

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
Women and Gender Studies  
Self-Study Document, Fall 2019

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*\*The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full, self-study document itself.*

## **Recent Program History**

Program Coordinators:

Fall 2012-Spring 2013: Director: Maria Parilla de Kokal

Fall 2013-Spring 2014: Director: Dr. Michelle Pautsenbaugh

Fall 2014-Spring 2016: Director: Dr. Alicia Giralt

Fall 2016-Spring 2017: Interim Director: Maria Parilla de Kokal

Fall 2017 Interim Director: Dr. Stephanie Wolfe

Spring 2017-Present Director: Dr. Melina Alexander

Before presenting our self-study findings, it is necessary to talk about the path our program has taken in recent years. In the year immediately following our last evaluation, our director, Maria Parilla de Kokal worked diligently to address some of the recommendations given by the review team. She finished a 6-year term of leadership and a new director was hired. In reviewing the findings of the past evaluation team the new director, Dr. Pautsenbaugh, initiated a name change for our program. She also worked on improving advisement for our students but found that taking on the role of faculty and advisor with only a quarter released time was too much for her to facilitate. She left the role of director with a recommendation that future directors were more adequately compensated for the time requirements of this position. We elected a new director, Dr. Alicia Giralt. Dr. Giralt took up the call for a name change and the need for measurable outcomes and our program officially became Women and Gender Studies in the fall of 2014. With this came a new mission statement and new program outcomes for our students. Dr. Giralt also negotiated with our dean for a stipend during summer semester so that the Women and Gender Studies program could continue to function during the summer semester; this money was, in summer 2017, given to pay for a course so that the WGS program had funds to pay for 3 on-campus courses a year. Unfortunately, Dr. Giralt was diagnosed with cancer and had to leave the position after struggling to maintain her duties for the 2015/2016 school year. With the uncertainty of her return, the board elected to have faculty rotate as interim directors until Dr. Giralt could return. When she announced her permanent retirement, the position was filled with our current director, Dr. Melina Alexander. During her time as director, the Women and Gender Studies program experienced a few challenges. The half time administrative assistant (secretary) of the program changed positions at the end of spring semester 2017. The assistant position was left unfilled until spring semester of 2018. The new assistant left in the spring of 2019 stating that she did not have enough work. The dean then moved the position to quarter time stating that a student worker could fill the other quarter-time. A quarter-time 10-month position was difficult to fill; when a half time position in another department came open a job share opportunity was made for the WGS position. This position became filled in the spring of 2019.

Due to these changes in leadership and administrative help, throughout this review, in some areas, no data will be reported or considered for years 4 and 5.

## **Mission Statement:**

There are currently three mission statements attached to the program. The first mission statement is listed on the Weber State University website for program review and contains a general statement. The second is the mission listed on our website and includes our program goals. The third mission statement was approved by our WGS board in 2014 to be used for program evaluation.

For the purpose of this program self-study, we decided to use the mission statement created for evaluative purposes

*Women and Gender Studies is devoted to the academic study of the roles, contributions, and scholarship of women. Women and Gender 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 and Gender 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.*

1. *Students will demonstrate knowledge of foundational and contemporary research and theoretical literature in the field of Women and Gender Studies.*
  - a. *Read, understand, and evaluate feminist theories and scholarship.*
  - b. *Identify, compare, and evaluate culturally and historically specific constructions of gender.*
2. *Students will apply their knowledge of women and gender studies.*
  - a. *Apply their knowledge of women and gender studies by analyzing current social and political situations from those perspectives.*
  - b. *Articulate the ways in which systems of power, privilege, and oppression shape our experiences as individuals and members of communities.*

## **Next Steps**

Moving forward our board must review these statements and come up with one clear mission statement that includes student outcomes. This consistency will enable yearly program assessments aligned to program outcomes.

