


M e m o r a n d u m

Date: October 7, 2015

To: Dr. Dianne F. Harrison
President

From: 
Dr. Michael Neubauer
Vice Provost

Subject: Final Memorandum of Understanding – Department of Gender and Women’s Studies (GWS)

The final phase of the program review process for the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies (GWS) occurred on September 16, 2015. At this time the commendations and recommendations from the external reviewers’ report were discussed. Present at the meeting were: Michael Neubauer, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs; Elizabeth Say, Dean, College of Humanities; Sheena Malhotra, Special Assistant to the Dean, College of Humanities; Dianne Bartlow, Department of Gender and Women’s Studies, Chair; Yoko Mimura, Educational Policies Representative, and Eli Bartle, Program Review Coordinator.

Dr. Neubauer congratulated the Department on its strengths as identified by the commendations in the external reviewers’ report. A discussion of the reviewers’ commendations and recommendations followed.

This MOU is the working document for program and university response until the next program review is initiated.

Attachment

cc: Elizabeth Say, Dean, College of Humanities
Sheena Malhotra, Special Assistant to the Dean, College of Humanities
Dianne Bartlow, Chair, Department of Gender and Women’s Studies
Yoko Mimura, Educational Policies Representative
Lawrence Becker, Educational Policies Representative

Department of Gender and Women's Studies

Program Review – 2015-2016

Memorandum of Understanding

The CSUN Department of Gender and Women's Studies, housed in the College of Humanities, offers an undergraduate degree and a minor. The program completed the current self-study in February 2015, followed by an external review on April 27, 2015. The external reviewers were Dr. Dionne Espinoza, Director, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, CSU Los Angeles and Dr. Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Professor, Department of Sociology, UC Santa Barbara. The Program's MOU meeting occurred on September 16, 2015. Follow-up will occur at one and three years. Their next program review cycle will culminate in a new self-study, external review, and MOU in AY 2021-2022.

The following commendations and recommendations are intended to help the Department focus its efforts over the next 5 years. They are arranged in topical order as follows: program, students, faculty, curriculum, assessment/strategic planning, other/misc.

Commendations: The Program is commended for:

Program

1. Being robust and clearly articulated which enables it to offer a combination of flexibility, core principles, and workforce preparation of students.
2. Its strong breadth of coverage in the field of Gender and Women's Studies.
3. Hiring of two faculty, who have teaching and research interests that lie at the cutting-edge of areas of study within the overall field of women and gender studies.
4. Taking a thoughtful and intentional approach to online learning, and adopting the hybrid model as most appropriate in light of best practices and the learning outcomes of the program.
5. Their staff's commitment to the program and to the tremendous amount of work they do to support program events, students, and faculty.
6. Creating the Phenomenal Woman Awards event to raise funds for the Department.

Students

7. An increased number of majors over time and continued efforts to make recruitment of majors a priority and beginning to take steps toward increased recruitment by hosting a panel on possible careers to be pursued following a major in Gender and Women's Studies.
8. Offering mentorship, high quality teaching, and undergraduate research opportunities to its students.
9. Working with students, student organizations, and the Women's Center to create co-curricular programming around career options after students graduate from the Department of Gender and Women's Studies.

Faculty

10. Its faculty's collegiality, vibrancy, and the commitment to excellence in their own research agendas.
11. Its faculty's involvement in women and gender studies, both at teaching and research levels, which is of superior quality as may be noted by their national and international recognition.
12. Encouraging and mentoring students to be part of faculty research projects.

Curriculum – Also Refer to Assessment/Strategic Planning Section

13. Spending some considerable effort in creating new courses and working on course development, including with other departments on campus.

Assessment/Strategic Planning

14. Implementing a more proactive assessment process that evaluates not only student learning outcomes, but also evaluates the substantive content of the curriculum.
15. Drawing on their assessment process to update the Department of Gender and Women's Studies curriculum, and to plan for future courses.

16. Identifying areas where the curriculum may continue to develop to retain the cutting-edge nature of the Gender and Women's Studies major.

Other/Misc.

17. A strong and clear self-study that allowed the external reviewers to obtain a very full picture of the workings of an extremely collegial and well-managed Department.
18. Students who we met expressed appreciation for the time and energy that the faculty put into the Department.
19. Integration of alumni into the teaching and research of the faculty in the Department, which helps the recruitment efforts of Gender and Women's Studies' faculty for majors and ensures that students have a successful entry into their lives after college.

Recommendations: The Department should:

Program

1. Work to connect professional advisors with faculty to ensure advisors are aware of the major, understand the goals of the major, and can be supportive of students who express an interest in the major or minor.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the concentrations, particularly those courses that are offered outside the Department, in order to ensure consistency in learning objectives as they pertain to the major in Gender and Women's Studies.
3. Hire additional administrative staff support.
4. Hire additional student assistants on an ad hoc basis to enable the continued hosting in special lectures, fundraisers, and additional programming.
5. Discuss work responsibilities of administrative staff, outline clear job descriptions, expectations, and include the Department of Asian American studies in this effort.

Students

6. Continue to recruit majors in the Department through a variety of approaches including pitching the major to students in the general education courses of the Department, communicating graduate success on the Department website, along with meeting with the advisors (as expressed in #1 above).

Faculty

7. Develop a hiring plan for the Department.

Curriculum – See Assessment/Strategic Planning Section**Assessment/Strategic Planning**

8. Continue to respond to assessment findings by explicitly including the full range of sexualities beyond the traditional binary construction of gender and sexuality, as well as including the concept of gender variance, in the curriculum.
9. Continue to respond to assessment findings by considering ways of “globalizing the curriculum” that make nation-state identities transparent in relation to globalization and transnationalism.

Other/Misc.

10. Continue to recruit majors, conduct research, hold events and lectures that build intellectual community, and network with alumni.