

# Program Assessment Plan

## American University

### Academic Program: CAS: Women's and Gender Studies - BA

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**Program Mission:** The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program (WGSS) is an interdisciplinary program encompassing feminist studies, masculinity studies, and sexuality studies. The program is committed to a multicultural curriculum that sustains and integrates diverse perspectives. WGSS courses emphasize participatory education in which student involvement, critical thinking, and personal insight are encouraged and made relevant in the learning process.

**Contact Person for** Lauren Weis

**Assessment:**

**Unit Website Address:** <http://www.american.edu/cas/wgs/>

**Unit's Primary Department:** Women/Gender

**COLA Reader -1:** Daniel Kerr

**COLA Reader -2:** Kathy McAdams

**Learning Outcome: Intersectional Analysis**

analyze how interlinked privileges and inequalities of gender and sexuality as well as race/ethnicity, social class, nationality, age and ability have shaped societies over time and continue to do so in the present.

**Outcome Year:** 2010-2011

**Start Date:** 08/23/2010

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
<p>Student survey, based on written questionnaire asking for students' perceptions of their abilities. Questionnaire will be forced-choice but will also allow for explanations of responses.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Survey</p>	<p>On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) at least 80% of student majors and minors rate each learning outcome as 4 or higher.</p>	<p>Cycle is every spring semester. (year 1 and every subsequent year) An online questionnaire will be sent annually to students by e-mail and will be filled out and returned anonymously to a central location. At least two members of the program assessment committee will review the data collected with the survey and report the findings to the director. This is an indirect measure. It is crucial for our understanding of student perceptions of the program. We will send out this survey annually to gather data over time about student perceptions and to uncover emerging trends.</p>	Yes
<p>Evaluation of each student's senior capstone research project, prepared for WGSS 500, Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies. Since the capstone research seminar is inter-disciplinary, these projects take a wide variety of forms, from formal academic papers, to creative performances, to videos and websites, to physical installations akin to museum exhibits. All final projects must contain an evaluation of relevant scholarly literature as well as research in primary sources, and the development of an original interpretation of those sources.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project</p>	<p>Each of two readers will evaluate the projects for evidence of the relevant learning outcomes using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the projects will receive average scores of 4 or higher for each learning outcome.</p>	<p>Cycle will be once every 4 years, in the spring semester, beginning year 2. This is a fall course and the instructor will provide copies of projects to the program director at the beginning of the spring semester. The projects will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure. This process will allow us to pinpoint weaknesses in particular areas of student development: in</p>	Yes

## Assessment Plan

Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
		research skills, understanding scholarly debates, and/or developing original interpretations.	
<p>Evaluation of each WGSS student's final paper/final exam in WGSS 300, Feminist and Gender Theory</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Written Assignment</p>	<p>Each of two readers will evaluate the papers/exams for evidence of the general learning outcomes as well as specific learning outcomes relevant to theory using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the paper/exams will receive average scores of 4 or higher for each general learning outcome and each specific learning outcome.</p>	<p>The cycle will be once every 4 years, at the close of the spring semester, beginning year 3. This is a spring course, and the instructor will provide copies of final papers/exams to the program director at the end of the spring semester. The paper/exams will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure. This process will allow us to identify where we are most and least successful in training our students about different theoretical approaches to the fields of women's, gender, and sexuality studies.</p>	Yes
<p>Evaluation of each WGSS student's final paper/final exam in WGSS 300, Feminist and Gender Theory</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project</p>	<p>Each of two readers will evaluate the papers/exams for evidence of the general learning outcomes as well as specific learning outcomes relevant to theory using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the paper/exams will receive average scores of 4 or higher for each general learning outcome and each specific learning outcome.</p>	<p>The cycle will be once every 4 years, at the close of the spring semester, beginning year 3. This is a spring course, and the instructor will provide copies of final papers/exams to the program director at the end of the spring semester. The paper/exams will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure. This process will allow us to identify where we are most and least successful in training our students about different theoretical approaches to the fields of women's, gender, and sexuality studies.</p>	Yes

### Related Courses

- WGSS-300 - Feminist and Gender Theory
- WGSS-500 - Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies

**Learning Outcome: Theory**

explain various theoretical approaches to women's/gender/sexuality studies.

NB: Specific learning outcomes that take course content into account will be developed. Examples might include student's ability to:

1. analyze current events using feminist/gender theory;
2. analyze their own life experience using a feminist/gender framework; or
3. develop coherent critiques of existing theory.

