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Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies Department Review, 2015

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Preamble

From its beginning, GWSS stood as one of the major departments in a vital field that has over the last twenty years established a core set of concerns, innovated in pedagogy, and expanded theoretical, evidentiary, and expressive findings not only to establish its own body of knowledge, but also to critically impact other areas of study. GWSS has grown from an experimental program to a vibrant and autonomous department housing 1) an undergraduate major and minor in GWSS; 2) a doctoral degree in Feminist Studies; and 3) graduate certificates, one in Feminist Studies and another in Sexuality and Queer Studies.

GWSS has undergone incredible growth and transformation and become one of the most established and highly regarded departments in the field. There are 18 departments with doctoral degrees in GWSS or Feminist Studies in North America and the University of Washington is one of the best.¹ The field has developed as an interdisciplinary site that produces new forms of knowledge, promotes intersectional and transnational perspectives, and establishes theoretical, expressive, and evidentiary bases for social justice and civic engagement. UW continues to contribute greatly to the direction of field development by generating new scholarship that builds upon, but does not replicate existing paradigms, bridges traditional divisions within the academy between departments and schools and colleges, and melds humanities, arts, social sciences, professions like nursing and law and even some sciences like biology. Most importantly, GWSS, as with the field as a whole, engenders the study of racial formation, social class, and global divisions of labor, power, and social life.

We reviewed the self-study; conducted group interviews with faculty, alumni, undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and adjunct faculty members; and met with several members of the department individually. Upon our request, the chair also promptly provided additional materials including syllabi, research profiles of faculty, distribution of graduate advising, lists of cross-listed courses, allocation and use of TA funding, enrollments by course, and information regarding minors and double majors.

¹ UW remains one of the smallest PhD granting programs nationally in terms of FTE: Arizona State U (11.5), California Institute of Integral Studies, Emory U, Ohio State U (12.25), Penn State U (8.5), Rutgers (16.25), SUNY -- Stonybrook, Texas Women's U (10), U Arizona (11.5), UC- Los Angeles (8.25), UC - Santa Barbara (7.8-9), UC - Santa Cruz, U Indiana (8-9), U Kansas (4.5), U Maryland (8), U Michigan (15.75), U Minnesota (7.5), and U Washington (8).

Overall Strengths

The last review called the Department of Women's Studies a hidden gem, but a decade later, it is apparent that under its new name of Gender, Women, Sexuality Studies, it is a gem, but one that is no longer hidden. Its reputation is stellar on and off campus. This program is a shining example of rigorous and engaged scholarship, innovative teaching, magnetic curriculum, thoughtful mentoring, and leadership in civic and university engagement. The strength of the department lies in rigorous scholarship and impactful teaching that prepares students for personal and professional life. It represents a model program for deepening diversity throughout the university that is informed by research and expressed through teaching and mentoring students in undergraduate and graduate programs alike. A hallmark of the program is its long-established connections to diverse communities within Seattle, which have taken years to build, an interaction that in turn has proved essential to sustaining diverse communities on campus.

Within the field, GWSS maintains a strong reputation as a pioneering program in transnational feminism, with strength in the area of women of color, primarily Chicana and Indigenous feminisms, the latter area too often missing from comparable programs. Over the last decade, the department has added to its long-standing expertise in social science perspectives through hiring scholars working in the humanities and arts, whose presence has enhanced curricular diversity and brought new distinctions. It has extended sexuality offerings, but still places an undue burden on the few faculty in that area, especially given the intensity of student interest in queer theory, LGBTQ studies, trans* identity and lives, sexual labor, and related topics. The Department's recent name change reflects the trajectory of the field, which emphasizes gender and sexualities through interdisciplinary, transnational, and intersectional perspectives.

Undergraduate enrollments are increasing in GWSS at a time when social science enrollments overall are declining. The department has succeeded in expanding course offerings and enrollments by innovating new introductory courses at the 200 level. Its growth is very impressive because students rarely enter the university knowing that the field even exists as an area of academic study; as a discovery department, it takes students longer to find this major.

In short, this department has innovated in linking research, teaching and community engagement. It has encouraged in-depth thinking about praxis at both graduate and undergraduate levels.

Teaching and Curriculum

GWSS builds upon its interdisciplinary research distinction to provide a curriculum informed by current directions in the field. It recognizes the need for periodic course development and curriculum transformation and is continuing to rethink its

undergraduate as well as graduate offerings. Scheduling two years at a time promises a predictable roster that allows for student planning and maintenance of its excellent record of on time time-to-degree. 200-level courses reflect the shift to gender, the emphasis on sexualities, a local strength in global studies, and an overall probing of the meanings of race, the transnational, and the archive. The department proactively has sought to build enrollments by adding introductory courses, like "Gender and Sport;" "Hip Hop and Indie Rock;" and "Masculinities: Contestation, Circulation, and Transformation." A major draw is "Psychology of Gender," an offering missing from many comparable departments. Many 300- and 400-level courses are taught by adjunct faculty and are cross-listed. Courses at all levels seek to integrate sexualities, race, and geographies into the syllabus; the department also provides specific offerings in queer theory and studies, including trans*gender studies. The Ph.D. curriculum allows for flexibility so that students can design their own program to gain what they need to conduct original research and gain competency in teaching. Core theory, methods, and history courses allow for a common framework; these too are also undergoing reconsideration, which is typical of the field now that its Ph.D. programs are maturing.

