

# REPORT FROM A SEMESTER AT OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WITHIN THE PROGRAM *TEACHING SABBATICAL*, 2014

Erika Alm, Ph.D.  
Assistant professor in Gender Studies  
Department of Cultural Sciences  
University of Gothenburg

## Introduction

I would like to start off with expressing my sincerest gratitude to the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) for awarding me one of the 2014 *Teaching Sabbatical* fellowships. When I was offered a spot on the *Teaching Sabbatical* program I had been associate head of department with a special focus on education at the department of Cultural Sciences at Gothenburg University, for a year and a half. Having this position had given me an insight into how administrative systems, academic politics and national educational politics set the conditions for everyday work in higher education. I was eager to get perspectives on my very situated experiences. STINT provided me with the opportunity to be a part of the everyday work at Ohio State University for a longer period of time, which has been transformative. I enjoyed my stay at the department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State University immensely, from the research surges to the everyday conversations with students and colleagues among staff and faculty. I hope that my stay can serve as a foundation for an institutional relation between WGSS at OSU and my home department.

### *Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State University*

Ohio State University (OSU) was established in 1870, and is one of the largest public universities in the US. OSU holds its position in the national ranking, with a place among the 20 top national public universities (in its 2015 edition of “Best Colleges,” *U.S. News & World Report* ranked OSU as nr. 18).<sup>1</sup> In addition to the main campus, situated in the state capital of Columbus, OSU has 5 regional campuses. The department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) is one of the largest departments of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies in the US. It hosts one of the largest graduate programs in the country, with 19 Ph.D. students, and has a faculty of 18 professors, tenured or on tenure-track, and 55 affiliated professors (in Comparative Studies, Geography, African American studies, History, English, Dance etc.). During the academic semester of fall 2014 more than 70 students had WGSS as a major on undergraduate level, and 8 on graduate level.

On its homepage the department describes its vision in the following way: “We advance the field through interdisciplinary research and innovative pedagogies, inspiring a new generation of gender and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.osu.edu/highpoints/>

sexuality scholars and feminist leaders committed to social justice. We strive to be a globally recognized model of excellence in gender, sexuality and feminist scholarship.”<sup>2</sup>

### *Structure of report*

My experiences from GU and OSU are situated in the particular departmental contexts that I have been part of, and hence not representative of conditions for faculty and staff at these institutions as a whole. Although there are administrative and bureaucratic structures that form a university into an institution per se, the effects they have for specific departments, educational environments or research hubs, are diverse and context-specific. In this report I will discuss and compare OSU and GU as institutions to some extent, but the main focus will be on a departmental level.

### **Preparation and planning**

In late December 2013 STINT<sup>1</sup> announced the recipients of the stipends within *Teaching Sabbatical*, so my first contact with the head of department for WGSS, Professor Jill Bystydzienski, was in the days between Christmas and New Years. In early January we had already decided on a time for my preparatory visit and settled on my academic responsibilities for the fall. Professor Bystydzienski had in conversation with faculty decided that they wanted to offer me the possibility to construct a course of my own, taking departure in my research interests. My research on cisnormativity and trans\* and intersex experiences expressed in scholarly and activist work addresses themes that are not covered in the current curriculum at WGSS at OSU, themes that previous and current students had expressed an interest in exploring. I started working on a course description and title immediately, in conversation with Professor Bystydzienski.

In early March 2014 I visited Columbus and OSU in order to meet the faculty and staff and to settle the details for my visiting professorship. Professor Bystydzienski had put together an itinerary for my visit that allowed me to both meet faculty and staff, accustom myself with campus, and sit in on classes given during the spring semester. The fact that my days were structured according to my needs to get to know the department and its teaching environment was immensely helpful in my process of preparing the syllabus for my course and making plans for the coming fall. When sitting down to construct the course I could go back to the notes I took when sitting in on classes, and I had established contact with a few of my colleagues that I could turn to with specific questions about what students might expect from the type of course I was about to give. These early contacts, with faculty, staff and Ph.D. students, were absolutely formative for the fall to come. Throughout the spring and during the summer I had contact with not only Professor Bystydzienski and WGSS staff about the formal aspects of my teaching – such as course description, location, student enrollment etc. – but also with some of the faculty and Ph.D. students about aspects pertaining to the content of the course. Upon arrival in Columbus in early August I could reconnect with people directly.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://wgss.osu.edu>