## **Curriculum:**

The Women and Gender Studies (WGS) Minor is an interdisciplinary minor that allows students to, along with the core courses, take a variety of electives offered across campus from various colleges and departments. Our WGS board has selected the curriculum for this minor. We are an interdisciplinary program; therefore determining curriculum is a collaborative process. We rely heavily on the expertise of our board in making programmatic decisions.

Courses offered as part of our minor are as follows:

| Required Courses   | Electives: Choose 2 courses   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSG /DV 1500 Introduction to Women &amp; Gender Studies (3)</li> <li>• WGS/POLS 2500 Human Rights in the World (3)</li> <li>• WGS DV 3050 Feminist Theories (3)</li> <li>• WGS 4150 Research Methodologies (3)</li> <li>• WGS 4250 Community-Based Research/Internship (3)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANTHRO 3700 Sex Roles: Past and Future (3)</li> <li>• COMM 3090 - Gender and Communication (3)</li> <li>• ENGL 2710 HU /DV - Perspectives on Women's Literature (3)</li> <li>• FL 3670 - Literature Authors (3)</li> <li>• GERT 3320 - Ethnicity and Older Women in the American Society (3)</li> <li>• HIST 3070 - Women in American History: 1600 to Present (3)</li> <li>• POLS 3400 Sexual Orientation, Politics and Law (3)</li> <li>• PSY 2370 - Psychology of Women and Gender (3)</li> <li>• PSY 3100 - Psychology of Diversity (3)</li> <li>• SOC 3130 - Sociology of Gender (3)</li> <li>• WGS 2900 - Topics in Women and Gender Studies (3)</li> <li>• WGS 4900 - Topics in Women and Gender Studies (3)</li> <li>• WGS 4830 - Directed Readings (1-3)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Should other courses relating specifically to Women or Gender Studies, either of an experimental or of a permanent nature, be added to the curriculum, these courses will be accepted as electives for the Women &amp; Gender Studies Minor Program</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Max. 3 directed reading credits</i></p> |

### Next Steps

Weber State University has put forth an initiative to facilitate timely graduation for students. This means it was important that our minor follow other minors in required credit hours. After giving our current program 3 years, our board met and to evaluate this additional requirement. Our curriculum consultant noted that most minors on campus require only 18 credit hours and that this additional course may impede students' desire to receive a WGS minor. The board voted unanimously to move this class from required to elective. In addition, our program will now contain 9 hours of required courses and 9 hours of electives. This proposal is being prepared for curriculum and we hope to have these catalog changes for students declaring their minor during the 2020-2021 catalog year.

### Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment:

Women and Gender Studies learning outcomes come directly from our mission statement.

1. *Students will demonstrate knowledge of foundational and contemporary research and theoretical literature in the field of Women and Gender Studies.*
  - a. *Read, understand, and evaluate feminist theories and scholarship.*
  - b. *Identify, compare, and evaluate culturally and historically specific constructions of gender.*
2. *Students will apply their knowledge of women and gender studies.*
  - a. *Apply their knowledge of women and gender studies by analyzing current social and political situations from those perspectives.*
  - b. *Articulate the ways in which systems of power, privilege, and oppression shape our experiences as individuals and members of communities.*

Our self-study analysis determined that our courses lead to students obtaining these outcomes.

### Next Steps

Our self-study analysis determined that the following items need to be addressed moving forward.

- The WGS board needs to review graduate programs in Women and Gender Studies to ensure that students are provided instruction on information pertinent to graduate studies.
- With the revision of the mission statement, the WGS board must also review the current student outcomes and make adjustments when needed.

### Academic Advising:

Academic advising for the Women and Gender Studies program is clearly defined. Students receive advising on the WGS minor or BIS emphasis from the following sources

College Advising: Conducted by the College of Social and Behavior Sciences Advisors

WGS Advising: Conducted by the WGS director

All students must review their course of study with the WGS director upon declaring a WGS minor.

### Next Steps

Results from our self-study indicate that we would like to continue to support our students through advisement while stepping up our systems that help students meet their post-graduation goals. To do this we will have to establish collaborative partnerships with advisors from students' major programs of study.

