



SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Proposal for
Bachelor of Arts
in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Appendix 5: External Evaluation Reports
(Section 7)

and

Appendix 6: Institutional Response to External
Evaluation Reports (Section 8)

April 11, 2022

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APPENDIX 5

External Evaluation Reports

(Section 7)



External Evaluation Report

Form 2D

Version 201-08-02

The External Evaluation Report is an important component of a new academic program proposal. The external evaluator's task is to examine the program proposal and related materials, visit the campus to discuss the proposal with faculty and review related instructional resources and facilities, respond to the questions in this Report form, and submit to the institution a signed report that speaks to the quality of, and need for, the proposed program. The report should aim for completeness, accuracy and objectivity.

The institution is expected to review each External Evaluation Report it receives, prepare a single institutional response to all reports, and, as appropriate, make changes to its program proposal and plan. Each separate External Evaluation Report and the Institutional Response become part of the full program proposal that the institution submits to SUNY for approval. If an external evaluation of the proposed program is required by the New York State Education Department (SED), SUNY includes the External Evaluation Reports and Institutional Response in the full proposal that it submits to SED for registration.

Institution: SUNY Old Westbury

Evaluator Name (Please print.): *Barbara Winslow*

Evaluator Title and Institution: *Professor Emerita, Brooklyn College CUNY*

Evaluator Signature:

Proposed Program Title: *Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies*

Degree: BA

Date of evaluation: *March 9, 2022*

I. Program

1. Assess the program's **purpose, structure, and requirements** as well as formal mechanisms for program **administration and evaluation**. Address the program's academic rigor and intellectual coherence:

Purpose: *The proposed WGSS Program is clearly defined as an interdisciplinary program that examines the creation, reconstruction of asymmetrical gender, sex and sexuality systems and their connections to other operations of power and inequities. Explorations of how gender, sex and sexuality intersect with race, ethnicity class and disability will be addressed to the imperial and globalizing contexts shaping these systems of power. This statement of purpose is clearly aligned with the current state of this interdisciplinary field. (See for example the statement of the National Women's Studies Association, "Today the field's interrogation of identity, power, and privilege go far beyond the category "woman." Drawing on the feminist scholarship of U.S. and Third World women of color, women's studies has made the conceptual claims and theoretical practices of **intersectionality**, which examines how categories of identity (e.g., sexuality, race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) and structures of inequality are mutually*

constituted and must continually be understood in relationship to one another; and **transnationalism**, which focuses on cultures, structures and relationships that are formed as a result of the flows of people and resources across geopolitical borders, foundations of the discipline.”

Structure: As of right now, WGSS is a minor and not a program, so I can only comment on a proposed structure for a Program. A WGSS Program should have as its Coordinator/Director a tenure track, preferably a tenured faculty member who also teaches in the Program. The Director/Coordinator must be given reassigned time in order to carry out the necessary administrative responsibilities, which will in a short period of time resemble the responsibilities of a department chair. I would encourage the Director/Coordinator to bring affiliated faculty into the program, creating committees that can help develop curriculum, observe adjunct faculty, advise the coordinator, develop outside programs, mentor students, keep in touch with WGSS alums. I can only assume the Dean or Provost (or whatever is in SUNY Old Westbury’s faculty handbook) reviews the work of the Director/Coordinator. The Director/Coordinator should have a fixed term, and I would encourage an established process, with faculty input, for creating the succession of WGSS Directors/Coordinator.

