

**WOMEN'S STUDIES SUBJECT AREA COMMITTEE
DISCIPLINE/PROGRAM REVIEW
Portland Community College**

December 2, 2011

1. **DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW:** At Portland Community College, a Women's Studies program was founded in the mid-1970s, but was discontinued in 1983. Current faculty member Melody McMurry was instrumental in the early effort to build a WS program at PCC. An interdisciplinary collective formed to rebirth the program, and the Women's Studies SAC was re-established in 1995. The new WS 101 Introduction to Women's Studies course was first offered in 1996. Women's Resource Center coordinators have also participated in the SAC since the program's re-institution. This is another feature that makes the Women's Studies SAC unique.

A. **Educational Goals and Objectives:** Women's Studies is a multidisciplinary field that has its roots in the feminist movement of the 1960s. A brand new discipline was created, with courses and programs emerging in the early 1970s. Courses and texts were created that had not previously been part of the college curriculum, or were relegated to the sidelines. Topics such as domestic violence, women's history and women's literature now took center stage in this new field of study. The goal of WS was to move beyond dispassionate academic research. A focus on transforming individuals and social systems in order to end oppression has been present in Women's Studies since its inception. As such pedagogy in Women's Studies remains highly experiential, striving to forge connections between personal experience, rigorous academic inquiry, and social change. According to the National Women's Studies Association's 2007 survey, there are over 650 Women's Studies programs and departments in the US. The overwhelming majority (92%) of Women's Studies programs offer undergraduate courses. In the community college segment, 24% offer an associate's degree, with another 24% offering a certificate or concentration.

B. **Changes since the last program review:** The Women's Studies program has grown considerably since our first program review back in 2000, a mere five years after the program was re-instituted and the first year in which program reviews were conducted. Key developments include:

- Two new courses added to curriculum, WS 201 and 202
- WS courses now offered at all four comprehensive campuses
- Evening and summer sections regularly offered at all campuses
- All three WS courses offered on a consistent basis
- Distance learning added
- Courses converted from three to four credits
- Revision of website
- Creation of my.pcc WS SAC group
- Articulation agreement with Oregon State and Portland State
- Collaboration with the campus Women's Resource Centers

- Renewed collaboration with PSU's Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program
- Internationalization
- Increased service learning utilization
- Increased community partnerships
- Increased participation in campus activities

C. **Women's Studies Focus Award:** The Women's Studies Focus Award offers direct recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of Women's Studies. The award requires twelve credits, of which WS 101 Introduction to Women's Studies is required. Students choose the remaining eight credits from courses recognized by the WS SAC as having significant focus on women and women's issues. Disciplines offering such courses include Alcohol and Drug Counseling, Art, Economics, English, Health, History, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish, or Speech Communication. Women's Studies was an early adopter of this initiative, when it was called a "Program Award." Women's Studies followed Peace and Conflict Studies and Creative Writing in formally recognizing a concentrated program of study. A complete listing of Focus Award requirements is listed in Appendix 1.

So far PCC has awarded twenty-one Focus Awards. Better outreach to the students is also needed. Many students are not aware of the Focus Award or even how to apply once they have completed their coursework. In the past year we have updated the website and acquired a women's studies email address to facilitate students applying for the Focus Award. What would assist in raising awareness of the Focus Award would be the ability to list affiliated courses alongside the WS designated courses in the course schedule. So far all attempts to make this change have failed due to Banner programing constraints.

Aside from awarding a simple certificate, at present there is no mechanism for formally recognizing students who have received a Focus Award. The SAC recognizes that a Focus Award is not a formally granted certificate or a designation on a transcript. Nonetheless, students deserve a formal recognition for this concentration. The SAC recommends that students who earn Focus Awards in a given year be listed in the graduation program or receive explicit mention in a college announcement.

2. **CURRICULUM:** Three courses have specific Women's Studies designations. Outcomes in all these courses have been revised and formally approved as meeting the new Cultural Literacy specifications as well as General Education requirements. WS courses reflect the principles of feminist pedagogy which focus on a collaborative learning environment and encourage greater student initiative and responsibility in the learning process. Students analyze the mechanisms of power that use and create gender, race, class, sexuality, age and disability-based oppression. The very ethos of the discipline demands that theory and concepts be applied to current affairs and everyday life.

A. **Course-Level Outcomes:** Because WS has just begun to do program assessment, we have not yet accomplished any assessment-driven changes to improve the attainment of course outcomes.

- i. **WS 101 - Introduction to Women's Studies** Surveys and critically analyzes the position of women in society, in terms of present realities and future possibilities. Provides a framework to connect personal experience with

contemporary social and political issues. Prerequisites: WR 115, RD 115 and MTH 20 or equivalent placement test scores.

Course Outcomes:

- Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current, and personally experienced events
- Articulate ways that systems of power, privilege and oppression are created and maintained by social-cultural forces
- Recognize the influences that systems of oppression have on diverse women's lives.
- Identify and analyze social processes that construct gender roles.
- Communicate skillfully by writing, speaking, and collaborating.

- ii. **WS 201 - Women of the World** Examines the position of women in society from a cross-cultural perspective. Topics include the process of gender enculturation, women's lives in foraging, pastoral and agricultural societies and international issues such as female circumcision, infanticide, child brides and honor/dowry deaths. Recommend: WS 101. Prerequisites: WR 115, RD 115 and MTH 20 or equivalent placement test scores. Recommended: WS 101.

Course Outcomes:

- Apply critical thinking skills to the investigation of international issues related to women.
- Analyze how cultural differences define variations in gender roles and use that analysis to develop sensitivity and empathy towards different cultures.
- Apply service learning experience and self reflection to enhance community and environmental responsibility.
- Apply written, oral and advocacy skills to analyze problems women face in different cultures and work towards their solutions

- iii. **WS 202 - Women Working for Change** Examines how women have worked to empower girls and women and improve the conditions of their lives. Explores ways that feminist theories have shaped the goals and strategies of social change efforts. Offers an in-depth look at selected topic areas, connects analysis and personal experience, and prepares students to become effective change agents. Prerequisites: WR 115, RD 115 and MTH 20 or equivalent placement test scores. Recommended: WS 101.

Course Outcomes:

- Recognize influences of changing political, social, economic, religious, sexual, historical, and cultural patterns in the creation and perpetuation of injustice.
- Evaluate effective possibilities for empowering women and working toward positive change in the lives of women.
- Use feminist theoretical perspectives to analyze social change efforts.
- Communicate effectively in writing, collaborating, and speaking

B. College Core Outcomes:

- i. **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Women's Studies courses are particularly successful in cultivating the development of critical thinking and

problem solving skills. For example, in a unit on work and poverty, groups are asked to draw up a monthly budget for different family constellations using family incomes at the current federally defined poverty threshold, Oregon minimum wage, and Multnomah county living wage standard. Role-plays and student-designed skits are another powerful method that not only cultivates high levels of student engagement in the learning process: they also convey key principles of feminist pedagogy, namely, that women's lives must also be understood from the inside-out. Academic knowledge without this personal experience is objectifying and demeaning to those studied, and therefore, such knowledge is partial. In Women's Studies, the method is often the message.

