SFU OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST

8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC   TEL: 778.782.5731   vpacad@sfu.ca
DISC 1 | 1625   FAX: 778.782.5876   www.sfu.ca/vpacademic
Canada V5A 1S6

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate	**DATE**	March 01, 2021
FROM	Catherine Dauvergne, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP	**PAGES**	1 of 1
RE:	External Review Mid-Cycle Report Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies (SCUP 21-08)		

The External Review of the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies was conducted in April 2017. As per Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan. At its February 17th meeting SCUP reviewed the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies' mid-cycle report.

The mid-cycle report, the Unit's assessment of its Educational Goals, and SCUTL's Feedback on the Educational Goals are attached for the information of Senate.

C: H. Leung

SFU

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Catherine Dauvergne, Chair, SCUP	**DATE**	February 5, 2021
FROM	Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic	**PAGES**	1 of 1
RE:	External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies		

The External Review of the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies was undertaken in April 2017. As per the Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan and the assessment of its Educational Goals. The update on the Action Plan has been reviewed by the Faculty Dean. The Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning (SCUTL) has provided feedback to the Unit on the assessment of its Educational Goals. The recommendations from SCUTL will be incorporated into the Unit's self-study report for the next external review.

The following documents are attached for the information of SCUP:
- Update on the Action Plan
- Assessment of Educational Goals
- SCUTL's Feedback on the Educational Goals

c: Helen Leung, Chair, Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

MEMO

ATTENTION Bal Basi, Coordinator, Quality Assurance

FROM Helen Leung, Department Chair, Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies (GSWS)

RE External Review Mid-Cycle Report for GSWS

DATE Februart 1, 2021

Please find attached a Mid-Cycle Report and an Assessment Report of our department's Educational Goals.

I am happy to provide any additional material if necessary.

cc: Dr. Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

Action	Progress Made
1. Programming	
1.1.1 Undergraduate	
• Review curricular themes	We reviewed current curricular themes and found that themes were not effective in guiding students towards courses choices as the themes are too static and have caused confusion to students. We decided not to continue with the curricular themes but instead develop a more dynamic and interactive tool to articulate and advertise GSWS program distinctiveness (see below).
• Articulate and advertise GSWS program distinctiveness	We are consulting with IT to find a suitable interactive software (akin to a "vote compass" tool used for elections) to develop a "course compass" tool on our website to enable students to answer questions about their interests while directing them to relevant courses that match those interests.
• Investigate establishment of undergraduate Honours program	After consulting with students, we discovered there is not enough interest in an Honours program to warrant further exploration. Instead, students showed interest in receiving some form of professionally recognizable certification for their work in areas of equality, diversity, and inclusion. We have thus turned our attention to explore developing an EDI Certificate, a process that is currently in the consultation and market research phase.
• Increase diversity of faculty and course topics	Since the last external review, three new continuing faculty members have joined the department, thus significantly diversifying our research and teaching profile, adding expertise in the following areas: global health, transgender studies, South Asia (Vaibhav Saria); critical race studies, feminist geographies, Filipinx diaspora studies (May Farreles, jointly appointed in Geography); and visual studies, cultural and literary history, Asian diaspora studies (Nadine Attewell, with 50% teaching in Global Asia)
1.1.2 Graduate	
• Revisit the role of the graduate courses in Professional Development	We have reviewed the graduate Professional Development series and determine that it is a significant component of the graduate program as it provides important skill sets and professional training for students to succeed in graduate school as well as develop a smooth transition into a professional career beyond graduation. The two-part course stretching over two semesters is in fact only one

