

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Vice-President, Academic
MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Senate
From: Alison Watt, Secretary, Senate Committee on Academic Planning
Subject: External Review of the Department of Women's Studies
Date: 15 November, 1995

The Department of Women's Studies was reviewed in 1994/95. The External Review Committee held its site visit on 27 and 28 March, 1995. I attach the executive summary and recommendations made by the External Review Committee and the response of the Department of Women's Studies for your information. The full report of the External Review Committee is available from Secretariat Services for Senators to review.

The External Review Committee was composed of the following members:

Dr. Rebecca Coulter (Chair)
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario

Dr. Martha MacDonald
Department of Economics
St. Mary's University

Dr. Diane Relke
Department of Women's and Gender Studies
University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Robert Anderson (Internal Member)
School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Mary Lynn Stewart, Chair of the Department of Women's Studies, will be attending Senate to respond to any questions.

Enclosures: 2

c: M.L. Stewart



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REPORT OF THE WOMEN'S STUDIES EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

JUNE 1995

The women's studies programs at Simon Fraser University have a strong reputation for excellence across the country and the faculty members associated with the Women's Studies Department are recognized widely for the high quality of their scholarship and publications. Outreach activities and the creative use of the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professorship further enhance the reputation of the department.

Women's studies undergraduates are offered an excellent array of programs from which to choose and demand for women's studies courses is strong. Joint programs with other departments provide a model of co-operation and wise use of resources, as well as interdisciplinary breadth and disciplinary depth. The curriculum review currently underway is well-timed and professors are sensitive to the need to revise course content and pedagogies to take account of cultural and other diversities.

The graduate program has an excellent reputation but a lack of resources means only a very small number of students can be admitted in any given year. The small intake, in turn, leads to several programming dilemmas and there is considerable difficulty in mounting regularly scheduled graduate courses. This is a significant problem. However, graduate students speak highly of the program.

The working environment within the department is excellent. However, the current staff members are excessively pressed and consideration must be given to providing additional support in this area. Some technological upgrading is required, as well.

The external review committee believes that Simon Fraser University should recognize the Women's Studies Department as an area of excellence within the university and should make plans to allocate the necessary resources for expansion. There is a strong demand for the graduate program which cannot be met because the department is under-staffed. The small group of faculty members is stretched to the limit. More resources should be allocated to a financial support program for students, to the women's studies library collection and for an increased faculty and staff complement.

In Canadian women's studies circles, Simon Fraser is respected for its seniority and its distinguished feminist scholars and teachers. The external review committee

feels that the time has come for the university to make a substantial new investment in women's studies in order to ensure the continued growth and development of this top-ranked program.

On the following pages, we offer a series of recommendations for improvements in existing programs and services. These recommendations are justified and explained more fully in the full report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

1. That additional joint programs, most notably with history, be developed and offered at the undergraduate level and that such ventures be encouraged and supported by the university administration.
2. That as part of the curriculum review, the Women's Studies Department seek out and identify any new courses with substantial women's studies content being offered in other departments and faculties and that those courses be designated for women's studies credit.
3. That the Women's Studies Department consider the development of extended minors or some other strategy through which women's studies students could pursue a cluster of courses toward a degree that would include First Nations Studies and/or Chinese Studies and/or Latin American Studies.

GRADUATE PROGRAM

4. That at least one core graduate course be offered each year, to be counted as part of the regular course load of the faculty member offering said course.
5. That the department give serious consideration to admitting graduate students on a biennial basis in order to establish a larger entry cohort.
6. That the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor teach one graduate course each year in the area of her specialization.
7. That additional efforts be made to identify and publicize to women's studies students suitable graduate courses being offered in other departments.
8. That clear guidelines be developed with respect to the requirements and expectations associated with directed reading courses and with those graduate courses that are constructed as "add-ons" to existing senior undergraduate courses.
9. That the graduate program chair and the administrative assistant in the Women's Studies Department work with the current graduate students to develop and produce a "survival" handbook for graduate students.

10. That the Faculty of Graduate Studies be more proactive in developing and offering a range of support programs for graduate students in the university.

FACULTY COMPLEMENT

11. That the faculty complement be increased to include one more joint and two more full-time appointments, thus bringing the number of faculty members up to 10 from 7 (5 joint, 5 full) and the number of FTEs to 7.5 from 5.
12. That if it is not possible for the history and women's studies departments to reach agreement on the vacant joint appointment, the Women's Studies Department be granted a full-time, tenure stream, interdisciplinary appointment to close at least some of the identified gaps (history, English, visual arts) and provide someone capable of covering the basic women in Canada courses.
13. That the two departments involved in joint appointments (existing and new) work co-operatively, rather than independently, in determining the futures of joint appointees, and that the tenure and promotion process for joint appointees be revised to reflect this co-operative approach.
14. That the half time responsibilities in each department be clarified and that colleagues in "home departments" be acquainted with the workloads and expectations in the Women's Studies Department.
15. That for joint appointees, each of the two departments be asked to recommend up to one full merit unit and that the two recommendations be added together to determine the total award.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTRIBUTIONS

16. That an advisory panel made up of representatives from the women's community be established by the Women's Studies Department to work with the Woodward Professor.
17. That a two-year term be established for appointments to the Woodward Professorship.