Particularly commendable is the internship course in keeping with the field's commitment to civic engagement and institutional concerns with career preparation and service learning. The "Women Who Rock" project, connected to courses, not only produces new knowledge but also incorporates student assistants and provides training in research methods, social justice, and event development. *Native Voices*, which trains graduate students in documentary filmmaking, also represents the kind of prescient work that finds new forms to produce and express research.

The best curriculum is insufficient without teaching excellence. The faculty teach very well indeed, as evidenced by strong evaluations, student enthusiasm, and their own thoughtful reflections on pedagogy. Such teaching is transformative, opening new ways of seeing and being in the world, exposing students to communities outside of their own, and addressing difficult issues around differences, power, and inequalities. Both undergraduate and graduate instruction includes training in digital production and exposure to new media.

Graduate Program

GWSS is a leader in and model for the graduate education of gender and sexuality studies. The graduate program is highly selective, accepting small diverse cohorts (3-4 students) annually; currently it has 16 active doctoral students. The growth of the field, nationally and internationally, provides excellent employment opportunities for these graduates, and the department has a strong record of placing its graduates in academic positions in the last five years. Of the 22 doctoral students who have graduated, 7 obtained tenure-track jobs and 6 received other academic positions (e.g. postdoctoral fellowships and visiting professorships), while others are working in related non-profit and policy positions. Nationally, Gender and Women's Studies is a growing field with over 60 searches for postdoctoral

fellowship, tenure-track assistant professor, and visiting professor positions in 2013-4 and over 70 positions in 2014-5, a number that exceeds the number of graduating students. The field is a rarity indeed – one in which demand for doctoral students exceeds supply. The growth of the field nationally is promising for UW's GWSS doctoral program. The department also has an enviable record in terms of students receiving GOMAP, Ford, and other top scholar awards.

This success, especially since the last review, might be attributed to the ways that the program has anticipated research trends and thus trained students to meet the curricular needs of a wide range of institutions. In addition, graduate students benefit from superb mentoring from advisors and participation in collaborative projects, like "Women Who Rock," part of which consists of "unconferences" where students have an opportunity to network with noted outside specialists and receive comments on their work from these visitors. Students engage in self-reflection and evaluation each year, writing a 5-10 year plan on their work and professional aspirations, an exercise that helps keep them on track. The change to a 4- year package of support for graduate students is extremely important for recruitment to the program and to the success of graduate students' research and professional development.

Impact across the College and Campus

Among the principal strengths of GWSS is a distinguished, diverse, and internationally renowned core faculty that is involved in shaping and transforming a growing and vibrant field. The scholarly impact of the core faculty meets the criteria of excellence in terms of books, book prizes, and peer-reviewed article publications, as established by the field. As the recipients of prize winning books in 2011 and 2012, Professors Reddy and Swarr particularly offer a cutting-edge foundation for sexuality studies. The public scholarship of Professor Habell-Pallan, including her work as a guest curator of an exhibit now with the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibition Service; Professor Sasha Welland, including her documentary films and curatorial work; and Professor Ross, including her numerous indigenous documentary films, is all exceptional.

GWSS serves as a center for interdisciplinarity, bringing a vitality to academic interchange throughout the university. Furthermore, with about 80 Adjunct Faculty, GWSS is a strong recruiter for faculty and graduate students in other disciplines interested in gender and sexuality studies. GWSS has served not only as an intellectual hub within the university for gender and sexuality studies, but also as an on-going hub for mentoring, leadership, and intellectual engagement for the college and the university as a whole.

To its uniqueness as a program strong in the social sciences, it increasingly has added expertise in visual culture, popular culture, digital studies, and public scholarship. The work of its faculty links schools and departments across divisions, putting social justice and analyses of power at the center of scholarship, teaching

and service. Providing new materials and modes of knowledge production to faculty and students has transformed service into leadership. Students apply what they learn in GWSS classes to their other courses, as well as their life. Faculty find collaborators, generate networks, and subsequently advance their own research. Indeed, GWSS creates bridges between different kinds of stakeholders, while empowering people to contribute and to take ownership of collaborative projects. Those benefitting include graduate students mentored through “Women Who Rock”, adjuncts more intellectually connected here than in home units; WIRED members validated by the department’s commitment to intersectional and transnational analysis of power; difference, and inequality; and alumnae, staff, and larger communities welcomed at events.

GWSS brings together students from across the campus into classrooms where each can contribute and learn across differences and through common assignments. About a third of GWSS undergraduates are double majors, with the largest double majors and minors being from psychology -- a testimony to the drawing power of Professor Nancy Kenney and the department’s commitment to spanning science studies and health as well as social sciences, humanities, and arts.

The graduate certificate programs further enhance the connective role of the department. Students from across the university enroll in GWSS graduate classes, which generally have very strong enrollments. Indeed, these courses provide a space for innovation and collaboration. So do pedagogy sessions offered by the department. It has become the site for the new Graduate Certificate in Sexuality and Queer Studies and has begun to revise this program in terms of the significant directions of the field: cross-cultural approaches to non-normative sexualities in relation to transnational flows of people, ideas, institutions, movements, and objects; and interdisciplinary approaches to racialized and globalized practices, discourses, and histories of sexualities.

Most significantly, GWSS is a center of diversity. Through people and curriculum, it sustains a multi-cultural environment. It is home to students and faculty from underrepresented groups and a place where Ethnic Studies and Transnational Studies meet, with an impact beyond its own department. This profile enhances the department’s standing in the field and substantially advances the mission of the university.

