

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities

S.03-19

Memorandum

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Chair, SCUP
Vice President, Academic

RE: Department of Women's Studies
External Review

DATE: January 10, 2003

The Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) has reviewed the External Review Report on the Department of Women's Studies together with the response from the Department and comments from the Acting Dean of Arts.

Motion:

That Senate concurs with the recommendations from the Senate Committee on University Priorities concerning advice to the Department of Women's Studies on priority items resulting from the external review as outlined in S.03-19

The report of the External Review Committee for the Department of Women's Studies was submitted on July 8, 2002 following the review site visit May 15 - 16, 2002. The response of the Department Chair was received on October 29, 2002 followed by that of the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Arts on December 12, 2002.

The external review team was asked to focus on five particular issues including:

- Faculty Renewal
- Community Outreach Initiatives
- The new PhD Program Proposal
- The new Undergraduate Minor in Gender Studies
- Research Activity, Peer Reviewed Publications and External Funding

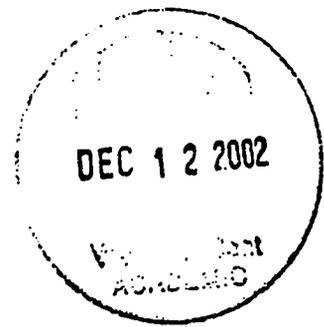
As a result of the information materials provided, the comprehensive site visit and the subsequent external review report and comments, it is apparent that the Department is actively engaged with all five of these issues. In relation to other concerns that arose during the course of the external review, such as the certificate program, student lounge space and research funding for graduate students, the Department has already begun to take steps to explore and to address these issues.

In relation to two particular areas of concern that came forward as a result of the external review, SCUP recommends to Senate that the Department of Women's Studies and the Dean of Arts be advised to pursue the following as priority items:

1. To continue to investigate an appropriate lectureship model such as a half-time, rotating or joint opportunity and a suitable structure for it within the Department in order to provide greater continuity in temporary instruction.
2. To seek additional base funding for staff positions to be used to support the regular activities of the Department including the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair.

encl.

c: M. Kimball, Chair, Department of Women's Studies
J. Pierce, Dean, Faculty of Arts

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts

MEMORANDUM

To: John Waterhouse,
VPA & Chair of SCUP

From: Roger Blackman
Acting Dean of Arts

Subject: Women's Studies Department
Dean's Report on External Review

Date: December 11, 2002

The external reviewers of the Department of Women's Studies gave it a clear and convincing thumbs up on such major aspects of departmental functioning as faculty scholarship, program quality, governance structure and collegiality. Their recommendations addressed concerns of a more minor nature.

I agree with the Department Chair in her assessments of most of the reviewers' recommendations, particularly those that are:

- a) Superfluous, e.g.:
 - the need for student orientations (#5).

- b) Impractical, e.g.:
 - more detailed course outlines (#4)
 - greater flexibility in the course-intensive MA program (#8).

- c) Sensible, e.g.:
 - watching for possible negative impact of the new Gender Studies Minor (#9)
 - being cautious when implementing the proposed PhD program (#10)

- d) Already in hand, e.g.:
 - exposing students to activities in the larger feminist community (#13)

- successsion planning for the department chair (#14).

As to the recommended rotating lectureship, the Dean's Office will work with the department toward the goal of greater continuity in temorary instruction, although the department's small size makes it unlikely that this will be achieved with a full-time lecturer position.

The external reviewers touch on another difficult resource issue in Recommendation #18, where they urge the administration to provide significant additional base funding for staff positions. Women's Studies is one of several programs in Arts that are requesting enhanced staff support. We will continue our efforts to secure the funding needed to address the neediest cases, but it is very hard to find base funding for this purpose as the administration presses Faculties to use this money to bring down their student-faculty ratios. However, we are prepared to provide one-time funding to allow Women's Studies to cope with periods of high demand on their staff.

CC: Meredith Kimball, Chair of Women's Studies

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
MEMORANDUM
WOMEN'S STUDIES DEPARTMENT**

TO:
Laurie Summers

FROM:
Meredith Kimball
Chair, Women's Studies

RE:
Department Response to External Review

DATE:
October 28, 2002

Attached please find a copy of the Department's Response to the Women's Studies External Review. If you need any further information, please let me know.

Meredith



Women's Studies External Review Departmental Response

GENERAL RESPONSE:

Overall the External Review Report was very positive. The reviewers state that they "would rank the Women's Studies Department at Simon Fraser University amongst the best in terms of quality of its programs, research output, the governance structure, and collegiality amongst faculty members". Faculty members are described as "highly respected scholars with international reputations". They find that the undergraduate programs have both "breadth and depth" and that the MA program is "excellent". The reviewers are fully supportive of the need for faculty renewal which is the major focus of the department at this time: "The effort to create full-time faculty positions at the entry level, and joint appointments at the senior level through a Joint CRC Chair have the full support of this review team". They describe their 20 recommendations as addressing "minor rather than major changes". We appreciate their comments and the spirit in which they offer their recommendations. Each recommendation is responded to in this report.

Before moving to the specific recommendations, there are some perceptions, interpretations, and errors in nomenclature or fact in their text that we wish to clarify. None of these comments are meant to detract from their work. They were presented with an overwhelming amount of information, not all of it consistent. The work of sorting through so much information is a mammoth task. We address these points here in the order that they arise in the text.

On page 3, paragraph 2, they discuss the graduate students' preferences for stand-alone graduate courses. The difficulty in providing more stand alone courses that they cite--the need for a minimum number of students in each course--is in our view the lesser of two problems. All of the stand-alone graduate courses we have offered in the past several years have had five or more students. The larger problem, from our point of view is the balance between graduate and undergraduate teaching. Faculty members are given a course credit for teaching a stand-alone graduate course. The undergraduate teaching (one course) that is lost is not replaced. Thus the more stand-alone graduate courses that are offered, the fewer undergraduate courses we can offer, and the fewer that are taught by regular faculty.

On page 4, first full paragraph, the reviewers refer to faculty members participation in the "Speaker's Bureau". The Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (RWWP) endowment is used to support a Travelling Speaker's Series within the department, and this is what the reviewers are referring to. Some of our faculty members also participate in the SFU Speaker's Bureau as well, but this is a separate and university wide program, while the Travelling Speaker's Series is internal to WS.

In their report of their discussions with the senior administrators (page 5, paragraph 4) the reviewers report the concerns of senior administrators about the low enrollments and

the cost of the program per student. There are two misperceptions in this discussion we wish to correct. The first misperception is that enrollments in WS are declining. This was true two years ago, however the 2001-2002 yearly enrollments (74.6 FTE) were up considerably from the 2000-2001 enrollments (62.9 FTE). Furthermore, the fall enrollments for 2002 were up (33.5 FTE) from the fall of 2001 (30.2 FTE). Thus the decline of a few years ago is being reversed. The same is true of the number of majors and minors. At the time of the review, there were 71 majors, minors, and joint majors. This figure was up from 58 the previous year. With the establishment of the Gender Studies course and minor which will be administered by Women's Studies, we expect a further increase in overall enrollment. In the same paragraph estimates cited of costs per student are high. We assume these figures have been carefully calculated, but it is important that only half of the salary for joint appointments be counted in these figures, and that modified contracts and long-term disability leaves be taken into account. High costs may also be due to the age structure of our faculty. Since all but one of the current faculty are over 55 and a number are close to the top of the salary range, these costs should decrease with the appointment of junior faculty.

An equally serious misperception is the statement "Exit surveys indicated that the program was not attractive to males and to minorities and seems to meet the needs of white females more than any other group". The exit surveys referred to are the university exit surveys. Because WS is a small program, very few of our students are contacted in the random survey and even fewer respond. Thus the perception that only white females take our courses is based on a highly selective and extremely small sample. In preparation for this review we conducted surveys of all our graduates from the BA and MA program in the spring of 2001 and of the students currently enrolled in our courses in the spring of 2002. The results of the graduate surveys appear in the WS 2000-2001 Newsletter and the results of the survey of current students appear in the WS 2001-2002 Newsletter. These surveys show that there is considerable representation of ethnic minorities in our courses and programs. Seventy five people who had taken undergraduate degrees and twelve MA graduates responded to our surveys. Twenty percent of students who had taken undergraduate degrees and 25% of the MA graduates indicated an identity other than white, Caucasian, or European. Among the 147 current students who filled out our survey, over a quarter (27%) indicated an identity other than white, Caucasian, or European. It is true that fewer males take our courses and programs. About 5-10% of the enrollment in both introductory courses are male, and at least six males have taken an undergraduate minor or major in WS. The majority of these have been ethnic minority men. Part of the reason for proposing the Gender Studies course and minor is to appeal to a wider range of male students who, once they have taken a Gender Studies course, may choose to take WS courses and programs they would not have otherwise considered.