**Outcome Year:** 2011-2012

**Start Date:** 08/27/2012

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

<b>Assessment Plan</b>			
<b>Assessment Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Schedule/Cycle</b>	<b>Active</b>
<p>Student survey, based on written questionnaire asking for students' perceptions of their abilities. Questionnaire will be forced-choice but will also allow for explanations of responses.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Survey</p>	<p>On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) at least 80% of student majors and minors rate each learning outcome as 4 or higher</p>	<p>Cycle is every spring semester. (year 1 and every subsequent year) An online questionnaire will be sent annually to students by e-mail and will be filled out and returned anonymously to a central location. At least two members of the program assessment committee will review the data collected with the survey and report the findings to the director. This is an indirect measure. It is crucial for our understanding of student perceptions of the program. We will send out this survey annually to gather data over time about student perceptions and to uncover emerging trends.</p>	Yes
<p>Evaluation of each student's senior capstone research project, prepared for WGSS 500, Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies. Since the capstone research seminar is inter-disciplinary, these projects take a wide variety of forms, from formal academic papers, to creative performances, to videos and websites, to physical installations akin to museum exhibits. All final projects must contain an evaluation of relevant scholarly literature as well as research in primary sources, and the development of an original interpretation of those sources.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project</p>	<p>Each of two readers will evaluate the projects for evidence of the relevant learning outcomes using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the projects will receive average scores of 4 or higher for each learning outcome</p>	<p>Cycle will be once every 4 years, in the spring semester, beginning year 2. This is a fall course and the instructor will provide copies of projects to the program director at the beginning of the spring semester. The projects will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure. This process will allow us to pinpoint weaknesses in particular areas of student development: in research skills, understanding scholarly debates, and/or developing original interpretations.</p>	Yes
<p>Evaluation of each WGSS student's final project/paper/final exam in WGSS 300, Feminist and Gender Theory</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Final Paper/ Final Project</p>	<p>Each of two evaluators will assess the projects/papers/exams for evidence of the general learning outcomes as well as specific learning outcomes relevant to theory using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being</p>	<p>The cycle will be once every 4 years, at the close of the spring semester, beginning year 3. This is a spring course, and the instructor will provide copies of final papers/exams to the program director at the end of the spring semester. If the final</p>	Yes

Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
	met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the paper/exams will receive average scores of 4 or higher for each general learning outcome and each specific learning outcome.	project culminates in a presentation, the program director or other evaluator(s) will attend and evaluate student presentations. The project/paper/exams will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure. This process will allow us to identify where we are most and least successful in training our students about different theoretical approaches to the fields of women?s, gender, and sexuality studies.	

## Related Courses

- WGSS-300 - Feminist and Gender Theory

## Learning Outcome: Application

apply these theoretical perspectives in settings beyond the classroom - in internships, programming, projects or activism.

NB: This involves the elements

- 1) We have been asking students to do a 'site evaluation' for many years. An evaluation for students measuring specific learning outcomes will be developed.
- 2) Since Spring 2010 we have had employers respond to a new online questionnaire to evaluate interns. We will revisit this instrument and revise in light of specific learning outcomes.
- 3) We will consider developing specific leaning outcomes for the internship paper

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2011-2012

**Start Date:** 08/23/2010

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Assessment Plan			
Assessment Measure	Target	Schedule/Cycle	Active
<p>Three-pronged evaluation of each student's experience and performance in WGSS 491 Internship:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. evaluation by student, based on internship questionnaire</li> <li>2. evaluation by internship employer, based on questionnaire</li> <li>3. evaluation of each student's final internship paper.</li> </ol> <p>Questionnaires will be forced-choice but will also allow for explanations of responses.</p> <p><b>Measure Type:</b> Field Work/ Internship</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) at least 80% of internship students will rate the general learning outcome as well as specific learning outcomes relevant to the internship as 4 or higher</li> <li>2. On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) at least 80% of employers will rate the intern's performance on measures of specific learning outcomes as 4 or higher.</li> <li>3. Each of two readers will evaluate the final internship papers for evidence of the general learning outcome (as well as any specific learning outcomes developed ) for the internship using a scale of 1 (minimal evidence of the outcome being met) to 5 (full evidence of the outcome being met). At least 80% of the paper will receive average scores of 4 or higher for the general learning outcome (and any specific learning outcomes developed).</li> </ol>	<p>The cycle will be once every 4 years, at the close of both fall and spring semesters.</p> <p>An online questionnaire will be sent to student interns by e-mail and will be returned to the AU internship supervisor. In similar manner, an online questionnaire will be sent to employers by e-mail and returned (currently the AU Career Center sends and receives employer evaluations of interns). The AU internship supervisor will review the data collected with the surveys and report the findings to the director (although typically this is one and the same person). These are indirect measures.</p> <p>The final paper will be evaluated by two members of the assessment committee and they will report their findings to the director. This is a direct measure.</p>	Yes

### Related Courses

- WGSS-500 - Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies

### Learning Outcome: Research Sources

locate appropriate research sources, both primary and secondary, in the field of women's/gender/sexuality studies.

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2010-2011

2011-2012

**Start Date:** 08/23/2010

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		survey and report the findings to the director. This is an indirect measure. It is crucial for our understanding of student perceptions of the program. We will send out this survey annually to gather data over time about student perceptions and to uncover emerging trends.	
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### Related Courses

- WGSS-500 - Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies

### Learning Outcome: Research Projects

develop effective research projects in the field of women's/gender/sexuality studies that are theoretically informed and methodologically sound.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010

2010-2011

2011-2012

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**Related Courses**

- WGSS-500 - Current Issues and Research in Women's and Gender Studies