Challenges and Recommendations

GWSS is a very innovative and strong unit, but inevitably, there are challenges that it will need to address that accompany their growth and dynamism. The committee has identified a series of challenges that need attention in the coming years. We also offer a number of recommendations to meet these challenges.

1. Undergraduate Program

The greatest challenges for the undergraduate program are continuing to attract undergraduate students to GWSS courses, and to make the GWSS major and minor into even more enriching and satisfying educational experiences.

1a. The self-study itself rightly notes that GWSS needs to engage in curriculum review in both undergraduate and graduate programs. We agree with this assessment and suggest that that one element of these revisions focus on *more fully infusing sexuality studies throughout the curriculum and adding new lecture courses with contemporary and innovative titles -- such as "Sex in Seattle," and "Social Justice and Feminism" -- that would likely draw considerable student interest.* Current students expressed a desire for additional courses on sexuality while our own review of the current course offerings suggested some vital and engaging areas of feminist scholarship not adequately highlighted in the current list of course titles. A stronger emphasis on sexuality studies is important due to recent shifts in the broader field of feminist studies, the name change of the department reflecting these shifts, and the recent addition of Chandan Reddy to the GWSS faculty. Another element is to reconsider the introductory course on a periodic basis to ensure that it is kept up to date, integrating sexuality studies and providing an introduction to key concepts and terms of debate.

1b. The committee recommends an *expansion of undergraduate career counseling and alumni relations as well as deepening advising services by increasing the current undergraduate advisor position to at least 75%.* Current staff members are working diligently to support student needs. However the department needs additional staff time to dedicate to these activities. Undergraduate students expressed a desire for greater community that would have multiple positive effects. Broadly, undergraduate community interactions would support students as they learn how to translate their learning out to their families and the larger world. More practically, students would like a "social justice job fair" to help them understand and also connect with job opportunities as they graduate; more assistance with selecting internships and also mentorship (possibly a course) during the internship process; and panels or brown bag lunches to provide guidance navigating pathways to graduate school and various career opportunities. The undergraduate advisor with an increased appointment is the ideal person to help translate these ideas into actions, and build fuller relations with alumni who can serve as invaluable mentors for students and important community liaisons and donors to the department. Such work dovetails with the University's broader capital campaign efforts and, notably, the campaign priority of deepening undergraduate advising and career counseling. *The College should therefore support the GWSS initiatives by increasing the position of the undergraduate advisor to at least 75%.*

2. Graduate Program

Moving forward, the greatest challenges for the graduate program lay in providing sufficient and predictable funding for graduate students, revising the curriculum to match current trends in feminist studies and student interest, increasing

professional development opportunities, and enhancing technical support and infrastructure for those engaged with multi-media and public scholarship projects. These challenges should be addressed in ways that build on the program's salutary and successful focus on interdisciplinary studies of race and social difference within the United States and beyond.

2a. We recommend that *funding from the College and the Graduate School be increased over the next two years to raise the number of quarters of TA/RA support from 19 to 27*. Current funding is insufficient because the department is unable to bring in a robust cohort of new students each year. The department is often in the situation of admitting only two or even just one graduate student per year. It is exceedingly difficult to sustain a graduate program at this level. An annual cohort of 3-4 students makes much more sense for a field in which, at a national level, the number of tenure-track academic positions outstrips the number of Ph.D.s produced each year. GWSS requires more TA/RA funding from the College, Graduate School, and also by faculty research grants to support these slightly larger cohorts. An increase in cohort size will not only strengthen the graduate program, but to the extent that these are TA lines, it will allow the department to expand enrollments in their large courses and to offer new ones.

2b. The committee also encourages the department to *rethink the core sequence of graduate classes to reflect recent shifts in feminist studies*. Currently, this is a three-course sequence on history, theory and methods (501 History of Feminism, 502 Cross Disciplinary Feminist Theory and 503 Feminist Research and Methods of Inquiry). This tripartite structure creates separations that are difficult to sustain in contemporary feminist studies and that do not reflect current thinking around the interweaving of theory, method, and geohistories. We recommend that the department participate in emerging national conversations (as at the National Women's Studies Association) about how to teach graduate feminist studies in ways that engage the complex intersections between theory, methodologies, and pedagogies. One possible direction would be to rework course titles in ways such as: Key Words/Contested Terms; Feminist Knowledge Production and Epistemologies; Intersectional and Transnational Feminist Theories.

2c. We recommend that GWSS *develop and offer more courses on sexuality* to respond to graduate student demand and to more fully claim its campus leadership position in sexuality studies. Related to this, we laud the department's decision to take responsibility for the Certificate in Sexuality and Queer Studies as part of extending its graduate curriculum in this area.

2d. The committee advises *increasing the collective professional development opportunities for graduate students*. Despite superb one-on-one support for graduate students from their advisers and as part of collaborative research projects, graduate students would also benefit from courses, brown bag panels, and workshops to improve their professional skills in grant-writing, feminist pedagogy, publishing, and the process of applying for academic and non-academic jobs.

Creating an integrated and coherent plan for professional development that is available to all students will enhance the individual mentoring students receive from their advisers.