In addition to the factual errors contained in this perception of the senior administrators (as stated by the reviewers), we have an ethical concern with the way the perception is stated. Presumably a concern with cost ought to be the same whatever the gender and race of the students taking the courses. White females are neither more nor less worthy than any other group of the money spent on their education by the university. We would hope that in the future, considerations of gender and race would not enter into discussions with external reviewers (or anyone else) of the cost of courses in any department.

In the discussion of the post-baccalaureate diploma (PBD) program (page 6, paragraph 4) the reviewers state that the students do a research paper or practicum. This is not accurate. PBD students certainly do research papers as part of the courses they take, but they do not do a stand alone research project or practicum. Further on in their discussion of the meeting with the Chair, the reviewers state (page 7, end of first full paragraph) that hiring post-doctoral fellows was seen as less successful than hiring well-established scholars in the RWWP. A more accurate view would be that these two groups have brought different strengths to the department and that while some faculty view the senior scholars as more useful, others would support a periodic return to offering post-doctoral fellowships.

In the discussion of conversations with the graduate students (page 12, paragraph 4) it says that the department had 17 teaching assistantships in the Fall and Winter semester (01-3 and 02-1). The confusion here is probably with number of tutorials. The accurate figures are that the department had three TA positions and one TM position each of these terms. In addition there is regularly one TM available in the summer semester. Certainly more distance courses would provide support through TM positions, however the suggestion that students in the MA program be allowed to teach undergraduate courses has never been an option in the department. The minimum requirement to teach a course as a sessional instructor is a completed MA. Our stated intention in the PhD proposal is that students who have completed their comprehensive exams will be eligible to apply to teach undergraduate courses.

Before turning to a specific response to each of the 20 recommendations in the External Review, it is important to provide an update on the department's nomination of a Canadian Research chair (CRC) as this process is considerably further along than it was at the time of the External Review. The departments of Women's Studies and Sociology & Anthropology applied for and received a Tier II CRC in Community, Culture and Health. After a search, Dr. Cindy Patton was chosen as the nominee for this position that was designed as a joint appointment in the two departments. This nomination was approved by the university and has been forwarded to the federal government for their approval.

RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

Each recommendation of the External Reviewers is first repeated below and followed by the department's comments concerning that recommendation.

Undergraduate Teaching Program:

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Department explore the possibility of exchanging lectures in the introductory courses so that students can benefit from their expertise in a particular area. This would meet student expectations and provide broad coverage.

Response: Early in the departmental history, the introductory courses were taught using guest lectures from faculty. We moved away from this procedure for two reasons. First there were problems with continuity as the same faculty were not available each term. Also as the discipline developed, individual faculty's areas of expertise did not necessarily fit with the flow of the course. Second we found that to do this in an integrated way became a work load issue for faculty. We currently provide each instructor with \$50 to use for films or guest speakers and a number of instructors bring in guest speakers. If the goal is to introduce beginning students to the faculty in the department, the orientation (see Recommendation 5) may work better than a change in the pedagogy of the introductory courses.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the practicum be made a credit course to provide students with practical and "field" experience so that they can apply the theories learned to actual practice. We also recommend that the Department consider assess whether the certificate program should remain in the calendar.

Response: We will definitely review the certificate program in order to determine whether it should remain in the calendar.

The establishment of a credit course to provide students with 'field experience' is a possibility in the future. However, it cannot be mounted without both an increase in staff resources (see Recommendation 18) and the assignment of a faculty member to oversee the course. Neither of these resources currently exists in the department. A well-run practicum course requires continuing contact with community groups and monitoring of placements. Neither of the staff people in the department have the time to do this, nor is any faculty member able to provide the academic monitoring necessary. We also note that having practicum students who are working for credit can be a burden to the community groups as well.

In our view the Arts Co-op Program is a well-established and excellent source of practical experience for students. Therefore, we have made numerous contacts with Co-op and encouraged students to gain practical experience this way. A small but increasing number of our students have pursued the Co-op Program.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the WS Department explore the possibility of a rotating one-year lectureship to enable sessional instructors to plan and to provide a more stable curriculum at least during this transition period of faculty renewal and with several people on sick leave.

Response: We support this recommendation, however, it is subject to funding from the Dean of Arts Office. As the Temporary Instruction Budget is always stretched, sessional course offerings are often the only option available. There also might be a problem with finding a person who could teach the range of courses we need. A full load for a Lecturer is eight courses per year. As a small department we usually do not repeat course offerings within the year. Thus to be useful a Lecturer would have to be able to teach at least six or seven and perhaps as many as eight different courses. People with such a

wide range of expertise are hard to find. For the person, to prepare and teach eight different courses within one calendar year seems a very heavy workload.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that detailed course outlines be made available to the Department to provide students with more information on course content and readings for the course offerings.

Response: We regularly provide a 1-2 page outline of each course in the coming semester before the beginning of teleregistration. These are available in hard copy at the department and on the web. These include a brief description of the course, a list of required readings, and a percentage breakdown of the assignments with an indication of the length required of any written assignment. This is the usual procedure in other departments. Instructors almost always give out a more detailed outline on the first day of class. Instructors are also usually available to talk to students who wish to register for their courses and answer questions the student may have. It is not practical to make available detailed outlines of courses before the beginning of the term. Furthermore, because instructors regularly change their course content from term to term, previous outlines from the same course run the risk of being misleading.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that a formal orientation be instituted for both undergraduate and graduate students at the beginning of the academic year to provide students with program information and other resources available at SFU. At these sessions, students should be informed about complementary courses in other departments available to them.

Response: We already conduct orientations for both the undergraduate and graduate students. At the undergraduate level, an open meeting is held in late September or early October each year. All undergraduates, TAs, TMs, and instructors, and the Co-op Coordinator for WS are invited to attend. Instructors introduce themselves, the Undergraduate and Graduate Chair discuss curriculum developments, the Co-op Coordinator explains the program and answers questions, and other upcoming departmental events are announced. The orientation is announced in all undergraduate classes, all students are invited to attend, and lunch is provided.

At the graduate level, an orientation is conducted in the first week of the course that all entering WS graduate students are required to take. In addition to this formal orientation, the WS graduate caucus organizes an informal orientation for incoming students.

Graduate Teaching Program:

Recommendation 6: We recommend associates be more frequently involved in teaching at the graduate level to increase the number and subjects of courses offered.

Response: We are very open to having Associate Faculty teach at the graduate level in our Programs. Most of them have been or are involved in serving as senior supervisors or committee members for our MA students and we expect they will continue with PhD students when this program is established. We would welcome their teaching graduate

WS courses. However, it is very unlikely their departments would release them to teach in WS. It might be possible in some cases to cross list graduate courses in both WS and the Associate Faculty's department. One Associate Faculty has already proposed this possibility for a course she plans to teach next year.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that there be appropriate WS pre-requisites for graduate courses available to undergraduate students at the 3rd & 4th year levels.

Response: At the present time all fourth year undergraduate courses that can be cross-listed as graduate courses require 60 credit hours including two WS courses, one of which must be WS 101 or 102. In reality most students taking 400-level seminar courses often have more WS credits than the official prerequisites. Most of the graduate students taking these courses with undergraduate students have found the interaction with undergraduates to be acceptable, especially where the faculty member also meets separately with the graduate students. At the 300 level, most courses require 6 credits of WS including WS 101 or 102. Here there are more likely to be students with only the minimum prerequisites, and two courses, WS 310 and WS 320, require only 60 credit hours. The department will review these prerequisites to see if change is necessary. It should be noted that PhD students will not take any combined undergraduate-graduate courses and with continued faculty renewal and the appointment of the CRC in Community, Culture, and Health (pending federal government approval) we hope we will be able to offer more stand alone graduate courses and a wider range of 400-level theory course options.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that the Women's Studies Department find ways of making the course intensive Master's Program more relevant to students, possibly by cross-listing more courses from other departments and creating more flexibility with the topics for the field exams.

Response: Cross-listing more courses is a possibility that we are interested in pursuing. As mentioned in Recommendation 6, these might be graduate courses taught by Associate Faculty. Our students also have available graduate courses in WS at UBC which they can take through the Western Dean's agreement. Dr. Patton who has been nominated for the CRC in Community, Culture and Health (joint appointment with Sociology/Anthropology) will regularly teach a cross-listed (WS and S&A) graduate course thereby increasing graduate students' options. The current arrangement for the field exams is very flexible and it is hard to see how it could be more flexible. Students can take exams in any two of their WS courses. This would include any cross-listed courses. Since faculty must set questions for and evaluate these exams we cannot expect faculty who are not associated with the department to take on this duty.