All and all I had very little practical problems in the preparation phase, and received great support from WGSS faculty and staff. The process for attaining a visa as a J1 (with accompanying J2 dependents) was fairly easy and quick. The main problem was finding suitable housing in Columbus. I had an offer of an apartment close to campus already in February – contact information to the landlady attained through the final report of a previous STINT scholar at OSU<sup>3</sup> – but it didn't suit the needs of my family. After meeting faculty in March we tried to find housing in the Clintonville area where most of faculty and staff live, but it proved very hard to find a landlord willing to accept a short period of rental (the most common one seems to be at least a year, preferably two). By mid-June we had located a house through Sabbatical Homes ([www.sabbaticalhomes.com](http://www.sabbaticalhomes.com)), and signed a contract with an OSU professor on sabbatical leave. My tips to future STINT scholars would be to ask around at the department on your preparation visit, and make sure that they are aware of the fact that you are looking for suitable housing, and to make use of Sabbatical Homes. There are plenty of apartments for rent just south, east and north of campus, but these are in houses in which only students live, and perhaps less suitable for scholars bringing their families.

For scholars who are bringing children with them to Columbus and OSU I would recommend taking the children with them on their preparation visit, to orient them in the environment, but also to start up the enrollment process into the public school system. Children who do not have English as first language are eligible for English as a second language (ESL) programs in the school they are placed, but they have to go through tests to determine the level of help needed, and those tests have to be done on site. Although school assignment is based on school districts and hence your future address the tests needed for ESL can be done before you have an address if you can show documentation that you will be working at OSU and staying in Columbus.<sup>4</sup>

### **Tasks and responsibilities**

My main responsibility for the fall semester was to give a course of my own fancy, and to be an active part of the WGSS faculty in terms of attending seminars and events. I was also to give a research seminar on my own research. The course was set to fit the slot of an intermediate course enrolling both undergraduate and graduate students (in the system used at WGSS it was called a 5000-level course, on a scale of 1000-level courses being introductory courses for undergraduate students and 8000-level courses being directed at master and Ph.D. students). The course slot was for 3 credits (3 hours of teaching each week) and ran throughout the whole semester.

I constructed a course called “Critical perspectives on cisnormativity” (WGSST 5620) that takes its departure in activist, scholarly and community reactions to the pathologization of trans\* and intersex people. As a class we explored context-specific expressions of cisnormativity and how they are structured by sexism, racism, colonialism and ableism. We discussed how geopolitically specific conditions, like legal

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<sup>3</sup> Ms. Linda Fowler of Villa Ruth Housing. Ms. Fowler has furnished houses and apartments throughout the Victorian Village and Short North neighborhoods, each approximately one mile south of the university campus. Exclusively for short-term tenants, the majority of whom come to Columbus as visiting scholars: [linda@qsds.com](mailto:linda@qsds.com)

<sup>4</sup> Columbus City School district: <http://www.ccsdh.us>.

recognition and access to medical health care, interact with transnational ones, like neoliberal discourses on human rights.