INTERACTION WITH OTHER UNITS

18. That the university establish an incentive fund to provide monetary support to joint course development and research projects between the Women's Studies Department and any other unit on campus.
19. That the Women's Studies Department attempt to increase the number of associates and/or consider creating a new, less onerous, category of associates or "friends" of women's studies to provide additional specific and limited services to the department such as serving on supervisory committees and providing information about new courses in other departments.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF

20. That the university directly fund two full-time staff positions in the Women's Studies Department and that the endowment money freed up by this move be used to hire an assistant for the Woodward Professor.
21. That all members of the department support the work of the staff by acquiring and using e-mail accounts.
22. That a computer graphics program be purchased immediately for the staff to use in their work.

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

23. That efforts be made to find more and better-equipped office space for the graduate students.
24. That the issue of access to a computer lab for graduate students be resolved quickly.
25. That additional support, and certainly no cutbacks, be given to the library to develop the women's studies collection and enhance the serials holdings.

Response to the External Review of the Women's Studies Department

Introduction

The Women's Studies Department is grateful to the External Review Committee for a thorough and thoughtful review. We are particularly pleased that the reviewers recognized the Department's "strong reputation for excellence across the country," including its "distinguished feminist scholars and teachers" and "congenial and cooperative" working environment. We appreciate the acknowledgement that this has been accomplished with "so few resources."

We will address the particular recommendations in the following ways.

Undergraduate Programs

Recommendation 1 The Departments of Women's Studies and Sociology/Anthropology have approved a proposal for a joint major which will come to Senate for approval this fall. Our Undergraduate Chair is negotiating the details of a proposed joint major with Political Science and will next consult with History about the details of another joint major.

Recommendation 2: The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee will seek out new courses for designation or cross-listing through advice from our faculty associates and through the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee.

Recommendation 3: The suggestion about designing degree options to cluster courses around First Nations Studies and/or Chinese Studies fits our commitment to reflect cultural diversity in our curriculum. Because Native Studies is new and the Asia/Canada proposal has not been approved by Senate, some time will be needed to establish formal links.

Graduate Program

Recommendation 4. The Graduate Committee has decided to offer W.S. 800, Methodology in Women's Studies Research, once a year as a graduate seminar, as a part of regular faculty teaching load.

Recommendation 5. The Graduate Committee rejects the idea of admitting graduate students biennially because this would mean the loss of good students to other graduate programs.

Recommendation 6. We agree with the notion of having the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor teach one graduate course and have adopted it.

Recommendation 7. To improve our efforts to identify and publicize suitable graduate courses in other departments, the Graduate Secretary will ask other departments to send outlines of graduate courses appropriate for our graduate students and will create a file of these outlines for graduate students to consult.

Recommendation 8. Women's Studies has guidelines with respect to requirements in directed reading courses and regularly-listed senior undergraduate/graduate courses. In future, course outlines for all graduate and combined courses will be submitted to and approved by the Graduate Chair.

Recommendation 9. The Graduate Student Caucus is investigating the possibility of writing and publishing a student handbook.

Recommendation 10. The Department strongly supports the suggestion that the Dean of Graduate Studies be more proactive in developing and offering support programs for all graduate students.

Faculty Complement

Recommendations 11: The Department would welcome the addition of one more joint and two more full-time appointments. Together with the Department of History, we have asked for authorization for a joint appointment. This request was denied but will be repeated next year.

Recommendation 11. In the longer term, we will seek full-term appointments to fill significant gaps in our curriculum.

Recommendations 13: The Department has always endeavoured to work co-operatively in the tenure and promotion process for joint appointees.

Recommendation 14: We have encountered some resistance in home departments to recognizing that joint appointees have half-time obligations in Women's Studies. With the assistance of the Dean of Arts, we will try to ensure that the full range of obligations to Women's Studies are recognized by any potential home department before any future joint appointments are made. We will also offer appointees the option of having their home department in Women's Studies.

Recommendation 15: While we appreciate the intentions of the reviewers in advising changes in the procedures for salary consideration for joint appointees, their proposed procedures would require changes in the framework agreement.

Research and Teaching Contributions

Recommendation 16: The Department is meeting with representatives of women's groups about acting as an advisory committee to the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair.

Recommendation 17: We are currently advertising a two year term for the RWWP Chair.

Interaction with Other Units:

Recommendation 18: We approve of the idea of an incentive fund to support joint course development and research projects and would take advantage of any such fund.

Recommendation 19: We will be asking interested faculty in other departments to act as liaisons with their departments.

Administration and Support Staff

Recommendation 20: The Department agrees that both of our staff positions should be funded by the university, as is the case in other departments. The Dean of Arts has increased his contribution to the secretary's salary to half; the other half is still covered by the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair's budget. The Coordinating Committee will use the money released back to the Chair budget to hire a part-time assistant to the Chair with responsibility for the considerable community outreach associated with the Chair.

Recommendation 21: All members of the department have agreed to establish e-mail accounts.

Recommendation 22: Because of changes in staff, we are redefining our software and hardware requirements.

Adequacy of Resources and Facilities

Recommendation 23: The Chair is resuming her efforts to acquire two new offices, one for the new faculty member (currently in the Chair's office) and one more for graduate students.

Recommendation 24: We are exploring how our graduate students may use the Sociology/Anthropology computing lab.