- ii. **Self-Reflection:** True to the feminist motto, the personal is political. In WS classes, students analyze and evaluate the very fabric of their personal daily lives and the society in which they live. From body image to domestic violence to racial constructions of femininity, students learn to investigate the world with respect to oneself. One student said: "*One thing I wish - or rather, a couple of things I wish I'd known before taking this class is how emotional it can be. I didn't know how intense learning and facing my own identity as well as learning about the oppressions others face would be . . . Just take a deep breath and know that if or when you get a bit emotional, that means there is lots of passion inside you - a powerful trait.*"
- iii. **Community and Environmental Responsibility:** Our courses also provide avenues for the growth of community and environmental responsibility especially through our service learning connections. WS 202, Women Making Change, engages students in women's activism and particularly highlights connections to the community with guest speakers and individual projects on community organizations. As one student said, "*In WS101, be prepared to become involved. You will be involved in every class, with all the students in the class, every day the class meets...students will get involved with each other, with the community and with the school.*"
- iv. **Cultural Awareness:** An essential feature of Women's Studies courses is the examination of the diversity of women's experience in society. Demonstrating understandings of key mechanisms of the social construction of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability and other dimensions of difference is essential for successful completion of any Women's Studies course. The experiences of diverse women are widely represented in course readings and materials, as well as in the students themselves. Women's Studies students frequently report that our courses were the first time they experienced circumstances in which their diverse life experience were positively represented in an educational setting. Students tell of feeling seen and being noticed, as opposed to having their experience and their people be rendered invisible, or relegated to the margins of the curriculum. Owing to Women's Studies emphasis on the diversity of women's lives, students with connections to multicultural, international, non-middle class, non-

heterosexual, and differently abled communities, for example, feel a greater connection to the college and the learning process. This bodes well for student success and for perceptions of PCC in the wider community. This diversity-infused curriculum makes manifest PCC's values of mutual trust and support, and speaks to Women's Studies' courses skill in cultivating an environment that is committed to diversity and individuals. As one student wrote: *"This class is for every single person, no matter what your beliefs, values, orientation, class, gender, whatever - to speak up and use the opportunity to learn about yourself as well as groups and individual people you may 'think' you know."*

- v. **Communication:** Women's Studies courses encourage students to develop their communication skills through writing and speaking assignments. In addition, Women's Studies students learn to analyze communication styles, especially with respect to race and gender, both among themselves and in the world at large. Guest speakers are also a regular part of our classrooms, as having people communicate their *own* stories, rather than having their experience be interpreted by a third party, best embodies principles of feminist inquiry and pedagogy. Participation in campus events, such as Rock Creek's Open Mind, Open Mic speakers, and the International Students' Women's Fashion Show provide a gateway into women's experience. Literature, poetry, narratives, essays, art and film are other key ways that the unique character of women's lives are made real. Women must speak in their own voice. Creating a climate where civil discourse dominates, controversial issues can be discussed, and diversity is celebrated is essential to achieving this goal of applying learning to personal and community life. Women's Studies classrooms have long been acclaimed for creating these "safe spaces", where students feel comfortable sharing the ways that feminist theory and concepts impact their personal lives, without fear of reprisal from classmates. Forming and maintaining a safe space in the classroom requires students to develop a high level of skillful and sensitive communication.
- vi. **WS core outcome mapping:** Please see Appendix 2.

C. Assessment of College Core Outcomes: Women's Studies faculty use a wide range of techniques to monitor student progress toward college learning outcomes. Formative assignments include reading response journals, class exercises, small group activities, free/expressive writing, class discussions, peer reviews, and role plays. These tools provide feedback to teacher and student, so that course experiences and study can be modified before larger summative assessments take place. A high reliance on formative tools is consistent with feminist pedagogy, whose principles emphasize the instructor's role as coach, rather than judge.

These formative tools also facilitate growth of self-directed assessment and metacognition, encouraging students to gauge some of their own learning. This is part and parcel of another key aspect of feminist pedagogy, which strives to cultivate trust in one's own lived experience, and fair distribution of power between teacher

and student. Summative assessments such as written and oral examinations, research and analysis projects, oral and visual presentations, performances, portfolios, and essays constitute key tools. Some of these are done on a collaborative basis, with students working in teams. This is true of presentations, performances, and research projects.

Women's Studies was also an early adopter of service learning activities, using this form of pedagogy prior to the inception of a district-wide service learning coordinator position and associated initiatives. Service learning is also congruent with principles of feminist pedagogy and the activism out of which the academic discipline of Women's Studies was founded. These ethics demand that learning be used to improve women and girls' lives, and the communities in which they live.

WS SAC members decided to focus the required assessment activities on WS101. This course is the entry level course to WS and engages the largest numbers of PCC students. As a foundational course, WS101 introduces students to the basic elements of the discipline. Conducting assessment of the WS101 courses will provide the SAC with insight into what students are learning about core elements of the WS discipline, from which the SAC can determine effective strategies for any necessary improvement. Due in large part to the lack of faculty teaching solely in Women's Studies, the SAC is currently behind on its assessment activities (see section 6C of this report).

- i. In the fall of 2011, during the WS SAC meeting, writing samples from Spring 2011 were identified, along with samples from Fall 2011 with a goal of collecting 20 sample papers from WS 101. WS SAC member Tanya Pluth drafted and modified Value rubrics from AACU's (Association of American Colleges and Universities) Critical Thinking, Self-Reflection and Cultural Awareness rubrics. The SAC conducted a norming process at the Fall 2011 SAC meeting. Definition of terms used in the rubric, e.g. "Culture" in cultural awareness, "evidence" in critical thinking, varied among members of the SAC and resulted in assigning differing scores. The norming exercise also revealed that the assignments did not ask students to articulate elements rated in the rubric. Please see Appendix 4 for our current Assessment Report.
- ii. We plan to continue the assessment process during SAC meetings of Winter and Spring 2012. After that time the SAC hopes to have results of assessment and subsequent course improvement to report.
- iii. Because of how recently the assessment of WS 101 have begun, no SAC mandated changes to the curriculum have yet been initiated.

D. **Distance Modality:** The WS 101 Introduction to Women's Studies course has been offered in web-format for over one year now. So far enrollment has been strong. The SAC will be comparing the online and face-t-face courses to see if any changes need to be made and will be discerning whether or not to extend its distance learning offerings in the future.

E. Educational Initiatives

- i. **Service Learning:** Women’s Studies faculty have been consistently using Service Learning since the program began. For example, students in Melody McMurry’s courses do service learning projects working with domestic violence prevention agencies in Washington and Columbia counties. In Women's Health (HE 212) students took advantage of a service-learning option to create a poster informing about an aspect of women's health, to display at the RC women's health fair about topics such as domestic violence and various birth control methods. Students stood by their poster at the fair and shared their findings with the class.
- ii. **Internationalization:** Women’s Studies faculty has been at the forefront in the college’s Internationalization Initiative. Marlene Eid served as the initiative’s first district-wide coordinator. Melody McMurry and Judy Zimmerman have participated in the Internationalization Task Force. Both Marlene Eid and Judy Zimmerman had early involvement with the Asian Studies program. Melody McMurry’s WS 201 course “Women of the World” has also been lauded by the International Education Office (OIE) as a model internationalized syllabus. Melody and Marlene were also early adopters of internationalized syllabi, participating in the first cohort of CIEE grantees, and being among the first to prepare fully internationalized courses. Three Women’s Studies faculty have been CIEE International Faculty Development Seminar grant recipients. The following WS faculty members completed CIEE seminars: Marlene Eid (Japan), Melody McMurry (England); Andrea Lowgren (Tanzania and Kenya), and Judy Zimmerman (India). Marlene Eid, Melody McMurry and others have attended multiple sessions of the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication, being awarded grants for attendance from the OIE.