### **Activities during the semester**

The highlight of my fall was teaching. My course had a cap of 20 students and I ended up with 18 students enrolled. It was a highly diverse student group, with a majority of undergraduate students and four graduate and Ph.D. students. Some of the students were majoring in WGSS (or the closely related Sexuality Studies), but there were also a good portion of students majoring in other disciplines, such as counseling, linguistics, neuroscience, dance, comparative literature etc. A substantial number of students enrolled identified as gender variant. Throughout the course of the semester the class was in active engagement with local activists and scholars. We had guest lecturers from University of Wisconsin and American University and from TransOhio. We attended local community conversations and vigils (like Transgender Day of Remembrance) as well as events arranged by the *Multicultural Center* and the *Office for Diversity and Inclusion* at OSU.<sup>5</sup> The course was structured around seminars and deployed normcritical pedagogy through a focus on knowledge production as collective, communal processes (based on active participation, continuous feedback and adjustments). I gave a couple of more old-fashioned lectures during the beginning of the semester, addressing specific topics suggested by the students. After that I only gave mini-lectures (usually no longer than 15 minutes) as part of the classroom discussions, prompted by the questions the students had, and the lines of argumentation we were following. In terms of examination the students handed in entry tickets (short paragraphs, a couple of sentences, with an analytical question posed to the class readings) to every class session (unless we attended external events) – comprising 10% of the final grade – wrote a short essay about a third way into the course – comprising 15% of the final grade – made an in class presentation in groups of 4 students, presenting literature pertaining to the course themes but not on the syllabus – comprising 25% of the final grade – and wrote a final essay, a case study to which they collected their own materials and made use of the course literature – comprising 40% of the final grade. The grade for the final essay was divided into a grade for a synopsis that they handed in a month before the due-date of the essay, on which they received feedback from both fellow students and me, and a grade for the actual essay. 10% of the final grade was connected to participation and informed participation in the classroom discussions.

Throughout the fall I tried to make the most of the opportunity of being part of a vibrant educational environment with close ties to civil society. I attended community conversations, events, vigils etc., to learn more about strategies for community outreach approaches in teaching practices. Apart from teaching I attended research seminars at WGSS and held an open lecture based on my research in mid-November. I also attended faculty meetings (two) and open lectures and workshops arranged at OSU. Two highlights were the screening of Freida Lee Mock's film "Anita" followed by a discussion between Anita Hill and Lee Mock, and the teach-in on Ferguson, Missouri, arranged by WGSS following the

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<sup>5</sup> <http://mcc.osu.edu>; <http://odi.osu.edu>

murder of Michael Brown. I have also had invaluable chances to network with U.S. based intersex and trans\* scholars and activists, in being able to invite scholars to my course at OSU and in being invited myself as a participant in research symposiums. In late October I was one of three speakers at a symposium on transnational trans\* studies at the department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at University of Minnesota.

### **Important lessons**

My pedagogical work and research feed of one another. In conversations with students I am confronted with other questions than the ones I typically pose in the confinements of my study. So to be paired with a group of students with very diverse backgrounds, all committed to making a critical intervention into structural cisnormativity, has been a gift and a challenge. The students helped me keep the focus on trans\* and intersex people's lived experiences of cisnormative structures, and engage with everyday experiences of discrimination and resistance.

The format of the course had me think through my own pedagogical tools and how I use them. Here are a few of my reflexions.

\* It quickly became clear to me that I needed to find ways to address the fact that the student group was diverse in terms of previous experiences of fairly advanced feminist readings (for some of the students this was their first course ever taken at WGSS). I needed to find ways to accommodate the students at their different levels of familiarity with the theoretical landscape we were exploring together. In order to address this I asked them to send in suggestions, anonymously, on topics they wanted me to give lectures on, for us to have a common ground to start our classroom discussions from. I also had them make an early assessment of the course (third week) in which I asked what parts of the course they found hard to grapple and what parts made their learning experiences easier. Their answers were anonymous. In addition to this I gave each student feedback during the fourth and fifth week, commenting on the quality of their entry tickets, their attendance and their participation in classroom discussions. After a couple of weeks' classroom discussions I also decided to make adjustments to the course structure to accommodate the graduate and Ph.D. students' higher level of theoretical engagement by offering them optional text seminars in which we could go into more in-depth theoretical discussions. The offer was received positively, we met up four times and an advanced undergraduate student joined our discussions.

\* Already during my preparation visit at WGSS I realized that it is a teaching environment with close ties to the surrounding activist communities and social movements. So, as described above, I made it one of my main goals with the fall to soak up as much knowledge as possible about strategies for community outreach approaches in teaching practices, and strategies for facilitating ongoing conversations between activists within and outside of academia.

\* The fact that it was possible for me to attend some of the faculty meetings gave me insights into the structural aspects of the educational system at OSU (reflections on these aspects will follow in the comparison between OSU and GU below).