2. Comment on the **special focus** of this program, if any, as it relates to the discipline.
The Program is the discipline. From faculty discussions, a focus of the program will be how it relates to the diverse suburban SUNY/Old Westbury and neighboring Long Island community, which is more than appropriate.
3. Comment on the plans and expectations for **self-assessment and continuous improvement**.
In line with SUNY-wide policies, SUNY Old Westbury performs every five year periodic reviews of all academic programs. In addition, the proposed Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) will be assessed each year of the five year cycle. I would recommend that the WGSS Program have at the end of each academic year a retreat, where faculty and students can review the years’ work and plan for the future.
4. Discuss **the relationship** of this program to other programs of the institution and collaboration with other institutions, and assess available support from related programs.
The WGSS minor has at least twenty-five full time faculty committed to teaching in a Program. Their home Departments and Programs include History, French Literature, Political Science, Sociology, English, Geography, Psychology, Social Health, American Studies, African Diaspora Studies, Education, Applied Anthropology. This gives a clear picture of the relationship and commitment by faculty. Support, which usually means reassigned time for faculty, is necessary for meaningful relationships and collaboration with the WGSS Program.
5. What is the evidence of **need** and **demand** for the program locally, in the State, and in the field at large? What is the extent of occupational demand for graduates? What is the evidence that demand will continue?
In the fifty some years since Women’s Studies has developed as a serious academic discipline, first as ad hoc courses, then programs, then Departments, and now Departments with Ph.D programs, Women’s, Women’s and Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies is now a key component of any liberal arts college or university. The National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA), an academic organization is the largest and still growing organization of women’s, gender, sexuality, feminist studies activists. Today NWSA is probably one of the best US models of global intersectional feminism. It hosts an annual conference which brings together over a thousand under graduates, graduates, professors, independent scholars and other feminist activists to discuss

the state of the field. Similarly the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women and Genders, which is held once every three years is the largest academic history conference in the US. Locally, women's (gender, sexuality, feminist) studies program at the City University of New York (CUNY) for example have grown in the past fifty years, with a degree granting program at the CUNY Graduate Center. There is no evidence that the demand for women's and gender courses will decline.

The Brooklyn College Women's and Gender Studies Program advertises, "What can you do with a Women's Studies degree? Everything." Women's Studies courses prepares students to understand the totality and complexity of the world in which they live. An intersectional understanding of medicine, media, the arts, education, the law, for example is critical today. An increasing number of applicants accepted for positions in museums today do not have Art History degrees, but rather Women's or other area studies degrees. The BC WGST Program has begun to track our majors, and in large numbers they go on to professional and graduate schools and find employment. (Even in these very difficult times)

II. Faculty

- 6. Evaluate the faculty**, individually and collectively, with regard to training, experience, research and publication, professional service, and recognition in the field.

The twenty-five SUNY Old Westbury tenured and tenure track faculty all have Ph.Ds (minus one, who is ABD); some have international reputations, most are known nationally in their academic fields. I met with a core group of faculty - Professors Quirk, Emory, Cocca, Shields-Mas, Goode, and was most impressed by their dedication to the proposed program as well as their experiences teaching in the field, their research and their ideas for future courses, and research.

- 7. Assess the faculty in terms of number and qualifications and plans for future staffing.** Evaluate **faculty responsibilities** for the proposed program, taking into account their other institutional and programmatic commitments. Evaluate **faculty activity in generating funds** for research, training, facilities, equipment, etc. Discuss any **critical gaps and plans for addressing them**.

*At this moment in time, SUNY Old Westbury has a core group of more than qualified faculty for the program. However, what is needed is **reassigned time** for the colleagues to teach, and develop strategies for generating funds for their research, training and etc. The responsibility for enabling faculty to develop the WGSS programs rests on the ability of the administration, perhaps the part of the institution which helps faculty write and win research proposal. As with too many Women, Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies programs and departments, the major academic gap is found in the 'hard' sciences and technology, but at Old Westbury, surprisingly in media.*

- 8. Evaluate credentials and involvement of adjunct faculty and support personnel.**

The adjunct faculty's include Ph.Ds as well as extensive and relevant work experience.

*As of now the proposed WGSS has **no** support personnel dedicated just to the program. In order for the proposed program to succeed, it will need a full time staff person to work with the academic leader to carry out the myriad programmatic and administrative functions. Support personnel has also included the Women's Gender, and Sexuality Resource Center (WGSRC) a fairly well resourced space which has helped mentor WGSS minors, and has played a role in attracted students to take WGSS courses and declare WGSS as a minor. The proposed program will continue to partner with the library, Student Affairs, Counseling and Wellness Services, Career Planning and Development, Student Health Services, the First Year Experience Program, Residential Life, campus police, the tutoring, writing and math centers as well as the ITS department.*