2e. Finally, as regards graduate students, we recommend that the department *apply to the Student Technology Fee Committee for funds to develop a computer lab for editing and producing digital media and documentary films*. Both graduate students and faculty expressed concerns about being unable to access such equipment elsewhere on campus at the times and for the durations they needed. A lab within the department will also be invaluable to undergraduate students and faculty involved in collaborative multi-media projects. In addition, we encourage GWSS to *work with UW Libraries, UW-IT, the I-School, and the Simpson Center to provide students and faculty with workshops or mini-courses in specific editing and production techniques*.

3. Faculty Hiring and Development

The most significant challenges facing the GWSS faculty are the lack of any junior faculty at the Assistant Professor rank (they do have one excellent Full-Time Lecturer), the presence of only two members at the Full Professor rank, and limited resources to compensate faculty in leadership roles.

3a. The lack of junior tenure-track faculty presents an enormous challenge to achieving the curricular innovations that are so essential to continued forward momentum. The department has not had an open Assistant Professor search in the last ten years. Given the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of the field on one hand, and the prospect of retirements of senior faculty on the other, there is an urgent need for an infusion of new junior faculty. Thus, we recommend that *over the next three years, GWSS be authorized to conduct two searches at the rank of tenure-track of Assistant Professor in the broad areas of black feminisms and the African diaspora with thematic foci in theory, queer/trans* studies, and/or science, health, technology, and medicine studies*. Such hires will address two challenges facing GWSS: that of bridging strengths in transnational and women of color feminisms with those in sexuality studies; and that of maintaining the department's long-standing and critical contributions to the sciences and social sciences.

3b. The committee's conversations highlighted another pressing challenge not for the GWSS department, but for the larger UW institution. *The UW must adjust its research and tenure and promotion culture to meet the shifting nature of research and knowledge production*. GWSS faculty are a model for new modes of engaged scholarship and scholarly production – but currently these modes are barely legible to many evaluators and others considering promotion and tenure cases. The UW research culture needs to understand archival creations, hybrid forms of scholarship, creative expression, exhibits, and performances as forms of scholarship, as recommended by the field's main professional organization, the National Women Studies Association, whose guidelines on this issue are attached. Reinvisioning

what counts as scholarship in the twenty-first century will enable a more appropriate and substantive valuation of the research contributions of GWSS faculty, especially at the rank of Associate Professor.

3c. We also recommend that *the College and University provide summer salary to compensate GWSS faculty who take on leadership roles within and beyond the department*. While the Chair, Director of Undergraduate Education, and Director of Graduate Education currently receive such support, it is important that compensation be provided to those who redevelop core programs. For example, as and when the Certificate in Sexuality and Queer Studies grows, the program will require a significant investment of time and intellectual energy and the Director might then be supported accordingly.

4. Adjunct Faculty

Another matter for GWSS to consider is if and how to bring its large number of adjunct faculty more fully into the ongoing work of the department. Some vibrant intellectual communities already exist between GWSS and adjunct faculty. For example, WIRED connects GWSS faculty with a broader community of women of color scholars on campus while various Simpson Center collaborations and public scholarship projects including “The Modern Girl Around the World,” “Women Who Rock,” and “New Geographies of Feminist Art” have flourished.

4a. Integrating more adjunct faculty – including those from the professional schools and the sciences -- into the instructional and mentoring life of the department would have similar benefits for all involved, both students and teachers. Yet, institutional barriers to co-teaching and cross-listing courses exist, producing significant limits on the department. “Activity Based Budgeting (ABB)” shapes the ways in which departments govern and guard their resources and limits creative collaborations – with a disproportionate impact on small and interdisciplinary departments like GWSS. We encourage *College and University leadership to recognize such adverse consequences of ABB and introduce countermeasures – such as cross-departmental course development awards – to promote collaboration rather than competition between units*.

4b. In addition, we recommend that *more adjunct faculty be encouraged to cross-list courses, especially graduate courses, with GWSS*. The department could then provide a comprehensive list of regular and adjunct faculty graduate classes on a quarter-by-quarter basis that would be of value to GWSS graduate students as well as those across campus interested in feminist studies. Greater cross-listing by adjunct faculty would take some pressure off the GWSS faculty to cover too many areas of feminist scholarship in their teaching and would serve to integrate adjuncts from across campus more tightly into the GWSS community. Additional professional development and mentoring might be provided by adjunct faculty as well.

5. Advancement

Social justice and diversity are at the heart of GWSS's educational mission and the University's upcoming capital campaign. Thus, we encourage *staff in Advancement to find ways to better highlight GWSS's work as few other units on campus so fully embody the University's goals for the twenty-first century.*

Conclusion

GWSS is a gem. It is a small unit, but one with dynamic and substantial impacts far beyond its size would suggest. We commend all members of the department for the quality of their work and the deep commitment they bring to all that they do. However, there are currently insufficient resources to support their broad-reaching work. As we have outlined above, the department needs an infusion of both people and funding in order to continue all of the dynamic aspects of their work at this high level of quality. Specifically, GWSS needs support to sustain its work in mentoring graduate and undergraduate students, its excellent teaching, and civically-engaged scholarship. Without this infusion of support, GWSS runs the very real risk that faculty might be poached away from the UW and this would endanger all of the progress the department has made in the last decade.

Given the ongoing strengths of the GWSS department. We recommend that the next review of the department be conducted in ten years.