Gender Studies Program:

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the Department monitor closely the effect of Minor in Gender Studies on the content and enrolment in the Women's Studies and Gender Studies Program to ensure that the integrity of the WS courses, as well as the enrolment, is maintained.

Response: We share this concern of the reviewers. We will monitor the Gender Studies course (GDST 200) and the Gender Studies minor as to ensure the integrity of the WS courses, enrollments, and programs. The Chair of Undergraduate Studies and the Departmental Assistant will periodically review the courses in both programs and any changes in either program will be reported to the BC Women's Studies Articulation Committee. Care will be taken to explain our primary commitment to Women's Studies to students, prospective faculty, and the wider community. We hope that Gender Studies will appeal to a wide range of students, some of whom will go on to take Women's Studies courses.

PhD Program:

Recommendation 10: We recommend that the University proceed with caution in implementing the Ph.D. program. It needs to be thought out concretely, in relation to: (1) Funding for doctoral students (2) Number of faculty available to supervise doctoral candidates and to serve on Thesis Advisory Committees. In view of the fact that admission to the Masters Thesis stream has been refused because of lack of supervisors, the Department needs to consider how additional supervisors and committee members can be managed with additional students at the doctoral level. It is important that a detailed strategy be worked out in view of the pending retirements (tied to faculty renewal issue). (3) There is also a need to ensure that students at the doctoral level have a cohort of students for intellectual and social support. (4) Finally, the policy of allowing doctoral students to teach in the undergraduate program only after completion of all requirements but the dissertation may be too restrictive; it may necessitate students to look for other jobs to support themselves, thus delaying their doctoral work. Whereas, teaching would help them gain experience and at the same time provide a larger pool for sessional instructors.

In response to the specific issues the reviewers raise:

1) Although we will not be able to guarantee all PhD students funding for all of their time in the program (the same is true for MA students) there are a number of sources of funding available to them. The sources that are available to both MA and PhD students in the department are TA and TM positions, Graduate Fellowships, faculty research grants, scholarships and bursaries within the department, and university scholarships and bursaries. In addition, PhD students will be able to apply for SSHRC doctoral fellowships. Based on the success of our MA students in obtaining entrance scholarships, we expect some of our PhD students to be successful in SSHRC competitions. In addition, once PhD students have completed their comprehensive exams, they will be eligible to teach courses in the department as sessional lecturers.

This level of support is at least as good as that offered WS PhD students in the new program at UBC, and in many smaller PhD programs at universities in BC. In order to be sure that students do not enter the program with inaccurate expectations, we do and will continue to make to clear what the sources of support are and that they cannot expect total support during their time in the program.

2) Given that we plan to take in a small number (2-4) students per year, supervision for the new PhD is adequate. In the past, the main reason students have been denied entry to the MA thesis option is not that there is no faculty member who would take a new student, but that the student's area of interest does not match a faculty member's area of interest. This will happen from time to time with the PhD as well. There are currently eight regular faculty and eight associate faculty available to supervise PhD students. With the completion of the CRC application and Dr. Cindy Patton's joint appointment in WS and S&A, we will have an additional valuable resource for supervising PhD students. Dr. Patton has an excellent track record of PhD supervision and is eager to take on students in both of her new departments.

3) We expect to admit only a few (2-4) PhD students each year. Thus, as the reviewers note, they will form a small cohort. However, we have a very active Graduate Caucus in WS of about 10-15 students. There will also be new MA students in each year's entering class and, through the Cooperative program with UBC, PhD students in their program may also form part of the cohort for new PhD students.

4) We feel strongly that it is not appropriate for PhD students to teach in the department as sessional instructors until they have finished all of their requirements except their thesis. They need to have the information and expertise that their courses and comprehensive exams will give them in order to be adequately prepared to teach undergraduates. Also teaching, especially the first time, is a very time-consuming process and is clearly a trade-off with timely completion of the degree.

Academic Research and Community Outreach:

Recommendation 11: We recommend that the Faculty work on strategies to get research funding to support graduate students through research assistantships. It may be useful for the new faculty and chairs (e.g., the CRC Joint Chair) to explore collaborative initiatives within the Department. For example, we were told that a number of people have research interests in the area of women's health. This could be an area of concentration for a research initiative. As well, given the strong linkage between the Women's Studies Department and Women's Organization, faculty members should explore the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) Program of SSHRC.

Response: We expect that as faculty renewal proceeds, collaborative initiatives will develop. Certainly the proposed addition of Dr. Patton as joint appointment with Sociology & Anthropology will increase the collaboration that already exists between our departments. As Dr. Patton's research interests are in the area of health she will also collaborate with the Institute of Health Research and Education (IHRE). Currently, Dr. Cohen and Dr. Zaman are involved in a collaborative MCRI grant, Dr. Levitin is

involved in a collaborative SSHRC grant with faculty in Sociology and Anthropology, and Dr. Cohen is part of a group proposing a major Community University Research Alliance (CURA) grant with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

Recommendation 12: We recommend that Women's Studies Faculty document all their contributions to the academy and the community in their curriculum vitae. From our own knowledge, we know that there are contributions missing from their CVs and more complete CVs would highlight their collective contributions.

Response: The reviewers had access to the faculty CVs, but not to the annual updates for each year for each faculty member. It is more usual for all talks, media interviews, and other contributions to the community to be listed on the annual updates and summarized on the CVs. Given the large number of contributions that WS faculty make, listing each one individually on the CV would make for very unwieldy CVs. In terms of making the contributions of faculty known to the academic and wider community, there is an effort on the part of the chair to list all activities as a part of the annual salary review, and many contributions are highlighted in the annual newsletter.

Recommendation 13: We recommend that the Department encourage more linkage between the RWW chair, its outreach activities and on campus activities to give students more exposure to actual practices and activities in the larger feminist community.

Response: We are always looking for ways to link RWWP and other outreach activities in the community with on campus activities and what we teach in the classroom. Often when instructors have a visiting speaker in their class, they will open up the class to all WS students and this is advertised in all WS classes. All campus and community events are announced in all WS classrooms. Instructors are provided with overheads for this purpose. Students are encouraged to make announcements of campus events in our classes. We often announce other community events that we think would interest students in our classes as well. Our newsletter is distributed in classes each fall and spring and sent to all our former graduates. We also often purchase one or two tickets to major feminist fund raising events in the community and offer them by lottery to WS graduate students.

Academic Renewal:

Recommendation 14: We recommend that the Department plan now for the next chair following the retirement of Meredith Kimball in year 2004. The mentoring process should begin now, either for someone within the Department or for one of the associate members.

Response: We are actively engaged in this process. As new faculty members join the department there is an active mentoring process, part of which focuses on training for taking on administrative work in the department. Because we are a small department, it is important that new faculty be able to take on administrative duties quite early in their career. Therefore we include in job advertisements the requirement that candidates have experience with committee work or other administrative tasks. The selection of

department chair is set by university policy, and there are still senior people available to fill this position.

Recommendation 15: We support the Department's intent to hire full-time junior faculty into the Department for the purposes of faculty renewal. At the same time, the Department should be open to joint appointments at the senior level, and to allowing those hired full-time to choose a joint appointment later.

Response: We are not opposed to making joint appointments at the senior level. Indeed with the completion of the CRC nomination process, Dr. Patton will join the department in a joint appointment as an Associate Professor. However, our number one priority for faculty renewal is to appoint full-time junior faculty. Given our age structure, this is the main need if the department is to continue as one of the top departments in the country-- as the reviewers note it currently is.

Recommendation 16: While we think the Joint CRC Chair is an excellent initiative, we feel strongly that this should not limit the Department's ability to hire new faculty, especially during this critical period of renewal.

Response: We can only strongly agree with this recommendation.

Library Resources and Staffing Issues:

Recommendation 17: We recommend that the University recognize the needs of departments to have a minimum of resources. Additional resources are needed to ensure that the holdings pertaining to small programs are adequate, so that new programs such as the Gender Studies Program and the Ph.D. programs can be supported.

Response: With this we also agree. Given this recommendation comes under the section of Library Resources, we assume the recommendation refers to a minimum of library resources. It should be noted that both the PhD Proposal and the Gender Studies Proposal have been vetted by the library, and resources have been judged adequate for these programs.

Recommendation 18: We recommend that the administration pay the full cost of the two staff members, and that a permanent part-time staff position be created to administer the programs related to the RWW Chair.