III. Students

9. Comment on the **student population the program seeks to serve** and assess plans and projections for student recruitment and enrollment. *Unfortunately, due to Covid I did not get to meet with students. However, pre-covid, I have been to the campus as a speaker and as an external evaluator for the American Studies Program, where I got to meet with a number of students. The ones I met, granted over three years ago, were very interested in and supportive of the courses in WGSS. The WGSS program is beginning with a modest but realistic program of recruitment: year one 5 full time, two part time, and plans by year five, forty five full time and part time students with an estimated FTE. Crucial aspects for student enrollment: 1) course offerings. If WGSS courses are not offered, students will not enroll. 2) Consistency of course offerings, especially those courses which will be required for the minor and hopefully the major 3) regular reflection on course content, keeping abreast of new issues facing WGSS.*

10. What are the prospects that recruitment efforts and admissions criteria will supply a **sufficient pool of highly qualified applicants and enrollees**?

The prospects for recruitment of highly qualified applicants and enrollees depends on the overall ability of SUNY Old Westbury to attract such students. The administration must demonstrate its support from such a program. The WGSS program will have to develop their methods of attracting students to the program. I have little doubt that the colleagues will be able to develop innovative and imaginative ways to bring students to the program. But to repeat what I wrote above, WGSS will not be able to recruit highly qualified students unless there are substantial course offerings.

11. Comment on provisions for encouraging participation of **persons from underrepresented groups**.

Is there adequate attention to the needs of part-time, minority, or disadvantaged students?

The faculty I met realized the most effective way in which to reach students from underrepresented groups is to provide courses that deal with the realities of their lives. That means courses that deal with race, class, gender, sexualities, ethnicities, disabilities, nationalities, immigration, to name a few. The Applied Learning Research programs should focus on issues involving POC and those with disabilities. Diverse faculty is another way of ensuring diverse students. Non academic programming (in concert perhaps with the WGSRC) which addresses the needs and interests of SUNY Old Westbury's diverse community, will further attract students to the program.

12. Assess the system for monitoring **students' progress and performance** and for **advising students** regarding academic and career matters.

As of right now there is no Program so there is no program system to monitor students' progress and performance. Once the Program is initiated, and with the necessary administrative support a system can be put in place – system which aligns with SUNY Old Westbury's Departments and Program (allowing, of course, for unique characteristics of the WGSS). Advisement will be done by both the administrator as well as by the Program head.

13. Discuss prospects for graduates' post-completion success, whether **employment, job advancement, future study, or other outcomes related to the program's goals**.

Majors and minors in Women's (Gender, Sexuality and Feminist) Studies, have in comparable institutions, for example CUNY, have gone on to graduate and professional schools, and have found employment, largely in not-for-profit, or educational institutions. Given SUNY Old Westbury's highly regarded academic records, WGSS graduates should do well in a post-covid job market. The WGSS Program should develop an ongoing partnership with Old Westbury's job placement services. With Applied Learning Research and internship possibilities, job opportunities should expand. Once the Program is instituted there should be administrative resources to track WGSS' alumni graduate study, employment and other work experience.

IV. Resources

14. Comment on the adequacy of physical **resources** and **facilities**, e.g., library, computer, and laboratory facilities; practical and internship sites or other experiential learning opportunities, such as co-ops or service learning; and support services for the program, including use of resources outside the institution.

All the campus resources, library, tutoring centers, IT centers will be available; the proposed WGSS will have an extra advantage of the WSSGRC. SUNY Old Westbury is located in a diverse area of Long Island. There are a number of organizations and NGO's which service this diversity and can be an invaluable resource for outside the institution. The proposed WGSS Program should also promote itself as an invaluable resource – knowledge and personnel – to outside institutions in the area.

15. What is the **institution's commitment** to the program as demonstrated by the operating budget, faculty salaries, the number of faculty lines relative to student numbers and workload, and discussions about administrative support with faculty and administrators?

My conversations with both the Provost and Dean indicate support for the program. Whether or not they will allocate the necessary resources – space, administrative personnel, equipment and software, reassigned time and a budget for other programmatic activities will determine the extent of administrative support.

V. Summary Comments and Additional Observations

16. Summarize the **major strengths and weaknesses** of the program as proposed with particular attention to feasibility of implementation and appropriateness of objectives for the degree offered.