## Comparison between the foreign and the home department and institution

### *Student population*

OSU and GU are fairly similar in terms constitution. Both OSU and GU are well-rounded universities, in the sense that they offer courses and programs in a wide range of disciplines. At OSU the more than 63 000 students can choose from 175 different undergraduate majors and 240 master, doctoral and professional degree programs. OSU offers more than 12 000 different courses in disciplines as far and apart as Architecture, Agricultural Sciences, Atmospheric Science, Ancient History and Classics, and Actuarial Science. The average student at OSU is from Ohio (more than 50 000 of the students are from Ohio), white (17 % of the students identify as belonging to a minority), and enrolled as an undergraduate (more than 50 000 of the students are undergraduates).<sup>6</sup> The tuitions and fees are fairly reasonable if compared on a national level at around \$ 10.000 annually for Ohio-residents (but more than \$ 26.000 for non-residents).<sup>7</sup>

GU is smaller than OSU, with 37 000 students on undergraduate level and master level, and around 2 000 doctoral students. GU offers courses in disciplines that span as wide as OSU and granted more than 6 500 diplomas to bachelor, master and profession students 2013.<sup>8</sup>

### *Structural conditions for teaching and research based teaching as a practice*

One of the impressive things about the way OSU, as an institution, approaches issues of pedagogy and education is the visibility and attainability of the support system for teaching scholars. The daily OSU newsletter (sent through an email-list) always contained at least one post pertaining to pedagogical aspects of academia, and there were plenty of advertisement for pedagogical seminars and workshops on the main homepage. It is hard to say anything general about an institution having only been at one department, but it seems as though pedagogical merits are promoted more often in the OSU context than in the GU context.

The *University Center for the Advancement of Teaching* (UCAT) is a high profile unit, easy to find through the main homepage, and often widely advertised. UCAT arrange a variety of workshops addressing all aspects of teaching – constructing courses, grading, reaching out to students, dealing with students in distress, getting familiar with the teaching platform Carmen – but also balancing research and teaching loads and life in academia in general. For example they offer workshops for graduate students to orient new teaching assistants in the arts of pedagogy, these workshops focus on student-centered strategies to promote self-efficacy and questions about how to build relevance into course content.<sup>9</sup> They also offer workshops on “going on the market” – the academic job search – and on writing curriculum vitae and cover letters, and guidance in the situation of a job interview.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.osu.edu/osutoday/stuinfo.php#acad\\_struct](http://www.osu.edu/osutoday/stuinfo.php#acad_struct)

<sup>7</sup> <http://undergrad.osu.edu/money-matters/tuition-and-fees.html>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.gu.se/digitalAssets/1473/1473691\\_gu\\_arsredovisning\\_2013.pdf](http://www.gu.se/digitalAssets/1473/1473691_gu_arsredovisning_2013.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [ucat.osu.edu/participate/events](http://ucat.osu.edu/participate/events)

There are also units across OSU that function as support for teaching scholars in areas such as distance education (*Office of Distance Education and eLearning*) – offering courses on flip-your-classroom-pedagogy with training in specific computer programs for recording lectures, and workshops on converting a campus course into an online course – and course design (*Course Design Institute*) with workshops with individual facilitators. The *Office of Diversity and Inclusion* plays a specific role at OSU in that it “supports the recruitment, retention and success of students, faculty and staff who enhance the diversity of OSU.”<sup>10</sup> It offers two programs, one directed at graduate students, and one directed at Ph.D. students writing their dissertations.

The equivalent of UCAT at GU is *PIL* (Enheten för pedagogisk utveckling och interaktivt lärande). *PIL* offers longer courses on pedagogy, some of which are mandatory for scholars in order to be promoted or allowed to teach at all, but also shorter workshops and inspirational lectures.<sup>11</sup> *PIL* gathers resources on interactive learning and teaching, and offers plenty of workshops on developing eLearning and distance education.

