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Spring 2015

### Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies Discipline Assessment Report 2014/2015

Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies Discipline

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**May 2015**

**GWSS Assessment Report**

**Introduction:**

The Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies discipline has been in a holding pattern for a few years and therefore has conducted minimal formal assessment. Currently coordinated by Jennifer Rothchild (Sociology) and a multidisciplinary steering committee, the discipline is undergoing a number of changes and will continue to transform in the upcoming months and years. Indeed, several changes have already been made and will be outlined below. Although these changes have not been based in formal assessment measures, they *are* the result of a thoughtful assessment of the major by steering committee members.

**Program Student Learning Outcomes for Majors and Minors:**

- (1) Students are introduced to the study of gender and sexuality across a diverse range of contexts.
- (2) Students gain exposure to a broad range of interdisciplinary approaches used by gender studies, women's studies, and sexuality studies scholars.
- (3) Through diverse methodologies and critical paradigms, students comprehend the impact of gender and sexuality in their own lives and in the world around them.
- (4) Students learn to think critically and reflexively through analysis of their own experiences as well as through a variety of primary and secondary source materials.
- (5) Students learn to communicate their ideas effectively in writing and through oral presentation.

**Assessment Measures:**

The chief assessment tool within the GWSS major is GWSS 4901. In this course, students graduating with a major in Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies compile a portfolio of work done in the major, write a paper about their experience in the GWSS program, and then discuss this work (both paper and portfolio) in a meeting with GWSS faculty. Although the information gleaned from this process is quite valuable, the current GWSS steering committee recognizes that it should not be the only means of assessment. Therefore developing a more formal and complete assessment that directly reflects the current Program Student Learning Outcomes is necessary. Based on this necessity, several changes have been put into place and are outlined below.

Since GWSS is an interdisciplinary major, several courses that majors take are housed in other disciplines and are thus assessed within those disciplines.

### **Changes Based on Assessment:**

In consideration of Program Student Learning Outcome 1, the discipline will work collectively over the course of academic year 2014-2015 to assess the range of courses offered and proposed for the period 2012-2016. We will examine syllabi for all courses to ascertain how well we are meeting our goal of breadth within the limits of our disciplinary staffing and expertise. This assessment will inform our discipline's hiring plan and priorities beyond 2015. That data will be collected across the course of the academic year. This PSLO overlaps with the following CSLOs: 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3; 2.1, 2.2, and 2.6; 3.1 and 3.2; 4.2 and 4.3.

In conjunction with Program Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 3, the discipline will work collectively over the course of academic year 2015-16 to assess the multiple ways in which we expose students to various methodologies and paradigms. We will choose three examples from courses across the curriculum which illustrate our various techniques and create assessment tools for each of the three examples. The assessment tools will be used at the first available opportunity and at least two of the examples will come from classes taught during 2015-16, in order to acquire some data quickly. A report to the Division Chair will be completed by May 2016, outlining the assessment we were able to complete during the 2015-16 year and our plan for continuing assessment of the critical thinking components of our curriculum. These PSLOs overlap with the following CSLOs: 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3; 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.7; 3.1, 3.2, and 3.5; and 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.

In attention to Program Student Learning Outcomes 4 and 5, the discipline will focus on our capstone course (GWSS 4901-Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies capstone) through which students write a theoretical analysis paper. This course includes a significant writing component, as well as both an oral and written presentation of the final project. Faculty assigned to this course will develop appropriate assessment tools for the two PSLOs in question, which will be tailored to academic year 2016-17's topics and timing. These PSLOs overlaps with the following CSLOs: 1.2 and 1.3; 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.7; 3.1 and 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.

### **Recommendations for Improving Assessment Process:**

- Conduct yearly assessment meetings to discuss the major.