3. STUDENTS

- A. **Student Enrollment patterns:** Since its inception in 1995, Women’s Studies has experienced monumental growth. The discipline has gone from having one section of the core course WS101 - Introduction to Women’s Studies at one campus to having multiple sections offered at all four comprehensive campuses. Both day and evening sections and summer term sections have been offered. Fall 2010 marked the first time the course was been offered as a web-based, distance learning modality. Women’s Studies retains the commitment that our courses be accessible to students with a wide variety of life circumstances. Two new courses, WS 201 (Women of the World) and WS 202 (Women Working for Change) are also offered on multiple occasions each year throughout the district. This began in 2005. Enrollment data from just the past three years shows how we’ve seen the number of women’s studies students increase.

2008-09 461 students

2009-10 542 students

2010-11 686 students

Across the discipline as a whole, in three of five years there has been over 22% FTE increase each year, save 06-07 to 07-08 and 07-08 to 08-09. Two of these years showed hefty 30% increases. Historically we have had high FTE in our core course, WS 101 - Introduction to Women's Studies, with enrollments at or near campus limits of 30 to 35 students per section. Rock Creek has seen a whopping 114% increase in FTE in this course; Cascade posted a 49% growth, and Sylvania came in with a sizable 20% increase.

- B. **Diversity:** With respect to diversity, Asian-Pacific Islander students are fairly evenly distributed across all four campuses, with approximately 10% of Women's Studies students identifying in this group at each campus. African-American students are more widely represented at Cascade campus, and Hispanic-American students at Rock Creek. Males also take Women's Studies, with percentages from 9-14% in most years for which data is available. There is also a spread of students across age groups. Students older than the traditional college age group take Women's Studies in sizable number, comprising at least 30% of the students at each campus. For more information on student demographics, please see http://www.pcc.edu/ir/program_profiles/200910/WS.pdf

- C. **Transfer Articulations:** All three Women's Studies courses are on the General Education/Discipline Studies list for Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer. Women's Studies has an articulation agreement with Oregon State University, whereby our WS 101 Introduction to Women's Studies course satisfies their requirement of Women's Studies 223/Women: Self, and Society. Our WS 202 course also transfers as a Women's Studies major elective credit. WS 201 transfers as cultural diversity credit for OSU's baccalaureate core.

At Portland State University, our WS 202 transfers as the Women's Studies major requirement WS 307 Women, Activism, and Social Change. WS 201 transfers as elective credit.

When WS 101 was initially developed the SAC did so in collaboration with the Women's Studies Program at Portland State (now called Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, WGSS), in order to have seamless transfer. WS 101 transfers as a major requirement at PSU. We are currently in conversation with the WGSS program at PSU with the goal of developing a more comprehensive and formal articulation agreement. Another goal of this partnership is the development of activities and initiatives to promote awareness of career options in Women's Studies and to promote successful transfer of PCC students to PSU.

Student feedback shows that among those who intend to transfer, Women's Studies courses are most typically used to satisfy Cultural Literacy or Social Science General Education/Discipline Studies requirements, and for elective credit.

The multidisciplinary bachelor's degree in Women's Studies is excellent preparation for careers in law, politics, government service, economics, social work, psychology,

counseling, human services, health professions, teaching, education, human resources, business, media and communications. Social worker, attorney, college professor, clinical and developmental psychologist, K-12 educator, and Women’s Resource Center coordinator are among the careers in which former PCC Women’s Studies transfer students are engaged.

4. FACULTY

Women’s Studies SAC Members	Primary Discipline
<i>Full Time Faculty:</i>	
Cathy Alzner	History (SY)
Mary Courtis	Anthropology (SY)
Marlene Eid	Psychology (RC)
Andrea Lowgren, SAC Chair	History (RC)
Melody McMurry	Sociology (RC)
Maria Wilson-Figueroa	Sociology (CA)
Judy Zimmerman	Psychology (RC)
<i>Part Time Faculty:</i>	
Traci Boyle-Galestiantz	WRC Coordinator (SY -WS faculty)
Holly Cullom	English (SE,RC)
Leslie Hickcox	Health (RC)
Marlene Howell	Women’s Studies (SY)
Archer Parr	Developmental Ed. and Women’s Studies (SY)
Tanya Pluth	English (CA)
Sarah Tillery	District Service Learning (RC - WS faculty)
George Tinker	Psychology (RC)
Michelle Wilson	Anthropology (SY)

A. Meeting the Basic Needs of Students

- i. Currently there are enough women’s studies instructors to meet the needs of teaching a basic offering of women’s studies courses. As noted above, our faculty is establishing creative and successful learning environments using a minimum of resources. The problem lies with the unofficial status of the subject which has no faculty for administrative duties. According to a National Women’s Studies Association report, “faculty in two academic units experience greater committee work, larger numbers of advisees, and need to keep current in two fields. Teaching loads and other assignments should reflect these dual responsibilities.” (“What Programs Need: Essential Resources for Women’s Studies Programs” Statement of the Governing Council of the National Women’s Studies Association, January 2000.) This report describes the reality that our faculty faces, a reality which adversely impacts the SAC’s ability to comply with

administrative tasks, such as the recent General Education/Discipline re-certification, Cultural Diversity, Learning Assessment, and Program Review. With divided time and conflicting schedules (two SAC meetings on the same day, for example) faculty are unable to complete administrative tasks with adequate attention or punctuality. Complying with any of the processes requires extra or overtime duty. WS SAC members have already done these projects with their primary SAC. As a result these projects are sometimes not completed in a timely manner, or are given short shrift. There are only four LDC SACs at PCC without any full-time faculty (Women's Studies, Chicano/Latino Studies, Religion, and Humanities).

- ii. **FT/PT Ratio:** Currently there are seven FT faculty and nine part-time faculty in the Women's Studies SAC. This ratio is misleading, however, since almost everyone in the SAC teaches primarily in other disciplines. In the past 10 years the 62% of WS classes have been taught by *full-time* faculty. Recently, however, that balance has been shifting. Since Fall of 2009, 57% of classes have been taught by *part-time* faculty.
- iii. **Diversity of Faculty.** The Women's Studies instructors at PCC are primarily female, white, able-bodied, US citizens, with several queer-identified faculty members. There are only two people of color. The ethnic diversity of the faculty does not match that of PCC's student body. One of the reasons for the relative lack of ethnic diversity is the unofficial hiring procedure for women's studies instructors. Since full-time instructors are self-selecting and not hired based on women's studies qualifications and because part-time instructors do not go through a rigorous hiring process overseen by Human Resources, we have little control in shaping the diversity of our faculty.

C. Instructor Qualifications:

- i. **Current Instructor Qualifications:** Introduction to Women's Studies is taught by instructors from a variety of academic disciplines at present including anthropology, history, English, sociology and psychology.

Revised Date: 2/27/2001

The current instructor qualifications are woefully inadequate. As of now, no minimum standards have been applied to instructors hired to teach women's studies, resulting in confusion and difficulty for department chairs and division deans. Instructor qualifications, which take into consideration the diversity of the field and the inconsistency of the degrees, need to be established. The SAC plans to tackle this project during 2012.