Recommendation 25; Like any other new and rapidly expanding discipline, Women's Studies is doubly disadvantaged by the current library policy of cancelling a periodical in order to add one. Increased library resources are crucial. We continue to request more funds.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Vice-President, Academic
MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Academic Planning
From: Alison Watt, Secretary, SCAP
Subject: External Review of the Department of Women's Studies
Date: 1 November, 1995

I attach the report of the External Review Committee and the response of the Department of Women's Studies for your information. The External Review Committee held its site visit on 27 and 28 March, 1995. The members of the committee were:

Dr. Rebecca Coulter (Chair)
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario

Dr. Martha MacDonald
Department of Economics
St. Mary's University

Dr. Diane Relke
Department of Women's and Gender Studies
University of Saskatchewan

Dr. Robert Anderson (Internal Member)
School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Mary Lynn Stewart, Chair of the Department of Women's Studies, will be attending SCAP on 8 November to discuss the Report and the Department's response.

Enclosures: 2



REPORT OF THE WOMEN'S STUDIES EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

JUNE, 1995

INTRODUCTION

The Women's Studies Review Committee visited Simon Fraser University on 27-28 March 1995 and met with faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, librarians, a representative from the Women's Centre and university administrators, sometimes individually and sometimes in groups. Without exception, we found these meetings to be frank, honest and open. In addition, the Review Committee examined a range of written documentation, most notably the Women's Studies Department report of its own internal review.

The external reviewers came to their task with some previous knowledge of the women's studies programs at Simon Fraser University. These programs have a strong reputation for excellence across the country and the faculty associated with the Women's Studies Department are recognized widely for their scholarship and commitment to their cognate disciplines and to women's studies. Similarly, the contributions of the holders of the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professorship are well-known and the way in which the Women's Studies Department has utilized this chair to expand its community outreach mandate is much-admired nationally. Over-all, the achievements and contributions of members of the Women's Studies Department have been significant in the Canadian context so it was not without some surprise that the external reviewers discovered how much had been done with so few resources.

What follows is our assessment of the Women's Studies Department using the categories provided in the terms of reference for the review committee. We have made a number of recommendations for the consideration of the Women's Studies Department and Simon Fraser University more generally. In making these recommendations, we acknowledge that our short visit and reading of the print materials can only have given us a partial picture of what is a complex pattern of political and economic realities within the university and its wider community. Nonetheless, we hope that our observations and recommendations, made as they are by outsiders, offer one entry point for discussions within the SFU community about the future growth possibilities for the Women's Studies Department.

1. STRUCTURE, BREADTH AND ORIENTATION OF THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Undergraduate students are offered an excellent array of degree programs from which to choose. The emphasis on the minor and joint programs and the recent addition of a major program provides a full spectrum of options. It is clear that joint programs are a good way to provide interdisciplinary breadth and disciplinary depth and the university should support this approach in appropriate ways. The development of new joint programs with the departments of political science and sociology/anthropology is to be commended. We recommend that other departments, most notably history, be encouraged to co-operate with Women's Studies in planning and offering additional joint programs.

The certificate program and the provision of courses through distance education provide concrete illustrations of the commitment of the Women's Studies Department to a range of student needs. Similarly, the current discussion about the possibility of adding an optional practicum component reflects a willingness to consider alternative approaches to learning and teaching. The reviewers recognize that co-op style programs which combine theoretical and applied work are becoming increasingly popular in universities and, in general, we believe such initiatives have much to offer students. We also recognize that difficult and troublesome issues are raised in planning, implementing and evaluating practica and that such undertakings are labour intensive and administratively demanding. Members of the Women's Studies Department are clearly aware of this and are proceeding with the necessary caution.

During our visit to the university, we were informed that the Women's Studies Department is beginning a curriculum review of the courses in the undergraduate program. It is clear to us that such a review is timely. A good variety of interdisciplinary and cross-listed courses at the undergraduate level are available but the list of courses has become a little idiosyncratic in that it reflects, not surprisingly, the interests of faculty over the years. Changes in the faculty complement through resignations and new hiring combined with the maturing of feminist scholarship support the need for a curriculum review.

At the same time, it must be said that the existing courses developed within the department itself all appear to be remarkably interdisciplinary. This is a tribute to the

faculty members who have developed the courses, given that most faculty were educated primarily in the monodisciplinary tradition. The women's studies professors clearly have worked hard to expand their interdisciplinary knowledge and teaching skills and have utilized their collective strengths effectively. They have been sensitive to changes and debates in the field of women's studies as the decision to develop WS 101 and WS 102 in place of WS 100 demonstrates.

As part of the curriculum review, we recommend that the department seek out and identify for women's studies credit designation, any new feminist-content courses being offered in other departments and faculties. This will further expand the offerings available to women's studies students. At the same time, we feel it is important for the Women's Studies Department to develop a more systematic approach to adding/deleting designated courses. There should be some assurance for women's studies students taking designated or cross-listed courses that the courses continue to have substantial women's studies content and that the advertised content bears more than a passing resemblance to the actual content delivered in the classroom. In this respect, the curriculum review group should also ensure that the calendar descriptions of courses are updated as necessary.

Specific gaps and difficulties around course offerings can be identified. At this time, with the appointment of Women's Studies Associate Members Mezei and Lebowitz to administrative posts, the availability of literature courses is severely restricted, a serious gap given that one of the joint majors is with English. A significant gap around

offerings in Canadian history was also identified. Attention should be given to considering ways to meet student desires for more 400 level courses in women's studies. Of course, this question, like many others is rooted in the university's ability to provide much-needed, additional financial support to the Women's Studies Department.

