

**UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY FORM**

Department/Program: **Women's and Gender Studies Program**

Director: **Sheila Hassell Hughes, Ph.D.**

Date: **June 2007**

OUTCOMES/MEASURES UTILIZED	RESULTS
<p><b>Women's and Gender Studies majors will be able to explain:</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 1</b> Specific ways in which women's and gender studies research has contributed to different academic disciplines.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> All WGS majors will complete courses on women and/or gender representing four distribution areas (Arts &amp; Literature; History; Philosophy &amp; Religious Studies; and Social Sciences). The Program Director will conduct an analysis of syllabi and transcripts for graduates to determine that all WGS majors achieve this outcome.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> All graduating WGS majors will submit a portfolio of work demonstrating this outcome. Portfolios will include a single sample of written work from one course in each distribution area as well as one sample from each of the following: WST 150, 310, and 490. The Program Director and/or a committee of affiliated WGS faculty will review the portfolios. Evaluation will show that 90% of the portfolios submitted demonstrate achievement of this outcome.</p> <p><b>Measure 3</b> 90% of WGS graduates will agree or strongly agree, in a print survey, that their WGS courses have exposed them to women's and gender studies research in different academic disciplines.</p>	<p>Transcripts and syllabi indicate that all 9 WGS majors to graduate in May 2007 achieved this outcome.</p> <p>Eight out of the 9 graduating majors submitted portfolios. All 8 portfolios (100%) demonstrated achievement of this outcome, although most included samples from only three of the four distribution areas, in addition to core WST course samples.</p> <p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b> How issues related to gender, race and class are better understood by crossing disciplinary boundaries.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> All WGS majors will pass the core interdisciplinary courses required: WST 150, WST 310, WST 390, and WST 490.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> In evaluation of graduating majors' portfolios, 80% of the portfolios will demonstrate interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary research or analysis relevant to gender, race, and/or class in one or more of the included samples.</p> <p><b>Measure 3</b> 90% of graduating majors responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree that their WGS courses have shown them how issues related to gender, race, and class are better understood by crossing disciplinary boundaries.</p>	<p>All graduating majors completed the required interdisciplinary courses or equivalents. One student fulfilled the 310 requirement through an independent study (WST 480) on the subject with the 310 instructor.</p> <p>Eight out of 8 (100%) of graduates' portfolios demonstrated this outcome.</p> <p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p>

OUTCOMES/MEASURES UTILIZED	RESULTS
<p><b>Women's and Gender Studies majors will be able to explain:</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 3</b> How the construction of gender affects the lives of women and men across cultures.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> The Director will determine that the syllabi for courses approved for the "global and multicultural" distribution requirement for the WGS major reflect his outcome by treating gender issues in multiple cultures or by focusing on non-US contexts or non-dominant cultures within the U.S.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> At least 80% of graduates responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree that they understand how the construction of gender affects the lives of women and men in multiple cultures.</p> <p><b>Measure 3</b> Evaluation of graduates' portfolios will show that at least 60% of graduates achieved this outcome in at least one written sample.</p>	<p>Only one section of one course approved for the global and multicultural requirement was offered in 2006-07. The syllabus for this course (ENG 335: Modern Black Literature), which both includes a high percentage of Black women writers and poses questions about gender in African American literature, reflects this outcome.</p> <p>Eight out of 9 graduates (89%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p> <p>Five out of 8 portfolios (62.5%) clearly demonstrated achievement of this outcome.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 4</b> Historical differences and/or similarities with regard to gender politics in one or more societies.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> At least 80% of graduates responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree that they understand historical differences and/or similarities with regard to gender politics in one or more societies.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> The Director will evaluate transcripts of WGS major graduates to ensure that 100% have completed at least one approved history course on women or gender.</p>	<p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p> <p>All graduating majors completed at least one WGS-approved history course.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 5</b> How their own social position and socialization have conditioned the way they view issues related to difference (gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.)</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> Review of student portfolios will demonstrate self-reflection on students' own social position and/or socialization with regards to gender in one or more papers in at least 60% of portfolios.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> Eighty percent of graduates responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree that the WGS program has helped them to understand how their own social position and socialization have contributed to the way they view issues related to human differences.</p>	<p>Six out of 8 portfolios (75%) demonstrated this sort of self-reflection.</p> <p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p>