The greatest strength of the proposed WGSS Program is its committed faculty. They are dedicated to creating such a program, volunteering time, thought, energies to making it work. With full support of the administration, their proposal is feasible; they colleagues understand the challenges they must face, and they are not promising any pie in the sky. The weakness will be lack of full administrative and financial support.

17. If applicable, particularly for graduate programs, comment on the ways that this program will make a **unique contribution** to the field, and its likelihood of achieving State, regional and/or national **prominence**.

SUNY Old Westbury has the most diverse faculty and student body of all the SUNY campuses - in terms of income, race, ethnicity, immigration status and gender. This high level of diversity, combined with the administration and faculty's commitment to a meaningful social justice education will mean that Old Westbury's students will excel in the developing fields which acknowledge the critical importance of bringing gender, race, ethnicities, sexualities into every level of study, research, Applied Learning and academic activism.

18. Include any **further observations** important to the evaluation of this program proposal and provide any **recommendations** for the proposed program.

To paraphrase Virginia Woolf, "Virginia Woolf, in her book A Room of One's Own, wrote that in order for a woman to write fiction she must have two things, certainly: a room of her own (with key and lock) and enough money to support herself. I would expand this iconic statement and say in order for there to be a successful, effective, innovative WGSS studies program there must be

1. *A Room of Ones' Own. The proposed WGSS must have its own space, located in the academic wings of the institution. Right now it shares a space with the Women's Center – an extraordinary place for all Old Westbury Students. However close the sisterhood is between WGSS and the WGSRC, they serve two different functions – the first is academic and the second programmatic. The WGSS space should be fully equipped as is every department or Program.*
2. *The WGSS Program must have a full time, tenured (preferably) or tenure track professor to head up the program. This person should be given reassigned time to administer as well as to teach at least one course in the program. If possible the Program head should serve on governance, planning, academic committees, so it can play a full role in all aspects of the college's planning. It would be best if the Program head served at least three years, in order to get to know the program and to develop future plans. The Program head should be selected by faculty and appropriate administration.*
3. *The Program needs a full time administrative staff person. Once the program is up and running, it will require as much administrative work as in any other program or department. With an office, students will drop in and if the program head isn't there, the administrator will be the face of the program.*

Other thoughts and suggestions:

Once the program is off the ground, the administration should do all it can to announce and advertise this. WSGS Programs have reasonably good track records at getting alums to give back. This means grads and alums need to be monitored and contacted. At Brooklyn College, the WGS Program had alumni luncheons, and all were invited to all the speaker series. Over time a number of alums started giving money for scholarships and lecture series.

If possible, WGSS should develop a working partnership with the School of Education. 80% of all public school teachers are women; 65% of their students are black and brown. Bringing a racial and gendered analysis of education would be invaluable for the teachers. Plus certain courses on history could be taken by Social Studies students, thereby bringing more students and FTE's into the program.

I would encourage an interdisciplinary course on the women's immigrant experience in Long Island, and if possible on women's indigenous history on Long Island.





External Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement

I am providing an external review of the application submitted to the State University of New York by:

SUNY Old Westbury

(Name of Institution or Applicant)

The application is for (circle A or B

below) A) New Degree

Authority

B) Registration of a new academic program by an existing institution of higher education:

Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program

(Title of Proposed Program)

I affirm that I:

1. am not a present or former employee, student, member of the governing board, owner or shareholder of, or consultant to the institution that is seeking approval for the proposed program or the entity seeking approval for new degree authority, and that I did not consult on, or help to develop, the application;
2. am not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any of the individuals listed above;
3. am not seeking or being sought for employment or other relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application?
4. do not have now, nor have had in the past, a relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application that might compromise my objectivity.

Name of External Reviewer (please print):

Barbara Winslow

Signature:

Barbara Winslow



External Evaluation Report

Form 2D
Version 201-08-02

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Institution: SUNY Old Westbury

Evaluator Name (Please print): Lee Ann Westman

Evaluator Title and Institution: Director, Honors College and associate teaching professor, Rutgers University, Camden, NJ

Evaluator Signature: 

Proposed Program Title: B.A. in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Degree: B.A.