Given current debates in feminist scholarship and disputes on many North American campuses, it was not surprising to find that some students were concerned about whether or not courses adequately took account of diversities, particularly with respect to the question of race. We found that faculty members were sensitive to the need to shape an inclusive curriculum and that active steps had been taken to include content by and about women of colour. Indeed, it was not clear to us that any other program at Simon Fraser University had done as much as the Women's Studies Department to address diversity issues. Certainly, the faculty members with whom we spoke indicated the ways in which they had revised course curricula and the ways in which they were continuing to re-shape courses. The most recent appointment to the department was hired specifically to develop additional courses in areas such as non-western feminism, women and development and the experiences of women of colour in Canada. The current occupant of the Woodward Professorship has been actively teaching and speaking about diversity questions and organized a conference that dealt with race and gender. While no one, least of all the women's studies faculty, would claim that everything that needs to be done to address the complexities of diversities is being

done, it is the opinion of the reviewers that the Women's Studies Department has made an excellent effort in this regard and will continue to do so over the next few years.

Furthermore, we would like to suggest that inclusivity is not the sole responsibility of women's studies. The non-women's studies courses required for current and future joint programs should also be scrutinized to ensure that they take adequate account of diversities. We recommend that the Women's Studies Department consider the possibility that arrangements could be made whereby women's studies students might pursue a cluster of courses toward a degree that would include First Nations Studies and/or Chinese Studies and/or Latin American Studies courses. The development of extended minors might be a way to address student demand with respect to cultural diversities.

It was obvious from the turn-away and enrolment figures that the demand for women's studies courses has not abated. There is some tension between the faculty's desire to retain relatively small class sizes for pedagogical purposes and the suggestion by graduate students and others that increased enrolments in the 200 and 300 level courses could be accommodated through the provision of additional graduate teaching assistantships, a strategy that would have the spin-off effect of providing more financial assistance for hard-pressed master's students. This is clearly a matter for discussion and resolution within the Women's Studies Department itself. In addition, it was suggested that course offerings be balanced more evenly between the fall and spring sessions, a suggestion we think has considerable merit.

2. THE STRUCTURE, BREADTH AND DEPTH OF THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

The M.A. program in women's studies has an excellent reputation in Canada and this is reflected in the large number of students applying for admission each year. This is a program of high potential for Simon Fraser University and every consideration should be given to providing additional resources to this program. Under different circumstances this graduate program could be one of the larger ones in the university and one which would enhance the university's reputation for excellence in research and scholarship. Indeed, with appropriate levels of support, the Department of Women's Studies should be encouraged to develop a doctoral program, as well.

As it stands, however, the M.A. program is hampered by a lack of faculty resources to deliver courses and because of this only a small number of students can be admitted each year. The small intake of graduate students (in 1993, 2 and in 1994, 3) seems to be the cause of many graduate student concerns and also results in faculty members carrying a larger than normal unpaid over-load of work because of the need to offer directed readings courses in lieu of regular graduate courses. Without regular classes, students have little opportunity to cultivate a peer group collegiality with which to fend off the intellectual loneliness characteristic of graduate studies generally. The progression from undergraduate to graduate studies can be daunting in any discipline, but it can be especially difficult when students come from elsewhere and have little opportunity to form a support network. When this happens, students tend to look to the supervisor for

more than supervision; indeed, they often look for intense mentoring, which an already thinly spread faculty will find difficult to deliver. Faculty members, on the other hand, deprived of opportunities to teach graduate courses in their areas of specialization by university regulations governing minimum class sizes, also suffer from a lack of lively interchange with a group of graduate students. To maintain program integrity, we recommend that at least one core graduate course be offered each year, to be counted as part of the regular course load of the faculty member offering said course.

The small annual cohort of graduate students creates a number of programming dilemmas. We have some suggestions to make for improving program options but we wish to emphasize that we regard these suggestions as temporary "band-aid" solutions premised on the assumption that in the short-term additional resources will be limited. We would encourage the university to identify the graduate program in women's studies as an area of excellence that should receive considerably more support than it does.

We recommend that the department consider admitting graduate students only once every two years. This would establish a larger cohort of students able to move together through the graduate program. In addition, this larger intake would justify the regular biennial offering of at least one full-year course or two courses, one in each of the fall and spring semesters for new students. While the department may have reservations about this recommendation which have not occurred to us, we believe this proposal has the potential to respond to student concerns about feeling intellectually and socially disconnected. It should also be noted that the Dean of Arts indicated that it is possible

to waive the regular registration requirement of five students in a graduate course if a department can make a special needs case for program integrity. We believe such a case can be made for women's studies and that some minimal level of course offerings are a necessary part of the M.A. program.

We also recommend that the following suggestions be considered as ways to enhance course offerings. The department might ask the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor to teach one graduate course a year in her area of specialization. Given the wide range of excellent scholars who have held this chair in the past, it can be expected that such an arrangement would increase the breadth of offerings in the graduate program. Additional efforts should be made to identify and publicize suitable graduate courses being offered in other departments. This might be facilitated by creating a new category of associates or "friends" of women's studies whose duties would not be onerous but who would contribute information about graduate courses and provide an expanded pool of thesis committee members.

