

Women's and Gender Studies Assessment Report, January 15, 2013

I. The Women's and Gender Studies Program has not done any formal assessment work during the Fall of 2013. Between 2010- and 2012 the program held a series of lengthy meetings to rethink and revise the curriculum in the context of adding "Gender Studies" to the program title and coursework. The success of those meetings was dampened by the loss of 3 colleagues whose courses and participation had been invaluable to the interdisciplinary and transcultural elements of the program—Sarah Malena, Amy Staples, and Andre Siamundele. The program moved to an emphasis on majors meeting thematic requirements that utilize a number of disciplines in addition to the core WGS courses under the rubrics: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Contexts, Creativity/Aesthetics, Embodied Experiences/Embodiment, Power and Experiential. Anecdotally we have found the incoming majors and minors appreciate the clarity of and meaning behind the new requirements. No one has yet graduated with the new requirements; the first will graduate in May 2014.

II. In February, WGS will host a meeting with 3 local colleagues from the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at Syracuse University to discuss further developing the transnational elements of the program, in particular adding curriculum on Middle Eastern issues. The meeting will provide a space to brainstorm course resources—online, video and textual as well as focus on syllabi development—both content and pedagogy.

III. Following the February meeting, the program faculty will discuss ways to implement suggestions from the discussions over the next two years with the resources available at Wells. Lisa Hall will be on sabbatical for at least the fall semester of 2013-2014, so program evaluation for next year will depend on adjunct staffing replacements and which Wells faculty can take on her courses.

IV. Program assessment work for spring semester of 2013 will include holding program faculty discussions to create a new assessment plan, comparing the assessment procedures of Syracuse colleagues, and holding focus group meeting with WGS majors and minors about their perceptions of strengths and areas for development in the program.

WGS Program Assessment Plan

Mission Statement:

The courses within the Women's and Gender Studies program provide students with contemporary, historical and multicultural perspectives on gender roles, particularly as experienced by women, in order to facilitate understanding of complex, interconnected systems of oppression and multiple histories and forms of resistance to oppression. Issues of race, indigeneity, non-normative sexuality and gender identification are core issues within the program. Majors and minors develop a critical perspective on personal, local and global dimensions of gender and sexual identities in the service of becoming active, affective, and effective agents in the world.

Key Program Goals:

- 1) acquaint students with multiple historical and cultural perspectives on gender roles, particularly as experienced by women
- 2) investigate and explore the formation of gender/ed identities and the relationships between variously gendered persons within local communities and cross-culturally
- 3) familiarize students with the ways in which women's and gender studies has incorporated questions of power and gender into the practice of academic scholarship and how it contribute to the on-going transformations of scholarly methods and approaches
- 4) analyze social and political issues as they pertain to the social construction of difference.
- 5) develop habits of responsibility and accountability to self and community in completing course work, activist work and internships

Learning Objectives

- 1) Acquaint students with multiple historical and cultural perspectives on gender roles, particularly as experienced by women:
 - a) Take classes focusing on different time periods and cultural groups
 - b) Demonstrate knowledge that gender roles are not identical or static across time and culture
- 2) Investigate and explore the formation of gender/ed identities and the relationships between variously gendered persons within local communities and cross-culturally
 - a) Be able to articulate what a "gender binary" means and what other possible variations exist that categorize gender
 - b) Be able to articulate various criteria different societies use to determine gender
- 3) Familiarize students with the ways in which women's and gender studies has incorporated questions of power and gender into the practice of academic scholarship and how it contribute to the on-going transformations of scholarly methods and approaches
 - a) Take courses from multiple disciplinary perspectives
 - b) Be able to articulate some key ways those disciplines have been affected by incorporating questions that focus on issues of gender and sexuality
 - c) Demonstrate knowledge of the history of feminist scholarly interventions in at least two disciplines

- 4) Analyze social and political issues as they pertain to the social construction of difference.
- a) Demonstrate an understanding of debates about “essential” v. “socially constructed facets of human behavior and identity
 - b) Demonstrate knowledge of various social movements in different times and locations, aimed at creating change
 - c) Articulate how various racial, sexual and gender identities have changed over time in relation to historical and political events and processes.
- 5) Develop habits of responsibility and accountability to self and community in completing course work, activist work and internships
- a) Complete work on time and to the satisfaction of the course instructor
 - b) Detail internship goals and activities and complete to the satisfaction of the internship supervisor
 - c) Be consistently reliable and responsible in the activism and /of offices undertaken on campus or in the larger community. Learn to identify how much time a given project requires and how much work self and others can reasonably be expected to accomplish.

Means of Assessment of Outcomes

I will collect syllabi from all program faculty during the spring and ask them to annotate the ways in which their courses support the above goals. I will collect the internship evaluation of our majors and minors from Eric Vaughn. The program faculty will meet to discuss our impressions of strengths and weaknesses of student knowledge and skills with regard to the above goals.

How Assessment Data will be Utilized

Program members will meet and decide on specific rubrics to adopt in relation to the development of writing and analytical skills and apply them to evaluating the upcoming semester’s work. At end of semester meeting an updated plan will be developed for the following year.