Date of evaluation: February 17, 2022

I. Program

1. Assess the program's **purpose, structure, and requirements** as well as formal mechanisms for program **administration and evaluation**. Address the program's academic rigor and intellectual coherence.
 - a. Core curriculum: Students are introduced to fundamental issues in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies via the introductory courses; the senior-level required practicum reflects a long history of women's studies and activism/engagement. Furthermore, the capstone practicum reflects SUNY Old Westbury's commitment to "applied learning."
 - b. Curriculum electives: The proposed WGSS major identifies three important categories for students to explore: historical contexts, cultural production, and intersectionality. Students will complete the major with a broad and interdisciplinary understanding of the program's roots in women's studies as well as its expansion to include inquiries into gender and sexuality.

- c. Curriculum recommendations: More Latino history/experience, especially given student body at SUNY Old Westbury.
- d. Curriculum recommendations: More global gender issues courses. The proposed WGSS major will benefit from examining the many issues in gender and sexuality from a global perspective.
- e. Interdisciplinarity: Interdisciplinary education is a strength. Irma Becerra, president of Marymount College, wrote recently about reorganizing the academic structure of her institution to be more interdisciplinary. She wrote, "Moving forward, institutions of higher learning should consider focusing on fostering curiosity, courage and resiliency in students while also stressing the vital importance of ethics. Meta-learning, the ability to reflect and adapt to change, should also be a priority in higher education." The WGSS degree proposal is an excellent example of interdisciplinary study. Students take courses in history, literature, criminal justice, political science, psychology, and sociology. Programs such as WGSS prepare students to think critically in a complex world and work environments and contain the vital element of social justice.
- f. Social Justice: The Proposed B.A. in WGSS matches SUNY Old Westbury's long tradition of social justice.
- g. Program title: "Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies" recognizes, and validates, the changes to the original "Women's Studies" programs from the 1970s.
- h. Stand-alone program: As the first stand-alone interdisciplinary program on campus, the proposed B.A. in WGSS faces certain challenges (see below!) but the program may be a model for other interdisciplinary programs on campus. With the proper resources and support, the WGSS will set the tenor for the success of other programs such as Black Studies proposal that is currently in the pipeline.
- i. Themed composition courses: freshmen composition courses such as "Women's Voices" are recruiting tools for the proposed WGSS major and should be applauded as a way to recruit freshmen who may not be aware of the interdisciplinary opportunities at SUNY Old Westbury.

II. Faculty

- 2. **Evaluate the faculty**, individually and collectively, with regard to training, experience, research and publication, professional service, and recognition in the field.
 - a. Robust faculty: The proposed WGSS major has 26 full-time faculty who teach courses that fulfill major requirements. This is a robust number of affiliated faculty and is key to the major's success.
 - b. Nearly all of the affiliated faculty members are full-time professors, and many have been promoted within their departments. I am confident that their status as assistant, associate, and full professors within their departments is evidence of meeting the university's rigorous standards for employment, promotion, and tenure.

III. Students

- a. Themed composition courses: freshmen composition courses such as “Women’s Voices” are recruiting tools for the proposed WGSS major and should be applauded as a way to recruit freshmen who may not be aware of the interdisciplinary opportunities at SUNY Old Westbury.
- b. Curriculum recommendations: More Latino history/experience, especially given student body at SUNY Old Westbury.
- c. Require attendance at events: Require students in WGSS major to attend events as part of SUNY Old Westbury’s commitment to high impact practices.