The Women's Studies Department has adopted the practice of creating some graduate courses through "add-ons" to senior undergraduate courses. While everyone recognizes this is a less than ideal situation, it has been made necessary because limited resources appear to allow no other options. As long as this approach must be taken, however, we believe clear guidelines for graduate students should be developed. They should understand how the undergraduate course is to be re-shaped and what the expectations are for graduate students taking the course. We think it would be helpful

to graduate students if professors "adding on" to undergraduate courses submitted a graduate reading list, assignments and any other additional requirements to the coordinating committee or to the graduate chair. Alternatively, a signed agreement between the graduate student and the faculty member making mutual expectations clear might make sense. In any event, we recommend that the Women's Studies Department address the concerns of graduate students with respect to the "add-on" courses. Similarly, with respect to directed readings courses, guidelines appear to be necessary to structure the work of graduate students and to ensure appropriate pacing and supervision. The graduate committee might become an active agent in this regard by building up a collection of bibliographies, setting guidelines for the frequency of meetings between graduate students and supervisors and designing an approval form for reading courses. Some professors have been able to group two or three students for a directed readings course and this seems to provide a useful half-way house between independent work and a regular classroom course. Efforts should be made to do more of this kind of grouping wherever possible.

It appears that a more regularized approach to graduate supervision is required in some instances. Provisions for students must be made in the absence of supervisors, whether on sabbatical or summer research trips. Written guidelines should be established so students receive a firm indication about what length of time is required by professors to turn-around drafts of thesis proposals, chapters, etc. The graduate students requested that a "survival" handbook be developed for them. We think this is

a good idea and would recommend that the current graduate students draft such a handbook in consultation with the graduate program chair and administrative assistant. Consideration should also be given to inviting graduate students to submit an annual evaluation of the program. This might take the form of a questionnaire similar to the course evaluations completed by undergraduate students.

The Review Committee feels strongly that the Faculty of Graduate Studies should be playing a more active role in developing and offering support programs for graduate students. Many graduate students' concerns--especially those having to do with the transition to graduate work, loneliness and limited opportunities for establishing collegiality--could be addressed relatively easily. Orientation programs, regular seminars on pedagogy for graduate teaching assistants, workshops on getting published, the organization of a graduate student research conference and other activities designed to induct graduate students into the academic life are all within the purview of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

It must be emphasized that despite the difficulties of maintaining a graduate program discussed above, graduate students overwhelmingly indicated their appreciation for what the program offers them. They understood that faculty members are taking on heavy workloads and they acknowledged that the women's studies graduate program allows them a great deal of flexibility to pursue their own interests and grow academically. The Review Committee was similarly impressed with the efforts of the Women's Studies Department to accommodate graduate students and to encourage their

intellectual development. We strongly recommend that Simon Fraser University recognize the growth possibilities for the graduate program in women's studies and provide the necessary staffing and other resources to allow this program to attain its full potential.

3. SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS, RATE OF PROGRESS AND DEGREE COMPLETION TIMES

We have already addressed several issues related to the support of graduate students. In addition, we would note that there is a desperate need for additional financial support for many of the students. The internal review notes, for example, that several students have had to leave the graduate program because they could not survive financially. This is an unfortunate waste. With respect to completion times, the statistics provided us suggest that completion times are as good as or better than those of many other departments at Simon Fraser. The fact that such an under-resourced graduate program can achieve completion rates comparable to or better than more well-endowed departments speaks to the high level of commitment of faculty and the enormous amount of work they do.

4. THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT IN THE DEPARTMENT

The members of the Review Committee were impressed by the congenial and cooperative atmosphere in the Women's Studies Department. Faculty, staff and students all appear to enjoy working in the department. The Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor, Dr. Dhruvarajan, observed that the most remarkable characteristic of the department

was the confidence of faculty members regarding the whole enterprise of feminist studies. This certainty of purpose and the stability of departmental status contributes to the development of a positive work environment. The faculty and staff are enthusiastic about their impressive outreach program and take pride in their creative administration of the endowed chair and in their unique governance structures. This sets off SFU's Department of Women's Studies from other departments where overwork and meagre resources have had an unfortunate impact on morale and have fragmented the collective sense of purpose that should inform a department.

The Review Committee was also impressed by the candour of faculty and staff in sharing with us information about the day-to-day life in the department and by their concern for each other's careers and personal well-being. In addition, there was an obvious sensitivity to the needs of students and the alacrity with which the department is addressing student suggestions for improvements suggests to us that the working environment is highly satisfactory.

Over-all, the department is clearly well-run, welcoming and active.

5. SIZE AND BACKGROUND OF FACULTY COMPLEMENT

Now that women's studies has departmental status and has expanded its range of degree programs, the equivalent of five full-time tenured/tenure-track appointments is inadequate, especially given that two of those appointments are really four halves. We recommend an increase in the faculty complement which would include one more joint and two more full-time appointments, thus bringing the number of faculty members up

to 10 from 7 (5 joint, 5 full) and the number of FTEs to 7.5 from 5. Frankly, we consider this to be a modest augmentation given the department's commitments and circumstances.