- ii. **Difficulties Determining Instructor Qualifications:** Determining instructor qualifications is more complicated for the discipline of women's studies than it is for older, more established fields of study. The reason for this is two-fold. First, women's studies is intentionally multi-disciplinary, so faculty in women's studies often hold degrees in subjects outside of women's studies, and university coursework focusing on women and gender does not always have a WS prefix.

Second, few institutions grant higher degrees in Women's Studies. Only a handful of universities grant PhDs, and while a growing number do grant MAs in Women's Studies, many only offer a graduate certificate or a parenthetical notation. In addition, faculty members who did their schooling decades ago had even fewer opportunities to pursue an official WS degree.

To further complicate matters, very few current Women's Studies faculty have degrees or large numbers of graduate units in the discipline. Although this is typical of the early cohort of Women's Studies faculty both at PCC and nationally, many of whom had a specialty within their primary discipline related to women, the discipline has grown and become established. Instructor qualifications have not kept pace.

D. Other Staffing Issues:

- i. **Full-time Hires:** Given that there is no self-standing Women's Studies department, primary disciplines are under no obligation to hire a new full-time faculty member with a Women's Studies degree or specialization. Under these circumstances, competency in Women's Studies does not factor into the Ideal Candidate Profile in any full time, tenure-track hiring process.
- ii. **Competing Disciplines:** One of the reasons so many Women's Studies courses are taught by part-time faculty is because needs in the faculty member's primary discipline must be satisfied first, before a section of WS can be taught. For example, when a WS course is assigned to a full time faculty member, the campus backfills a section in the full-time faculty member's primary discipline. So if a History faculty member teaches a WS course, the history course that s/he would have taught must be taught by another faculty member. This ability to backfill is highly dependent on the current staffing levels and qualifications of part-time faculty in the primary discipline. If a full-time faculty member teaches a specialized course on a regular basis, s/he may be difficult to free-up and "replace," owing to a dearth of qualified part time faculty to teach that special course. This acts to suppress the number of Women's Studies sections that a given campus can offer, and adversely impacts enrollment and FTE. This process of assigning full-time faculty to teach women's studies classes is also dependent on individual deans who may or may not be supportive of the Women's Studies program. Because only Sylvania has a very small budget for faculty teaching WS, Cascade and Rock Creek must use money from other programs in order to offer WS courses. This unusual configuration, without an org code and FTE, contributes to the fluctuating staff and course offerings of WS at PCC.
- iii. **Evaluation:** One of the problems of Women's Studies' unofficial status as a Subject Area at PCC is that full-time instructors are often not evaluated in women's studies courses. Only FT instructors which elect to be evaluated in WS are observed by their deans in this capacity. The lack of systematic evaluation creates problems for accurately evaluating FT faculty teaching women's studies

courses. Standards need to be established for the evaluation of faculty in both of their disciplines.

- E. **Faculty/PCC Community Connections:** Women's Studies faculty are actively involved in a wide variety of college activities, committee work, and community events.
- i. **Women's Resource Centers (WRC):** Our students and faculty have partnered closely with campus WRC's. Our partnership with the Sylvania Campus Women's Resource Center was instrumental in re-establishing this discipline. Faculty members have connected and co-planned our classroom activities to coincide with the WRC's programming. Women's Studies students work in conjunction with the WRC in celebration of International Women's Day. WRC staff regularly visit our classes to discuss Women's Resource Center services and programming. WS 101 is strongly recommended or required to be selected as a Women's Resource Center advocate at some of the campuses. WRC coordinators have been ex-officio SAC members since the discipline's re-establishment. Some WRC coordinators have also taught in Women's Studies. Traci Boyle-Galestiantz of Sylvania Campus offers a case in point. WS faculty have also been guest presenters and lectures at WRC events, such as the Women's Self-Care Retreat at the Rock Creek campus last spring.
 - ii. **Teaching Exchanges:** Women Studies faculty have conducted teaching exchanges within the discipline for many years. This is one way the multidisciplinary nature of Women's Studies comes alive. Faculty members share their Women's Studies specialty area or primary discipline as a guest instructor or speaker. Exchanges have occurred on topics related to women and sexuality, history, global feminism, economics and more. Women's Studies faculty Marlene Eid, Melody McMurry, and Judy Zimmerman have also partnered with ESOL's Cynthia Thornburgh for over two years. Their Women's Studies students fulfill their course requirements by serving as conversation partners in advanced ESOL courses.
 - iii. **Campus Activities**
 - International Women's Day
 - International Education Week
 - Women's History Month
 - Black History Month
 - Semana de la Raza
 - National Coming Out Day
 - Illumination Project
 - Open Mind, Open Mic
 - Women's Health Fair
 - PCC Reads
 - Students4Giving
 - Queer Resource Center
 - Men's Anti-Violence Education Network
 - Advisors to: Gay Straight Alliance, Amnesty International

- Partner with Women’s Resource Centers (advocate training; joint event planning)
- Human Rights Campaign - Day of Silence
- Guest speakers in classes open to the campus community (African Women’s Coalition; Basic Rights Oregon; Community of Welcoming Congregations; National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League; Feminists for Life; LGBTI panels; sex worker panels; female clergy/religious leaders; lay and certified nurse midwives)

iv. Community Service

- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon
- Feminist Majority Foundation Feminist Faculty Network
- Adelante Mujeres
- Womenstrength Self-Defense classes

v. PCC Committees and Service

- Diversity Programming Committee
- Hiring Committees - Women’s Resource Center Coordinator; WRC Student Advocates, Division Deans; Sociology Faculty
- Internationalization Task Force; Internationalization Initiative Coordinator
- Asian Studies Committee
- Teaching Learning Center Coordinator
- Curriculum Committee
- PCC Reads
- Portland Bridges To Baccalaureate
- Educational Advisory Council

E. Professional Development

- i. **Activities:** The Women’s Studies instructors at PCC participate in a variety of women’s studies professional development activities as well as those in their home disciplines. Our instructors attend and present at conferences such as PSU’s Feminist Pedagogy Conference, the Women’s Health and Wellness Retreat, and the Women’s Multicultural Institute at the University of Chicago. As noted above, women’s studies faculty have also participated in CIEE programs focused on women’s issues. Several Women’s Studies instructors are members of the National Women’s Studies Association. PCC Women’s Studies instructors also participate in many community organizations, such as the Attorney General’s Task Force on Sexual Assault, Womenstrength Self-Defense, Bradley-Angle House, Domestic Violence Resource Center, and the City of Portland’s Inter-Group Dialogues project on race and racism.
- ii. **Benefits for Students:** Continued learning via professional development, conference participation or community participation is a way to integrate new ideas and pedagogies into the classroom. For example, one instructor’s community service as an intergroup dialogues trainer for the city of Portland on race and ethnicity has helped her create student dialogue groups which en

courage self-reflection on other people's experiences for understanding how oppression works.

