

Campus Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Unit Name: Women's and Gender Studies Assessment Summary Fall 2007-Spring 2008

What are the student learning outcomes in your unit?

The WGS Program has 5 student learning goals:

- To analyze academic disciplines at the intersection of gender, race, and class, equipping students to identify and analyze assumptions about gender built into the varying approaches of disciplines and areas of knowledge
- To encourage original scholarship and research about women that takes into consideration gender, race, class, and sexuality and that evaluates the effects of assumptions about gender on research, teaching, and the various disciplines
- To provide a collaborative, decentered learning environment which values students' ideas and encourages the open exchange of information, opinion, and rational argumentation
- To integrate real-life experience with academic skills, praxis with theory
- To foster an individual and critical approach to learning

Which outcome did you assess this academic year?

Critical Thinking

How did you assess their skills before, during and / or at the end of the semester / academic year?

The Director convened a faculty meeting in January 2008 focused on assessment. Using one of Woolvord's assessment methods, each faculty member was asked to report on an area our students succeeded at academically and one that they struggled with. An analysis of these comments revealed that our students are willing to participate in class and will readily share their relevant personal experiences, but struggle with moving from the personal to the theoretical, especially when discussing controversial topics. This led to a discussion of how to improve this academic aspect of our course offerings, specifically through the Introduction to Women's Studies.

Please summarize the data you have collected this semester / academic year.

A set of readings on enhancing critical thinking was distributed to the WGS faculty. We plan to spend the September meeting of the WGS Program focused on redesigning the W200 / 201 course to insure that students get the basic tools needed to understand feminist theory and points of view other than their own. We will begin with the goals of the Program and create learning

outcomes focusing on these crucial critical thinking skills that can be embedded in the introductory course.

Please describe any programmatic changes you have made or are planning to make based on the data you have collected.

This revision will culminate in a test of the new course offered for the first time in Spring of 2009 and an evaluation of the success of that course will follow, using student teaching evaluations as well as the reflections of the instructor(s).

****Note:Please use this template to provide the responses to the prompts above. ****