

*Women's & Gender
Studies
Assessment
Processes*

Work in Progress

Mission Statement

The Women's and Gender Studies Program represents an ***interdisciplinary*** approach to feminist and LGBTQ scholarship, the purpose of which is to ***re-examine*** from feminist perspectives ***traditional bodies of knowledge*** taught in the university and distributed through society at large.

In Women's and Gender Studies we are concerned with the political and historical nature of the production of knowledge. The curriculum emphasizes rigorous critical thinking, imagination, and creativity, and assists both students and faculty to ***develop knowledge from feminist, LGBTQ, anti-racist, multicultural, and global perspectives.***

WGS Does Assessment!

- We have been assessing our program since about 2006.
- Triggered by creation of the new MAJOR in WGS in 2001.
- Smaller program.
- Very committed faculty!
- Challenge: cross-listed courses for electives

What we do...

- Portfolio System
- Majors and Minors receive assessment-related materials when they declare!
- Portfolios constructed during required capstone course: WGS 350 Seminar in WGS (every spring)
- Students collect several papers that represent learning
- Students write reflective essays about each paper and their overall learning in WGS
- Students present at WGS Symposium

What we do (2) ...

- WGS faculty attend the Symposium and use our rubric to assess the student presentations
- Each student portfolio is read by two faculty members who volunteer to be part of our Assessment Committee. (9-11 volunteers)
- Assessment Committee members use our rubric to evaluate the portfolio as a whole.

W G S R u b r i c

Women's Studies Major Assessment Rubric for the Portfolio

5	Outstanding	Outstandingly addresses goal/objective
4	Strong	Effectively addresses goal/objective
3	Adequate	Meets goal/objective
2	Limited	Goal/objective addressed inadequately
1	Unsatisfactory	Goal/objective not addressed
0	Not Applicable	

Directions assessing the Portfolio: Students must receive a minimum of 3 in all applicable categories with sufficient evidence noted in the documentation area for each goal.

Women's Studies Major Goals and Objectives

5 4 3 2 1 0

	5	4	3	2	1	0
<p>A. Understand implications and applications of feminist theories.</p> <p>1) Read and understand feminist theory 2) Compare different theories 3) Create own feminist perspective <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>B. Recognize intersections of inequality, power and oppression and apply them to own and others' lives.</p> <p>1) Understand how feminist theory about inequality, power and oppression is related to personal experiences 2) Understand how inequality, power and oppression affect women's lives 3) Understand the impact and relationship of race, class, sexuality, age, ability and other dimensions of inequality. <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>C. Analyze the relationships between and among various social institutions in the context of inequality, power and oppression.</p> <p>1) Reflect on women's experiences in social institutions, such as education, employment, health care, and the criminal justice system 2) Analyze the relationship between past feminist struggles and social change <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>D. Evaluate women's changing status, using the intersections of race, class, age, ability, sexuality, and other dimensions of inequality.</p> <p>1) Demonstrate familiarity with substantive information about women's diverse experiences 2) Compare and contrast women's changing status historically using the intersections of race, class, age, ability, sexuality, and other dimensions of inequality. <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>E. Development of thinking and writing skills</p> <p>1) Compare and contrast concepts and ideas 2) Conceptualize different understandings of feminisms 3) Craft a theoretical perspective <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>F. Development of research skills by distinguishing the relative weight and value of library sources</p> <p><i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						
<p>G. Development of clear and effective writing in the discipline</p> <p>1) Understand audiences & 2) Makes clear argument 3) Develops conclusions and implications 4) Mechanics & 5) Appropriate academic style (APA, Chicago, etc.) <i>Where in the documentation is this present:</i></p>						

What we do (3)...

- WGS office staff calculate the mean scores on each goal/learning outcome on our rubric
- The Assessment Committee meets each summer to review the results
- **FEEDBACK LOOP:** Based on our review, we decide on adjustments to our program, new approaches to help our students learn what we hope they gain from the program

Changes from Assessment Feedback

- ✓ We decided to use the Seminar for more **intentional and structured reflection** on what students have learned.
- ✓ More support and assistance with constructing the portfolio, i.e. **reflecting on their learning**
- ✓ Portfolio process AND Symposium presentation became the vehicles for **integration of learning**

- ✓ Asked faculty to explicitly point out to students the connections between their assignments and the WGS Learning Goals and Outcomes.
- ✓ Developed common assignments for courses
- ✓ Working on ways to integrate more historical knowledge into the program.
- ✓ Working on ways to enhance students' skills of reflection.

Challenges & Possibilities

- Students don't take courses in developmental order
- More minors than majors – they come with very diverse curriculum experiences
- Possibility of sharing core courses with other programs
- Changing requirements

WGS Program Goals

WGS (Inter)Disciplinary Knowledge

- A. Understand implications and applications of feminist theories.
- B. Recognize intersections of inequality, power and oppression and apply them to own and others' lives.
- C. Analyze the relationships between and among various social institutions in the context of inequality, power and oppression.
- D. Evaluate women's changing status, using the intersections of race, class, age, ability, sexuality, gender identity and other dimensions of inequality.

Broader Skills

- E. Development of clear and effective writing in the discipline
- F. Development of thinking and writing skills
- G. Development of discussion skills
- H. Development of presentation skills
- I. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish the value of different research sources

Example 1

BACCALAUREATE GOAL 1.3
Written and oral
communication proficiency

WGS Program Goals
Development of
presentation skills

Assessed at the Symposium

- 1) Adapt verbal messages to a specific audience
- 2) Use multiple strategies with audiences

Example 2

BACCALAUREATE GOAL 2.4

Use of classroom knowledge to identify and engage big questions, as well as the practical issues of everyday life

WGS Goal C. Evaluate women's changing status, using the intersections of race, class, age, ability, sexuality, and other dimensions of inequality.

- 1) Demonstrate familiarity with substantive information about women's diverse experiences
- 2) Compare and contrast women's changing status historically using the intersections of race, class, age, ability, sexuality, and other dimensions of inequality.