Response: We strongly support this recommendation. This is a request that we have made since 1990. It was a recommendation of the 1995 External Review of the Department and it was a major request of both of our three-year plans. It is time to do this and we sincerely hope the Dean of Arts will be able to implement this long-standing request. It should be noted here that this position, while it would support the community program of the RWWP as described by the reviewers, would also support all other outreach activities of the department as well, including the department web page.

Recommendation 19: We recommend the Department re-design the Departmental web site so that information about Department activities and course changes can be made available to the public and to students quickly. The web site could also help reduce printing costs while encouraging enrolment. The web site should be accessible and updated frequently to ensure information is current. The web site should provide information on the teaching programs, course content and complimentary courses available to students.

Response: We currently have a web page that describes current and upcoming courses, undergraduate and graduate programs, events, job postings, and other relevant information. However, given it is only one of many jobs done by the Receptionist/Graduate Secretary/Chair's Secretary position, it is not possible to do more than include basic information. An interactive and up-to-date web site with links to many other groups is time consuming. This recommendation depends on the implementation of Recommendation 18. With the endowment money that would be made available if Recommendation 18 were implemented, we would hire a half-time person. An important part of her/his job would be the design and updating of the department web page.

Recommendation 20: We recommend that the undergraduate students be asked to rearrange the space assigned to them to make it more convenient for their use.

Response: We have done this and continue to do it. The department chair has met with representatives of the WSSU and encouraged them to approach the Student Society which has funds to furnish student society lounges. They must take the initiative to do this. We have continued to try to improve the equipment in the small computer lab that is used by undergraduates, graduate students, and sessionals on a regular basis. When the leases on the departmental computers came up this August, we bought one of the computers in order to update the equipment in the computer lab. There are now three computers (two are up to date) and a printer in the lab.

External Review Report

Women's Studies Department

Simon Fraser University

Vancouver, B. C.

Pat Armstrong, York University, Toronto

Shree Mulay, McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women (Chair)

- - Roxana Ng, OISE/UT



May 14-16, 2002

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1. Background:

The review team consisted of Dr. Pat Armstrong: Departments of Sociology and Women's Studies, York University, Dr. Shree Mulay: McGill Centre for Research & Teaching on Women, McGill University; Dr. Roxana Ng: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and Dr. Stephen McBride: Department of Political Science, Simon Fraser University.

Prior to the visit the site team was provided with the following documents:

1. Terms of Reference for the External Review
2. SFU Senate Guidelines for External Reviews
3. President's Agenda
4. Statement of Purpose
5. Three Year Plan of the Vice-President Academic
6. Faculty of Arts Three Year Plan
7. Departmental Self Study including Departmental statistical information
8. General Statistical Data and University Facts
9. Survey of Graduates Report for the Department
10. Graduate Studies Fact Book 2000
11. 2001/2002 University Calendar
12. Senior Administrative Structure Chart, January 2002
13. Senior Academic Administrative Structure Chart, January 2002

During the course of the site visit, the following additional documents were provided:

14. Course outlines
15. Statistics for enrolment in other departments
16. Statistics for enrolment in the Women's Studies Department

In our initial meeting with the senior administrators, the terms of reference for the review were reiterated and in addition, the review team was specifically asked to comment on:

- The effects of upcoming retirements, and suggest strategies for faculty renewal;
- The Department's community outreach initiatives;
- The PhD program proposal and its potential for the Department;
- The undergraduate Gender Studies Minor proposal and its potential for the Department;
- Research activity, peer reviewed publications and external funding of the unit.

Finally, we were asked to make recommendations that address the major concerns, taking into account the resources available to the Department and the objectives described in its three-year plan.

2. Summary of Review Team's Evaluation:

Overall, based on our knowledge of Women's Studies in Canadian universities, we would rank the Women's Studies Department at Simon Fraser University amongst the best in terms of quality of its programs, research output, the governance structure, and collegiality amongst faculty members. Very few universities in Canada have a full-fledged Women's Studies Department, and at Simon Fraser University, the Women's Studies Department is fortunate to have four full-time and four joint appointments. In addition, the University provides funding for the salary of the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor that allows the Women's Studies Department to bring outstanding individuals to the Department. The original the Ruth Wynn Woodward endowment provides funding to top-up the salary of the Chair and to undertake innovative programs for community outreach. These are some of the unique features of the Simon Fraser Women's Studies Department, which have made the Department exceptional. The leadership provided by Professor Meredith Kimball has contributed greatly to the strength of the Department; she is considered by her colleagues and students to be very fair and effective in instituting governance structures that are transparent and accountable.

The faculty members are highly respected scholars with international reputations. Undoubtedly, the high calibre of tenured faculty complement is reflected both in the breadth and depth of the undergraduate teaching programs. The sessional staff is committed to the teaching program and have appreciated the consistent constructive feedback on their teaching performance. The thesis-based Masters Program is excellent and the students are appreciative of their interactions with their thesis supervisors. While the students in the course-intensive Masters Program recognize the extra effort on the part of the faculty to meet with them separately, they would prefer stand-alone courses for graduate students. At present, this appears to be difficult in light of the need for a minimum number of students for a particular course. However, with the introduction of Ph.D. program in Women's Studies there may be more opportunities to offer courses that are exclusively for graduate students.

All faculty members have an active research program; notable amongst these, is the SSHRC-funded MCRI on "Neo-liberal globalism and its challengers: Sustainability on/ in the semi-periphery" led by Prof. Marjorie Griffin Cohen at SFU. She was also awarded the Dean of Arts medal for academic excellence. Prof. Mary Lynn Stewart was elected to the Royal Society, for her work on labour history and Women's history, and has published a book recently. Other faculty members have also made significant contributions, although some of these contributions have been made in less traditional ways and through non-traditional means. In general, however, the scholarly work by faculty members appear in peer-reviewed journals that have a high ranking amongst Women's Studies publications. Not all faculty members have external funding at present in part because some of the work that faculty members do does not require considerable funding. However, it would be important for faculty members to consider

applying for external funding to support graduate students, especially those being recruited into the Ph.D. program.

The Women's Studies Department has a well-established program for community outreach. The RWW Chair goes to remote communities in B.C. to speak at community events and other faculty members also participate in the Speaker's Bureau. Of particular importance is the visiting scholar program that allows instructors from community colleges to spend some time in the Department on their research or course development project. The biennial retreat organized by the Women's Studies Department that brings together Women's Studies instructors from the community colleges is extremely important for the future development of the discipline.

The Department is seeking renewal of its teaching program. This is being achieved through a proposed Minor in Gender Studies and a PhD program in Women's Studies. Both strategies have the potential to provide an important stimulus to the program. They could increase enrolment while expanding course content and making more courses viable.

However, the major concern for the Department is faculty renewal. Given the number of individuals who will be retiring in the next few years and senior faculty who are on medical leave, there is concern that at this time the stand-alone graduate courses for master's students cannot be provided to meet student demands and the undergraduate courses too will suffer. The Department has successfully recruited one full time faculty in a tenure-track position. This appointment is exciting and opens up new possibilities for the Department, especially in developing the new Minor in Gender Studies. The effort to create full-time faculty positions at the entry level, and joint appointments at the senior level through a Joint CRC Chair have the full support of this review team.

In short, the teaching programs and research activities undertaken by the Women's Studies Department fits in well with the University's statement of purpose; Women's Studies addresses the needs and expectations of a diverse student body. It is effective in pursuing broad community involvement, and in providing a positive environment for everyone.

Our twenty recommendations address minor rather than major changes. These are indicated in the report in appropriate sections as well as at the end of the report to facilitate its distribution. We hope that these recommendations are useful to the Department and the University in building on their strengths for excellence in Women's Studies. We thank the University and the Department for giving us the opportunity to be part of the process.

3. Overview of Women's Studies Department

The self-study document provided by the Women's Studies Department was comprehensive and informative. Other documents were also very useful in comparing the Women's Studies Department with programs in other universities.

Meeting with Senior Administrators:

At the start of the site visit, we met with Dr. Bill Krane, Associate VP Academic; Dr. Bruce Clayman, VP Research; Dr. John Pierce, Dean of Arts; Dr. Jon Driver, VP Graduate Studies and Ms Laurie Summers, Director of Academic Programs. We were told that the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) had developed the strategic plan for the University and it was entering the second three-year cycle. In this phase, the University had made a decision to invest in specific areas such as computer sciences and engineering even though there were significant financial constraints. As well, since there had been no new construction on campus there was significant space constraint.