	(6-credit) course but it functions to create a cohort and provide a space of support for students during their first year in the graduate program.
• Establish Rationale for Feminist Theory course and consider mandatory Methodology course	We have established the Feminist Theory course as a core graduate course to provide students with an understanding of the intellectual foundation of the field. We have revised the curriculum to make the methodology course (now renamed "Toolkits for GSWS Research") mandatory for students taking the MA Thesis, and one of two standalone graduate courses students in the MA Course Intensive option must choose to complete the program.
• Consider additional graduate courses (including summer courses)	Since 2017, we have been able to regularly offer 1-2 additional graduate courses during the summer, which is much welcomed by students.
• Streamline Graduate Degree milestones and articulate vision for MA and PhD programs	In 2018 (approved in 2019), we revised our graduate program curriculum to update course titles and content to better reflect our program's vision; increased the significance of the methodology course in the MA program (as described above); and streamlined the PhD program requirements with clearer and achievable milestones for students to complete their coursework, comprehensive exams, and thesis proposal within the first two years of their study. We also articulated a clearer vision on our website for the MA Course Intensive option to highlight the program's specific emphasis in developing students' academic learning into practical applications for the workplace.
2. Research	
• Work with Associate Dean, Research (FASS) and Vice-President, Research to increase research visibility	We are developing a "Research Hub" on our departmental website to highlight current faculty members' research in formats that are suitable for public engagement. We are currently working on the content and hope to launch the Research Hub during our 50th Anniversary celebration in 2021. We will seek the support of FASS AD-Research and the VP-R Office to help us with the Hub's visibility.
• Highlight intersection of GSWS research and VPR research initiatives	One of the VP-R's strategic initiatives is Knowledge Mobilization. To highlight the influential knowledge mobilization achievements of researchers who came out of our Ruth Wynn Woodward Endowed Chair program, we have secured the support of the President's Office and the Office of the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to offer the 2021 Presidents' Dream Colloquium on "From Conversations to Action: Creating From Social Justice Research," where past

	RWW Chairs with expertise and experience of highly successful public engagement will share their knowledge mobilization strategies with students.
• Build on and highlight collaborative and international faculty-led research initiatives (China, Hong Kong graduate exchanges); dedicate section of website to promote special initiatives in community-engaged research and international collaborations	International collaboration initiatives have run into challenges since Covid-19 imposed travel restrictions. Current projects with universities in Hong Kong are also facing challenges due to changes in the legal situation in Hong Kong regarding freedom of expression. Dialogues on how to further these initiatives will continue but much is uncertain at the current moment.
• Consult with Graduate Studies regarding joint degrees and student/faculty exchanges; continue to work with SFU International on internationalization projects	A field school in India is being explored with SFU International but progress is dependent on more clarity around health and safety for international travel in the near future.
• Publish annual research report highlighting faculty and graduate student research successes: post on website and distribute to SFU administration	See the section above on the creation of a GSWS Research Hub. We will also develop social media strategies using hastag #GSWSResearch to disseminate regular news about faculty and graduate student research successes.
3. Administration	
• Request 1 day/week of a shared communications position to aid the Department Manager in: promoting and communication research, events, and community engagement (i.e help organize and promote approximately 100 events per year, including outreach, annual symposiums (Rosemary Brown Symposium, Margaret Lowe Benston lecture series, Ruth Wynn Woodward lecture series), and Woodward Travelling Speaker Series; maintain and expand social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	The position has been filled and we have benefitted enormously from our Communication and Events Coordinator, who has done an extraordinary job in helping us promote our slate of outreach and public engagement activities.
• Confirm dedicated department meeting space	Renovations are currently being completed for a dedicated meeting space in our department.
• Update and reorganize website to highlight faculty and student research initiatives and success	Our website has been updated this year and we will continue to work on making it a dynamic and appealing environment to highlight our initiatives and success.
4. Working Environment	
• Continue to work with Associate faculty members in Hellenic Studies, First Nations Studies, History, and other units to	We have continued to work with, and expand, our pool of associate faculty members. We currently offer cross-listed or cross-designated courses with Hellenic Studies, Labour Studies, Urban Studies, and Indigenous Studies. With the