IV. Resources

- a. Women’s Center recommendation: hire a director.
- b. Women’s Center recommendation: provide a larger space for programming, library, student meetings.
- c. Recommendation: Create a social justice center (or repurpose the Women’s Center!): This center will serve as an umbrella center for various interdisciplinary programs. For example, the Women’s Resource Center at University of Texas at El Paso serves the Chicano Studies and African American Studies students, the Queer Student Union, and the Women’s and Gender Studies students with programming, meeting space, a library, and more.
- d. Funding: Bring back funding for Women’s Resource Center/social justice center.
- e. Financial Investment: Hire a director for the Women’s Center/Social Justice Center.
- f. Financial Investment: Paying the WGSS director to run the program but not the Women’s Center, and hiring faculty are worth the investment. Current WGSS courses are filled and generate FTEs for the university at very low cost.
- g. Model for other programs: Invest in the proposed WGSS to ensure its success and to encourage other departments to create their own interdisciplinary programs. SUNY Old Westbury has a large Latino population that would benefit from courses and a minor or major in Latino history and culture. Black Studies can model its program on the success of the WGSS program.
- h. Programming Support: provide support for programming that will draw students to courses and to social justice mission of university.
- i. New hires: Create dual appointments in WGSS and other disciplines. This will give new hires a home department but also ensure core faculty in the WGSS major. New hires focused on Latino history and global gender issues should be a priority.
- j. Representation: the WGSS major needs representation in the faculty senate.

V. Summary Comments and Additional Observations

3. Summarize the **major strengths and weaknesses** of the program as proposed with particular attention to feasibility of implementation and appropriateness of objectives for the degree offered.

Strengths of the program proposal: Below is a review of points made above, as well as some additional recommendations.

- a. Robust faculty: The proposed WGSS major has 26 full-time faculty who teach courses that fulfill major requirements. This is a robust number of affiliated faculty and is key to the major's success.
- b. Core curriculum: Students are introduced to fundamental issues in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies via the introductory courses; the senior-level required practicum reflects a long history of women's studies and activism/engagement. Furthermore, the capstone practicum reflects SUNY Old Westbury's commitment to "applied learning."
- c. Curriculum electives: The proposed WGSS major identifies three important categories for students to explore: historical contexts, cultural production, and intersectionality. Students will complete the major with a broad and interdisciplinary understanding of the program's roots in women's studies as well as its expansion to include inquiries into gender and sexuality.
- d. Interdisciplinarity: Interdisciplinary education is a strength. Irma Becerra, president of Marymount College, wrote recently about reorganizing the academic structure of her institution to be more interdisciplinary. She wrote, "Moving forward, institutions of higher learning should consider focusing on fostering curiosity, courage and resiliency in students while also stressing the vital importance of ethics. Meta-learning, the ability to reflect and adapt to change, should also be a priority in higher education."¹ The WGSS degree proposal is an excellent example of interdisciplinary study. Students take courses in history, literature, criminal justice, political science, psychology, and sociology. Programs such as WGSS prepare students to think critically in a complex world and work environments and contain the vital element of social justice.
- e. Social Justice: The Proposed B.A. in WGSS matches SUNY Old Westbury's long tradition of social justice.
- f. Program title: "Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies" recognizes, and validates, the changes to the original "Women's Studies" programs from the 1970s.
- g. Stand-alone program: As the first stand-alone interdisciplinary program on campus, the proposed B.A. in WGSS faces certain challenges (see below!) but the program may be a model for other interdisciplinary programs on campus. With the proper resources and support, the WGSS will set the tenor for the success of other programs such as Black Studies proposal that is currently in the pipeline.

- h. Themed composition courses: freshmen composition courses such as “Women’s Voices” are recruiting tools for the proposed WGSS major and should be applauded as a way to recruit freshmen who may not be aware of the interdisciplinary opportunities at SUNY Old Westbury.

Areas for Improvement

- a. Women’s Center 1: I was delighted to learn that the university has a Women’s Center but dismayed to find out that the director of the proposed BA in WGSS is also the director of the Women’s Center. It’s not an exaggeration to say that the director is doing two completely different jobs. A Women’s Center needs its own director to manage the space, develop and host programming, and support academic programs (see recommendations).
- b. Women’s Center 2: needs its own larger space (see recommendations).
- c. No budget: A stand-alone program needs funding for basic expenses, at least, because the proposed WGSS major will not have departmental support.
- d. No administrative support: A stand-alone program needs to at least share an administrative assistant with another program. With the new Black Studies program, perhaps? Or other potential interdisciplinary programs?
- e. Curriculum: More Latino history/experience, especially given student body at SUNY Old Westbury.
- f. Curriculum: More global gender issues courses. The proposed WGSS major will benefit from examining the many issues in gender and sexuality from a global perspective.
- g. Structure of stand-alone interdisciplinary programs can also create barriers: Director of proposed WGSS major is part of Provost Council but no representation in Faculty Senate.
- i. include any **further observations** important to the evaluation of this program proposal and provide any **recommendations** for the proposed program.

