

The Womanist Collective Housing Charter - 2019/2020 Academic Year

Mission Statement

In June of 2008, a group of feminists at Dickinson College founded the Feminist Collective. After Dickinson College established an administrative Women's Center with a paid director, the group saw an opportunity to expand their activism on campus and assume a more radical, community-based feminist agenda.

In September of 2019, a group of Black and Brown womxn re-named and re-established the house name to the Womanist Collective. The renaming is an ode to Alice Walker's Womanism and the honoring of the history, efforts, joys and tears of womxn of color at Dickinson College.

Womanism was coined by Alice Walker in 1983, and gives visibility to womxn of color. A womanist is described as "a women who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counter-balance of laughter) and women's strength.

The Womanist Collective is non-hierarchical, Student Senate recognized organization composed of students, faculty, and staff members. It strives to integrate the study and practice of an inclusive womanism; one which puts at the forefront womxn of color narratives, achievements, and histories. The Collective aims to provide a sacred space for discourse on social justice issues, social and cultural enrichment, and the gathering of womxn.

The group functions as a Collective, and therefore all group members cooperate to make decisions and organize collective movement. Group facilitators assume a leadership role and function as liaisons between group members and the College administration. Four of these facilitators take residence at the Womanist Collective residential house, which is currently located at 135 W. Louther.

Note: The Feminist Collective residential house was first located at 135 N. College Street since its founding in 2008, and moved to the 527 W. Louther location in 2018 due to maintenance issues. Currently, The Womanist Collective now occupies the historic location of 135 N. College Street and shall remain there unless circumstances prohibit.

Philosophy

The Purpose of a Residential Space

Creating a Safe Space

The Womanist Collective residence provides housing for the four residents who maintain it as an open setting for the campus and community. The house provides a “safe space,” an open and accepting environment that encourages respectful conversation and exploration and does not tolerate violence or harassment.

The Womanist Collective also maintains an “open door policy” to ensure that all members of the Dickinson community have access to this safe space, with the intention that individuals from all backgrounds will feel welcome in the Womanist Collective. Through this philosophy, the Womanist Collective invites any and all community members to utilize the environment for personal and community growth. This invitation comes with the expectation that individuals who hold social privilege (whether race, class or gender), recognize said privilege and attend meetings conscious of such.

Importance of the Womanist Collective Residential House Library

The Womanist Collective residential house library is a useful source of printed information also symbolic of the Collective’s goals of continual dialogue and exploration of womanist subject matter. Most importantly, these texts are accessible to house residents, non-resident members of the Womanist Collective, and other Dickinson students to serve as educational resources which may not be found in other campus locations, such as the Waidner-Spahr Library.

Goals

Goals as a Collective (Goals are listed but not limited to)

- ❖ To function as a space for dialogue of Womanist, Black Feminist Political Theory, and Black Queer Theory. [L] [SEP]
- ❖ To facilitate conversations between different groups of people through a communal space. [L] [SEP]
- ❖ To form coalitions between other organizations that consist of people of color, particularly ones interested in cultural solidarity, uplift, and/or Womanist and Queer theory.
- ❖ To expand the Womanist activism on campus and in the community beyond through active [L] [SEP] discussion, thinking and movement regarding and participation in historical and contemporary womanist issues.

[L] [SEP] 2019-2020 Semester Goals [L] [SEP]

- ❖ Attend House Manager Operational Training.
- ❖ Attend the Special Interest Housing Manager Meetings.
- ❖ Maintain and improve current House Charter if necessary.
- ❖ Actively maintain current house roster for each semester, will fill any vacancies should they occur, and submit any changes to the Office of Campus Life immediately, if necessary.
- ❖ Facilitate the Womanist Collective student organization by conducting weekly meetings regarding different social justice issues, as well as womxn experiences.
- ❖ Participate in social justice efforts on and off the Dickinson College campus (through meetings, events, and demonstrations).
- ❖ Complete all events listed on House calendar. Sponsor more events if the Collective sees it necessary. There will be a **Goal Assessment** at the end of each semester during our last weekly residential meeting, where all residents will participate in an assessment of the current semester. Residents will assess whether or not the Womanist Collective Residential House has successfully met and accomplished initial community goals. Attendance is mandatory for all residents, who expected to actively participate in the discussion.

