Date: November 20, 2014

To: All Interested Candidates for the HERS Summer Institute

From: Amber Vlasnik, Chair
Presidential Screening Committee

Thank you for your interest in a HERS (Higher Education Resource Services) Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration. This memo will share important information about the WSU screening process and your application packet. All application materials are due to the Women’s Center by 12:00 p.m. on Monday, December 15, 2014.

If you have additional questions after reading this memo, please do not hesitate to contact me. As Chair of the Presidential Screening Committee, my duties include answering questions, addressing concerns, and providing application guidance. In addition, as a past participant of the Summer Institute, I can answer many of your other questions about this immersive experience. However, candidates must communicate their interest to me so that I can assist!

About HERS and the Summer Institute

The Summer Institute is a fourteen-day professional development opportunity that has been offered by Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) and Bryn Mawr College since 1976. Each summer, approximately seventy women faculty and staff gather from across the U.S. and from many foreign nations to engage in an intensive leadership and management development curriculum taught by dozens of high-profile visiting faculty. This long-standing collaboration between HERS and Bryn Mawr College has created one of the most prestigious professional development opportunities for women in the United States. In recent years, HERS has created parallel institutes at Wellesley College and the University of Denver, which are equivalent in curriculum and structure.

According to their Web site (http://www.hersnet.org/), HERS is an “educational non-profit providing leadership and management development for women in higher education administration.” Since 1976, HERS has graduated more than 5,000 women leaders from HERS Institutes and has alumnae across the United States, as well as in Canada, South Africa and other nations, in positions of leadership at all levels of higher education.
During the twelve day experience, the Summer Institute will explore the following curricular themes: self-knowledge and promotion; asset and relationship building and management; and institutional and higher education awareness.

A typical day at the Summer Institute last approximately 12 hours. It begins with breakfast and then two morning class sessions that are divided by a coffee/tea break. After lunch, two afternoon sessions occur, again with a break for refreshments. After an hour of personal time (some women elect to take the free yoga class), networking hour begins. Dinner is typically the conclusion of the day, though there are several evening sessions each week that can stretch until 9:00 p.m.. Homework in the form of readings or project revisions is assigned most evenings. There are opportunities to dine with the faculty members, many of whom are flown in to deliver a lecture and then will stay for informal or formal networking or to lead discussion topics at meals. There are also opportunities to organize meals based on interest groups, such as women at HBCUs or faculty women who are interested in transitioning to administration. Classes occur on all weekdays and on Saturday mornings. Participants have Saturday afternoon through Sunday evening free. Because of the demanding schedule, participants are not allowed to bring partners, children, or pets, though they may visit during the weekend free hours.

Supervisors who are supporting their employees to attend the HERS Summer Institute are encouraged to consider the demands of the Summer Institute. The Summer Institute is a rigorous program that will command, on average, many more than 40 hours per week. While at the Summer Institute, there is limited time to check work e-mail and answer calls. As a result, supervisors are encouraged to consider how to relieve their employees of their Wright State responsibilities except in case of essential functions or emergencies. This will allow the WSU candidate to fully immerse in and engage with the topics, people, and opportunities presented by the Summer Institute, including planning how to apply her knowledge after returning to campus.

**History and Tradition of the WSU Screening Process**

Wright State University has a long-standing tradition of supporting the professional development of women faculty and staff at HERS Summer Institutes. Over the years, 26 WSU women have represented the university at this prestigious national institute; 22 of the women attended the institute at Bryn Mawr College and four women attended at the University of Denver. As a result of Wright State’s demonstrated commitment, many more WSU women apply each year than the institution can support. In 1997, the Office of the President asked the Women’s Center to run a screening process for the presidential nomination and, since that year, the Director of the Women’s Center has chaired the Presidential Screening Committee. The duties of the committee are to screen the candidates and share their feedback with the Chair of the Screening Committee. The responsibilities of the Chair of the Screening Committee include the following tasks:

- Coordinate all official communications about the annual screening process;
- Solicit nominations and encourage all interested women to apply;
- Assist candidates with their applications by clarifying the application process, meeting individually with candidates, and offering suggestions for how to strengthen applications, if requested;
- Coordinate the selection process of the Screening Committee and share the committee’s findings with the Office of the President;
Once the WSU candidate is selected, work with her to ensure her application is as complete and strong as possible.

- Ensure final submission of the selected WSU candidate’s application to HERS; and
- Provide guidance and resources as the WSU participant prepares for her experience at the HERS Summer Institute.

WSU women’s involvement in the HERS Summer Institute could not occur without the generous support of the Office of the President. Selected candidates typically request support for travel expenses (airfare or mileage, meals while traveling, and hotel, if arriving the day before the Summer Institute begins) from their department, school, or college.

The Application Process

The WSU application process begins in the fall when Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) posts information about the following summer’s institutes. Once their application information is available online, the Presidential Screening Committee releases a letter to all full-time women faculty and staff. The letter outlines the Summer Institutes and directs interested candidates to the Women’s Center’s website for more detailed information.

Once your application is completed and submitted (see below for detailed information about your application packet), the Presidential Screening Committee will meet to evaluate all eligible and complete applications. After completing their screening process, they will forward a summary of their conclusions as well as all applications to the Office of President for review and final selection.

The selected candidate will then work closely with the Chair of the Presidential Screening Committee to complete and submit her application to HERS. HERS decides on the status of the applications to the Summer Institutes by mid-April. Accepted candidates will receive a welcome packet from HERS that includes homework that must be completed before arriving at the Summer Institute.

The Application

The following items are needed for an application packet to be complete:

- Current Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Current Job Description
- Self Descriptive Letter that addresses the following:
  - Identifies your immediate professional objective;
  - Identifies what you consider to be your own special strengths;
  - Identifies the challenges, if any, which you feel might affect your professional development;
  - Describes the path you would like your career to take, including a specific projection of where you see yourself, or would like to see yourself, in five years (be as concrete as possible); and
  - Outlines the ways in which you think attendance at the Institute will help you achieve your objectives. All letters should be addressed to HERS (see below).
A letter from your immediate supervisor. If selected as the WSU representative, the letter will be used in your application packet to HERS and therefore should be addressed as follows:

HERS
Summer Institute
The Chambers Center
University of Denver
1901 East Asbury Avenue
Denver, CO 80208

If selected as the WSU representative, President David R. Hopkins will write a letter of support that will also be included in your application to HERS.

**Conclusion**

There are no major changes to the 2015 HERS selection process. The selected participant can choose which HERS Summer Institute, based on dates and location, to attend. The 2015 Summer Institutes will be held from June 15-27 at the University of Denver and from July 13-25 at Bryn Mawr College. The selected participant may consider her professional obligations, the needs of her department, and her personal calendars, among other factors, when choosing which institute to attend.

Best wishes as you prepare your application for this exciting opportunity. Again, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions. In addition, all interested candidates are strongly encouraged to ask questions of the Women’s Center staff and past HERS participants.