Several instructors particularly credit internationalization activities for changing the scope of their women's studies courses. Andrea Lowgren's CIEE trip to East Africa, for example, provided an opportunity to situate conversations about female circumcision within a particular ethnic group's (Kikuyu) history and culture. Participation in community organizations makes links for service learning opportunities for students and contacts for guest speakers. After a visit from a guest speaker from the Domestic Violence Resource Center in WS 202, one student sent this email during the summer: *"I just wanted to let you know that in a few hours I am going to be volunteering for the first time I'm going to be working with the community outreach coordinator for the Washington County DVRC. Some good karma will be coming your way, Thank you for the inspiration!"*

5. FACILITIES AND SUPPORT

- A. Classroom Space:** Our courses are taught in a variety of classrooms. Some of these settings are conducive to doing small group and experiential activities; many are not. Several classrooms are so small that students are prohibited from moving about save going in and out of the classroom. Long, large tables dominate the classroom space. These cannot be moved to create the open space needed for role plays, performance, or other experiential activities. Similarly, these tables make it difficult to create space arrangements that allow for de-centering students' attention from the front of the classroom. Students are forced to sit in neat rows, with eyes fixated on the *back* of other students' heads -- not on their faces. Controversial and emotionally challenging topics are regular features of Women's Studies courses. Having ready access to others' nonverbal communication is essential to effective and sensitive discussion; and to the creation and maintenance of rapport and a safe classroom climate.

Many classrooms place projector screens squarely in the middle of the whiteboard space, leaving little room for the instructor to write on the whiteboard. This impedes students' ability to take good notes. Podiums have enriched our teaching in myriad ways. Unfortunately, the light controls for classrooms are located *away* from the podium. There is significant disruption created in working with classroom lighting when using multiple media in a given class session, especially when they are interspersed with "lecture" segments. Image quality on projected screens is often compromised because many classrooms retain high levels of ambient light -- even when all available blinds are closed. This is also an ADA accessibility issue. Students who must read captioning to access film/video often struggle.

- B. Library:** The library is doing a commendable job managing Women's Studies holdings, databases, and its library website information while working within a shrinking budget and with reduced staffing. Jane Rognlie, the WS librarian, has been added to the WS group email list and has started to send out information about women's studies resource guides, new holdings and offer assistance to WS instructors. She has also indicated that she would like to renew her efforts to attend WS SAC meetings once a year.

- C. **Advising:** The WS SAC would like to do more outreach to advisors so they know more about the WS curriculum.
- D. **Scheduling:** Currently the WS SAC is trying to cooperate in scheduling our courses between campuses to not duplicate course offerings. Most scheduling is done via the Social Sciences Leadership group, which puts WS courses taught by Arts and Humanities faculty at a scheduling disadvantage. Scheduling practices still need to be better coordinated.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Areas of Strength

- i. **A low cost program** -- Women's Studies is a program that operates efficiently. The program has no specific lab or equipment needs.
- ii. **Interdisciplinarity:** Students in WS courses learn about the connections between disciplines and how to apply knowledge learned in many of their PCC courses. Both the faculty and the curriculum in WS are drawn from multiple disciplines. There are few other opportunities for interdisciplinary coursework at PCC.
- iii. **High levels of college service and dedication:** In addition to teaching, community participation and professional development, Women's Studies faculty participate in two Subject Area Committees. This reflects a high level of commitment to students and to the college mission and goals.
- iv. **Facilitators of student success:** Women's Studies has long-standing collaborations with WRC's, ASPCC, and Student Services, entities which promote student success. WS faculty often are informal advisors to students who transfer to universities. Women's Studies faculty are noted for high levels of outside class student contact, cultivating the one-to-one relationships which encourage retention and success.
- v. **A driving force in campus diversity programming:** SAC members are actively involved in realizing the college's mission and goals. We sponsor myriad activities that promote cultural diversity, stimulate community engagement, and that create inclusive campuses for the entire PCC district -- not just those students enrolled in our classes.

B. Goals for Improvement

- i. **Instructor qualifications and staffing:** The SAC needs to create more specific instructor qualifications for WS 101 and develop instructor qualifications for WS 201 and 202. The SAC would also like to implement policies for the evaluation of instructors of WS courses.
- ii. **Highlight the WS Focus Award:** We would like more students to know about and complete the WS Focus Award. Through the Focus Award we would like to boost enrollments in WS-affiliated courses in other disciplines. We would also like to better celebrate Focus Award recipients and keep track of their numbers and progress as they transfer to Oregon universities.

- iii. **Timely Completion of Administrative Tasks:** The number of administrative tasks for the SAC is growing. In addition to coordinating meetings and dealing with curricular changes, the SAC has responsibilities for assessment reports each year. The WS SAC would like to be able to keep pace with the required administrative responsibilities but has been unable to do so because of the lack of FT faculty in the discipline.
- iv. **Continue to help the WS program stabilize and grow:** We would like to offer more WS classes to more students, to make better connections with other academic programs, PCC campus activities and the broader community.

C. **Resources Needed:** The Women’s Studies SAC appreciates the opportunity to identify and request resources from the administration to help us meet our goals and better serve our students. While we recognize that some of these needs and requests go beyond our SAC, we hope that college-wide patterns can be identified and addressed, as well as program-specific concerns. We know that budget constraints remain a challenge for everyone.

- i. **A dedicated Women’s Studies budget and org codes for all three campuses.** Simply put, Women’s Studies cannot adequately continue to function without an adequate budget. At Sylvania there has been a small budget for WS, but *at Rock Creek and Cascade there is no dedicated WS budget.* Currently division deans use money from other disciplines to pay for WS classes. At Rock Creek, for example, WS is paid for with money from History, Psychology, and Sociology. Further complicating issues, WS has not been collecting FTE separately either. These inconsistencies and borrowings need to be resolved. Please see Appendix 3 for more information about budgeting.
- ii. **A solution to the problem of fulfilling SAC responsibilities without FT WS faculty** Without any faculty allotted specifically to women’s studies, the faculty is barely able to meet college expectations of SAC administration and unable to provide long-term leadership and vision. The Women’s Studies program continually stumbles and has to be revived because of the lack of stability and continuity of the faculty.

The Women’s Studies SAC needs one full-time position in the district. This could be a new hire, or a conversion of a current instructor to WS. The FT instructor would teach WS classes and manage SAC chair duties as well, but also require one course release per term for administrative duties. We strongly believe that the program doesn’t just need one FT faculty member to teach a full load *and* chair the SAC. In order to manage all the necessary SAC and scheduling responsibilities for the entire district, the full-time position in WS will also require one course release per term. Without a course release, the problem of SAC administrative duties would not be solved; it would be concentrated on one person instead of rotating through the WS faculty. District-wide this

has been an ongoing problem. Note, for example, that all of the SACs that did not complete assessment reports for 2010-11 on time were SACs with one or fewer full-time faculty.

In addition to a full-time position, the WS program needs jointly appointed faculty. Most institutions of higher education with Women's Studies programs have a combination of women's studies faculty members and joint-appointment faculty. Joint-appointment faculty are hired and evaluated in two disciplines. The cost of joint appointment positions would be split by the two disciplines sharing the FT position. The WS SAC recommends that a committee of administrators and faculty meet to discuss how to fairly proportion the numbers of classes taught in each discipline over the course of the school year with allocation of budget, load, administrative tasks and FTE.