### Faculty:

Women and Gender Studies teaching faculty are completely comprised of support faculty. Most of the WGS teaching faculty consists of professors from supportive departments, some of whom teach some of the cross-listed courses. Some teaching faculty is comprised of WSU staff. They are diverse in gender, ethnicity, discipline, and teaching style.

### Current Faculty:

| Name                   | Rank      | Highest Degree | Years of Teaching | Areas of Expertise          |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dr. Melina Alexander   | Full      | Ph.D           | 21                | Education/Social Justice    |
| Dr. Stephanie Speicher | Assistant | Ph.D           |                   | Education/Social Justice    |
| Dr. Emily Petersen     | Assistant | Ph.D           | 3                 | English/WGS                 |
| Dr. Kathryn McKay      | Full      | Ph.D           | 40                | History/WGS                 |
| Dr. Stephanie Wolfe    | Full      | Ph.D           | 7                 | International Relations/WGS |

|                   |           |           |   |  |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---|--|
| Dr. Richard Price | Associate | Ph.D      | 7 | Political Science/Queer Studies        |
| RC Callahan       | N/A       | Masters   |   | Online Education/Queer Studies         |
| Paige Davis       | N/A       | Masters   | 2 | Education Leadership/Domestic Violence |
| Tanji Byrum       | N/A       | Masters   | 4 |  |
| Eli Alexander     | N/A       | Bachelors | 2 | Anthropology/WGS                       |
| Sarah Storey      | N/A       | Bachelors | 0 | Anthropology/WGS                       |

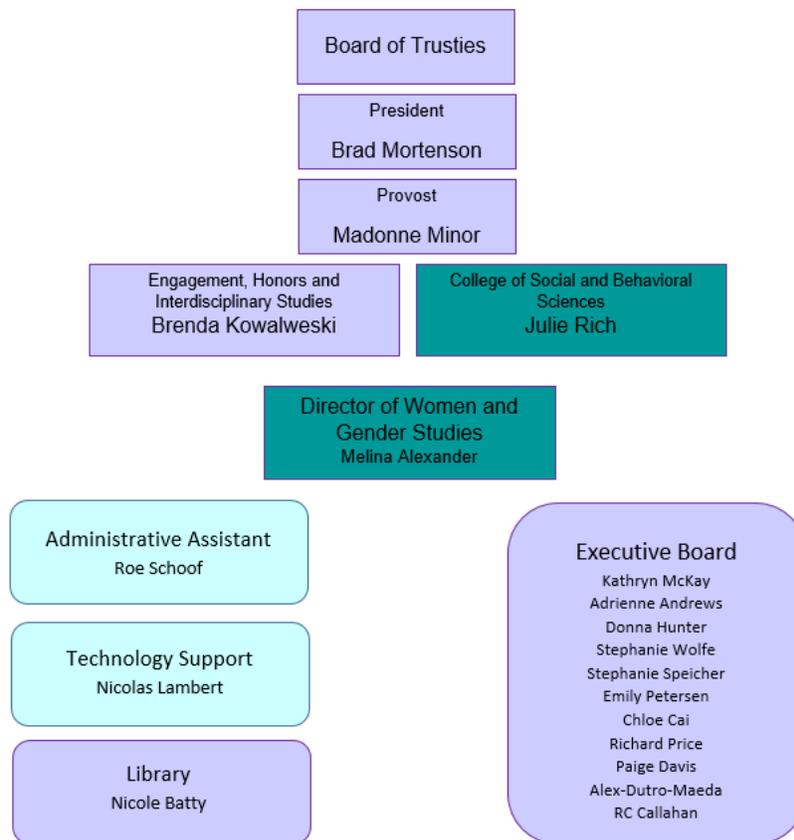
[Return to Part H](#)

### Next Steps

From our self-study, we learned that we are falling behind on measures to secure and maintain effective adjunct faculty. We have determined that the following actions need to be taken

- Create teaching standards aligned to the program mission
- Review and revise the faculty handbook
- Require faculty to submit a syllabus prior to teaching each semester
- Have faculty articulate how each of the applicable student outcomes will be addressed and assessed.
- Provide evidence of student progress.
- Place adjunct faculty on our website

### Program Support:



Women and Gender Studies receives support from a variety of sources including our deans, support staff, adjunct faculty, and our executive board.