House Resident Expectations

Residents are expected to maintain the physical space which they inhabit, and maintain the accepting atmosphere which has become the identifying characteristic of the House itself.

Womanist Collective Club Facilitators- All house residents will take an active role in the Womanist Collective campus organization as club facilitators. The role of facilitator is to assist in leading weekly club meetings and discussion, plan logistical details and club events, invite guest speakers, build coalitions with other campus groups. Resident facilitators will also train other club facilitators who do not reside in the house, but also take on a leadership role in the campus organization.

House Manager (HM)- The role of House Manager is designated by a consensus-based decision amongst future residents. The House Manager resides in the house for the entire academic year and serves as a liaison between the Office of Campus Life and house residents, most importantly by renewing the house application for special interest housing and attending official House Manager meetings and Operational Training. The HM participates in house opening and closing at the beginning and end of each semester and reports facility and safety concerns to the College. The HM also maintains an accurate and current roster of students enrolled in the program. HM also helps to administer the program outlined in the house charter. The House Manager signs a House Manager contract to ensure that HM responsibilities will be met.

Resident Meetings

Residents of the Womanist Collective are expected to attend weekly meeting on Sunday nights at 9:00PM. These meetings are essential for a cohesive living environment. This weekly meeting will provide a time and space for members of the house to check in and discuss any concerns they have. The meeting agenda will be set by the house manager and will follow the general format of:

1. Job updates: an assignment of weekly chores for the house members. This assignment will be based on a rotating list of chores that need to be^[1]_{SEP} completed to maintain the house.^[1]_{SEP}
2. Reflection: of the past week's chores and events. As well as reflection on the past week's Womanist Collective meeting.
3. New business: discussing and planning upcoming events for the house, and announcements that pertain to the whole house.
4. Open space: a time and opportunity for house members to share ideas, thoughts and reflections that they feel are relevant.

All decisions of the Womanist Collective house members will be made by consensus. The house manager is responsible for making sure that the environment of the meeting provides a feeling of safety in sharing members' opinions, conflicts and thoughts.

Participation in Application Process

All residential members of the Womanist Collective will take an active role in reviewing, interviewing, and accepting new residential members for the house for the upcoming semester. Unless there are residential members who were randomly placed into the Womanist Collective by Residence Life. All randomly assigned parties are prohibited from participating in the acceptance of new applicants to ensure that the house and club are able to uphold our mission. Acceptance of applications is contingent upon house vacancies. All applicants must fill out the Womanist Collective Application For Housing. All applicants will interview with the current residents. Then current residents will make a consensus-based decision for new residents. Applicants will be notified of application status in a timely manner. All deadlines of Office of Campus Life will also be met by the Womanist Collective in a timely fashion.

Unexpected Vacancies

If any unexpected house vacancies should occur during the course of the semester, the Womanist Collective Residential House will adhere to any College requirements for filling vacancies.

Residents will make an effort to fill the vacancy as soon as possible (at least within 3 weeks). In this period of time, the Womanist Collective will also meet with the Office of Residence Life to create an action plan for filling the vacancy.

In the event of an unexpected vacancy being filled by the Residence Life Office, the Womanist reserves the right exclude person(s) not accepted into the Womanist Collective by our application process in resident selection for the following year in order to ensure the space retains it's political and historical significance.

House Rules and Standards

As full-time students of Dickinson College, all residents must be in compliance with all Dickinson College rules outlined in the Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. Any resident not in compliance is subject to consequences put forth by the College and Office of Campus Life.

Quiet Hours

Quiet hours will take place Sunday-Thursday, from 11:00pm - 9:00am. Quiet hours are subject to change upon the consensus-based decision of all residents.

Parties

Parties held in the house must be planned and approved by all house members. The planning and notification of these parties will take place during the weekly residential meetings. Community and planned Womanist Collective events take priority over all other events. Parties may only be hosted by house members and said house member(s) are responsible for cleaning up after the party. Clean up must be completed by the next day. All damages or charges by DPS are the responsibility of all house members.

Bathroom

House members are responsible for maintaining and cleaning the bathroom. Members of the house are expected to clean up after themselves as well as complete their assigned weekly chores, which may include cleaning the bathroom. If a house member notices a problem with the bathroom they must notify house members and then notify facilities.