develop additional cross-listed or designated courses at undergraduate and graduate level	connection of two of our newly appointed faculty members, we also plan to develop similar arrangements with Geography and Global Asia.
5. Alumni and Mentorship	
• Expand alumni presence on website	We have launched a Linked In group specifically for GSWS alumni and students. We hope to use this platform to build a more effective alumni network.
• Connect alumni with current graduate students in mentorship relationships	We have invited alumni members to participate in two new initiatives, one featuring alumni who are authors (GSWS Reads) and one featuring alumni who are activists and changemakers (GSWS Acts). We hope that these events will help build alumni relationships with current students. Alongside the LinkedIn group, we will encourage mentorship relationships to emerge from these engagements.
• Develop career days and mentorship programs for undergraduate students	The LinkedIn group and the above alumni events are for both graduate and undergraduate alumni and students. We are actively working with the Office of Alumni Relations to promote these initiatives in order to develop a robust alumni network that will remain in close connection with the department.

Educational Goals Assessment Mid-Cycle Report
Department of Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies

Background
We asked instructors the following two questions when identifying educational goals for their courses:

- What do I want students to know?
- What do I want them to be able to do when they graduate with a degree in GSWS?

Our assessment plan was developed with an aim to provide useful findings to help instructors see which goals are successfully met by their courses and which goals need additional attention.

Since we mapped the curriculum to our educational goals in 2016-17, there have been substantial changes in our faculty complement, including one faculty member's planned retirement, the addition of three continuing faculty members, and an additional faculty member due to join us in January, 2021. These welcomed additions to our personnel necessitate a review of our curriculum map and an examination of how new courses fit with our educational goals. We have developed a pilot assessment plan, with the intention of learning from its outcomes. On the basis of this pilot assessment, we plan to develop an updated continuous assessment plan and a reporting template that we will provide to every faculty member to more easily facilitate the collection of data every semester.

Pilot Assessment
For the pilot assessment, we collected data from courses mapped to each program-level goal, and to a selection of the component goals. We revised the initial mapping to exclude courses taught by sessional and limited term instructors to focus instead on **courses taught by continuing faculty** members (CFL) in order to maintain a continuing basis for comparison. We have also focussed on **direct assessment** as those are regular elements of a course that are shared across the curriculum. We collected data from courses at the 100-level (150-250 enrollment, aimed at the general student population); 300-level (35-60 enrollment; aimed at students with an interest in GSWS), and 400-level (20-25 enrollment; aimed at GSWS majors and minors) in order to assess the goals in different pedagogical situations. We use **grade distribution** (usually for a specific project or assignment) as a common data point. We look for the **percentage of students who received B- (72%) or higher**. From this data point, we could see what portion of the class *overall* is considered to be "succeeding" toward this educational goal.

Findings from our pilot assessment are summarized as follows:

Program Goal: **Display disciplinary knowledge of core concepts of gender and sexuality**
Component/Definition: Students can understand and evaluate some of the major intellectual theories and scholarship relevant to the field of gender and sexuality.
Data Source: GSWS 100   *Year/Semester*: 2017 Fall, 2018 Fall
Direct Assessment Method: Exams on core concepts

Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

Midterm Exam 2018	Final Exam 2018	Midterm Exam 2019	Final Exam 2019
54%	89%	64%	85%

*Findings***:** We found that a majority of students have fulfilled this educational goal by the end of the course. The significant increase in the proportion of students succeeding in this goal between the midterm and final exam suggests that the learning method in this class is progressive and cumulative, and that most students require time to process the course material before reaching this goal.

Program Goal: **Develop Transferable Skills and Information Literacy**
Component/Definition: Students will be able to effectively communicate in written and oral formats.
Data Source: GSWS 101   *Year/Semester*: 2017 Fall, 2018 Fall, 2019 Fall
Direct Assessment Method: An assignment in which students prepare for and participate in a debate on issues related to course material.
Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

2017	2018	2019
94%	91%	92%

*Findings***:** The data indicate that students almost universally succeed at this goal. However, it is unclear if this skill is being *developed* in the course. In order to measure development, we would need to collect data that track some steps in the progress of the assignment. For future iterations of the course, the instructor plans to break up the assignment into several steps and assess each to measure progress.