The meeting began with an assessment of the Women's Studies Department. From the administration's perspective on the positive side, the Department has strong individual faculty members and, there is strong senior level faculty within the Department who have been successful in obtaining research funding. The Department has used the Woodward endowment extremely well in developing its programs and the Department has excellent governance and management structures in place. The newsletter is of excellent quality, adding significantly to the visibility of the program. The new initiatives in creating a Gender Studies Program and a Ph.D. Program are important. The Minor in Gender Studies may have a greater appeal to the kind of students currently not attracted to Women's Studies; while the Ph.D. proposal is under review.

At the same time, there are a number of concerns. Most significantly, there has been a steady decline in majors and minors in numerous departments under the faculty of Arts but the decline in Women's Studies has been much sharper. The 60-70 FTEs in Women's Studies is critically low, and it seems to be a "demand issue rather than supply issue". According to their calculations, the cost per student in Women's Studies is approximately \$7,000-\$8,000 compared to \$2000-\$3000 in other programs. Exit surveys indicated that the program was not attractive to males and to minorities and seems to meet the needs of white females more than any other group. The administration has made a commitment to maintain student enrolment. Therefore, the decline in enrolments needs to be addressed and redressed.

There is also concern about future leadership for the Department and faculty renewal in general. Meredith Kimball retires in 2004. The usual practice has been to have an internal candidate as the Chair of the Department, but retirements may make it difficult to find a candidate at that time. Bridge funding to bring on board new faculty, as the cohort of senior faculty begin to retire, will not be available because of the need to balance budgets between 15 departments and schools under the Faculty of Arts.

A separate external Review Committee is examining the stand-alone Ph. D proposal in Women's Studies. However, the administrators want the site Review Committee to consider whether there is the critical mass of faculty necessary to supervise Ph.D. students; the extent to which other departments could contribute to supervision of students and finally the appropriateness of an agreement between SFU and UBC to collaborate in the Ph.D. program. It was pointed out to us that the provincial government does not provide funding for graduate students so there are no resources available to support new programs. Therefore, any Ph.D. proposal would have to be implemented without significant additional financial outlay.

This meeting with administrators helped set the stage for our assessment and clarified their expectations of the review.

Meeting with the Chair of Women's Studies Department:

Prof. Meredith Kimball, the Chair of the Women's Studies Department, met with the site review team, gave a tour of the Department and provided an overview of the different programs in Women's Studies.

The Minor in Women's Studies was established first, followed for strategic reasons by a graduate program at the Master's level. The major and joint majors in Women's Studies were introduced after the master's program. The post-baccalaureate diploma program appears to be popular amongst a certain number of students because students can take upper level courses followed by a research paper or a practicum. The certificate in Women's Studies, originally designed to attract people from the community, appears to not to attract much interest. This program permits students to take lower division courses and a practicum.

According to Prof. Kimball, Women's Studies Programs have tended to attract more mature students coming from the community colleges who enter the program at a later stage. These students already have a background in Women's Studies and they differ from the average students at SFU.

Prof. Kimball, noted that while enrolments had declined in the program, the statistics for the year 2001-2002 indicates a reversal of this trend and these are now comparable to the enrolments before 1999 (76.7 FTEs). She felt that the Minor in gender studies would compensate for the decline in FTEs. According to her, there is a need to develop skills-based courses to meet the demands of undergraduate students. Prof. Kimball also talked about faculty renewal and hoped that there would be bridge funding to hire an additional junior level faculty as Prof. Sue Wendell begins her early retirement. This would entail top-up funds for 14 months. She was particularly optimistic about the proposed Joint CRC Chair in Women's Studies and Sociology. This appointment would expand their expertise in health areas. The next Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair will be Dr.

Sue Wilkinson who also specializes in qualitative methods in health research. With these two additions, health will be an emerging strength within the Department.

The Department is particularly proud of the Ruth Wynn Woodward (RWW) professorship. SFU has supported the RWW Chair financially by providing a salary at the junior level for the Chair. Undoubtedly, this has contributed greatly to making the endowment a very significant one in all of Canada. The Women's Studies Department has used the endowment fund in different ways at different times. At times people were hired at the post-doctoral level and in recent past, the Department hired Dr. Sunera Thobani, a junior academic at the time for two terms. For now, the Department has decided to use the endowment to hire senior scholars. Professor Dionne Brand, a well-known poet, currently holds the RWW Chair. In addition to teaching, she is also doing community outreach throughout the region. While hiring post-doctoral fellows and junior faculty was not as successful as hiring well-established scholars, the fact that the Department was willing to experiment is commendable.

This meeting, along with subsequent encounters with the Chair, provided a clear picture of the development and current state of the Department. We were impressed with the innovative use of the RWW, with attention given to the development of the program, and with the strategies being developed to deal with current and emerging issues. The new hires will take the program in directions that reflect current scholarship and respond to student interests.

Meetings with Faculty Members:

We met with faculty members collectively on two occasions; at a luncheon on the first day and at a reception on the second day. Both encounters included undergraduate and graduate students. We also met individually, with, Sue Wendell, Marilyn MacDonald, Habiba Zaman (Full-time Faculty); Andrea Lebowitz (Emerita Faculty), Meredith Kimball, Mary Lynn Stewart, Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Jacqueline Levitin, (Joint Appointments); and with Brian Birch, Arlene McLaren and Kathie Mezei (Associate Faculty). These occasions provided us with an opportunity to discuss their individual perspectives.

We heard very positive comments from all faculty members about the Department. Associate faculty felt it was a model department. Despite the additional burden of having administrative duties in two departments, senior faculty with joint appointments loved the fact that they had a foot in two places. It was important for their own intellectual growth and development as well as for maintaining a feminist perspective in their home departments. Joint appointments also helped build support for the Women's Studies program in other departments. However, all of them advocated full-time appointments in Women's Studies at the junior faculty level, to ensure that new faculty would have adequate time to initiate their research programs and not be burdened by administrative responsibilities in two departments.

We were impressed with both the support for the program and the logic of the arguments made for new, full-time appointments at the junior level. At the same time, cross-appointments at senior levels are clearly valuable to the program. We were struck by the collegiality amongst the faculty members, their respect and support for the leadership provided by Dr. Meredith Kimball. We were impressed as well by their concern about faculty renewal, the upcoming retirements and the illnesses that have limited the participation of senior faculty. Other matters related to teaching programs will be discussed in the appropriate section.

Meetings with Sessional Instructors

We met with four people who work as sessional instructors in the Women's Studies Department. We learned from them that first time sessional instructors submit their CV and three reference letters, although there is no other formal interviewing process. Before having the right of refusal for the course, they have to teach three times in the Department. Departments have to bid for sessional slots from a temporary budget and the Dean approves of this budget based on previous enrolment projections for the course.

The instructors were very enthusiastic about their interactions with the Chair and the administrator responsible for scheduling and supporting the instructors. They felt that the postings were advertised well in advance. Student evaluations were presented in a standard format, which is comprehensive and useful. Moreover, the Chair of the department provided feedback that is useful in making improvements. However, the evaluations come at the end of the session and therefore do not help in making changes during the semester.

Office time for meetings with students has been a matter of concern because salaries do not adequately cover meeting times. Telephone office hours have alleviated the problem somewhat but it is a University-wide issue, not specific to Women's Studies.

As a group, they raised their concern about the instability of their position and the fact that they cannot plan. They are obliged to accept all offers for teaching because they cannot be certain that they will be able to teach for Women's Studies Department. They must accept other offers because they are afraid of losing their seniority with a particular department. They feel that their union caters primarily to needs of graduate students and does not take up issues specific to other sessional instructors. Some limited term appointments would provide a degree of stability and at the same time help the Department during the renewal phase.

We were impressed by the commitment of these sessional instructors to the Department, a commitment that was profound in spite of their tenuous positions. Their recommendations for more limited term appointments seem to address both the problems raised by students about continuity and planning, and the issues resulting from medical leaves and retirements.

4. Undergraduate Teaching and Curriculum:

Prof. Mary Lynn Stewart, the Chair of the Undergraduate Program Committee, provided an overview of the undergraduate program. She indicated that every effort is made to ensure that senior faculty teaches introductory Women's Studies courses. In addition, the introductory courses have been developed as distance education courses. Regular faculty does not teach the long distance courses; rather they have teaching assistants or sessional instructors who are in contact with students by phone and through e-mail. Originally, the course titled "History of Western feminisms" was intended to be paralleled with a course on "World Feminisms". If the course were to be revamped, world feminisms would be a major component.