With the recent new appointment, the disciplinary balance in the department is considerably improved. However, the balance within the humanities is somewhat worrisome. The decision regarding the vacant joint appointment with history should be made as soon as possible. If the two departments cannot come to some agreement soon, we recommend that the Women's Studies Department be granted a full-time, tenure stream appointment in order to meet its pressing needs. A good cross-disciplinary appointment could close at least some of the identified gaps within the department (for example, in history, English, visual arts) and the position should be structured to ensure that the appointee would be able to cover the basic women in Canada courses.

Attention must be given to workload issues for joint appointments. While the intent of joint appointments is that they be balanced between the two departments concerned, it seems clear that this is not the case. The very way in which the term "home department" is defined--that is, *not* the Women's Studies Department--suggests that the home department is dominant and controls the bottom line in terms of salary, merit, tenure and promotion. It is not clear why, in fact, the home department is never the Women's Studies Department.

During the review process it became obvious that the demands of joint appointments are not easily met by scholars in the early stages of their careers. The

women most likely to succeed are ones who are childless or have grown children and have already achieved some seniority. This skews the age profile of the department in unacceptable ways and sends forth inappropriate messages about who can and cannot be a university professor. There are two examples now of the way in which the existing joint appointment structure could not tolerate the normal pressures of childbearing or accommodate illness and disability.

The problem with joint appointments is that not only must faculty members meet two sets of criteria, but that one set is clearly dominant and this to the detriment of individual joint appointees. Take, for example, the evaluation of a professor's publication record for tenure or promotion. Women's studies values the dissemination of research through a variety of vehicles. While it is important that specialists speak to other specialists, it is equally important that feminist research reach the other audiences for which it is intended. This means that the publication of accessibly written and broadly distributed monographs, and the publication of research in widely available periodicals, pamphlets and collections are of crucial importance. However, if a "home department" represents a discipline that values the refereed journal article above all else, the joint appointee will either have to restrict the dissemination of her research to this narrow audience, thereby ignoring her responsibility to the wider world of women more generally, or serve both audiences, thereby substantially increasing her workload and delaying a promotion application. A joint appointee is further disadvantaged by the fact that teaching and service tends to be more highly valued in women's studies than in most

other departments, so she must invest considerable effort in these areas, sometimes at the expense of speedy progress with a research program, if she is to meet women's studies standards and demands. Efforts in teaching and service, especially community outreach, can often count for far less in the "home department" which may view the joint appointee as not having her priorities properly ordered. In short, standards for tenure and promotion may well be dictated largely by the "home department" or the appointee will place undue burdens on herself to meet two different sets of standards, thus incurring far more than one regular workload.

While members of the Women's Studies Department recognize the difficulties of joint appointments, they do not wish to abandon them. In particular, senior scholars holding joint appointments see much benefit in them. However, we suggest some changes are needed to take account of the difficulties we have noted. We recommend that the half time responsibilities (committee work, supervision, directed readings, etc.) in each department be clarified. It would also be helpful if steps were taken to increase the awareness of colleagues in "home departments" about the workload and expectations in the Women's Studies Department.

With respect to merit increases in salary, we understand that the "home department" and the Women's Studies Department do not always agree in their assessments of the joint appointee's contributions. Given that the maximum award is two merit units per faculty member, we suggest that each of the two departments recommend up to one full merit unit, based exclusively on performance in that

department, and that the two recommendations be added together for the total award. While this might mean that over time joint appointees will receive a higher average increase than those appointed to only one department, this would simply acknowledge that the work of a joint appointment exceeds the sum of its two parts. Indeed, at this point, the only comparability we could see between the half of a joint appointment and a full one is the different number of sections taught per year. Research, and certainly service, are more or less doubled for the joint appointee.

We also recommend that the tenure and promotion process for joint appointees be reconsidered. It seems to us that a joint tenure/promotion committee composed of an equal number of representatives from each department, rather than two separate committees, could undertake the necessary review of each individual's file. The standard number of assessments from external referees could be divided between the two departments rather than doubled. That is, we recommend that the two departments involved in the joint appointments work co-operatively rather than independently in determining the futures of the joint appointees.

6. RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTRIBUTIONS OF FACULTY MEMBERS

One of the real strengths of this department is in its research contributions. On average, the faculty has an impressive publication record and has brought considerable grant money to the university. Many of the faculty members are nationally and internationally recognized as outstanding in their research fields and some have won prestigious awards for their work. These accomplishments are a matter of record and we

need not reiterate here any specific examples. It may be that the Simon Fraser University community as a whole does not recognize the very high regard in which its women's studies scholars are held elsewhere.

During our visit to the department, it was obvious that the faculty takes its teaching responsibilities seriously and makes every effort to respond to student concerns within the limits set by the lack of resources. We learned from students of some professor's innovative ways of dealing with classroom conflict around, for example, issues of race. We learned, too, of the way in which the department supports the work of sessionals.

The faculty have clearly invested students with confidence in the importance of their perceptions and input and we were pleased to see the active participation of both the undergraduates and graduates in the review process. Women's studies students want more personal attention: graduate students want closer personal mentoring, while undergraduates want to see more of their faculty around campus, particularly at the Women's Centre. Student expectations of women's studies are exceedingly high, and this is a credit to faculty who have clearly encouraged students actively to claim, rather than passively to receive, their education.