Program Goal: **Develop Transferable Skills and Information Literacy**
Component/Definition: Students will engage in independent and collaborative tasks.
Data Source: GSWS 431   *Year/Semester*: 2017 Spring, 2020 Spring
Direct Assessment Method: An assignment in which students collaboratively develop a public engagement project based on academic ideas learnt in the course.
Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

2017	2020
86%	100%

Findings: The data indicate that the majority of students reach this goal. Similar to the last goal, it is unclear if and how this skill is being *developed*. Also, since the assignment requires both independent and collaborative skills, it would bs useful to have separate assessment of each skill. For future iterations of the course, the instructor plans to break up the assignment into several steps, and to distinguish between individual and collaborative skills, in order to assess the goal with more useful and detailed information.

Program Goal: **Analyze and assess the concept of gender with an intersectional focus**
Component/Definition: Understand and explain the concepts of privilege and oppression in relation to categories of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity, sexuality, and/or dis/ability
Data Source: GSWS 330   *Year/Semester*: 2019 Fall

Direct Assessment Method: Exams
Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

Midterm 2020	Final Exam 2020
68%	93%

Findings: The data collected from this class indicate that most students succeed in meeting this goal and that there is progress made throughout the semester. We plan to continue to track the data of this class, as well as to map to this goal new courses taught by faculty members who have recently joined the department. We hope to be able to collect more data in the coming years.

Program Goal: **Analyze, assess, and apply interdisciplinary approaches to gender and sexuality.**
Component/Definition: Students can formulate a supported position based on assessment of scholarly research.
Data Source: GSWS 431   *Year/Semester*: 2017 Spring, 2020 Spring
Direct Assessment Method: A final research paper that must include elements of original research and a literature review of irrelevant interdisciplinary scholarship on the research topic
Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

2017	2020
90%	93%

Findings: We found that students almost universally succeed in this goal. As the data is collected from a final assignment in an advanced seminar taken by students during the last year of their study, we can surmise that success in this goal also measures students' development and progress through the program.

Program Goal: **Display Engaged and Empathetic Citizenship**
Component/Definition: Students engage with issues of inequality, oppression and justice in relation to gender and other identities.
Data Source: GSWS 316   *Year/Semester*: 2019 Spring, 2020 Spring
Direct Assessment Method: A group project in which students pick a very specific object related to science & sex and work collaboratively over a month to slowly unpack and map the histories, connections, uses, materials, myths, erasures, and other dimensions of that object as it relates to systems of oppression and group identities.
Data Point: Percentage of students in class who received a B- or higher

2019	2020
90%	93%

Findings: We found that students almost universally succeed in this goal.

Concluding Summary and Next Actions
In conclusion, findings from our pilot assessment suggest that we are very much on the right track and are succeeding in meeting our educational goals in a variety of pedagogical situations throughout our program. We have also identified some gaps in our pilot assessment plan, which we will revise as we develop our continuous assessment plan and a reporting template.

In addition to the direct assessment methods, which we have focused on in the pilot, we will also be developing indirect assessment methods, such as student surveys and focus groups, to assess some of the high-level program goals more effectively.

Mid-Cycle Educational Goals Assessment Report Review

Provided by SCUTL, the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning

Unit name: **Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies**   Date: 12 January 2021

This form provides feedback from members of the SCUTL subcommittee that reviews plans and reports resulting from SFU external reviews. Our aim is to provide formative feedback on the work being undertaken to set and assess educational goals for programs at SFU. As the inclusion of SCUTL in the external review process is new, we would appreciate hearing from the unit regarding whether this feedback is helpful so we can continue to revise and improve our process. Please feel free to contact the Chair of SCUTL, Elizabeth Elle, at any time (avplt@sfu.ca).