OUTCOMES/MEASURES UTILIZED	RESULTS
<p><b>Women's and Gender Studies majors will be able to explain:</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 6</b> How the social construction of difference (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.) contributes to forms of social inequality.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> At least 80% of graduates responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree that their WGS courses have helped them understand this relationship.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> Review of graduate portfolios will reveal that at least 80% of majors have produced written work demonstrating this relationship.</p> <p><b>Measure 3</b> The Director will review syllabi and conduct an evaluation of transcripts every five years to determine that 50% of WGS majors have taken at least two distribution area courses that achieve this outcome.</p>	<p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p> <p>One hundred percent (8 out of 8) portfolios included work demonstrating this relationship.</p> <p>This evaluation should be conducted in 2010, five years after the implementation of the major (in Fall 2004) and the graduation of our first major (in May 2005).</p>
<p><b>Outcome 7</b> Ways in which individuals and groups have challenged sexism and other, related forms of oppression (such as racism) and worked to achieve more equality.</p> <p><b>Measure 1</b> The Director will review syllabi and conduct an evaluation of transcripts every five years to determine that 50% of WGS majors have taken at least two distribution area courses that achieve this outcome.</p> <p><b>Measure 2</b> Eighty percent of graduates responding to a print survey will agree or strongly agree with the statement, "The WGS Program has helped me to understand the ways in which individuals and groups have challenged sexism and other, related forms of oppression, and worked to achieve more equality."</p>	<p>This evaluation should be conducted in 2010, five years after the implementation of the major (in Fall 2004) and the graduation of our first major (in May 2005).</p> <p>Nine out of 9 graduates (100%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.</p>

**Brief Analysis:** In general, this year's assessment – which is the first to employ our new assessment plan focusing on the new WGS major—shows a very high degree of achievement, with results meeting or, in most cases, exceeding our stated objectives in terms of the various measures applied. Nevertheless, in review of syllabi and portfolios, a couple of points of concern were raised. First, the fact that only one course offered over the academic year fulfilled the global and multicultural requirement (only four regular offerings are approved for this category – including one in English and three in History) highlights the need to develop and offer more courses across the disciplines that treat gender issues in multiple cultures or focus on women or gender in non-US contexts or non-dominant cultures within the U.S. This priority dovetails with various values and goals across the institution, but staffing and curricular issues, among other things, have prevented departments from advancing in this area. As anticipated, demonstration of a cross-cultural understanding of gender in student portfolios was lower than results for any other outcome measured. Second, the team of portfolio reviewers (which included the Program Director and two other senior faculty members of the WGS Committee, one of whom is also a former WGS Program Director) raised some concerns with regard to the quality and content of the student portfolios. Most substantively, the reviewers felt that little of the written work reflected truly interdisciplinary analysis or research. While we interpreted Outcome 2 somewhat broadly for purposes of assessment, the consensus was that we would like to see more thoroughly interdisciplinary analysis and research. This is something we can work to promote especially in WST 310 and 490, but we could also look for ways to encourage assignments inviting such work in courses offered across the disciplines. In addition to the outcomes and measures identified by the assessment plan, I conducted exit interviews with all of the graduating majors.

Student responses in these interviews indicate a high level of satisfaction with the program, both academically and personally. Students unanimously declared that the program had met or exceeded their expectations, that they had undergone some form of transformation in their modes of perception and/or thinking as a result, that they appreciated the ability to draw connections across courses, and that their service learning experience had enhanced their major.

The most common area in which students indicated they'd like to see improvement was in curricular sequencing and connection. Due to late declaration (most majors declare in their junior or senior year) and challenges in scheduling (core WST courses are currently offered just once a year), all of the graduates took the required introductory course (WST 150) in their junior or senior year—in some cases after they took the theory and methodology course (310), for which it is normally a prerequisite. (This was allowed because they had taken so many other WGS-approved courses.) One student suggested offering majors the option either of "testing out" of WST 150 or taking an upper-level alternative. Another student indicated she would like to see more focus on womanism and black women's experience across the curriculum. Two graduates said they wanted more emphasis on activism in their courses – with group projects focused on the UD or Dayton communities. One of these suggested building an activism component into the senior seminar or offering a 1-credit feminist activism course. These comments highlight the difference between service learning (even in gender-justice seeking organizations) and grassroots feminist activism—a tension with which we grappled in designing the core curriculum. A couple of other students felt there was too much repetition of particular topics (e.g. pornography) within their WGS courses across the disciplines, and some wanted more courses in the area of gender studies. Several students indicated they had hoped to find more explicit connections between WST 310 and WST 490.