One form of teaching, community outreach, is often over-looked or down-played. In the Women's Studies Department, considerable faculty energy goes into the outreach program and this should not go unrecognized by the university. This program provides educational opportunities around the province for large numbers of people and, in turn,

provides an education for the faculty members who participate. The province-wide presentations also function as recruitment visits that will pay off in future applications for admission to Simon Fraser. This outreach program should be seen by the university as an investment in its own future, and every effort should be made to expand the program and ensure that it is adequately funded.

An important part of the research and teaching functions of the department occurs through the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professorship. The department is to be congratulated for the creative uses it has made of the endowment. A wide range of strengths and skills have been brought to the department through judicious appointments to the Professorship and over the years appointees have made important contributions both inside and outside the university. We understand that feedback from the community regarding the activities of the Woodward Professors is excellent and letters from community groups speak glowingly of the educational sessions provided by Woodward Professors and by other faculty members through the Travelling Speakers' Bureau. Senior administrators should be better acquainted with the volume and enthusiasm of this feedback as it might assist them in developing suitable responses to increasing demands for university accountability.

The current Ruth Wynn Woodward Professor, Dr. Dhruvarajan, made some specific suggestions about ways to enhance the work of Woodward Professors and we recommend that they be implemented. An advisory panel made up of representatives from the women's community should be established to support the work of the Professor.

This is especially important when the professorship is filled by a distinguished scholar from outside Vancouver. A two-year tenure for the Woodward Professor is recommended as much of the first year must necessarily be given to figuring out the university, establishing contacts and determining needs. An assistant, possibly part-time, should be hired to help the Professor better carry out her complex mandate, co-ordinate with the advisory panel, help organize her first semester outreach activities and provide some continuity from one holder of the professorship to the next. In addition, given the hectic pace kept by the Professor, an assistant would ensure a more rapid turn-around on clerical work than is presently possible given current staffing arrangements in the department. We have already recommended that the Woodward Professor offer one graduate course a year.

7. INTERACTION AND INTEGRATION WITH OTHER UNITS

Joint appointments and joint majors are conducive to some degree of interaction and integration with several other departments, although interactions have not always been completely satisfactory as the difficulties around filling a joint appointment with history illustrate. Also, as one associate observed, some departments are "supportive in an amiable but not productive way." As we have noted above, there is a need for faculty members in other departments to make more effort to understand the work of women's studies scholars. It is unrealistic to expect that a handful of joint appointees and Women's Studies associates can be made responsible for integration with other units. However, with time and proactive efforts on the part of senior administrators, more

fruitful relationships will surely result. We would recommend that the university administration establish an incentive fund to provide monetary support to joint course development and research projects between the Women's Studies Department and any other unit on campus. This would encourage further co-operation and interaction within the university community.

As small programs themselves, First Nations Studies, Chinese Studies and Latin American Studies would benefit as much as would Women's Studies from some kinds of cross-program initiatives. As stated above, the extended minor may be a useful mechanism for promoting interdepartmental activities.

While there is considerable interaction, formal and informal, among feminists on campus, and several are associates in the Women's Studies Department, the Review Committee suggests that efforts be made to increase the number of associates. We have also suggested above that the department consider establishing a new, less onerous, category of associates in order to promote the growth of a larger network of feminist scholars willing to contribute information, serve as supervisory committee members and provide some other limited services to the department.

The Women's Centre had high praise for the department and for faculty members who have provided many services to the Centre over the years. It was noted that the department sends many students to the Women's Centre to do volunteer work there and to make use of the resources available in the Centre's library.

Finally, it should be noted that members of the department serve on many

university committees and consequently interact with a wide range of faculty members in the course of this work.

8. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF

Regardless of its size, any department with such a variety of degree programs and so many other projects needs considerable clerical and administrative support and certainly more support than the Women's Studies Department currently has. The coordination of the outreach program sounds to be a full-time job in itself. We have already recommended that the Woodward Professor be provided with an assistant, preferably full-time but certainly part-time. This would relieve some of the pressures on the current staff members. In addition, we recommend that the university directly fund two full-time staff positions, thus freeing up endowment money to support the hiring of an assistant for the Woodward Professor. Plans should also be made to increase the staff complement as new joint programs are approved and new faculty members are hired. While the current staff members are clearly highly competent and organized and very knowledgeable about the department's work, it is simply unfair to continue to add on more and more work for them to do.

The staff spoke of the need for some technological upgrading. They indicated that it would be most helpful to them if all faculty members were on e-mail as this could streamline communications and make it much easier to reach faculty who, through joint appointments, are somewhat scattered. Indeed, it was suggested that all members of the Co-ordinating Committee should be on e-mail. We urge all members of the department

to support the work of the staff by acquiring e-mail accounts and using them. Wordprocessing compatibility between faculty and staff would also help. There is a pressing need for the staff to have a computer graphics program and steps should be taken immediately to acquire the appropriate software.

9. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

The department is pleased with its new quarters in the quad although it is clear that additional space may soon be required as new faculty and staff are hired. The common room is a welcome addition and provides a place for faculty, staff and students to meet formally or informally. The department should make sure that undergraduate students become aware of the fact that they can use this room. Undergraduate students also indicated they would like a room for themselves that was pleasant and inviting and had equipment and resources students could use.