We found that in order to provide feedback on mid-cycle reports, we needed to also consider the assessment plan produced at the start of the external review process. This worksheet notes where particular elements are present in the plan or the assessment, if they are aligned with the aims of the unit, and the strengths and weaknesses of both the plan and the mid-cycle assessment. SCUTL is working from these guiding principles: assessment plans should be **feasible**, **context-sensitive**, and **assess the program, not individual instructors or courses.**

Stage	Element	Plan	Report	Other Comments/Suggestions
Plan and Prioritize	Who will work on the assessment and why	EG coordinator		
	Department context provided		Yes, for instance the addition of new faculty members	
	Plan for engaging faculty		A template to be provided to every faculty member for every semester.	
	Reasonable timeframe		To be continuous work.	The unit may find continuous work useful, but it exceeds expectations. It may be more tractable to assess only a subset of EGs each year with the goal of assessing all once or twice over the 7-year cycle.
Define and Refine	EGs are broken down to measurable sub-goals	Yes		
	Revise EGs (if unit deems necessary)			Not yet articulated

Curriculum Mapping	Identification of key courses that address specific EGs	Yes		All courses assessed, though GSWS appears to be selecting courses to assess based on the population taking them (majors, general audience, students with interest in GSWS but not necessarily majors), to see if their Ed goals are being attained by these different groups. This is a positive and interesting way of assessing EG's.
	Curriculum mapping plan (e.g. Introduce/Develop/Proficient; instructional strategies; assessments)		With new faculty joining unit, plan to review curriculum map to see how new courses align with Ed Goals.	
Assess and Discuss	Specific direct, course-based evidence of student learning as linked to particular EGs		They are honing in on particular assessments, whether or not these are in the map. Assessed some different courses from those outlined in plan.	Re: use of course goals, some units have found it helpful to hone in on particular aspects of the assignment that meets the goal. It may be possible to use one assignment to assess student achievement of multiple EGs – for instance, is it possible that the public engagement activity in 431 provides a valid measure of engaged and empathic citizenship in addition to transferable skills and information literacy?
	Feasible plan for collecting additional data (indirect evidence), if needed		Plan to develop student surveys and focus group to help assess high-level EGs.	Rationale for these is not as clearly explained as rationale for other aspects of data collection.
	Rationale for data collection, including alignment with EGs; plan is clear and feasible	Yes	Courses taught by continuing faculty members (for continuity); Direct assessment (regular elements of course); Grade distribution to see overall success; In pilot, appears to be different groups of students (general audience, students with interest, majors/minors)	Overall grade may not be the best measure. Would suggest looking at aspects of graded assignment/exam that address EG, for example there might be components of marking rubrics that would be more closely aligned with what you'd like to know. Some units randomly sample and re-assess work in light of EGs instead of using grades.
	Plan to share findings within unit			Not yet articulated

Implement Improvements	(Provisional) Plan for using findings		Individual instructors plan to use findings to improve courses.	Unit is self-reflective about assessment process, and plans to add indirect assessment

Strengths: Carefully thought through plan with clear rationale for data collection. GSWS is thinking about aligning this work with new faculty members and new courses – demonstrates that they are embedding this work in department teaching and learning practices. They are also doing the work longitudinally to ensure student success is consistent across years. They have completed every aspect of their plan (direct assessment), on a limited scale in the pilot. They have reflected on the assessment process and plan to improve on it. They are using an interesting approach to select courses based on the population taking them (majors, general audience, students with interest in GSWS but not necessarily majors), to see if their Ed goals are being attained by these different groups.

Weakness: unsure if grade is the best measure, may want to focus on particular aspects of course-based assessments that demonstrate student attainment of EGs. Don't necessarily need to do every course every year unless you find it helpful (for instance, your goal of ensuring consistency across course offerings).

Recommendation: Identify key courses that are aligned with Educational Goals and focus direct assessment of student learning on those courses.

If you would like support for re-imagining direct or indirect assessments, please consider contacting Alice Campbell in CEE, who is in a new role of Specialist, Program Assessment (alice_campbell@sfu.ca)