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Women's Studies Scholarship:

A STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION FI

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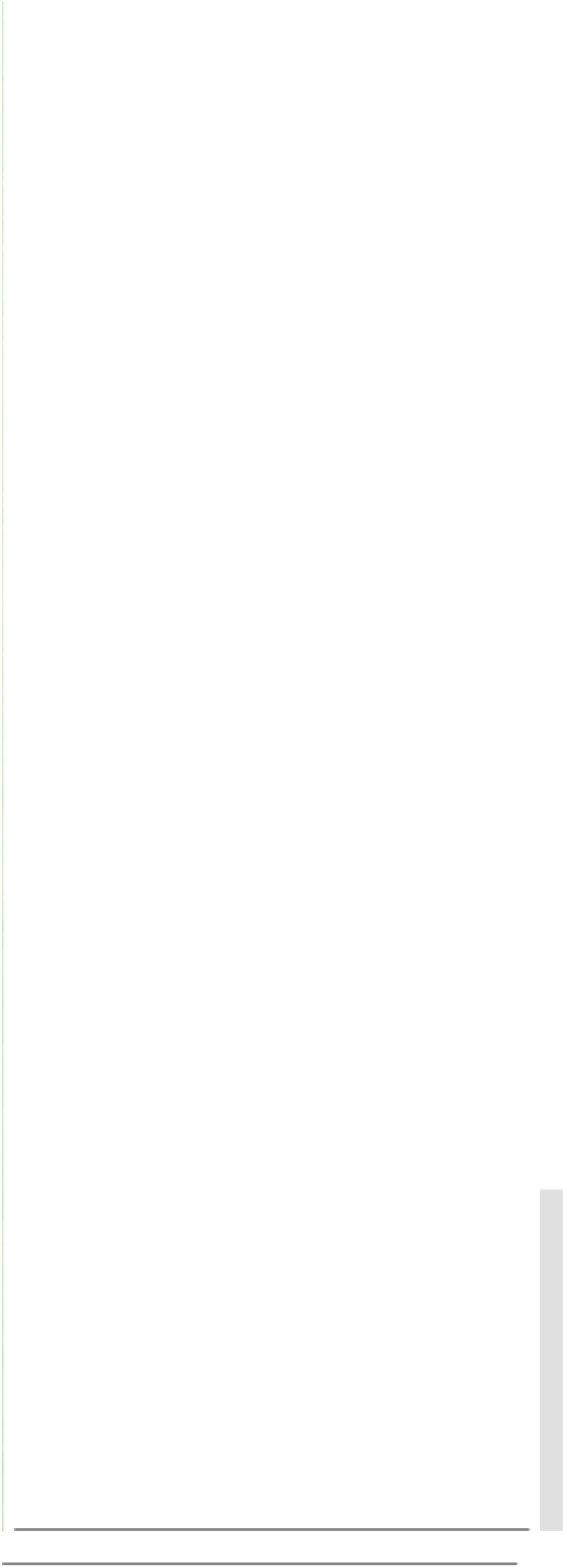
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Introduction and Statement of Purpose

This work builds on a 1999 National Women’s Studies Association publication, *Defining Women’s Studies Scholarship: A Statement of the National Women’s Studies Association Task Force on Faculty Roles and Rewards* (Pryse 1999). Much has changed in the field since 1999, including strong growth at the graduate level, with more than 16 doctoral programs and 40 master’s programs nationally. The doctoral programs not only hire, promote, and tenure faculty—while educating future faculty members—but they also produce much of the field’s newest scholarship. Therefore the time is right to take a new look at tenure and promotion in women’s and gender studies, particularly since practices for evaluating women’s and gender studies scholars may not fully reflect changes in the field nationally and locally. □

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This project also grows out of recent work by the National Women’s Studies Association on civic engagement. The resulting white paper, *Women’s Studies as Civic Engagement: Research and Recommendations*, pointed to the need for a new field statement on tenure and promotion in women’s and gender studies because effective civic engagement pedagogies, while frequently identified as a central goal in higher education, too often fail to count in the academic reward system (Orr 2011). Consequently we want to address the gap between stated institutional values and tenure and promotion practices.

Epistemological questions about “what counts” as a feminist issue or as feminist scholarship are central to women’s and gender

studies and therefore to its research, teaching, and service. In framing this paper the working group considered the question of “what counts” from at least two perspectives. First, definitions of the field of women’s and gender studies are by no means settled. In fact, ongoing debates are central to how women’s and gender studies scholars understand their scholarship, teaching, and service. Such debates are even reflected in the field’s name, which now includes “women’s and gender studies,” “women’s, gender, and sexuality studies,” “gender studies,” and “feminist studies.” In this paper, however, we will use the term “women’s and gender studies.”

Second, questions about “what counts” within the academic reward system are frequently out of step with stated institutional goals, whether in women’s and gender studies programs/departments or in the larger institution (e.g., stated values of “interdisciplinarity” or “transnational thinking” are not adequately reflected in the norms of “excellence” requisite for tenure and promotion). Moreover, too often terms like “rigor” and “excellence” mask narrowly conceived evaluative measures tied to systems of power that have and continue to exclude white women and people of color from the tenured or full professor ranks. As an American Association of University Women report notes, “[s]ome academics appear to be biased against women’s studies...discounting publications in women’s studies journals in their assessment of scholarly productivity” (2004).

At the same time, we recognize that faculty trained as interdisciplinary scholars in women’s and gender studies are typically being evaluated for tenure and promotion by scholars trained in traditional disciplines. These differences in training can yield different expectations around tenure and promotion that committees must take into account in order to insure fair and equitable standards for candidates. In addition, candidates who hold joint appointments often experience different and sometimes

contradictory standards for tenure and promotion. Institutions have a responsibility to set clear expectations for candidates with joint appointments.