Shower/Bathtub

House members are discouraged from leaving hair in the showers, either on the walls or in the drain. If a house member notices a problem with the shower they must notify the house members

and then notify facilities.

Toilet

If there is a problem with the toilet it is the responsibility of the last person who used the toilet to attempt to fix this problem. If this house member is unable to fix this problem they must tell other house members and then notify facilities.

Doors

Doors will be locked at all times.

Community Spaces

All Womanist Collective members are encouraged to fully utilize community spaces, which include the kitchen, the common room, and the library. When using these spaces, everyone is asked to be conscious of the needs of others. House members are expected to clean up after themselves.

Kitchen

Fridge and Storage: The fridge and shelving areas are open to use for all house members. [SEP]Because three students share one kitchen and one refrigerator, each member is asked to be respectful of the space they occupy. [SEP]

Eating Policy: Food reserved in specific cupboards allocated to house members is for their use only. All may eat food in the spaces for communal resources. If members eat food that belongs to someone else, they are expected to be honest about it. This policy is to be revisited every semester. [SEP]

Dishes: Everyone is responsible for their own dishes, and needs to wash them as soon as possible. House members are also responsible for dishes they remove from the kitchen area. The dish/kitchen cleaning policy is to be discussed every semester. [SEP]

Soap and Sponges: House members will take turns providing essential resources for the house. [SEP]

[SEP]Common Room [SEP]

General Cleanliness: House members must pick up after themselves to ensure the common room [SEP]does not become cluttered. Before and after events, all house members are responsible for

cleaning and arranging the furniture. [L] [SEP]

Library: All residents are encouraged to read the books in the Womanist residential house library. All residents must be respectful of property by returning books to their designated space after reading them.

Conflict: Should conflict arise in the house, house members should refer to the questionnaire filled out prior to moving in to decide the best steps to move forward. Conflicts should be resolved as soon as possible, and peacefully, to maintain the atmosphere of the house.

Programming - Calendar of Events

The Womanist Collective house serves as the base for the Dickinson College Womanist Collective campus organization, which is officially recognized through the Dickinson College Student Senate. [L] [SEP] These are the events planned for the 2019-2020 Academic Year: [L] [SEP]

Weekly club meetings: Mondays at 8:00-9:00pm. Womanist Collective House. These meetings will [L] [SEP] serve as a setting to discuss various womanist issues. Each week a “facilitator” of the Executive board will choose a topic. Non-facilitator members who are interested also have the option to propose and lead a discussion. [L] [SEP]

Activities Fair: September 2019. HUB Social Hall. Participate in Activities Night and advertise the Womanist Collective. Purpose: participate in open womanist dialogue and encourage all campus community members to take an active role in the Womanist Collective. [L] [SEP]

Queer Speed Dating: October/November 2019. Womanist Collective/Tree House. This event is for queer people of color to socialize, network and enjoy time together that they otherwise would not have due to a significant lack of visibility of QPOC on campus.

Art Sale for POC: Possibly Spring Semester 2020. Womanist Collective House. This event is for artists to display their work in the house as well as sell pieces. This event is meant to create connections for artists of color, create a new platform, and fill the House walls with a variety of art.

Paint n’ Sip: November 2020. Womanist Collective. This event is a collaboration with Arts Collective. It’s purpose is to provide a space for people to socialize comfortably through the therapeutic act of painting. Light refreshments will be provided.

Movie Night: Scheduled by semester. Althouse. The Collective will watch a movie that the group members find to be significant to both contemporarily relevant and significant to womanism. The movie will be followed by a discussion about the film. [L] [SEP]

Any other events or cosponsored events that the Womanist Collective sees fit for participation. All residents are encouraged to help create and participate in pertinent on-campus and off-campus events.

Revisions to the House Charter ^[L]_[SEP]

The Womanist Collective House Charter is constantly subject to review and changes may be made to this charter upon consensus-based decision of house residents. All residents are encouraged to review the house charter at least once each semester and propose necessary revisions. ^[L]_[SEP]

Acceptance of House Charter by Womanist Collective Residents ^[L]_[SEP]

All residents must accept the terms and conditions of the Womanist Collective House Charter in order to take residence in the Womanist Collective residence house. All residents will be made aware of all information (including rules expectations) of the house upon the acceptance of their application for residence. Acceptance of charter is based upon placement of student's names on the house roster, which is on file with the Office of Campus Life.