According to Prof. Mary Lynn Stewart, the student population in the program is changing. Earlier there were a significant number of mature students in the program. Now the new policy adopted by the university makes it more difficult for mature students, women on welfare, and women coming from community colleges to enter the University. This has an impact on student numbers as well as on student expectations. The current students in the programs are much younger. They are outspoken about their interests and expectations. As well, the interaction of the younger students with older women in the program has not always been positive. Focus group discussions, conducted by the Department indicated that students want a wide variety of courses and more material on international issues. They are interested in culture, media, film and body image for starters. They want more material on non-western traditions in their courses and more activist projects. The course on Gender, Race and Class has met some of the needs but there is scope for further curriculum revision, as a part of the University-wide initiative. However, the course offerings depend on availability of faculty and funds allocated for hiring sessional instructors.

Prof. Mary Lynn Stewart emphasized that, although new hires revitalized the program, she was concerned that there was too much expectation placed on them. At the same time, she felt that joint appointments made it difficult to plan the teaching program.

We were left with the clear impression that careful thought goes into the design of the program, but this design is sometimes undermined by variability related to the staffing of courses. We were also convinced that the Department is prepared to respond to student interests in a measured fashion, if the resources are available in ways that allow such planning.

Comments by Undergraduate Students:

We met with four undergraduate students. While appreciative of the course offerings and the high calibre of the faculty, they felt that the introductory courses need to be revamped and should have an activist component. They would like to see speakers from different women's organizations come to speak in the introductory courses. They cited the work of several organizations as being appropriate for collaboration. They used the course on Race, Gender and Class as an example of the problems created by

such variable staffing. In their view, the content this year did not reflect the course description.

This in turn was related to concerns about the nature of the information available on courses. In their view, the Student catalogue was not accessible and did not provide complete information on cross-listed courses. As a result, students had to go from one Department to another to get the information. There was also inadequate introduction to the Department for new students. Finally, they wanted more interaction with their Women's Studies Professors both in formal and informal settings. They noted that the Women's Studies Student Union had organized three events and only one faculty member attended.

We had some difficulty assessing the extent to which these four students were representative of others, especially given that these concerns were not evident in the other material we received. We did, however, think their concerns about contact and information is fairly easy to address, although the problems resulting from faculty teaching in their areas of expertise rather than concentrating on the described material is more difficult. It may also be easy to fill gaps with guest lecturers from other courses. We thought their interest in more links between course material and practice could be dealt with through the practicum.

Cooperative Program

It is our impression, from meeting with the administrator and students with direct experience, that the Co-op program is highly successful and effective in providing students with appropriate work experience and skills. It matches employers with students and these matches have frequently resulted in a permanent employment. Students consider it to be a very valuable program and support it with enthusiasm.

In sum, given resource constraints, we feel that the Women's Studies Department has done an excellent job in providing students with a broad range of courses and subject matter. They have carefully designed courses but cannot always deliver the content or range they would like to provide.

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Department explore the possibility of exchanging lectures in the introductory courses so that students can benefit from their expertise in a particular area. This would meet student expectations and provide broad coverage.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the practicum be made a credit course to provide students with practical and "field" experience so that they can apply the theories learned to actual practice. We also recommend that the Department consider assess whether the certificate program should remain in the calendar.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the WS Department explore the possibility of a rotating one-year lectureship to enable sessional instructors to plan and to provide a more stable curriculum at least during this transition period of faculty renewal and with several people on sick leave.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that detailed course outlines be made available to the Department to provide students with more information on course content and readings for the course offerings.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that a formal orientation be instituted for both undergraduate and graduate students at the beginning of the academic year to provide students with program information and other resources available at SFU. At these sessions, students should be informed about complementary courses in other departments available to them.

5. Graduate Teaching and Curriculum:

Sue Wendell, Chair of the Graduate Studies Program Committee, provided an overview of the Graduate Teaching Program. She indicated that there were two streams at the master's level, the first was a thesis-based program and the second was a course intensive program. For the thesis-based program, a supervisor is assigned to the student at the time of admission; however, the program is flexible enough so that students can change their supervisors if needed. Those who cannot find a supervisor at the time of admission or those who do not want to write a thesis take the course-intensive program. In 2002, there were four students in the course-intensive program. In all, there were 17 graduate students enrolled in the Master's Program; 11 were still taking courses and there were four students in the course-intensive program. An orientation for graduate students is provided at the beginning of WS 800 course, which is compulsory for all graduate students. This course focuses on research methodologies. Graduate courses are taught by tenured faculty although on rare occasions a sessional instructor has been hired to teach a graduate course.

Dr. Jon Driver, Dean of Graduate Studies told us that the Provincial Government did not fund graduate programs, nor did it provide graduate scholarships. Consequently, there are few graduate scholarships at SFU (\$ 5,000 per semester). The other source of funding for graduate students is teaching. However, the budget for teaching assistants is in the hands of the deans and not the Dean of Graduate Studies. Therefore, support for graduate students is a critical issue. According to Dr. Driver, the University anticipates growth of graduate programs in applied/professional fields because funding is more readily available. Another area of expansion is the interdisciplinary graduate program in community health, public health and population health. Finally, Dr. Driver suggested that faculty research grants must be a major source of graduate student funding.

Comments by Graduate Students

We met with graduate students along with faculty at the reception and luncheon and then separately with them as a group.

Students had nothing but positive things to say about the faculty. They found the faculty to be supportive, friendly, and flexible. They commented on the high quality of course content and of teaching, as well as the breadth and depth of knowledge of the instructors. They appreciate being allowed the time to complete their theses, without undue pressure. One student described her supervisor as "amazing" while another said this was the best Department she had encountered in her studies.

The students assessed their stand-alone graduate courses as excellent. They wanted more of them. In contrast, they felt that graduate courses with undergraduate students, while providing the numbers required to mount a course, did not always meet their needs despite the supplemental hours when graduate students meet the professor separately. This is particularly problematic for students who take the course-intensive option. In their view, the availability of a limited number of graduate courses may be solved by the introduction of a doctoral program.

Several students also questioned the practice of admitting students in the thesis-based program only if a professor was willing to supervise the student. On the one hand, this practice ensures that students have a supervisor. On the other hand, it also means that students are required to declare their interests when applying and that some have been refused admission because no faculty volunteered to supervise. This is not an easily resolved issue, but it does suggest that supervisory resources are already stretched. This should be considered in assessing the potential for a doctoral program.

Lack of funding was also a problem for students. In all, 17 teaching assistantships were available for the Fall and Winter semester this past year in Women's Studies. The students suggested that allowing master's students to teach undergraduate courses may alleviate their funding problem. They also felt that more on-line courses would provide more funding to graduate students.

Comments by Faculty

We discussed the graduate program at our various meetings with faculty members. There seemed to be a consensus that increasing the number of graduate students would solve the problem of stand-alone graduate courses. However, we were not entirely convinced that there are sufficient teaching resources available to mount these additional courses.

From the information available to us, we are convinced that Women's Studies is offering a high quality Masters Program. We are, however, concerned that the graduate courses which are also available to undergraduate students may not be fulfilling the needs of graduate students. The problem may be partially addressed by requiring all Undergraduate students taking these courses to have completed some specific pre-

requisite Women's Studies courses so that they are better equipped to take the advanced courses.

While we have no doubt that the faculty is more than qualified to teach at the doctoral level, we were concerned about the limited resources available in terms of both faculty and funding. Greater collaboration with other departments may help alleviate some of the stress. More direct involvement of associates in teaching at the graduate level in Women's Studies, and more cross listing of courses would also be beneficial.

Doctoral students could help address some of the problem by teaching at the undergraduate level and thus freeing faculty time to teach at the graduate level. This would also provide funding for these students. However, we understand that the current proposal would discourage this practice.

Recommendation 6: We recommend associates be more frequently involved in teaching at the graduate level to increase the number and subjects of courses offered.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that there be appropriate WS pre-requisites for graduate courses available to undergraduate students at the 3rd & 4th year levels.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that the Women's Studies Department find ways of making the course intensive Master's Program more relevant to students, possibly by cross-listing more courses from other departments and creating more flexibility with the topics for the field exams.

6. New Initiatives in Teaching Programs

Minor in Gender Studies:

There was considerable enthusiasm on the part of the faculty and administration for the Minor in Gender Studies. It was felt that by taking the initiative of starting the Gender Studies program, WS would be able to ensure that the program does not develop an anti-feminist orientation as it has done in other places. In addition, it would meet the needs of students who would otherwise not be interested in WS. It would redress the question of declining enrolments and would allow them to capitalize on courses offered by other departments. The only negative comments we heard were from undergraduate students who expressed the fear that the Gender Studies Program may dilute the WS program. However, none of the faculty saw this as a problem.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the Department monitor closely the effect of Minor in Gender Studies on the content and enrolment in the Women's Studies and Gender Studies Program to ensure that the integrity of the WS courses, as well as the enrolment, is maintained.

