**Annual Departmental Assessment Report**

**Department or Program:** WGSS

**Academic Year of Report:** 2018-2019

**Department Contact Person for Assessment**: Judith Raiskin

**Section 1: Learning Objectives Assessed for this Report**

*Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies Major*

LO4 : Be prepared to connect feminist knowledge and skills with their communities in order to participate in social justice activism and civic engagement

**Section 2: Assessment Activities**

Our current senior course WGS 411 “Feminist Praxis: Internship Seminar” addresses our LO4 goal of connecting feminist academic work with community engagement. The course combines classroom work and internships at non-profit organizations, businesses, and on-campus offices. Assessment of students’ classroom work is based on:

1. Weekly writing reflections on three different questions relating to the students’ weekly experiences in their internships, the structure and challenges of their organization or agency, and a question that asks students to relate their work to the weekly assigned readings focused on a variety of social justice movements.
2. A longer 8-page paper on the history of their agency or organization and its connection with other organizations and movements nationwide.
3. A small-group collaborative and activity-based presentation on related organizations.

Assessment of the internship is based on weekly reports, an evaluation from an on-site supervisor, and a completed log of hours.

To ascertain whether the class is meeting our learning objective goal of connecting feminist knowledge and skills with community and civic engagement, we have asked students in the past 4 years to answer the following as their week 8 reflection question:

***Question: Do you think that internship classes or practicum credits are academically valid?* *Do you think it is important to have an internship or activist component as part of the WGS major? Why or why not?***

We have received 51 long-answer responses that reveal that almost all the students find that the experience of the guided internship connected with a course achieves our learning objective #4. This survey, and the unstructured information we have received about student employment following graduation, reveals additional benefits for the students for post-graduation professional development.

Professor Judith Raiskin, who has been teaching the course, communicates with all the supervisors in the internships and has received very positive feedback about the dedication, informed insight, and professionalism of the WGSS majors. Those assessments are both in writing and spoken communication. Raiskin attributes the strength of WGSS students to their academic preparation in feminist knowledge from their previous courses and the weekly seminar that focuses on the connection of that material to the work in the community.

**Section 3: Actions Taken Based on Assessment Analysis**

As a result of the assessment, and the positive feedback the course has received, we feel we are meeting this learning objective. The teaching practices used in this course meet the standards of inclusive, engaged and research-led. However, we understand that our practices can always be improved. Therefore, we will continue to collect WGS 411 student reflections as well as from the onsite internship supervisors. We will also consider revising the survey question to include a question about how feminist knowledge and skills have shaped their work in their internship. Our department will also consider how LO4 might apply to our other courses and reassess this learning outcome based on our long-term LO Schedule (see Section 5 below). This revision will help us continue to incorporate the recently stated teaching standards of inclusive, engaged and research-led teaching practices.

**Section 4: Other Efforts to Improve the Student Educational Experience**

The WGSS curriculum was revised after our last external review in 2016, and we have finally fully transitioned to it this year. This gives us the opportunity to newly assess what the students find valuable or problematic about our classes and overall goals. We have devised an on-line survey that we will be sending to our majors and graduate students who have graduated asking them a series of questions about their take-aways from the curriculum and what they are doing now. We will be sending this out over the summer of 2020 and hope to see how our learning outcomes translate to their current employment of graduate/professional school pursuits.

**Section 5: Plans for Next Year**

Starting in spring 2020- Winter 2021, we plan to assess our LO2: “Develop skills in critical thinking and analysis through feminist research and methods.” Each faculty member will fill out the “goal definition worksheet” and we will hold a faculty meeting to compare notes and discuss results such as the ways in which students have been meeting or not meeting this learning outcome. In particular, we will revisit a discussion of our WGS 101 course and how it might be revised to better meet this learning objective. We will discuss our students’ strengths and weaknesses related to the learning goal. The department head, undergraduate studies director, and curriculum committee will form a committee and propose an actionable change to be put in place the following year in an attempt to improve student learning.

**SCHEDULE OF ASSESSMENT:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| WGSS LEARNING OBJECTIVES\* | AY 18-19 | AY 19-20 | AY 20-21 | AY 21-22 |
| LO1: Develop feminist conceptual lens |  | X |  |  |
| LO2: develp skills critical thinking |  |  | X |  |
| lo3: writing skills, speaking |  |  |  | X |
| lo4: connect to communities | X |  |  |  |

\*WGSS Learning Objectives

1. Develop a broad understanding of feminist studies and histories through interdisciplinary, intersectional, and transnational conceptual lenses.
2. Develop skills in critical thinking and analysis through feminist research and methods.
3. Be able to convey complex information and ideas through accessible writing, speaking, and online communication.
4. Be prepared to connect feminist knowledge and skills with their communities in order to participate in social justice activism and civic engagement.