There are definitely similarities in the resources offered as support for teaching scholars, at OSU and at GU. Both universities push for distance education and eLearning as areas of development, OSU perhaps in a more structured way than GU.<sup>12</sup> But OSU has a more developed system of support into issues of inclusion and diversity than GU does. GU also lacks the type of professional guidance that OSU offers in terms of balancing research and teaching. GU does offer workshops that specifically address getting familiar with life within academia (on topics such as group dynamics, efficient email-correspondence, on administering a research project etc.), but not much related to career development other than guidance for those in leading positions.<sup>13</sup>

I do believe that the type of structural support that OSU offers has effects on the individual professors' conditions for teaching, and for balancing research obligations with teaching obligations. Playing into this is, of course, also the system with sabbatical leave, which has no equivalence in the Swedish university system. Another aspect is the differences in the processes of recruitment. At the department of WGSS at OSU faculty took an active part in the recruitment process of new faculty members. Not only were they part of preparatory discussions about the department's needs and wants, they were also part of the evaluation process and the actual ranking of applicants. At GU, at least to my experiences, the processes of recruitment are much more formalized, the evaluation is rarely done on a departmental level and faculty do not have much influence over the decisions made, since the evaluation is made by external reviewers, and the decision taken by the dean and external council groups (comprised of GU scholars). Changes in the organization (giving the head of departments more independence in terms of decision making) might change this situation. I would be very happy to see faculty as a collective group

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<sup>10</sup> [www.odi.osu.edu](http://www.odi.osu.edu).

<sup>11</sup> [www.pil.gu.se](http://www.pil.gu.se)

<sup>12</sup> See for example this description of “Delta Kickstart Week” that was announced in the daily newsletter: “Kickstart Week, hosted by *The Office of Distance Education and eLearning*, is an accelerated program to assist participants in developing online courses while using standards for best practices, online pedagogy and innovative technology. Attendees will walk away with a 14-week plan, developed content and certification in the Quality Matters Rubric.”

<sup>13</sup> <http://medarbetarportalen.gu.se/kompetensutveckling/programochkategorier/>

earn more influence in processes of recruitment, since the collegial milieu is an important aspect of everyday experiences of teaching, and of balancing research and teaching; especially in Sweden, where co-teaching is very common, and you rarely teach courses on your own but rather with a team of colleagues. One of the things that really took some time to adjust to at OSU, in terms of pedagogical approaches, was the fact that I did not co-teach, and hence didn't have colleagues that I could discuss specific pedagogical approaches, appropriate assignments and student progress with. I did discuss the specifics of my course with colleagues, in everyday conversations, but the dimension of sharing students and course content was lacking.

### *Teaching environment*

The department of WGSS at OSU has an impressive breadth in its curriculum on undergraduate level, with courses that fit either of four major concentration areas: Race, Sexualities and Social Justice; Narrative, Culture and Representation; Global and Transnational Feminisms; and Power, Institutions and Economies.<sup>14</sup> The same is true for the graduate level. In comparison to the unit for Gender Studies at the department of Cultural Sciences at GU, WGSS at OSU is a large department, with economical possibilities to maintain both a breadth and a specialization in the curriculum, and with a real investment in offering parts of the curriculum online, available to students that are not located in Columbus. In comparison the curriculum in Gender Studies at GU is narrower, and courses that previously were offered both on campus and online are now limited to campus with the argument that the drop-out rate on the online versions was too high making the courses not economically viable. It is my conviction that the structural conditions for Swedish higher education on an undergraduate level (the mainstreaming of courses and the focus on progression following the Bologna process) make for a less dynamic curriculum in the sense that courses need to be structured according to the system of grundkurs (introductory course), fortsättningskurs (intermediate course) and fördjupningskurs (bachelor's course), which means that it is not possible for undergraduate students to choose thematically specific courses according to their own inclinations. There are, of course, pros and cons with both systems, but I do think that creating a more flexible system would benefit Swedish higher education and make it easier to maintain both breadth and specialization.

