

San Francisco State University
Inventory of Program Assessment Activities, 2010-2011

Program: Women and Gender Studies Dept.

College: Arts and Humanities

Date: December 1, 2011

Program Mission: Women and Gender Studies provides a framework for examining women and gender in relations to race, class, sexuality, colonialism, multiculturalism, and globalization. The **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** for the WGS major are that students will be able to: (1) Define and describe issues concerning women and gender in relation to race, class, sexuality, colonialism, multiculturalism, and/or globalization; (2) Compare and distinguish among historical understandings of gender in relation to structural inequality, social movements, and labor struggles; (3) Integrate and demonstrate comprehension of course content through preparation of oral presentations, and through critical, creative, and expository writing; (4) Conceptualize and analyze gender and feminism in a transnational framework, from an interdisciplinary perspective, using a range of methodological tools; (5) Integrate their academic studies in Women and Gender Studies into their personal and professional goals and be able to formulate and implement theoretically informed political, cultural, and community action; and (6) Critically compare and appraise theories, methods, histories, and representations of women, gender, and feminism. The **following table** shows assessment of these SLOs in the four core BA classes and through exit surveys administered when students file their BA forms.

Measurable learning objectives	Place in curriculum where objective is addressed	Academic year objective was/will be assessed	Assessment/procedures Methods/strategies	Summary of findings about student learning	Use of findings for program improvement
<p>SLO #1: Define and describe issues concerning women and gender in relation to race, class, sexuality, colonialism, multiculturalism, and/or globalization.</p>	<p>WGS 200 (Introduction to Women and Gender Studies)</p>	<p>Fall 2010</p>	<p>A survey administered on the last day of class asked three questions: (1) What is the difference between biological sex and gender?; (2) What is one focus of transnational feminism?; and (3) What factors does an intersectional analysis of women’s issues look at?</p>	<p>The vast majority of students were able to answer Q.1, demonstrating a mastery of one of the founding assumptions of the field of WGS (i.e., the distinction between biological sex and gender).</p> <p>The second question generated some confusion, though many were able to identify important tenets of this current wave of feminism in the U.S.</p> <p>The third question revealed that many students could identify how gender intersects with race, sexuality, and nationality but were less able to identify the impact of historical formations such as colonialism, militarism, and globalization.</p>	<p>This survey illuminates that most students are able to grasp the key SLOs of the course.</p> <p>Since the rest of the survey was answered successfully, the confusion about Q.2 might be addressed by rewording it.</p> <p>The lesser ability to identify historical formations as part of an intersectional analysis suggests that more concrete examples might be used to demonstrate how colonialism, militarism, and globalization shape and intersect with gender.</p>

<p>SLO #1: Define and describe issues concerning women and gender in relation to race, class, sexuality, colonialism, multiculturalism, and/or globalization</p>	<p>WGS 200 (Introduction to Women and Gender Studies)</p>	<p>Spring 2011</p>	<p>On the first and last day of class, students were asked to free-write based on the two prompts: "feminism is ..." and "men and women are ..."</p>	<p>Results indicate a significant increase over the semester in student understandings of the transnational and intersectional components of Women and Gender Studies. In their definitions of feminism, at the start of the semester only 5% students cited international and global components, compared to over 20% at the end of the semester. Twice as many students defined gender as intersecting with race, class, and nation at the end of semester rather than at the start.</p>	<p>The free-writes indicate that many students understand gender issues in relation to other factors, but that issues of nationalism and globalization could benefit from additional focus.</p>
<p>SLO #2: Compare and distinguish among historical understandings of gender in relation to structural inequality, social movements, and labor struggles</p>	<p>WGS 200 (Introduction to Women and Gender Studies)</p>	<p>Spring 2011</p>	<p>On the first and last day of class, students were asked to free-write based on the two prompts: "feminism is ..." and "men and women are ..."</p>	<p>Students consistently identified feminism as a movement for gender equality, social justice, and political rights. There was a significant drop in the number of students who associated feminism with the category of history.</p>	<p>The drop in associating feminism with history could be attributed to the increased attention to social construction and ideology, which were taught in an historical framework.</p>
<p>SLO #3: Integrate and demonstrate comprehension of course content through preparation of oral presentations, and through critical, creative, and expository writing</p>	<p>WGS 300 (GWAR and Part Two of the Intro Sequence)</p>	<p>Fall 2010</p>	<p>12 exit surveys in the final week of semester, asking the following questions: (1) Based on taking WGS 200 and WGS 300 how would you describe the field of WGS? (2) Based on taking WGS 300 what have you learned about writing a research paper in WGS? and (3) How has this course helped you improve your writing skills? Please be as specific as possible about any improvements you can identify.</p>	<p>Students mentioned both specific skills they learned (such as how to cite correctly; the importance of writing and revising multiple drafts; what constitutes a scholarly source; how to construct a persuasive argument) as well as referencing more generally a confidence about how to demonstrate their knowledge and support their opinions through careful and well-supported thinking and writing.</p>	<p>The small class size and writing-intensive design of WGS 300 (GWAR) supports students developing their critical writing, thinking, and oral presentation skills and supports WGS meeting this SLO.</p>