Audience for This Document

This document is intended for use by:

- Tenure-track faculty in women's and gender studies departments
- Feminist scholars in related fields
- Faculty who serve on tenure and promotion committees and evaluate the work of women's and gender studies candidates, and faculty who serve as external reviewers
- Women's and gender studies department chairs, and
- College and university deans and vice presidents who serve as administrative levels of tenure review. We recognize that women's and gender studies faculty gain tenure and 5 promotion in a wide range of institutional settings—from community and liberal arts colleges to research universities. As such, this document offers a broad, field-level view of how to understand and assess research, teaching, and service in women's and gender studies that can be used in conjunction with specific institutional requirements. *Too often terms like “rigor” and “excellence” mask narrowly conceived evaluative measures tied to systems of power that have and continue to exclude white women and people of color from the tenured or full professor ranks. As an American Association*

of University Women report notes, “[s]ome academics appear to be biased against women’s studies...discounting publications in women’s studies journals in their assessment of scholarly productivity” (2004).

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What Is Women’s and Gender Studies? An Overview of the Field

Women’s and gender studies is both an interdisciplinary field in its own right and one that maintains connections to other interdisciplinary fields and to traditional disciplines.

Effectively evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion in women’s and gender studies requires that evaluators understand the field as heterogeneous and account for the consequent variability of women’s and gender studies scholarly forms, methods, and contributions. Approaches to knowledge production and transformation in women’s and gender studies are highly divergent. Thus in providing an overview of the field, our aim is to offer context and background for assessment, rather than a directive or mandate for the field. We outline below four key concepts central to women’s and gender studies scholarship, teaching, and service.

▣ **The Politics of Knowledge Production** ▣ **Social Justice** ▣
Intersectionality ▣ **Transnational Analysis**

THE POLITICS OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

As an intellectual project committed to challenging and

transforming dominant systems of power and privilege, women's and gender studies recognizes that knowledge is not neutral; it takes multiple forms and emerges from diverse locations. In drawing from, building on, questioning, and transforming conventional disciplinary approaches, women's and gender studies takes disciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and even antisciplinary forms. It develops new modes of inquiry and engagement, asks new questions, creates new knowledge, and imagines new futures while also unearthing forgotten or subjugated ways of knowing. Additionally, women's and gender studies examines how knowers, and systems of knowledge, are situated: reflexivity about the impact of social location, power asymmetries, and cultural contexts on the knowledge process are thus central issues. This epistemological, theoretical, and methodological enterprise includes critical awareness of inclusions and exclusions in knowledge production. With their focus on power asymmetries, women's and gender studies faculty can be perceived as disloyal or transgressive to institutional norms, perceptions that have the potential to negatively affect their prospects for tenure and promotion.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPERATIVE

Women's and gender studies has its roots in the civil rights, women's, and student movements of the 1960s and 70s. As such, it analyzes the social construction and material realities of power relations and traces the workings of systems of oppression and privilege, historically and contemporarily. The field studies cultures, movements, and strategies of resistance and with an eye toward realizing social justice; its practitioners conduct research and design curricula that address the persistence and tenacity of inequalities as well as their changing forms. Women's and gender studies faculty may collaborate with community partners and organizations—local, national, and global—in transformational action research and advocacy. Therefore, assessment measures

should account for collaboration in ways that do not devalue such profiles on the grounds that they signal less rigorous work or lower levels of “productivity.” Indeed, collaborative work is often more challenging than solitary scholarship, and this labor should be recognized in such assessments. This recognition requires developing innovative assessment techniques. Contributions to promoting social justice may take multiple forms, including participatory action research as well as artistic and creative expressions, such as film, performance, and digital media.

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INTERSECTIONALITY

Women’s and gender studies rests on the understanding that because systems of inequality, from the structural to the experiential, are interdependent (e.g., racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism), gender norms, social systems, and inequalities cannot be adequately analyzed, or transformed, in isolation. Intersectionality is a pivotal and original contribution of our field. Intersectionality is deployed in multiple ways as a theoretical perspective, mode of inquiry, methodological tool, and approach to social justice that renders visible how systems of inequality function in overlapping ways; intersectional approaches also seek to transform these matrices of power. Intersectionality has generated important scholarship, teaching, and engagement in women’s and gender studies and throughout the academy.

TRANSNATIONAL ANALYSIS

Transnational analysis in women’s and gender studies examines power, privilege, and differences within and across boundaries and through processes ranging from the intimate to the global. It considers the continuum of unequal global systems and their inter-relationships with structures, cultures, and psyches, including

colonialism, imperialism, neocolonialism, and neoliberalism. Analyses intervene in hierarchical paradigms and resist binaries of local/global or domestic/international. Note that the transnational is not conceived as indicating a location “over there” but rather is approached as an analytic that enables practitioners to comprehend the impact of global processes across spaces, over time, in distinct locales, and in the intimacy of homes and bodies. Transnational analysis decenters “the center” wherever it may be, and it explores the way that the center is always multiply constituted in and through its relationship to “the periphery.”

Assessing Women’s and Gender Studies Scholarship, Teaching, and Service

1.

Widenthescope. Assessment is itself a system of power in higher education, one that too often results in maintaining the status quo, both in terms of institutional demographics and in terms of disciplinary logics. Widening the scope of what “counts” as models of research, teaching, and service, and accounting for a more expansive sense of where such work should take place and how, is therefore often needed. A key question is, “do our criteria and measures match up with our stated goals and expectations?”