#### **Actions Taken:**

Two initiatives designed to promote scholarship and writing in the field which were launched last year continued in 2006-07: The Joyce Durham Essay Contest in Women's and Gender Studies and The Colloquium for Research on Women and Gender (CRWG). Although the Durham contest drew only a small number of submissions, the judges were able to identify a winner and award an honorable mention. The WGS Committee began work in the spring term on revising the essay contest process and guidelines in order to solicit more strong submissions in future. The CRWG met six times over the course of the year, featuring the research of six faculty from five different departments. Average attendance at the CRWG (which included a catered bag lunch this year) was up substantially (about 60%) from the first year. In terms of curriculum, WST 310 was offered for the second time this year and enrollment increased substantially (from 7 to 18). This was the first year in which we offered WST 390 (service learning) as an attachment to 310, and 6 majors took advantage of this opportunity. WST 490, the senior seminar, was offered for the first time in the winter term, enrolling 10 students, 9 of whom were WGS majors.

We continued to work with students in the Women's Leadership House, supporting a series of dinner discussions and an open house in their residence on College Park.

The WGS Committee met twice each semester, focusing on revising the assessment plan and the promotion and processes for the essay contest, as well as on fundraising strategies. We continued our tradition of collaborating with other programs and offices on a number of speakers and events, including Asra Nomani, Jane Caputi, and Michael Kimmel. We also contributed to a community forum on women survivors of childhood sexual abuse which was initiated by several community partners, including Womanline. We worked with the new student group AWE, supporting their plans for Women's Week and the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Women's Advocacy Dinner, as well as various other Women's History Month events. We continued to send regular e-mail updates to faculty and students about events and opportunities related to the program, and we added a compiled e-mail update called "WOW: What's On for Women," which was sent out twice in the winter term. After having produced our first version of a new print newsletter, called "Making Waves," last August, we produced a second version, with the assistance of a WGS-minor student editor, at the end of the school year. These newsletters, and copies of the program brochure we had printed last summer, were distributed in a number of venues throughout the year.

One goal for our part in the cluster workshop remains the development of more conversations and new courses on women in different cultures and in international contexts. Last year, the Women & Culture Cluster faculty discussed Azar Nafisi's book, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, with the Cross-Cultural Cluster faculty at the Spring Workshop. This year we again met with CC faculty, this time to discuss Andrea Smith's book, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*.

Dr. Hughes work on promotion and recruitment was less intensive this year, due to her fall sabbatical. Instead, however, she was able to focus new energies on internationalizing the program. Thanks to a few days in France in October, she was able to put together a successful summer study-abroad proposal focused on race and gender in Paris for 2008. In May, she participated in a women's studies faculty tour of Morocco, and she plans to explore further the possibility of a women's studies abroad program there.

In terms of students, we remained steady at 15 majors this year and increased our minors slightly to a new all-time high of 50. Our affiliated faculty also increased somewhat to a total of 49. In May we graduated our first group of majors (a lone major graduated in 2006), a class of 9 double-majors.

#### **Resources Utilized:**

The Women's and Gender Studies budget was utilized for basic operations in the office and, in concert with our partners across campus, to provide programming on women's, gender, and diversity issues, to support the activities of the Women's Leadership House, and to fund faculty and student travel (to the NWSA, ESA, and CWIL conferences as well as to France and Morocco). At our prompting, The Women's Center received a used digital projector from the College, which will be useful to faculty teaching WST courses in the workroom and to those who wish to use Powerpoint for the CRWG. The Center remains a great ally and resource, providing co-sponsorship in the form of funds and administrative support for many joint ventures. Co-funding was obtained from the Women's Center and a number of other offices

and departments in support of all of the speakers and events outlined above. In addition, the Women's Center, Associate Dean Benson, and the Philosophy Department once again contributed funds for a modest stipend for the faculty advisor to the Women's Leadership House, and Associate Dean Benson also provided a small stipend for faculty supervising WST 390 service learning placements. Support for the CRWG luncheons was provided by Associate Dean Polzella with funds remaining from his endowed chair budget. The program budget will also be used to pay the first of two year-end installments on a new computer for the administrative assistant's office. We tapped our designated fund in order to hire three additional students on short-term contracts over the course of the year to work on promotional materials (a newsletter, brochure, and web page) and to pay a part of the printing costs for these materials.