

Program Planning Summary

Designation of New Program: Bachelor of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies

Number of credit hours in proposed major: 36

Proposed date of implementation: Fall 2008

Justification of need:

Women's and Gender Studies at the College of Charleston is a vibrant, growing program. We are the largest interdisciplinary program at the College in terms of enrollments, faculty involvement, and number of minors, and we maintain a strong connection to the Charleston community. We are one of over 700 programs nationally, and national trends as well as student interest at the College of Charleston suggest that the time is right for a Women's and Gender Studies major. The primary purpose of the B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies is to enable undergraduates to focus their energies on Women's and Gender Studies with the degree of concentration necessary to pursue the intellectual, personal, and civic opportunities offered by this significant and rapidly growing field of study.

Our classes and our minor are popular. Women's Studies classes have been offered at the College of Charleston since 1987, and the minor has been in existence since 1989. Our program has grown steadily and impressively in the last 17 years. Growth in recent years has been accelerated: during the 2005-2006 year we saw a 14.5% increase in enrollments over the previous year, and we have had a roughly 20% annual rate of increase in the number of minors over the last three years. A total of 1784 students enrolled in Women's and Gender Studies courses (including crosslisted courses) during the 2005-2006 year. Our introductory course is particularly popular; we now regularly offer six sections per semester, which represents a 41% increase in enrollments.

During the spring semester 2006, we surveyed current Women's and Gender Studies minors as well as students enrolled in the Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies to assess their interest in a Women's and Gender Studies major. 18 out of 171 WMST 200 students surveyed said that they would be interested in majoring in Women's and Gender Studies (11%). 19 out of 20 current minors surveyed said they were interested in majoring or double majoring in Women's and Gender Studies. Graduating senior minors were asked if they would have been interested in majoring in Women's and Gender Studies had the major been available; of the eight who responded, their answers were

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| 3 | Absolutely Yes |
| 2 | Very Likely |
| 2 | Somewhat Likely |
| 1 | Not Sure |

Nationwide, more than 200 schools offer majors in Women's Studies or Women's and Gender Studies, including many of our peer and aspirational peer institutions. Liberal arts colleges offering a major in Women's Studies include Amherst, Guilford, Hamilton, Kenyon, Macalester, Oberlin, Smith, Wellesley, and William and Mary. Other schools with a major include Emory, Duke, Georgetown, Goucher, Rice, Tulane, Vanderbilt, the University of North

Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Virginia. Great universities offer majors in Women's and Gender Studies; because we are a great university, it is time for us to offer this major.

As is the case with many programs in recent years, we have changed our name from Women's Studies to Women's and Gender Studies. Our new name more accurately reflects the broad-based approach we take in our classes and our research; we are concerned not only with what it means to be a woman in the world but what it means to be a man, and our classes address masculinity as well as femininity and how these categories intersect with race, class, sexual identity, and ethnicity. (Other schools which have programs in Women's and Gender Studies or Gender Studies include Furman, Rice, Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, Elon, Vanderbilt, Wake Forest, and the University of Virginia.)

Like other degree programs in the liberal arts, Women's and Gender Studies will prepare students for a wide range of careers by developing skills of analysis and expression while fostering an understanding of fundamental dynamics in contemporary society. We have already placed former students who minored in WGS in such agencies and organizations as People Against Rape and Safe Moves in Charleston and EMILY's List in Washington, D.C.

Anticipated program demand and productivity:

The number of Women's and Gender Studies minors has doubled over the past four years. At the end of the 2005-2006 academic year, 57 students were Women's and Gender Studies minors, the largest number ever. Several initiatives are underway that will increase student involvement. In fall 2006 the College's Office for the Academic Experience began sponsoring a WGS Living-Learning Community, enrolling 20 first-year students in linked courses focused on Women's and Gender Studies; since all of these students voluntarily selected this community, we assume that several will become Women's and Gender Studies minors (and perhaps majors). In addition, beginning in fall 2007, seven scholarships will be specifically designated for WGS students. Because of these trends and initiatives, we anticipate 20 students becoming majors in the first year, with a growth of 10% annually.

We have vigorous and sustained faculty involvement: 42 faculty members from departments throughout the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs, the School of Education, and the School of Business and Economics, and the School of the Arts regularly teach courses that count toward the Women's and Gender Studies minor (and would count toward the major). In the last academic year, four new faculty members whose research and teaching emphasize women and/or gender issues were hired in the departments of History, Communication, Classics, and Management and Entrepreneurship. Ten faculty members are currently in the rotation to teach the Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, and we have a number of qualified adjunct instructors. We have not had difficulty staffing our courses in the past, and now that we have a director who teaches one or two WGST courses per semester, we should not have difficulty covering our curricular needs.

Assessment of extent to which the proposed program duplicates existing programs in the state:

This would be the second interdisciplinary studies major at the College (we offer an interdisciplinary studies major in Urban Studies and an area studies major, Latin American and Caribbean Studies), although such majors are quite common at our peer and aspirational peer institutions. Only one South Carolina university currently offers a Women’s Studies major, the University of South Carolina (Furman offers a concentration in Women’s and Gender Studies). The USC program is substantially larger than ours, offering a minor, major, and master’s certificate in Women’s Studies. The program director at USC is aware of our efforts and has been very supportive.

Relationship of the proposed program to other institutions via inter-institutional cooperation:

There will be no direct relationship initially between the major in Women’s and Gender Studies and programs at other institutions, as no other institution in the Charleston region has a Women’s and Gender Studies Program. Our program does belong to regional and national organizations, however, including the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association and the National Women’s Studies Association.

New Annual Expenses

Every semester an average of twenty-three courses are taught in departments across the College that count for the Women’s and Gender Studies minor (and will also count for the major). The number of new courses that will be required for the major will be small (two or three courses), which will fit within the director’s annual teaching load of four courses. For these reasons, we will not require any additional faculty lines to support the Women’s and Gender Studies major.

The College of Charleston already supports the Women’s and Gender Studies Program by providing a \$5000 annual operating budget and funding for a student worker for 10 hours per week. We will need additional student worker assistance, an increased library budget, and additional operating budget for printing and events.

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| Student assistant 10hrs x 8.00 x 50 | 4000. |
| Library and video budget | 500. |
| Printing—brochures, magazine | 1000. |
| Speakers, field trips, sponsored events | 1000. |
| NEW ANNUAL TOTAL (estimate) | 6500. |
| IMPLEMENTATION COST (estimate) | \$6500. |