**Next Steps**

At this time the director of Women and Gender Studies, the administrative assistant, and the deans of WGS must review course load and budget to determine a budgetary plan moving forward.

**Relations with External Community:**

Women and Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary program. We have an advisory board that is made up of individuals from across the university ([See Standard E](#)). By nature, our program collaborates with other members of the Weber State University Community.

In addition, through our newly formed student organization, the social advocacy club, we have partnered with two community organizations, VoterRise and ONE Salt Lake. VoterRise is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of registered voters <https://www.voterise.org/> One Salt Lake is a non-profit organization working on ensuring global health through legislation.

**Next Steps**

In the past, WGS has had a member of the community as part of their advisory board. We feel that we need to move forward in once again securing this position.

**Student, Adjunct Faculty and Staff Statistics:**

**Student Data**

| WGS    | AY14 | AY15 | AY16 | AY17 | AY18 | AY19       |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|------------|
| MAJORS | 22   | 25   | 27   | 28   | 32   | 32         |
| GRADS  | 2    | 1    | 4    | 1    | 3    | 1 (4 apps) |
| SCH    | 508  | 623  | 776  | 651  | 834  |            |

| Ethnicity        | AY14   | AY15   | AY16   | AY17   | AY18   |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Caucasian        | 13     | 16     | 18     | 19     | 19     |
| Hispanic         | 5      | 6      | 6      | 5      | 5      |
| Asian            | 1      | 1      | 1      | 1      | 1      |
| Two or more      | 1      | 1      | 1      | 2      | 2      |
| Unknown          | 2      | 1      | 1      | 0      | 0      |
| African American | 0      | 0      | 0      | 1      | 1      |
| %minority        | 31.82% | 32.00% | 29.63% | 32.14% | 32.14% |

**Adjunct Faculty**  
[See table in part E](#)

**Staff**

*WGS Staff*

| Name            | Job Title                | Years of Employment | Areas of Expertise        |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Rosemary Schoof | Administrative Assistant | 1                   | Administrative specialist |

*CSBS Staff*

| Name            | Job Title       | Areas of Expertise  |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Stephanie Quinn | College Advisor | Student Advisement  |
| Nicolas Lambert | IT Specialist   | Academic Technology |

**Next Steps**

Women and Gender Studies relies on faculty willing to teach courses in overload. Moving forward we would like to expand our faculty to include a wider pool of individuals that are willing to offer not only our lower-division courses but also our upper-division courses as well. We would also like to have faculty willing to offer one variable topic course a year.

**Results of Previous Program Reviews:**

The following were overall recommendations from the last program review in 2012

I. Overall Recommendations

- a. The Executive Committee, the Faculty, and the Coordinator of Women Studies should meet with the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences to discuss the growth of the program and its budgetary concerns. The main arguments should be the shift toward the study of gender issues in the nation, the university, and the labor force.
- b. The teaching-release-time for the Coordinator of the Program should be increased to fifty percent.
- c. Provide incentives to other departments and faculty to develop cross-listed classes with Women Studies.
- d. Develop better mechanisms to institutionalize the relationship of Women Studies with external organizations.
- e. There is a need for a committee that can plan the future of the program on a short-long basis.
- f. The computer in the main office should be replaced and upgraded.
- g. Fund and create a Gender Studies Post-Doc position to
  - i. help Program Coordinator in determining teaching assignments
  - ii. guide adjunct faculty
  - iii. create appropriate procedures for orientation of new faculty
  - iv. provide formal periodic review of faculty review
  - v. help create and offer a core of courses
- h. Develop and record measurable learning outcomes to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program.

**Information Regarding Current Review Team Members:**

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