At WGSS undergraduate courses are often lectured based and make use of different sorts of examination forms: written longer and shorter essays, oral presentations in class, in-class quizzes and tests. On the graduate level the pedagogical approach is described as a Socratic one, with classroom discussions rather than lectures; these courses are often structured around student projects, and dynamic at core. The same is true for Gender Studies at GU, the courses on undergraduate level contain more lectures than the ones on graduate level, but already on the intermediate course (Genusvetenskap fortsättningskurs) the syllabus is structured around student projects of different sorts (group projects designed to give the students experiences of a variety of methods, and a shorter thesis project). The interactions between

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<sup>14</sup> <http://wgss.osu.edu/undergraduate/major/courses-concentrations-chart>



professors and students are similar between the two departments: they are grounded in a conviction that knowledge production processes are collective processes, and that students and professors learn from one another in everyday interaction and dialogue. I didn't experience any tangible differences in how students addressed me (apart from the occasional being called "Professor Alm" at OSU), or what they expected from me.

Both OSU and GU have master's programs in WGSS and Gender Studies respectively. The OSU version is thematically broader than the GU one: the students choose an area of concentration (the four concentrations mentioned earlier for the undergraduate studies) and then courses associated with that concentration. There are courses that focus specifically on community outreach and community building, and the department describes itself as community centered: "The Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies encourages students to become involved with WGSS, campus, and local organizations and initiatives to help extend the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies message outside the classroom."<sup>15</sup> The master's program at GU is called *Gendering Practices* and is designed around interdisciplinary challenges and conversations, with a major focus on applicability of scholarly work outside of academia. Students are required to do an internship during the program, and choose one of four strands, developed to prepare the students for different parts of the labor market: Equality Politics, Organisation, and Law; Cultural Theories, and Practices; Cultural Heritage; Body Politics, and Social Health.<sup>16</sup> In other words: there are similarities between the content of the master's programs, but the GU version seems more specialized.

### **Action plan – topics to address and if possible introduce in Sweden**

#### *Personal (and departmental) level*

One of the major areas of inspiration that OSU and the department of WGSS has provided me with is the close connection between civil society, activist communities and the university. The department of Cultural Sciences as a whole, and Gender Studies in particular, would benefit immensely from developing the interactions between scholars, students and civil society. Although such interconnections are already established in both teaching and research environments, a more structural approach might help develop and strengthen them. A couple of examples: I would like to involve activist organizations in teach-ins and workshops to a larger extent than hitherto. I would also like to explore the possibilities of constructing courses that involve aspects of community outreach that is not based in either fieldwork or dissemination of research, but rather in communal political engagement in work for social change, courses in which activists and representatives from civil society are an active part in both the design and the execution of the course, not only invited guests.

#### *Departmental level*

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<sup>15</sup> <http://wgss.osu.edu>

<sup>16</sup> <http://kultur.gu.se/english/education/masters-second-cycle/gender-studies/gendering-practices--master-s-programme-120-hec>

In a couple of years the department of Cultural Sciences will host 5 educational programs (two programs are already running, three more will be established as of the fall of 2015, altogether two on bachelor level and three on master level). All of these are focused on an interaction between labor market and university, preparing the students for their lives after studies. Internships are an integral part of each of the programs, but it has not, hitherto, been a priority to orient the internship placements towards community outreach. Perhaps a structural effort to enhance the interactions already established between the department and civil society in the form of activist communities and NGOs could contribute to a specialization in the department's educational profile.

On a departmental level I would also like to propose changes in the structure of the curriculum that make it possible to establish thematically specialized courses intimately tied to research projects and profiles; this is especially relevant – and fairly easily attainable – on the advanced level (in the curriculum for advanced students). This would also contribute to a specialization in the department's educational profile.

#### *Institutional level*

I think that GU would benefit from institutionalizing its engagement with issues of diversity and social equality. One way to do it would be to create an equivalence to *DISCO* (The Diversity and Identity Studies Collective) at OSU. DISCO works to “promote identity studies on campus through support of extra-curricular student groups, campus-wide lectures, round-tables, performances, and conferences, and curriculae development.”<sup>17</sup> It is a coalition of a range of disciplines.<sup>18</sup> A center with the ability to gather interdisciplinary resources and host events directed at students, faculty and staff would provide a more structured approach to diversity and inclusion, and hopefully revitalize the discussions about recruitment, pedagogy, and the university as a stratified room that reiterates already established norms of inclusion and exclusion, based on ethnicity, class and gender. Below is an example of an event hosted by the *Office of Diversity and Inclusion* at OSU as an inspiration into what such activities might look like:

#### **STEM Resource Fair Jan. 21**

The STEM Student Resource Fair, hosted by the Ohio Louis Stokes for Minority Participation Alliance Scholars Program and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, will take place on Wednesday (1/21) from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the MLK Lounge in Hale Hall. This is an opportunity for students, staff and faculty to learn about services, resources and student organizations in the colleges of Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Food, Agricultural & Environmental Sciences.