- Account for plural forms of research, teaching, and service that occur in multiple locations, and not just the traditional forms.
- Recognize that, given the field’s overtly political approach to knowledge and power, women’s and gender studies scholars often face resistance in the classroom, in assessment

of their research, and in perceptions of their service contributions. For example, teaching evaluations may reflect students' discomfort with challenges to their preexisting modes of thinking about the world around them, especially if the candidate teaches required courses. Consider alternative evaluations of teaching.

- Women's and gender studies candidates are often busy with the work of institution- building: large women's and gender studies departments with multiple tenure lines and fully-fledged degree programs, from the undergraduate to the doctorate, are not the norm nationwide. Despite their importance for the field and for local institutions, faculty contributions to institutionalizing women's and gender studies are often undervalued when it comes time for promotion and tenure review, both for full-time women's and gender studies faculty and all the more so for jointly-appointed and affiliated faculty.

- Recognizing divergent and diverse contributions should not be approached as a “watering down” of rigor or as “making exceptions to excellence”—this kind of devaluation is not only divisive but often reinforces the very norms and inequities that an institution seeks to change. *A key question is, “do our criteria and measures match up with our stated goals and expectations?”*

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2. Account for institutional and departmental obstacles and inequities.

- Institutionalized obstacles, such as pay inequities, asymmetrical

workloads, and gendered-racialized service expectations (i.e., who does the institutional ‘housekeeping’ or ‘reproductive labor,’ that is, the often unrewarded work required to sustain people and institutions) should also be accounted for in evaluation of a candidate’s contributions. For example, as John W. Curtis notes in an American Association of University Professors report, *Persistent Inequality: Gender and Academic Employment*: “The culmination of a faculty career, full professor status, remains an elusive goal for women....At only 28 percent of all full professor appointments, women are still outnumbered more than two to one at the most senior rank” (2011). Citing Misra et al (2011), Curtis also documents that “disproportionate time spent in teaching and service was a significant obstacle for women associate professors to attaining full professor rank.”

- Women’s and gender studies was established, in part, to transgress institutional norms in higher education, but as the field has become institutionalized over time it has developed its own norms that often mirror those of the broader institution. In order to remain true to its founding principles,

women’s and gender studies must continually engage in self-reflexivity.

- Women’s and gender studies has long understood the false divides among the traditional categories of scholarship, teaching, and service. However, assessment measures for promotion and tenure often approach these as separate activities. This continuum needs to be more adequately accounted for in assessing candidates. For example, teaching and community engagement may

be intertwined and also generate new ways of approaching scholarship.

- Moreover, the discipline recognizes that activism with women and other groups inside and outside of academic institutions

produces knowledge and contributes to the development of women's and gender studies scholarship. However, assessment measures for tenure and promotion tend to be individualist in nature, meaning that collaborative research, teaching, and service engagement may be undervalued.

“The culmination of a faculty career, full professor status, remains an elusive goal for women....At only 28 percent of all full professor appointments, women are still outnumbered more than two to one at the most senior rank” (Curtis 2011).

3. Find ways to recognize and value a wider range of contributions in various forms. Many in higher education recognize that the traditional scholarly monograph no longer should maintain its central place in tenure and promotion consideration (Ahlberg, 2010). Since feminist scholarly work takes many forms, we want to echo that view, and suggest the following characteristics of women's and gender studies scholarship:

- Scholarship may embrace multiple genres, languages, and collaborations within and beyond the academy and can include forms such as artistic expression, public performance, lab-based teamwork, collaborative editorial work, and archival research.
- In addition to traditional publishing outlets such as academic presses and journals, scholarship may be produced in such forums as online journals, blogs, op-eds, policy reports, peer-reviewed publications, performances, community action projects, grant applications, consulting, lectures, conference presentations, curriculum transformation projects, field-defining statements, social

media, and alliance work.

- Committees should consider scholarly impact reflected in an editor's solicitation of a candidate's work, invited conference sessions, or inclusion of a scholar's work on syllabi, for example. Looking ahead, we hope that these guidelines and recommendations serve a twofold purpose. First, we expect them to aid women's and gender studies candidates for tenure and promotion. Perhaps more important, we expect this document to contribute to ongoing conversations and calls for change in institutional tenure and promotion practices. *We expect this document to contribute to ongoing conversations and calls for change in institutional tenure and promotion practices.*

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Recommendations for the Department, Candidates, and External Evaluators

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT

Department chairs should provide the following to candidates for tenure and promotion:

- Explanation about local practices
- Clear criteria and expectations for candidates
- Regular evaluation (annually, at a minimum)

□ Clear articulation of procedures, processes, and culture at your institution in order to guide candidates in the tenure and promotion process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

CANDIDATES Individual candidates for tenure and promotion should take the following steps:

□ Ask questions about and understand local practices and how they apply to your career

□ Be proactive with regard to dates and deadlines

□ Take responsibility for creating your support systems

□ Attend tenure and promotion workshops offered on your campus

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

Letter writers should keep the following guidelines in mind when evaluating women's and gender studies candidates for tenure and promotion:

□ Construct your evaluation in terms of criteria provided by the candidate's institution and not your own

□ When useful apply insights from your own discipline but do not rely on them as the primary standards for evaluating the candidate

□ Take time to write a thorough, thoughtful assessment of the candidate and be sure to capture what is original or significant in the candidate's research and teaching

□ Place the candidate's work in the broader field of women's and gender studies



Women's Studies Scholarship:

A STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION FI
GROUP

ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO TENURE AND PROMOTION IN WOMEN'S .

