



Date: May 14th, 2019

To: Provost and Vice Chancellor, Patricia Kleine

From: MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE ACADEMIC POLICIES COMMITTEE

Subject: APC report regarding program review of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program

The Academic Policies Committee (APC) appreciates the time and effort of Director, Rose-Marie Avin of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program (WGSS), the members of the Internal Review Committee (Wayne Carrol, Susan O'Brien, and Angela Wong) and the external reviewer (Dr. Kristin Mapel Bloomberg) for the review of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program. The internal review committee and external reviewer reports provided the committee useful information to assist us in forming our recommendations. While the APC recommendations are generally summarized on the attached spreadsheet APC is providing additional details in the form of this letter.

COMMENDATIONS:

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program is to be commended for the following:

1. The program's commitment to reaching the University's guidepost goals.
2. The program's strong contribution to the University's EDI efforts.
3. The program's delivery of sought-after certificates within the university.
4. A high proportion of the program's courses employ High Impact Practices (HIPs).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Commitment to Developing the Critical Hmong Studies Program. The APC was disappointed to find out that due to workload issues involving course coverage in WGSS, the faculty brought in to develop the curriculum for the Critical Hmong Studies program has not been able to begin that process for two years and now maybe further delayed due to the resignation of the other tenure-track faculty within the program. The additional professional expectations that WGSS faculty are to also contribute to providing services to the University (i.e. training in EDI issues, critical research theory, a lot of speaking engagements in classes), diminishes the likelihood of the Critical Hmong Studies program getting underway anytime soon. The APC considers the Interim Dean of A & S taking responsibility for establishing clear expectations for the development of the Critical Hmong Studies program as an initial first step, but a further commitment of additional resources is needed for its fulfillment.

2. Professional Development Opportunities for Affiliate Faculty teaching WGSS courses. Rapid changes in research and pedagogy in WGSS present challenges to affiliate faculty who may not have the depth and/or time to keep up with critical issues in the field. Specifically, as pointed out in the external reviewer report, affiliates expressed the desire for more professional development related to WGSS, especially regarding feminist pedagogy, classroom management, advising, and student development. Considering that many WGSS courses serve as a means of

recruitment for the major, it would be ideal that students receive the most current information in the most suitable forms.

3. Review Form (Excel) recommendations that APC left blank (item #11): It is apparent from both the IRC and external reviewer's reports that the program lacks a critical mass of faculty to deliver an exceptional program. The inability to deliver an exceptional program, has resulted in faculty workload issues, faculty retention issues, undergraduate major recruitment efforts, and the opportunity for the program to stay current with the ever-changing pedagogy in WGSS. The current workload of faculty in the program warrants more consideration and financial support to allow for more course array options, further growth in majors/minors, and curricular development in the Critical Hmong Studies program. Unfortunately, the lack of depth in program faculty and affiliates has persisted as it was identified in the 2015 program review report as an item deserving attention.

Summary Recommendation:

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program has performed very well despite the continued challenges encountered by faculty and affiliates. To ensure that future efforts allow for desired program growth, a proactive approach is needed. For the program to continue in these efforts, the APC recommends these immediate actions:

- Determine the role and length of service for the WGSS Director position
- Determine where to focus professional resources and energy (i.e. growth in certificate programs; growth in major/minors; university LE/GE requirements)
- Develop strategies to recruit and retain "Affiliate Faculty"
- Continue implementation of task identified in 7-year program plan

APC strongly supports the recommendation from all the other review levels to "continue in present form" considering the recommendations made above.

Cc.

Dr. Rose-Marie Avin, Director, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program
Dr. Mary Hoffman, Director of Academic Planning and Assessment