The WS SAC realizes that there may be other creative solutions to the problem of fulfilling SAC administrative duties. We are interested in considering all ideas, but we do want to emphasize the institutional inequity of refusing funding for Women's Studies. The SAC cannot successfully function without any human and financial resources.

iii. Banner configuration

Banner needs to be configured so that WS courses are listed together in the course schedule. At present, only WS courses are listed under the WS header. Students looking for WS-affiliated courses to fulfill the WS Focus Award or expand their knowledge of women's studies must individually search each discipline to see if a course is offered that term and cross-check it with the list of approved Focus Award courses. The course schedule needs to be able to list courses with other prefixes (HST, PSY) and a Focus Award designation below the WS courses. The Service Learning designation in the catalog is an example that this configuration is possible. You can see the service learning configuration here:

<http://www.pcc.edu/schedule/default.cfm?fa=dspTopicDetails&thisTerm=201104&topicid=SL&type=Credit>

- iv. Classroom Design Changes:** We realize that changes to the physical structure of the classroom are difficult, expensive and impact many disciplines. However, as PCC moves forward in using bond money to physically add and alter instruction spaces, we would recommend changing classroom furniture and layout to allow for creation of open space that is not at the front of the classroom in order to facilitate small group and experiential activities and allow alternative layouts that allow accessibility to others' nonverbal communication. We know such classrooms exist, but because WE sections are usually scheduled by

other disciplines, WS classes are not generally scheduled in suitable spaces. The administrative assistant scheduling classrooms for history classes, for example, may wrongly assume that the history instructor wants to same lecture configuration for WS as she prefers for HST. Having a FT position in WS would solve many problems like this. Changing window and door coverings to significantly reduce ambient light during use of podium-projector system and moving light controls near the classroom podium would also be very helpful for quality instruction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The SAC expresses appreciation to David Stout, our Administrative Liaison of the past ten years for his steadfast support of our program. Such continuity of leadership is rare and treasured. The SAC extends its heartfelt thanks to Karen Sanders, Dean of Social Sciences and College Prep for ongoing support in all areas. Thanks also to Jean Garside for providing important administrative assistance in preparation of data. And finally, gratitude to all of the WS students who make this work worthwhile.

Appendix 1

WOMEN'S STUDIES FOCUS AWARD

Required Course

WS 101 Women's Studies 4

Plus an additional 8 credit hours of Women's Studies courses selected from courses listed below.

Elective Courses

AD 103 Women and Addiction 3

ART 210 Women in Art 4

EC 216 Labor Markets: Economics of Gender and Work 4

ENG 222 Images of Women in Literature 4

ENG 260 Introduction to Women Writers 4

HE 212 Women's Health 4

HST 204 History of Women in the US: Pre-colonial to 1877 4

HST 205 History of Women in the US: 1877-Present 4

HST 225 History of Women, Sex, and the Family 4

PSY 231 Human Sexuality 4

PSY 232 Human Sexuality 4

SOC 218 Sociology of Gender 4

SP 237 Gender and Communication 4

SPA 271A Readings in Spanish Literature (Women Writers) 3

WS 201 Women of the World 4

WS 202 Women Working for Change 4

Appendix 2

CORE OUTCOMES MAPPING

PCC Core Outcomes:

1. Communication.
2. Community and Environmental Responsibility.
3. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving.
4. Cultural Awareness.
5. Professional Competence.
6. Self-Reflection.

Mapping Level Indicators:

0 Not Applicable.

1 Limited demonstration or application of knowledge and skills.

2 Basic demonstration and application of knowledge and skills.

3 Demonstrated comprehension and is able to apply essential knowledge and skills.

4 Demonstrates thorough, effective and/or sophisticated application of knowledge and skills.

Course	Course Name	CO1	CO2	CO3	CO4	CO5	CO6
WS 101	Introduction to Women's Studies	3	3	4	3	0	3
WS 201	Women of the World	3	4	4	4	0	3
WS 202	Women Working for Change: History, Theory, Practice	3	4	4	3	0	3

Appendix 3

WOMEN'S STUDIES BUDGETS

Sylvania

- Org Code for WS at Sylvania: A40914 (established Fall 2011)
- FTE for WS at Sylvania for Fall 2011 = 11.95. This is the first term that FTE for WS at Sylvania is being recorded separately. Previously it was included in History's FTE since there was no Org Code for WS in the Social Sciences division.
- Annual Budget: \$16,649 (plus \$2,972 for benefits)
- Cost of offering a total of 12 sections (Winter 2011, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Summer 2011) = \$37,464 (not including benefits)

Rock Creek: no org code or budget

Year	Total annual sections	FTE by term	Cost / How did we pay for it?
2008-2009	4 (1 fall, 1 winter, 2 spring)	2.45 1.73 <u>4.65</u> Total: 8.83	Fall: Holly on overload - \$3,265 (charged to SOC) Winter: Holly on overload - \$3,265 (charged to HST) Spring: Judy taught 2 classes as part of her FT load
2009-2010	6 (1 summer, 1 fall, 2 winter, 2 spring)	1.01 3.11 4.23 <u>4.40</u> Total: 12.75	Summer – Judy as part of her FT load Fall – Holly on overload (charged to SOC) Winter – Holly on overload (charged to HST) and Andrea as part of FT load Spring – Holly on OL (charged to Psych) and Marlene as part of FT load
2010-2011	7 (None summer, 2 fall, 2 winter and 3 spring)	6.87 4.58 <u>7.42</u> Total: 18.87	Fall – Judy taught 2 as part of her load Winter – Melody and Andrea – part of load Spring – Judy taught 2 and Marlene 1 as part of load

It should be noted that even though RC didn't pay Judy, Marlene, Andrea or Melody – we did then have to pay part timers in Psych, History and Sociology to teach the courses they would have otherwise taught if they hadn't been teaching Women's Studies, a total of 7 sections (at about \$3,000 each) during the 2010-2011 year.

Cascade -- no org code or budget

Costs have been included in English when the course is taught by Tanya Pluth—she is part time so we pay for her courses. Maria does them as part of her load, but, as with other campuses, this means we pay PT faculty to cover the classes she is not teaching. Here are the classes from 2011 and the 2 we have planned for winter 2012—we will probably have another one spring 2012 but it's not on the schedule yet.

TERM	CRN	SUBJ	CRSE	TITLE	CR- H	INST-NAME
201104	42164	WS	101	Women's Studies	4	Pluth T
201101	18044	WS	201	Women of the World	4	Wilson-Figueroa
201102	21928	WS	101	Women's Studies	4	Pluth T
201102	28214	WS	202	Women Working for Change	4	Pluth T
201201	17938	WS	101	Women's Studies	4	Wilson-Figueroa
201201	15432	WS	201	Women of the World	4	unstaffed

Each course costs approximately \$3000 plus benefits—for 2011= \$12000 plus approx \$2000.

Appendix 4:

Women's Studies Outcomes Assessment Report and Revised Plan 2010 – 2012

Introductory Narrative:

Women's Studies at Portland Community College draws upon academic professionals from many disciplines, including Psychology, History, English, and Anthropology, to offer Women's Studies classes at the 100 and 200 level. PCC offers a Women's Studies Certificate core program, and Women's Studies courses serve as transfer credit for students continuing education at 4 year institutions. Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to the understanding of difference, identity, and oppression. Women's Studies involves the historical, political, cultural and sociological approaches to the study of gender and women's experience, and introduces the past and present achievements and experiences of women from an interdisciplinary and global perspective. Knowledge derived from women's studies courses enables people to analyze current and past social problems through a particular interdisciplinary lens, examining the dynamics of gender and other aspects of identity in the areas of employment, the family, violence, health and other social institutions. This interdisciplinary lens of critical thinking, combined with an understanding of the experiences, history, needs and abilities of women, is an asset to students considering careers in such fields as education, social service, government, business, law, the ministry, journalism, health, and more.