Recommendations for improvement

- a. Women’s Center: hire a director.
- b. Women’s Center: provide a larger space for programming, library, student meetings.
- c. Create a social justice center (or repurpose the Women’s Center!): This center will serve as an umbrella center for various interdisciplinary programs. For example, the Women’s Resource Center at University of Texas at El Paso serves the Chicano Studies and African American Studies students, the Queer Student Union, and the Women’s and Gender Studies students with programming, meeting space, a library, and more.
- d. Funding: Bring back funding for Women’s Resource Center/social justice center.

- e. Financial Investment: Hire a director for the Women's Center/Social Justice Center.
- f. Financial Investment: Paying the WGSS director to run the program but not the Women's Center, and hiring faculty are worth the investment. Current WGSS courses are filled and generate FTEs for the university at very low cost.
- g. Model for other programs: Invest in the proposed WGSS to ensure its success and to encourage other departments to create their own interdisciplinary programs. SUNY Old Westbury has a large Latino population that would benefit from courses and a minor or major in Latino history and culture. Black Studies can model its program on the success of the WGSS program.
- h. Programming Support: provide support for programming that will draw students to courses and to social justice mission of university.
- i. Require attendance at events: Require students in WGSS major to attend events as part of SUNY Old Westbury's commitment to high impact practices.
- j. New hires: Create dual appointments in WGSS and other disciplines. This will give new hires a home department but also ensure core faculty in the WGSS major. New hires focused on Latino history and global gender issues should be a priority.
- k. Representation: the WGSS major needs representation in the faculty senate.



The State University
of New York

External Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement

I am providing an external review of the application submitted to the State University of New York by:

SUNY Old Westbury
(Name of Institution or Applicant)

The application is for (circle A or B below)

A) New Degree Authority

B) Registration of a new academic program by an existing institution of higher education:

BA in Women's, Gender, + Sexuality Studies
(Title of Proposed Program)

I affirm that I:

1. am not a present or former employee, student, member of the governing board, owner or shareholder of, or consultant to the institution that is seeking approval for the proposed program or the entity seeking approval for new degree authority, and that I did not consult on, or help to develop, the application;
2. am not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any of the individuals listed above;
3. am not seeking or being sought for employment or other relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application?
4. do not have now, nor have had in the past, a relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application that might compromise my objectivity.

Name of External Reviewer (please print):

Lee Ann E. Westman

Signature:

Lee Ann E. Westman

ⁱ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2021/07/22/the-need-for-interdisciplinarity-in-higher-education/?sh=415096441ad9>

APPENDIX 6

Institutional Response to External Evaluation Reports

(Section 8)



Institutional Response to External Reviewers
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program – SUNY Old Westbury

Early in 2022, two external reviewers were invited for a virtual visit to evaluate the proposed degree program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS). These day-long visits included meetings with the WGSS Program Committee, Affiliated Faculty from supporting academic departments, the Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences, and the Provost. Dr. Barbara Winslow, a historian of women's activism who taught in both the School of Education and the Women's Studies Program at Brooklyn College, visited on Monday, February 14, 2022. Dr. Lee Ann Westman, an Associate Teaching Professor at Rutgers-Camden in Gender Studies and Director of the Rutgers-Camden Honors College, visited on Thursday, February 17, 2022.

Both reviewers' reports are supportive of the proposed program and its structure. Dr. Westman's report underscores the proposed program's interdisciplinary focus. She writes, "Students take courses in history, literature, criminal justice, political science, psychology, and sociology. Programs such as WGSS prepare students to think critically in a complex world and work environments and contain the vital element of social justice." Dr. Winslow also praises the proposed program's interdisciplinary focus and the faculty commitment to offering courses that serve a diverse student population. Dr. Winslow writes, "The faculty I met with realize the most effective way in which to reach students from underrepresented groups is to provide courses that deal with the realities of their lives. That means courses that deal with race, class, gender, sexualities, ethnicities, disabilities, nationalities, immigration, to name a few."