<p>SLO #3: Integrate and demonstrate comprehension of course content through preparation of oral presentations, and through critical, creative, and expository writing</p>	<p>Exit Survey</p>	<p>Spring 2011</p>	<p>13 exit surveys from majors and minors in Spring 2011.</p> <p>Among other questions, students are asked to rank 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest) how WGS has helped them develop their critical thinking, analytical writing, and speaking skills.</p>	<p>The overwhelming majority of students reported that WGS had helped them develop their ability to demonstrate course content through a variety of formats.</p> <p>12 of 13 students ranked their improvement on critical thinking and analytical writing as 5 or higher (9 of 13 students ranked critical thinking as 7, the highest)</p> <p>11 of 13 ranked their improvement on speaking skills as 5 or higher.</p>	<p>Students self-report that their writing, thinking, and speaking skills develop in significant ways throughout their time in the program and that this SLOs is met across the curriculum.</p>
<p>SLO #4: Conceptualize and analyze gender and feminism in a transnational framework, from an interdisciplinary perspective, using a range of methodological tools</p>	<p>WGS 300 (GWAR and Part Two of the Intro Sequence)</p>	<p>Fall 2010</p>	<p>12 exit surveys in the final week of semester, asking the following questions: (1) Based on taking WGS 200 and WGS 300 how would you describe the field of WGS? (2) Based on taking WGS 300 what have you learned about writing a research paper in WGS? and (3) How has this course helped you improve your writing skills? Please be as specific as possible about any improvements you can identify.</p>	<p>In addition to the specific writing skills listed above, several students reported the importance of bringing a range of “different perspectives” and a “multi-faceted approach” to any topic.</p>	<p>Though students do not necessarily use the language of “interdisciplinary perspectives” or “range of methodological tools,” student comments show that they learn to analyze and understand gender and feminism from a range of perspectives, suggesting that this class is successful in meeting this SLO.</p>
<p>SLO #5: Integrate their academic studies in Women and Gender Studies into their personal and professional goals and be able to formulate and implement theoretically informed political, cultural, and community action.</p>	<p>WGS 690 (Senior Seminar)</p>	<p>Spring 2011</p>	<p>Survey conducted on last day of class asking students to evaluate how well the course had met its primary SLO.</p>	<p>19 students completed the survey and all indicated enthusiasm and/or satisfaction with the majority of the course activities designed to meet the SLOs.</p>	<p>Some students indicated that the portfolio project (a portfolio of their academic work) could be re-imagined to clarify its value in relation to the SLOs. Students particularly appreciated time devoted to preparing for post-BA work (e.g., CV/resume workshop; discussions about life after graduation; alumni panel)</p>

					and the class thus might focus more on these areas in future semesters.
SLO #5: Integrate their academic studies in Women and Gender Studies into their personal and professional goals and be able to formulate and implement theoretically informed political, cultural, and community action.	WGS 698 (Internship)	Fall 2010	Student portfolios (weekly journals; response papers on readings about non-profits and unpaid labor; final paper)	In their final papers, students reflect on the gendered politics of their community organization, focusing on one specific element of their experiences during the semester. 8 of 10 students made specific reference to how WGS 698 had given them the tools to reflect on and understand their internship experiences both in terms of the relationship between their WGS studies and community work more generally, and in terms of their own personal growth.	Students overwhelmingly reflected that WGS 698 allowed them to connect what they learned in their academic classes to their future career goals, personal commitments, and overall understanding of the world. Students taking class consistently report that it successfully meets this key SLO.
SLO #6: Critically compare and appraise theories, methods, histories, and representations of women, gender, and feminism.	WGS 200 (Introduction to Women and Gender Studies)	Spring 2011	Students produce group projects that reflect their understanding of cultural production and representations. They used advertisements, fine art, and music to critically analyze the intersectional, transnational, and gendered elements of representations.	Of the 25 group projects, only two received grades in the C range or lower; all others were As and Bs. Students focused both on the gendered inequalities women face in media representations, as well as on empowering images of women and gender equality. There was also a marked increase (10x) in the end-of-semester free-writes that mentioned issues of media and representation.	The high grades and increase in comprehension about the importance of cultural representations indicate a highly successful enterprise and that students were able to grasp this SLO.