

Thank you all for your support and willingness to step up to reinstate the WGS Department. We appreciate you all. SSU faces a \$20+ million budget deficit as a function of falling enrollment over the past 6-7 years. However, we stabilized this year and the estimates were that from here on out, there would be steady though slow growth. Nevertheless, SSU announced on January 22, 2025 that 46 faculty would lose their jobs, and the elimination of six departments, including Women's and Gender Studies. You've been asking what you can do to help.

If you want to get more involved, email the alumni organizing at savessuwgs@gmail.com.

In addition to whatever forms of advocacy you have available, we ask you to inundate these Administrative folks with EMAILS AND LETTERS with your STORIES. Your passion for WGS, the intersectional feminist perspectives we take (esp as it relates to gender, race, class, sexuality, nation), the topics we address, the difficult conversations we lead—these are what they need to know. They need to hear from you all, why WGS is a unique department and why the elimination matters.

Identify:

1. Who you are (WGS major/minor alum, former GE/SSU student, WGS guest speaker, community organization impacted by WGS)
2. Why this specific WGS Department is important (to you personally, but also more broadly in terms of what and how we teach).
3. If you are a WGS Alum, please let Administration know what kind of work you went on to do/families you raised, advocacy work you do in your communities, and so on. Give specifics on what you learned that has informed your post-SSU life. Share any personal examples. Administrators and legislators respond to personal stories.

Explain:

1. Why you think the social and economic cost of losing WGS (for students, the community, society) far outweighs the cost savings.
2. Why you think the elimination of WGS betrays the fundamental mission of the CSU, and the basic values of SSU.

Ask:

For the Department to be reinstated with its tenured faculty intact.

Five points to consider touching on (you don't need to hit them all—or any!):

***NOTE: These are not to be cut/paste into your letter.**

- 1) Elimination of WGS is a loss to the entire university with regard to inclusion, appreciation for differences, and academic excellence. In addition to our major courses, WGS has served over 15,000 General Education SSU students since its founding as a Department in 2001. We bring these topics to the SSU students broadly, and they bring that

interdisciplinarity, appreciation for diverse perspectives, and justice-focused empathy to all of their communities— locally and nationally.

- 2) Elimination of the WGS Department creates immediate and long-term harm and loss to the local community. WGS is the only department that has required an Internship since its founding. WGS students have clocked over 30,000 volunteer/internship hours to local Sonoma County organizations. These organizations help the unhoused, survivors of violence, immigrant communities, LGBTQ+ youth, women seeking healthcare, and so much more. Many of these students go on after graduation to work or volunteer for these organizations—or found their own.
- 3) Elimination of the WGS Department creates immediate loss and long-term harm for the retention of marginalized students, including LGBTQ+ students, BIPOC students, survivors of violence and trauma, and many more. We are the department that centers BIPOC and LGBTQ+ curriculum—and this retains those students. We are a department of 2 BIPOC faculty and 2 LGBTQ faculty, all of whom are experts in reaching diverse students with materials and concepts relevant and transformative for them. Representation matters.
- 4) WGS majors and Queer Studies minors have gone on to have powerful and impactful careers because of their time in WGS. Stripping future students of this opportunity is denying them the tools to create the kinds of change our society needs.
- 5) WGS is exactly what is needed in this political and cultural moment, marked as it by attacks against LGBTQ rights, immigrant rights, women's reproductive rights, and more. Now, more than ever.

Please send **ONE direct email** to ALL the following people at the same time:

To: president@sonoma.edu, moranski@sonoma.edu, mahmed@sonoma.edu,
Gerald.jones@sonoma.edu

President Emily Cutrer
Provost Karen Moranski
Vice President of Administration and Finance Monir Ahmed
Vice President of Student Affairs

And cc the following (these are important for the letters to have any impact):

Cc: csu-chancellor@calstate.edu, Trusteesoffice@calstate.edu, Richard.Figueroa@gov.ca.gov,
Nichole.Murillo@gov.ca.gov, aaron.skaggs@sen.ca.gov, aaron.vad@asm.ca.gov,
meredith.mcnamee@asm.ca.gov, Jacob.Fraker@sen.ca.gov, Natalia.Garcia@asm.ca.gov

CSU Chancellor Mildred Garcia
CSU Board of Trustees
Governor Newsom (staff members Richard Figueroa and Nichole Muñoz-Murillo)
State Senator Mike McGuire (Chief of staff Aaron Skaggs)

State Assemblymember Damon Connolly (Chief of staff Aaron Vad)

State Assemblymember Chris Rogers, SSU Alum (Chief of staff Meredith McNamee)

State Senate Consultant to the LGBTQ Caucus Chair Jacob Fraker

State Assembly member and LGBTQ Caucus Vice Chair Natalia Garcia

And bcc:

Bcc: savessuwgs@gmail.com, romesbur@sonoma.edu, mcquade@sonoma.edu,
kimrajai@sonoma.edu, tung@sonoma.edu

WGS Faculty Chair Don Romesburg

WGS Faculty Lena McQuade

WGS Faculty Patricia Kim-Rajal

WGS Faculty Charlene Tung

(and our central organizing site)