Currently, Women's Studies offers 6 sections of WS101, including one on-line course, per quarter: 3 at Sylvania, one at Rock Creek, and one at Cascade. In addition, WS201 and WS202 are offered intermittently at Sylvania, Rock Creek, and Cascade. Currently, there are no full-time Women's Studies faculty. As a result, the responsibilities of Chair have been filled by a full-time instructor from a related department. In 2010-2011, WS Chair Judy Zimmerman (FT, Psychology) spearheaded assessment and program review planning and implementation, with the support of Tanya Pluth (PT, English and WS) and Andrea Lowgren (FT, History). In Fall of 2011, Andrea Lowgren assumed Chair duties for WS and continued development of the program review and WS assessment structure. This plan includes reporting on 2010-2011 assessment, and introduces planning for WS assessment for 2011-2012.

Assessment plan progress report:

The Women's Studies Subject Area Committee (SAC) met on October 27, 2010 to develop a plan for assessing student learning. The plan for school year 2010-2011 focused on the following core outcomes: *Critical Thinking, Communication, and Cultural Awareness*. The plan the SAC developed is listed below, with comments on progress and challenges.

1. Student writing samples will be collected. A random sample of 20 papers will be gathered. These papers will be divided equally among the WS 101 courses taught during Winter 2011, including courses taught via a distance learning modality.

Progress Report: WS instructors collected 12 papers from this specific course period. Two campuses participated in sampling: Cascade and Rock Creek.

- In the fall of 2011, during the WS SAC meeting, further writing samples from Spring 2011 were identified, along with samples from Fall 2011. Discussion during the SAC meeting centered around the challenges of coordinating WS instructors to actually collect materials. WS Instructors at the Fall 2011 meeting agreed to identify a more systemic method for gathering materials as a part of developing a more detailed and structured assessment process for WS.

Lessons learned: The variety of instructors offering WS courses and the lack of structural support/cohesion for the WS program created barriers to communicating and following through with assessment efforts. In 2011-2012, new efforts are directed at generating structure, commitment, and engagement from WS Instructors to support assessment efforts.

2. A rubric will be developed for each course to test the course outcomes and their linkage to college core outcomes.

Progress Report: WS Instructors began research and development of potential rubrics for assessing *Critical Thinking, Communication and Cultural Awareness* in Women's Studies' 101 student work in Spring of 2011. WS SAC drafted and modified Value rubrics from AACU's (Association of American Colleges and Universities) *Critical Thinking, Self-Reflection and Cultural Awareness* rubrics. The SAC conducted a norming process at the Fall 2011 SAC meeting. The norming process consisted of:

- 1.) Eight WS SAC members reviewed and discussed the structure and elements of the rubrics for each outcome.
- 2.) Eight WS SAC members used the rubric to score samples of student work independently
- 3.) Eight WS SAC members shared results and scores and identified areas of commonality and inconsistency.
- 4.) Eight WS SAC members discussed how to improve the rubrics for future sampling, including ways to involve WS 101 students in the creation of rubrics and assessment models.

As a result of the norming process, WS SAC members identified a key area to clarify prior to engaging in broader assessment activities:

- 1.) Definition of terms used in the rubric, e.g. "Culture" in cultural awareness, "evidence" in critical thinking, varied among members of the SAC and resulted in assigning differing scores.**

Discussion: Women's Studies instructors present at the Fall 2011 SAC meeting represented many academic disciplines, from Women's Studies to History, English to Sociology and others. Women's Studies, as a new discipline within the academy more generally, is in a unique position of engaging instructors from broad and diverse discipline backgrounds. Although some members of the WS SAC have Women's Studies degrees, others teach Women's Studies through the lens of their "home" disciplines. As a result, terms such as "culture," "evidence" and even "feminist theory" hold slightly different meanings for different members of the SAC, based on their specific lens. For example, one of the student essays, when examined under the rubric of "Cultural Awareness," received widely different scores from reviewers. Discussion of these different scores revealed a curious tension and a foundational problem to conducting assessment within the inter-disciplinary nature of Women's Studies: some members of the SAC defined "culture" to include the different "cultures" that men and women inhabit, with "gender" as a part of "cultural awareness," and assigned the student essay a 4 out of 5 on cultural awareness

elements. Others within the SAC read “culture” to mean more specifically race/ethnicity, and as a result, scored the same essay as a 1 or “does not apply” for cultural awareness elements, because the student did not discuss race/ethnicity in the essay. This is an unacceptable discrepancy, and requires all of us as a SAC to reflect on this information and devise a strategy for clarifying these terms prior to more assessment activities. As a SAC made up of members from diverse disciplines, we have a unique opportunity to reveal each disciplines’ strengths and also limitations, and to truly work within an “interdisciplinary” structure to resolve these elements as we move forward.

- 2.) **Assignment criteria that did not ask students to articulate elements rated in the rubric.** The two essays reviewed during the norming process came from two different courses and represented different types of assignments. One student essay was a “take-home mid-term” requiring the student to intensively articulate feminist theory and provide examples from assigned readings. The other student essay was a “participant research” assignment where students were required to conduct their own observatory research on certain gender-related terms and phrases, and describe their results. In each case, some elements of the rubric were not applicable to what the student had been asked to do in the first place. In those instances, the WS SAC recognized a need to either adjust the rubric to provide more room for capturing the student work, or to adjust/standardize assignments that will be assessed in order to capture accurate information about student learning within WS101 classes.

Lessons Learned: Rubric development challenged WS SAC members to capture the unique learning and critical thinking that occurs as students in WS101 explore core concepts and theory, often engaging with multiple disciplines and forms of learning that are not easy to measure with standardized tools. The SAC looks forward to continuing to test these rubrics during 2011-2012 and discover how effectively the rubrics apply to WS101 assignments and learning.

3. The SAC will meet in the end of winter or early spring terms to assess the sample papers. A subsample will be used to assess inter-rater reliability.

Report: WS SAC did not conduct this assessment. Instead, WS instructors met on Oct. 26th, 2011, to standardize and test sample rubrics and revise assessment process and timeline.

4. Results will be reviewed during the spring SAC meeting.

Report: This timeline failed – see notes and reports above. WS instructors met on Oct. 26th, 2011, to standardize and test sample rubrics and revise assessment process and timeline.

5. The SAC will discuss ways to modify pedagogical methods and strategies if results indicate that such modification is warranted.

Report: This timeline failed – see notes and reports above. WS instructors met on Oct. 26th, 2011, to standardize and test sample rubrics and revise assessment process and timeline.

Revised Plan for Women’s Studies Assessment

When identifying which College Core Outcomes to assess, WS SAC identified Critical Thinking, Self Reflection, Communication, and Cultural Awareness as inherent in Women’s Studies coursework and relatable to/from WS Course Outcomes. In 2011-2012, WS SAC will assess Critical Thinking, Self Reflection and Cultural Awareness, based on a desire to measure how effectively WS courses are meeting these outcomes and gather information about ways to improve WS programming in support of the upcoming WS Program Review.