I would also encourage GU to establish centralized efforts to facilitate community outreach aspects in education and research, to support faculty, educational programs and departments. Below is an example from OSU that testifies to how such investments might be structured, in this case through a stipend fund.

#### **Graduate and professional student fellowship**

Community service-minded graduate and professional students are encouraged to apply for 2015-16 Columbus-Athens Albert Schweitzer Fellowships. Fellows partner with community organizations on

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<sup>17</sup> <https://wgss.osu.edu/graduate/career-development/intersections>. See also: <http://www.osu.edu/initiatives/diversity.html>

<sup>18</sup> African and African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Comparative Ethnic Studies, Disability Studies, Latina/o Studies, Native American Studies, Sexuality Studies, and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

year-long service projects to address social and health-related needs in Franklin and Athens counties. Attend an information session on Monday (12/1), 4:15-5:15 p.m. in 147 Atwell Hall or Wednesday (12/3), noon-1 p.m. in 1069 Graves Hall.

In order to develop the support for faculty and staff I would want to see the type of professional guidance that OSU offered at GU. Below are two examples of workshops held during the fall semester at OSU:

**ASFW presents 'Mentoring, What's it all about?'** MJ Abell and Lindsey Tapp of Human Resources will use mind mapping and career questions to see how mentoring could help you develop personally or professionally, on Tuesday (11/18) from noon-1 p.m. at the Gateway, Suite 430.

**Oct. 23: Innovative Paths for Promotion and Tenure:** Using effective learning technology is more than just a side project or a labor of love. It's your contribution to Ohio State's commitment to becoming a leading institution in digital scholarship. Innovative teaching practices boost a faculty profile for promotion and tenure now more than ever. Learn how at the second engagement of the Innovate 365 event series, on Thursday (10/23) in 010 Page Hall.

*National level: in the Swedish research and education system*

Support for community outreach programs and interactions between universities and civil society would be highly appreciated. Such support already exists, but it is often put forth in special calls of funding for projects (research related or educational). There is a need for a structural take on these issues; the same is true for the advancement of work around inclusion, diversity and social equality.

Another issue that would benefit from a national discussion and structural take is the one of balancing research and teaching. The sabbatical system, established in the US, but also in other countries (like Norway), provides a stable structure that faculty, heads of department, deans, and university presidents can use in the negotiations of how to promote an environment that can foster creativity and productivity in both research and teaching. The dependence on funding from major research councils like Vetenskapsrådet and Riksbankens Jubileumsfond creates instability in the system. Faculty, heads of study and heads of departments have limited chances to create long-term, sustainable calculations of time spend on research and teaching respectively due to this instability, which generates frustration and often a tendency to avoid engagement in projects related to teaching and pedagogy since they are thought to steal precious hours that could be dedicated to research and research applications. With a sabbatical system, and a guaranty for coherent periods of research, I think this frustration would be lessened. Riksbankens Jubileumsfond's willingness to fund sabbaticals is highly appreciated, but I think Swedish universities need to find solutions that are co-operational and not reliant on external funding from research councils. Some institutions have initiated a process.<sup>19</sup> Using the fairly recent report – only focusing on research conditions, but implicitly also addressing the issue of balancing research and teaching – by Gunnar Öquist och Mats Benner, *Fostering Breakthrough Research: A comparative study* (2012), might be a start.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> <https://campi.kth.se/nyheter/forska-utomlands-med-lon-fran-kth-1.512173>

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.kva.se/globalassets/vetenskap\\_samhallet/forskningspolitik/2012/akademirapport\\_breakthrough\\_research\\_121209.pdf](http://www.kva.se/globalassets/vetenskap_samhallet/forskningspolitik/2012/akademirapport_breakthrough_research_121209.pdf)