipment for the staff.
- B. STAFF: The Coordinator shall be responsible for campus-community liaison, including the publication of a newsletter. There shall be several counsellors (see I.C.), sufficient child-care personnel, a librarian, and secretarial staff. Volunteers will be encouraged to do internship training at the Center. There shall be an Advisory Board consisting of students, faculty, and community representatives.