Women’s Studies assessment model 2011-2012

1. WS101 Outcome	2. Maps to PCC Core Outcome	3. Assessment Setting/Method	4. When will assessment take place ?
Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current and personally experienced events.	Critical Thinking Self Reflection	Critical Thinking Value Rubric Self-Reflection Value Rubric	3/2012
Recognize the influences that systems of oppression have on diverse women’s lives.	Self Reflection Cultural Awareness	Self-Reflection Value Rubric Cultural awareness Value Rubric	3/2012
Identify and analyze social processes that construct gender roles.	Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking Value Rubric	3/2012

PCC Core Outcome: **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**

Related WS101 Course Outcomes: **1.) Identify and analyze social processes that construct gender roles.**

Students in WS101 whose work meets Course Outcomes of “Identify and analyze social processes that construct gender roles” and “Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current and personally experienced events” likewise demonstrate proficiency in elements of PCC Critical Thinking core outcomes: “identify, evaluate and synthesize information from sources; distinguish relevant from non relevant data, fact from opinion; determine the extent of information needed; evaluate information and its sources critically; research and analyze data; interpret and use written, quantitative and visual text effectively.”

PCC Core Outcome: **Cultural Awareness**

Related WS101 Course Outcomes: **Recognize the influences that systems of oppression have on diverse women’s lives.**

Students in WS101 whose work meets Course Outcomes of “Recognize the influences that systems of oppression have on diverse women’s lives” likewise demonstrate proficiency in elements of PCC’s Cultural Awareness core outcome: “Use an understanding of the variations in human culture, perspectives and forms of expression to constructively address issues that arise out of cultural differences in the workplace and community.”

PCC Core Outcome: Self-Reflection

Related WS101 Course Outcomes: 1.) Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current, and personally experienced events.

Students in WS101 whose work meets Course Outcomes of “Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current, and personally experienced events” and “Recognize the influences that systems of oppression have on diverse women’s lives” likewise demonstrate proficiency in elements of PCC’s Self-Reflection core outcome: “Assess, examine and reflect on one’s own academic skill, professional competence and personal beliefs and how these impact others.”

Assessment Techniques in WS101 Courses at PCC

Women’s Studies faculty use a wide range of assessment techniques to monitor student progress toward learning outcomes. Formative assessments include reading response journals, class exercises, small group activities, free/expressive writing, class discussions, peer reviews, and role plays. These tools provide feedback to teacher and student, so that course experiences and study can be modified before larger summative assessments take place. A high reliance on formative tools is consistent with feminist pedagogy, whose principles emphasize the instructor’s role as coach, rather than judge. These formative tools also facilitate growth of self-directed assessment and metacognition, encouraging students to gauge some of their own learning. This is part and parcel of another key aspect of feminist pedagogy, which strives to cultivate trust in one’s own lived experience, and fair distribution of power between teacher and student.

Summative assessments such as written and oral examinations, research and analysis projects, oral and visual presentations, performances, portfolios, and essays constitute key tools. Some of these are done on a collaborative basis, with students working in teams. This is true of presentations, performances, and research projects. Women’s Studies was also an early adopter of service learning activities, using this form of assessment prior to the inception of a district-wide service learning coordinator position and associated initiatives. Service learning is also congruent with principles of feminist pedagogy and the activism out of which the academic discipline of Women’s Studies was founded. These ethics demand that learning be used to improve women and girls’ lives, and the communities in which they live.

Sampling techniques:

WS SAC members decided to focus the assessment on WS101. This course is the entry level course to WS and engages the largest numbers of PCC students. As a foundational course, WS101 introduces students to the basic elements of the discipline. Conducting assessment of the WS101 courses will provide the SAC with insight into what students are learning about core elements of the WS discipline, from which the SAC can determine effective strategies for any necessary improvement.

Assessing Critical Thinking within a Women’s Studies setting

Progress Report:

WS SAC members began researching Critical Thinking assessment techniques as utilized by other disciplines at the college level. We reviewed numerous models, including those specifically developed for and used by Women’s Studies departments at other institutions. Throughout the development of rubrics

for each element assessed, WS SAC focused on exploring the question of what “critical thinking” looks like in WS101 coursework. This led WS SAC members to explore the “Values” rubrics available from the AACU. These values rubrics articulate precise definitions of outcomes within rubric models that are tightly connected to measurable categories. WS SAC members chose Values rubric models and elements most closely relatable to PCC’s Core elements of Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, along with the WS101 outcome of “Identify and analyze social processes that construct gender roles” and “Use concepts basic to feminist thought in order to develop new understandings of historical, current and personally experienced events.” Please see attached rubric for the model that WS SAC members used during the test assessment period in the fall of 2011.

Assessing Self-Reflection within a Women’s Studies setting

Progress report:

From its very beginning as an academic discipline, Women’s Studies placed high value on linking lived experience to academic knowledge. Experiential learning activities are common in our classrooms. For example, in a unit on work and poverty, groups are asked to draw up a monthly budget for different family constellations using family incomes at the current federally defined poverty threshold, Oregon minimum wage, and Multnomah county living wage standard. Role-plays and student-designed skits are another powerful method that not only cultivates high levels of student engagement in the learning process, they also convey key principles of feminist pedagogy, namely, that women’s lives must also be understood from the inside-out. In Women’s Studies, the method is often the message. As a discipline Women’s Studies values the authority of experience. As such guest speakers are a regular part of our classrooms, as having people tell their *own* stories, rather than having their experience be interpreted by a third party, best embodies principles of feminist inquiry and pedagogy. Literature, poetry, narratives, essays, art and film are other key ways that the unique character and the diversity of women’s lives are made real.

To capture this unique learning, WS SAC members designed a “Values” rubric based on models available from the AACU. These values rubrics articulate precise definitions of outcomes within rubric models that are tightly connected to measurable categories. Please see attached rubric for the model that WS SAC members used during the test assessment period.

Assessing Cultural Awareness within a Women’s Studies setting

Creating a climate where civil discourse dominates, controversial issues can be discussed, and diversity is celebrated is essential to achieving the WS goal of applying learning to personal and community life. Our classrooms are characterized by high levels of rapport -- despite the fact that the physical setting of many classrooms is hostile to doing small group work and experiential learning activities. The experiences of diverse women are widely represented in course readings and materials, as well as in the students themselves. WS SAC seeks to capture the learning students engage in around issues of cultural awareness during WS101. Please see the attached Cultural Awareness Values rubric, adapted from the InterCultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE rubric from the AACU.

2011-2012 Next Steps:

WS SAC faces numerous challenges to conducting the in-depth assessment that its members wish to perform. While each WS SAC member present at the Fall 2011 meeting expressed a desire to discover the kinds of patterns, trends, and revelations that precise and intentional assessment can provide, the fact that each member of the SAC also has duties in their “home” SAC greatly impacts the amount of time

available to develop these measuring tools and structures. We look forward to guidance from PCC Administration regarding support available for either WS SAC part-time members to receive compensation for their work developing assessment, or release for FT faculty to attend to WS SAC assessment duties. In the meantime, the WS SAC plans to conduct the following steps to continue advancing assessment:

- 1.) **Fall 2011:** Identify and assign WS Instructors to draft assignments that attend to key elements of the Self-Reflection and Critical thinking rubrics for use in Winter 2012.
- 2.) **Fall 2011:** Revise rubrics and conduct sub-committee meeting to address issues with consistency raised during the norming process.
- 3.) **Winter 2012:** Collect 20 papers for assessment from Winter 2012 WS101 courses at Cascade, Sylvania and Rock Creek.
- 4.) **Spring 2012:** Conduct assessment on essays collected in Winter 2012 and write report updating assessment outcomes.