Ph.D. in Women's Studies:

The proposed Doctoral Program in Women's Studies is an important initiative, especially given the paucity of doctoral programs in Women's Studies in Western Canada including B.C. There is a demand for faculty in Women's Studies; for example, a survey showed that there were 24 positions advertised for faculty positions of which nine required a Ph.D. with Women's Studies background. Some of these positions required expertise in other areas such as sociology and health. Non-academic institutions such as governments and organizations interested in gender analysis would also hire a person with a PhD in Women's Studies. SFU is in a good position to launch a doctoral program given that it already has a MA program in place. It can be a source of instructors for the undergrad program and would allow more stand-alone graduate courses to be offered.

The proposal to collaborate with University of British Columbia is an excellent idea because the Department will be able to draw upon expertise in WS from the UBC. UBC faculty could serve on Thesis Advisory Committees and courses offered at UBC would be available to students at SFU. Without such collaboration, SFU is unlikely to have sufficient resources to mount this program.

Although students and professors alike were confident that the PhD program could be introduced without requiring additional resources, we have some concern that during this period of transition, there may not be enough faculty members to supervise students even though the Department anticipates only 2-3 students in the PhD program. Illnesses and impending retirements are factors contribute to this problem.

Recommendation 10: We recommend that the University proceed with caution in implementing the Ph.D. program. It needs to be thought out concretely, in relation to: (1) Funding for doctoral students (2) Number of faculty available to supervise doctoral candidates and to serve on Thesis Advisory Committees. In view of the fact that admission to the Masters Thesis stream has been refused because of lack of supervisors, the Department needs to consider how additional supervisors and committee members can be managed with additional students at the doctoral level. It is important that a detailed strategy be worked out in view of the pending retirements (tied to faculty renewal issue). (3) There is also a need to ensure that students at the doctoral level have a cohort of students for intellectual and social support. (4) Finally, the policy of allowing doctoral students to teach in the undergraduate program only after completion of all requirements but the dissertation may be too restrictive; it may necessitate students to look for other jobs to support themselves, thus delaying their doctoral work. Whereas, teaching would help them gain experience and at the same time provide a larger pool for sessional instructors.

7. Faculty Research:

Collectively and individually, the Women's Studies faculty have made an impressive contribution to the academy and to the community through publishing, organizing conferences and workshops, speaking engagements, etc. A number have significant publication records, with important impact on feminist scholarship (e.g., Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Meredith Kimball, Mary Lynn Stewart and Jacqueline Levitin). They have taken the risk of going outside of the traditionally recognized disciplinary journals to publish in non-traditional outlets. Meanwhile, they have contributed to making these journals more recognized in the mainstream. Others have contributed to developing feminist scholarly networks and organizing conferences, especially in previously unexplored areas (e.g., feminist critique of science).

Of course, like other places, some members are more productive and do more than others, but overall people pull their weight. Criteria for evaluating faculty, need to take into account not only refereed publications, but also outreach activities such as conducting workshops and engaging in other services to the profession and to the community (both academic and the women's communities in other rural areas).

At the same time, the limited amounts of funding obtained by those employed full-time in the Department means there are only limited funds available to graduate students. This is particularly a problem given the province's failure to fund graduate students.

Recommendation 11: We recommend that the Faculty work on strategies to get research funding to support graduate students through research assistantships. It may be useful for the new faculty and chairs (e.g., the CRC Joint Chair) to explore collaborative initiatives within the Department. For example, we were told that a number of people have research interests in the area of women's health. This could be an area of concentration for a research initiative. As well, given the strong linkage between the Women's Studies Department and Women's Organization, faculty members should explore the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) Program of SSHRC.

Recommendation 12: We recommend that Women's Studies Faculty document all their contributions to the academy and the community in their curriculum vitae. From our own knowledge, we know that there are contributions missing from their CVs and more complete CVs would highlight their collective contributions.

8. Community Outreach Program

We met with Melissa Munn, a visitor scholar from one of the colleges in Northern B.C. She has participated in all the community outreach programs. The wider community has very few resources, therefore the traveling Speaker's Bureau has brought exceptional women to smaller communities and the community college helps organize events for them. The visiting scholarship has been very important for her growth and development; community colleges have very few resources. The visiting scholarship helped her financially to spend time at Simon Fraser University, allowing her to develop a new course on "Women and Crime". This will be the second Women's Studies course to be introduced at her college. Such courses, in Melissa Munn's opinion, help build a demand for University Women's Studies program. The biannual retreat of Women's Studies instructors, has also contributed significantly to creating an intellectual community amongst them. The retreat coincides with the provincial articulation meeting to decide on transfer credits from the community colleges.

Thus, the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair enables the Department to pursue broad community involvement: community outreach, college visitorship, a bi-annual retreat, traveling speaker's series. In our estimation, the community outreach programs are highly effective and quite unique. They serve to build up the profile of Simon Fraser University in general and the Women's Studies Department in particular, outside the Lower Mainland.

Similarly, Prof. Jackie Levitin's project on health and home provides an excellent example of outreach and a model for forging links between the University and the community.

Recommendation 13: We recommend that the Department encourage more linkage between the RWW chair, its outreach activities and on campus activities to give students more exposure to actual practices and activities in the larger feminist community.

9. Resources, Facilities and Support

Academic Staffing Issues

As stated elsewhere in the report, academic renewal is a concern for Administrators, Chair of the Department, Faculty Members and both Graduate and Undergraduate Students. The Department has developed a strategy but this needs the support of the University as a whole. Interest in Women's Studies in Canada is growing. However, the student body is changing and the new recruitments need to be able to teach in newer areas. The Department has begun the process but the support from the Dean of Arts is needed to provide bridge funding for tenure-track faculty to ensure that there will be faculty with sufficient experience to carry out the program when the senior faculty retire.

Recommendation 14: We recommend that the Department plan now for the next chair following the retirement of Meredith Kimball in year 2004. The mentoring process should begin now, either for someone within the Department or for one of the associate members.

Recommendation 15: We support the Department's intent to hire full-time junior faculty into the Department for the purposes of faculty renewal. At the same time, the Department should be open to joint appointments at the senior level, and to allowing those hired full-time to choose a joint appointment later.

Recommendation 16: While we think the Joint CRC chair is an excellent initiative, we feel strongly that this should not limit the Department's ability to hire new faculty, especially during this critical period of renewal.

Library Resources

While we were impressed with the presentation by the library staff and with both their knowledge and commitment to Women's Studies, we were also concerned that small programs such as Women's Studies lose more when resources are severely limited, as they are now. This is especially a concern when new programs are contemplated.

Recommendation 17: We recommend that the University recognize the needs of departments to have a minimum of resources. Additional resources are needed to ensure that the holdings pertaining to small programs are adequate, so that new programs such as the Gender Studies Program and the Ph.D. programs can be supported.

Departmental Business and Facilities Management

Faculty: There is an equitable distribution of administrative tasks, and all members appear to be actively engaged in the Department's functioning. The environment and culture of the Department is conducive to dialogue and interactions among faculty, staff and students, with the possible exception of some undergraduate activities.

Governance: The governance structure is inclusive. Students very much appreciated being included in the decision-making process by having two votes on the Coordinating Committee. They feel their voices are heard. Many people commented on the fact that the process is transparent. One associate faculty commented that WS is a model for other departments in the way it conducts its administrative work. She stressed that the process is transparent, consultative. When she misses meetings, she knows what is happening because excellent minutes are taken and these are circulated well in advance of follow-up meetings. According to her, Women's Studies stands out and is the best compared to the two other departments she where she has worked.

Technical Staff and Support Facilities

Computer space: Students are very positive about the computer room, which is widely used especially when assignments are due. They are very appreciative that access to computers and a printer is made available to them.

Support Staff: In general, relations among support staff, faculty and students seem cordial and conducive to building a supportive community. However, the two support staff people appear to carry a considerable load. Small programs have heavy administrative duties, especially when there are graduate students with wide-ranging needs. Reliance on funding from the RWW Chair for part of the administrative assistant's salary seems inappropriate, given that the terms of the endowment designate the funds to hire an assistant for the RWW Chair. Temporary assistants for RWW Chair, means that there is no continuity and regular staff has to organize the programs associated with the Chair. We are concerned that insufficient attention has been paid to developing an up-to-date website for the Department; time constraints seem to be the primary factor. However, a well designed website would be an effective way of communicating with students, faculty and community alike. Frequent updates are crucial or the effectiveness of a website.