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Administrator's Guide to Tenure and

Promotion Reviews in Women's and Gender Studies

Women's and gender studies is a relatively young field; the early programs were established in the 1970s. The field has matured significantly in the past fifteen years, marked particularly by the growth of graduate programs. There are now 16 doctoral programs and 40 master's programs offered in the U.S. Because the field is interdisciplinary, as well as young and growing, evaluation of candidates for tenure and promotion in women's and gender studies entails particular complexities. For example, current junior faculty in women's and gender studies are now likely to have earned their doctorates in this interdisciplinary field, unlike their senior colleagues, most of whom have earned doctorates in disciplines. Committees and administrators must take into account these differing expectations, to ensure fair and equitable standards for candidates. This statement is intended to provide a broad, field-level guide, for administrators—deans and provosts—who are responsible for promotion reviews.

WHAT IS WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES?

Women's and gender studies is fundamentally about the study of power and societal inequalities. The intellectual scope of the field includes a focus on themes such as women's lives, queer theories, transgender theories and identities, feminisms of women of color, border studies, transnational feminisms: all are explored with a variety of methodologies and inter/ disciplinary perspectives. Four concepts are central to women's and gender studies scholarship, teaching, and service.

Women's and gender studies is fundamentally about the study of power and societal inequalities.



ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEWS IN WOMEN'S
AND GENDER STUDIES

Politics of Knowledge Production: Women's and gender studies recognizes that knowledge is not neutral. In questioning and transforming conventional disciplinary approaches, women's and gender studies takes disciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, forms. It develops new modes of inquiry and engagement, asks new questions, creates new knowledge. Women's and gender studies examines how knowers and systems of knowledge are situated: reflexivity about the impact of social location, power asymmetries, and cultural contexts on the knowledge process are central to the field. Critical awareness of inclusions and exclusions in knowledge production is foundational.

Intersectionality: The multiple systems of inequality, organized around gender, race, socioeconomic position, heterosexism, and other dimensions of inequality, are fundamentally interdependent. Recognition of this interdependence among systems of inequality and power renders visible how systems of inequality function, and enables transformation of these matrices of power.

Transnational Analysis: Transnational analysis in women's and gender studies considers the continuum of unequal global systems and their impact on structures, cultures, and individuals, resisting binaries such as local/global or U.S./international. "Transnational" is an analytic that enables comprehension of the impact of global processes both across spaces and in distinct locales. This destabilizes "centers" and explores how centers are always multiply constituted through relationships to "peripheries."

Social Justice: Women's and gender studies, with its roots in the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, analyzes the social construction and material realities of power and traces the workings of systems of oppression and privilege. The field studies the persistence and tenacity of inequalities, as well as strategies of resistance. With the goal always of furthering social justice,

women's and gender studies faculty often collaborate with community partners— local, national, and global—in transformational action research.

As an intellectual project committed to challenging and transforming dominant systems of power and privilege, women's and gender studies recognizes that knowledge is not neutral; it takes multiple forms and emerges from diverse locations.

ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEWS IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

ASSESSING WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP, TEACHING, AND SERVICE

Broaden the scope

- Account for plural forms of research, teaching, and service that occur in multiple locations.
- Recognize that collaborative work is often more challenging than solitary scholarly production.
- Recognize the multiple forms of scholarship, from traditional written products to artistic and creative expressions such as film, performance, digital media, collaborative editorial work, archival research. Increasingly, scholarship is produced in online journals, blogs, op-eds, policy reports, social media, community action projects. This expansion of domains of scholarship is not specific to women's and gender studies, but is central to the field.
- Recognize that many women's and gender studies faculty are also involved in institution-building: building alliances with other departments, enlisting affiliated faculty, proposing new courses and curricula, managing cross-listed courses, generating fuller comprehension of the field among key institutional stakeholders. This needs to be included in promotion reviews.

Recognize and account for institutional and departmental obstacles and inequities

- Institutional obstacles such as pay inequities, asymmetrical workloads, and service expectations that are often gendered and racialized should be explicitly accounted for in evaluating candidates. Disproportionate amount of time spent in teaching and service has been identified as a significant obstacle for the promotion from Associate to Full Professor, among women faculty.

- One important category of such obstacles is the biases students may bring to their evaluation of their instructors. Women's and gender studies scholars often face resistance in the classroom; teaching evaluations may reflect students' discomfort with challenges to their thinking. Multiple forms of evaluation, including peer evaluations and classroom observations, help to put student resistance in context.

- Scholarship, teaching, and service have traditionally been viewed as distinct. In recent years connections among these three arenas are more fully recognized. Women's and gender studies faculty are particularly likely to work across these arenas, which should be viewed as overlapping and mutually constructive.

- Collaborations with communities and groups outside of academic institutions are viewed as producing knowledge and contributing to the development of women's and gender studies scholarship. These collaborations need to be recognized as the scholarship they are. *Recognize that*

many women's and gender studies faculty are also involved in institution-building.

ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO TENURE AND PROMOTION REVIEWS IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

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Effectively evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion in women's and gender studies requires that evaluators understand the field as heterogeneous

and account for the consequent variability of women's and gender studies scholarly forms, methods, and contributions.

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