Reviewer Recommendations:

- **Space:** The reviewers recommended that the WGSS Program should have its own space on campus and that that space be separate from the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Resource Center (WGSRC) located in the Student Union.

The WGSS Program and WGSRC serve complementary but distinct purposes. The WGSS Program is an academic program and thus deserves its own space, preferably in the New Academic Building. The WGSRC sponsors programming and provides a resource library on a wide range of topics related to its mission. The Center also offers opportunities for student internships, service learning, volunteering, and work study.

- **Program Director:** Drs. Westman and Winslow also recommended that the proposed program have a director who is a tenured (preferably) or tenure-track faculty member with release time. They also suggest that the WSGRC have its own director responsible for managing the space and developing and hosting programming.

The current Director of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program receives one course release per semester to oversee the WGSS minor, supervise WS4900: Internship in Women's and Gender Studies, develop and offer programming, and run the WSGRC, which before the pandemic involved overseeing the Center's staffing. The Director also chairs the WGSS Program Committee and is a member of the Provost's Council. We agree with Dr. Westman that directing the WGSS Program and the WSGRC is two jobs, and we are committed to figuring out how to reimagine the connection between these two entities to make the work of directing them more sustainable and equitable.

- **Administrative Staff:** The reviewers commented on the need for administrative support to assist with the daily running of the program, as in other programs and departments.

We agree with this recommendation. An administrative staff person is vital to the growth of an academic program. Besides the proposed B.A. in WGGS, a proposed B.A. in Black Studies is in the works at the College. These new programs might be part of the College's proposed Social Justice Center, which could provide essential administrative support.

- **Expanding Course Offerings:** Dr. Westman suggests developing more global gender issues courses. Dr. Winslow suggest offering courses on the history and experiences of immigrant women and indigenous women on Long Island.

We agree there is a need to expand our course offerings. There is a particular need for more courses with a transnational framework and courses in Latinx and queer studies.

- **Representation:** Drs. Westman and Winslow recommend that the WGSS needs representation in the Faculty Senate and other governing bodies.

We agree that the program should have representation in faculty governance in addition to membership on the Provost's Council.

Responses to Specific Recommendations by Dr. Westman

- **Under Recommendations for Improvement (p. 5):** Dr. Westman recommends restoring funding for the WGSS Program and WSGRC.

Historically, the WGSS Program/WSGRC has had a budget of \$10,000 per academic year. Since the pandemic, the Program and WSGRC has operated without a budget. Funding is essential to the growth of this new program, as it will attract students to the major and cultivate and sustain a commitment to feminist activism and scholarship on our campus, as both reviewers note in their reports.

- **Under Recommendations for Improvement (p. 6):** Dr. Westman suggests requiring majors “to attend events as part of SUNY Old Westbury’s commitment to high impact practices.”

We think this is an excellent suggestion and propose bringing back annual events like the Symposium on Gender and Sexuality to showcase feminist research by students.

Responses to Specific Recommendations by Dr. Winslow

- **Under Structure (p. 2):** Dr. Winslow recommends establishing a process for creating the succession of the WGSS Program Director.

We agree that WGSS Program bylaws should be developed. The WGSS Program Committee has begun the process of drafting them.

- **Under Recommendations (p. 5):** Dr. Winslow encourages developing relationships with alumni to fund scholarships and lecture series. She also urges the administration to provide release time to faculty who seek external grant funding.

We agree and plan to develop a steering committee tasked with, among other responsibilities, seeking out as many sources of funding as possible.

- **Under Recommendations (p. 6):** She also suggests partnering with the School of Education (SOE) to attract students and provide prospective teachers with a racial and gendered analysis of education.

This is a useful suggestion, and we plan to consider ways to partner with SOE.

The proposed B.A. in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies supports the College’s social justice mission and provides an unique opportunity for interdisciplinary study that interrogates categories of identity and systems of power. This program promises to be an attractive one to students with an interest in understanding how gender, sexuality, and other categories of identity shape their lives. With its applied learning/internship requirement, the program encourages students to explore the interconnectedness between feminist scholarship and activism.