Recommendation 18: We recommend that the administration pay the full cost of the two staff members, and that a permanent part-time staff position be created to administer the programs related to the RWW Chair.

Recommendation 19: We recommend the Department re-design the Departmental website so that information about Department activities and course changes can be made available to the public and to students quickly. The website could also help reduce printing costs while encouraging enrolment. The website should be accessible and updated frequently to ensure information is current. The website should provide information on the teaching programs, course content and complimentary courses available to students.

Space: Space for faculty, and most students, seems to be adequate. Faculty, staff and graduate students like having the lounge, which provides an informal meeting place for members of the Department. Undergraduate students are less enthusiastic about their space and feel the room available is very small. While the room itself is small, it is accessible to students 24 hours a day and we felt that between the various spaces available to students, there was no serious space problem.

Recommendation 20: We recommend that the undergraduate students be asked to rearrange the space assigned to them to make it more convenient for their use.

10. Conclusion

In general, the Women's Studies Department is of high quality. Our recommendations are intended to improve further what is already a very sound program and address some emerging issues.

It was our pleasure to assess this program and trust that our assessment will be useful for the future development of Women's Studies Department.

11. Recommendations:

For sake of convenience, we are listing all the recommendations in one place. These are as follows:

Undergraduate Teaching Program:

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Department explore the possibility of exchanging lectures in the introductory courses so that students can benefit from their expertise in a particular area. This would meet student expectations and provide broad coverage.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the practicum be made a credit course to provide students with practical and "field" experience so that they can apply the theories learned to actual practice. We also recommend that the Department consider assess whether the certificate program should remain in the calendar.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the WS Department explore the possibility of a rotating one-year lectureship to enable sessional instructors to plan and to provide a more stable curriculum at least during this transition period of faculty renewal and with several people on sick leave.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that detailed course outlines be made available to the Department to provide students with more information on course content and readings for the course offerings.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that a formal orientation be instituted for both undergraduate and graduate students at the beginning of the academic year to provide students with program information and other resources available at SFU. At these sessions, students should be informed about complementary courses in other departments available to them.

Graduate Teaching Program:

Recommendation 6: We recommend associates be more frequently involved in teaching at the graduate level to increase the number and subjects of courses offered.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that there be appropriate WS pre-requisites for graduate courses available to undergraduate students at the 3rd & 4th year levels.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that the Women's Studies Department find ways of making the course intensive Master's Program more relevant to students, possibly by cross-listing more courses from other departments and creating more flexibility with the topics for the field exams.

Gender Studies Program

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the Department monitor closely the effect of Minor in Gender Studies on the content and enrolment in the Women's Studies and Gender Studies Program to ensure that the integrity of the WS courses, as well as the enrolment, is maintained.

Ph.D. Program:

Recommendation 10: We recommend that the University proceed with caution in implementing the Ph.D. program. It needs to be thought out concretely, in relation to: (1) Funding for doctoral students (2) Number of faculty available to supervise doctoral candidates and to serve on Thesis Advisory Committees. In view of the fact that admission to the Masters Thesis stream has been refused because of lack of supervisors, the Department needs to consider how additional supervisors and committee members can be managed with additional students at the doctoral level. It is important that a detailed strategy be worked out in view of the pending retirements (tied to faculty renewal issue). (3) There is also a need to ensure that students at the doctoral level have a cohort of students for intellectual and social support. (4) Finally, the policy of allowing doctoral students to teach in the undergraduate program only after completion of all requirements but the dissertation may be too restrictive; it may necessitate students to look for other jobs to support themselves, thus delaying their doctoral work. Whereas, teaching would help them gain experience and at the same time provide a larger pool for sessional instructors.

Academic Research and Community Outreach

Recommendation 11: We recommend that the Faculty work on strategies to get research funding to support graduate students through research assistantships. It may be useful for the new faculty and chairs (e.g., the CRC Joint Chair) to explore collaborative initiatives within the Department. For example, we were told that a number of people have research interests in the area of women's health. This could be an area of concentration for a research initiative. As well, given the strong linkage between the Women's Studies Department and Women's Organization, faculty members should explore the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) Program of SSHRC.

Recommendation 12: We recommend that Women's Studies Faculty document all their contributions to the academy and the community in their curriculum vitae. From our own knowledge, we know that there are contributions missing from their CVs and more complete CVs would highlight their collective contributions.

Recommendation 13: We recommend that the Department encourage more linkage between the RWW chair, its outreach activities and on campus activities to give students more exposure to actual practices and activities in the larger feminist community.

Academic Renewal

Recommendation 14: We recommend that the Department plan now for the next chair following the retirement of Meredith Kimball in year 2004. The mentoring process should begin now, either for someone within the Department or for one of the associate members.

Recommendation 15: We support the Department's intent to hire full-time junior faculty into the Department for the purposes of faculty renewal. At the same time, the Department should be open to joint appointments at the senior level, and to allowing those hired full-time to choose a joint appointment later.

Recommendation 16: While we think the Joint CRC Chair is an excellent initiative, we feel strongly that this should not limit the Department's ability to hire new faculty, especially during this critical period of renewal.

Library Resources and Staffing Issues

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Recommendation 18: We recommend that the administration pay the full cost of the two staff members, and that a permanent part-time staff position be created to administer the programs related to the RWW Chair.

Recommendation 19: We recommend the Department re-design the Departmental website so that information about Department activities and course changes can be made available to the public and to students quickly. The website could also help reduce printing costs while encouraging enrolment. The website should be accessible and updated frequently to ensure information is current. The website should provide information on the teaching programs, course content and complimentary courses available to students.

Recommendation 20: We recommend that the undergraduate students be asked to rearrange the space assigned to them to make it more convenient for their use.

11. Site Visit Schedule of interviews:

Department of Women's Studies
Simon Fraser University
Site Visit Schedule, May 15-17, 2002

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

7:15		Taxi from Hotel to Burnaby campus	
8:00	9:00	Breakfast meeting: Associate VP academic Bill Krane Dean of Arts: John Pierce Dean of Graduate Studies: Jon Driver Director of Academic Planning: Laurie Summers	PCR Strand Hall
9:00	9:30	Walk to Department	AQ5119
9:30	10:15	Meredith Kimball, Chair	AQ5119
10:15	11:00	Sue Wendell, Chair Graduate Studies Committee	AQ5119
11:00	11:45	Mary Lynn Stewart Chair Undergraduate Studies Committee	AQ5119
11:45	12:15	Andrea Lebowitz, Emerita faculty	AQ5119
12:30	2:00	Lunch with Women's Studies Coordinating Committee	DUC
2:00	3:30	Meeting with Women's Studies Coordinating Committee	DUC
3:30		Return to Hotel	

Thursday, May 16, 2002

8:30		Take taxi to downtown campus	
9:00	9:45	Sessional Instructors	SFU Harbour Centre
9:45	10:30	Move to Burnaby campus	
10:30	11:15	Billie Korstrom, Departmental assistant and Christine Goodman, Graduate secretary /Chair's secretary/ receptionist	AQ5119
11:30	12:15	Graduate students	AQ5119
12:30	2:00	Lunch	DUC
2:00	2:45	Undergraduate students	AQ5119
2:45	3:30	Associate Faculty	AQ5119
3:30	4:00	Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor (Note: Dionne Brand will not be in town. However, Billie Korstrom and Meredith Kimball who have been involved with her activities will meet with the Committee)	AQ5119
4:00	4:30	Melissa Munn, Community College visitor	AQ5119
4:30	6:00	Reception	DUC
6:00		Return to Hotel	

Department of Women's Studies
 Simon Fraser University
 Site Visit Schedule, May 15-17, 2002
Friday, May 17, 2002

8:00		Taxi from Hotel to Burnaby campus	
9:00	9:45	Dean of Graduate Studies: Jon Driver	AQ5119
10:00	10:45	Dean of Research, Bruce Clayman	AQ5119
11:00	11:45	Librarians Carole Smith, Gwen Boyd and Todd Mundle	AQ5119
12:00	1:30	Lunch	DUC
1:30	2:00	Co-op coordinator, Paulette Johnson	AQ5119
2:00	2:30	Marjorie Griffin Cohen Faculty	AQ5119
2:30	3:00	Jacqueline Levitin, Faculty	AQ5119
3:00	3:30	Marilyn MacDonald, Faculty	AQ5119
3:30	4:00	Habiba Zaman, faculty	AQ5119
4:00	5:00	Closing meeting with Bill Krane, John Pierce, Jon Driver and Laurie Summers	PCR Strand Hall
5:00		Return to hotel	