

WSU Five-Year Program Review  
Self-Study

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Department/Program: Women's Studies

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Executive Summary:

Women's Studies Minor Program Self-Study for the 2010-2011 5-year Regent Review

This self study is conducted to critically analyze the Women's Studies Minor Program's challenges and successes as well as to provide suggestions necessary for positive, continued growth of the program.

A. Mission Statement

Women's Studies is devoted to the academic study of the roles, contributions, and scholarship of women. Women's Studies explores issues of ethnicity (including what has been historically termed race), class, sexual preference and gender as they impact women's lives in a variety of cultural contexts. It promotes new areas of research, discovers lost contents of human history, identifies women's place in contemporary life, and encourages a sense of empowerment among students through analysis of their commonality of experience. The women's studies minor prepares students to pursue graduate work or employment in professional and community organizations, with emphasis on critical self-reflection and responsible decision-making.

Women Studies is an interdisciplinary program devoted to the academic study of the roles, contributions, and scholarship of women. It explores issues of race, class, sexual preference and gender as they impact women's lives in a variety of cultural contexts. Its goals are:

1. to build on the existing body of scholarship as the program develops an interdisciplinary curriculum about women and gender issues.
2. to encourage variety in pedagogical methods for teaching.
3. to transform traditional disciplines through continuing consideration of new data, methods, theories, and analytical frameworks generated by Women's Studies scholarship, helping to correct long-standing oversight of the study of women's contributions to societies throughout the world.

B. Curriculum

Women's Studies curriculum is designed to meet the mission and goals of the program and to facilitate transfer of credit to other institutions with similar programs e.g., Women's Studies or Women and Gender Studies. The minor program is open to all students and may readily complement their major area of study. It consists of 20 credit hours i.e., 12 hours from the following core courses and 8 hours from a variety of approved cross-listed courses found in almost every School at WSU.

**Core Courses (12 hours)**

WS 1500 Introduction to Women's Studies

WS 3050 Feminist Theories

WS 4050 Research Methodologies

\*WS 4060 Research Project

\*WS 4860 Internship

WS 4990 Senior Seminar

**Elective Courses (8 hours)**

WS 4830 Directed Readings

WS 2900 Topics in Women's Studies

WS 4900 Topics in Women's Studies

\*Students can select to take either the Research Project course or complete the Internship in Women's Studies course. These days, students are encouraged to gather data in the Internship course.

**Some Cross-listed Courses**

Eng Hu 2710 Perspectives on Women's Literature: Asian Women Writers, China, Japan & India

Eng Hu 2710 Perspectives on Women's Literature: Great Women Writers of the Western World

Eng Hu 3510 Global Perspectives in Literature - Middle Eastern Women Writers

Eng 3750 Themes & Ideas in Literature: Indian Women Writers Writing in English H

Hlth 4220 Women's Health Issues

Pols 4160 Problems in World Politics - Third World Women

Psy 2370 Psychology of Women and Gender

Psy 3100 Psychology of Diversity

Psy 4900 Selected Topics in Psychology: Class, Culture, and Gender

Anth 3700 Sex Roles, Past, Present, Future

Soc 3120 Sex Roles, Past, Present, Future

Honors 4990 Manhood in America: Scholarship in Men's Studies

Honors 481K Gay & Lesbian Studies: Theories & Literature (Also WS 481D)

Discussion between the coordinator, WS Executive Council, and WS Curriculum Committee resulted in making changes for two courses to better fit the scholarly and marketing needs of our students. The first of the changes passed by the WS Executive Council, *but still needing to be presented to the College and University Curriculum Committees*, is to increase the number of credit hours for the Research course from 2 to 3 credit hours. This credit hour increase would increase content and better align the WS Research course with other research courses at WSU and with other university Gender and Women's Studies research courses.

The second curricular change that would fit the purpose and style of other Women and Gender Studies programs would be the restructuring of the Senior Seminar or capstone course. It is a course that has been taught differently by different faculty, in part to accommodate the needs of very small numbers of students. As the number of minors in Women's Studies increases, so the number of students taking the Senior Seminar course together has also increased. It seems to be an opportune time for restructuring this course and making its teaching content and goals consistent regardless of the instructor teaching it.

**Women's Studies Program  
Outcome Grid: Student Outcomes by Courses**

Graduates of the Women's Studies program will:

1. Know the main social, economic, political, and psychological issues in contemporary women's lives, globally and locally;
2. Know the main topics in theories and methodologies of feminisms;
3. Know women's class, sexual orientation and cultural (historically "racial") diversity;
4. Know in depth one aspect of women's experience learned through (for example) a literary genre, a time period, a geographic region, or focus on a very **narrow** topic (this could be accomplished through electives, research paper, an internship, etc.);
5. Possess the ability to connect ideas and concepts about oppression and patriarchy about women within various fields to common themes or topics;
6. Possess the ability to write a focused and coherent analytical essay based upon and sustained by evidence;
7. Possess the ability to design and implement a project demonstrating studied topics.

C. Academic Advising

Women's Studies Minors and BIS students meet with the Women's Studies Coordinator who is the program's advisor. The goal of the advisor is to help students with the academic requirements and to connect them with other faculty in their major area who can inform them about relevant careers for their chosen major and WS Minor. An advisement manual was designed to help potential minors with academic questions and procedures relevant to the WS Minor.

D. Faculty

Women's Studies teaching faculty is completely comprised of adjunct faculty. Most of the Women's Studies teaching faculty consists of professors from supportive departments, some of whom teach some of the cross-listed courses. They are diverse in gender, ethnicity, discipline, and teaching style.

E. Support (Staff, Administration, Facilities, Equipment, and Library)

Women's Studies has a ¼ release time faculty (Coordinator) and a ½ time secretary. The secretary is the backbone of the program because of the time spent in the office and connecting with WS supporters and staff. There is office space in the Social Science Building for the Coordinator and for the secretary.

Additionally, there are library and equipment resources available to the program but funding has not significantly been altered in the past 10 years.

F. Relationships with the External Communities

Women's Studies' greatest contact with the External Communities has been primarily through its student service projects. Students have worked in places like the American Red

Cross, Red Thread Sex-Trafficking Awareness, Your Community Connection, Shriner's Hospital, YWCA of SLC, Fund-raising for a school in East India, Planned Parenthood, etc.

G. Review Team

The review team consists of: Dr. Brad Carroll Physics Chair at Weber State University, Dr. Kerry Kennedy Associate Professor in Social Work at Weber State University, Dr. Giancarlo Panagia Associate Professor in Justice Studies and Gender Studies Adjunct at Westminster College, Dr. Armando Solorzano Associate Professor in Family and Consumer Studies and Adjunct in Women's Studies at the University of Utah.