Graduate students also raised concerns about the lack of office space for their use. Currently, one small office serves sixteen students. They would like additional offices and resources and argue that this would provide an opportunity and reason for students to congregate, thus alleviating the isolation many of them experience. We would recommend that efforts be made to find a better arrangement for the graduate students before the new cohort enters the program in the fall. Students were also concerned by their lack of access to a computer lab. We understand inconclusive negotiations have occurred with the Department of Sociology in an attempt to secure access to its computer lab for women's studies students. We recommend that immediate attention

be given to accommodating the computing needs of the graduate students, either through the successful conclusion of negotiations with the Department of Sociology or through some other means. When arrangements are finalized, they should be monitored to ensure they effectively meet the needs of women's studies students and provide true access to computing facilities.

The annual library budget for the Women's Studies Department is alarmingly small, particularly since the department is growing. Looking at the library budget by department, and in relation to the number of graduate students, suggests that the women's studies budget needs enhancement to achieve comparability. While we recognize that it is often the case that feminist publications that fall within the domain of the traditional disciplines are purchased from the budgets for those collections, we would argue that as women's studies has become a field of inquiry in its own right, it is harder and harder to starve women's studies on the grounds that its needs are taken care of elsewhere. Certainly, as other departments confront tighter budget restrictions, there is no guarantee that women's studies will be able to depend on those departments to support its needs.

Massive increases in subscription rates for journals are a problem for all departments, but the policy of cutting an "old" journal if a new one is desired works only for the well-established disciplines. Given the relative youth of women's studies, the department is still working on developing the essential core of required journals and is not yet at the stage where any journals can be cut. In fact, there are some glaring gaps

in the women's studies serials list which should be filled as soon as possible. It hardly seems fair to ask a new department to begin cutting in the same manner as well-established, large departments whose longevity, size and development during richer times have enabled them to make large claims on resources. What is required here is not the same treatment for all departments because not all departments are equal.

Representatives from the library system were knowledgeable about the collection pertinent to women's studies and open to working closely with the department. We suggested that they try to generate a list of the entire feminist holdings, not just the interdisciplinary one, so that faculty designing new courses or revising old ones could be more precisely informed about the available library support.

Throughout this report we have addressed what we consider to be the major resource need of the department, namely the need for more faculty and staff. This small department has set an ambitious agenda of courses and programs but their delivery stretches the available faculty and staff to the limits, especially now that the new major has been added. Most of the faculty and associate members are senior and very able academics so it is not surprising that many of them are called on to serve as university administrators. This, however, leaves the department vulnerable with respect to course delivery and, while the work of the sessional instructors was spoken of highly, an over-dependence on part-time instructors to deliver courses is not desirable. We have already made specific recommendations about increasing the faculty and staff complement and would reiterate this recommendation as being the key one in this report. "Making do,"

as one faculty member described it, is not acceptable for a department which gives so much to students and contributes so much to the reputation of the university.

Women's studies faculty are nothing if not creative when it comes to devising solutions to problems created by underfunding, but these solutions invariably mean additional demands and stress on the faculty. A perfect example is the development of a graduate program originally designed to cost the university next to nothing. Indeed, the university is getting far more than its money's worth out of this faculty who, collectively, set a punishingly high standard of productivity which has begun to take its toll. The decision of two professors to convert joint appointments to one-department appointments because of the effect of the former on family life and health is but one indication that something must be done and done quickly. It was clear to us that the department is currently delivering degrees at the expense of the personal and social lives of its faculty and that it will be difficult, if not impossible, for this same small number of professors to continue the flat-out pace at which they have been working for the last twenty years.

In Canadian women's studies circles, Simon Fraser is respected for its seniority and its distinguished feminist scholars and teachers. A few women's studies programs in the country are now producing graduates with advanced degrees so the time has come for a program as important as Simon Fraser's to expand and search out its next generation of outstanding teachers and researchers.

10. THE DEPARTMENT AND THE EXTERNAL COMMUNITY

We have commented throughout on the positive relations the department has with the external community, particular as they relate to the outreach work of the Ruth Wynn Woodward Professorship and the Travelling Speakers' Bureau. The organization of conferences such as the recent one on gender and race is another example of close ties with the external community. The importance of this work cannot be over-stated.

In addition, it is worth noting that along with everything else they do, faculty members serve or have served on the boards of women's organizations in the city, provincially and nationally and on committees and executive groups for a wide range of professional associations. One member brings a feminist presence to the board of directors of two corporations. Faculty members have an exemplary record of service to their external communities, both professional and public. This is yet another example of the commitment and extraordinary effort displayed by members of the Women's Studies Department and another reason why the women's studies program has such a strong reputation across the country. It is our view that the university does not fully appreciate the national stature of its women's studies faculty and program and how this enhances the over-all profile of Simon Fraser University generally. For a very small commitment of resources, the university reaps many benefits. It is time to make a more substantial investment in women's studies in order to sustain the continued growth and development of this top-ranked program.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Coulter

Rebecca Coulter, Chair, External Review Committee
University of Western Ontario

Martha MacDonald
St. Mary's University

Diana Relke
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Robert Anderson
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Department of Women's Studies

Memo

To: David Gagan
Vice-President Academic

From: Mary Lynn Stewart
Chair, Women's Studies

Re: Response to the External Review of the Women's Studies Department

Date: Friday October 20, 1995

I enclose the response to the External Review of the Women's Studies Department, as requested by your predecessor on 14 June, 1995. I am also sending a copy to the Dean of Arts.

Mary Lynn

