**2009 Women’s and Gender Studies Report**

**Step 1: Department/Program Mission (Due May 15, 2009)**

Women's and Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary program that examines the role of gender in the construction of lives, cultures, community norms, meaning systems, and systems of representation. All of the key areas of study within the program use cross-cultural or multicultural investigations to understand the dynamics and differences in the operation of gender. Within specific contexts but also across differences, the program also focuses on the lives of women--on women's past and present active involvement in the making of the world. Each of the two tracks also emphasizes the ongoing interplay of theory and practice.

**Step 2: List goals/outcomes (Due May 15, 2009)**

The two tracks of the majors were developed around the following goals/outcomes first approved in the fall of 2005:   
1. Knowledge of the foundational concepts and issues in the discipline of Women's Studies or Gender Studies.  
2. Knowledge of the historical positioning and social construction of women or gender.  
3. Knowledge of the systemic nature of gender.  
4. Knowledge of women or a gender system outside the student's cultural and national experience.  
5. Knowledge of the complexities of the categories "women" and "men," including differences in class, race, ethnicity, age, and sexuality.  
6. Knowledge of the theories and methods central to the discipline of Women's Studies or Gender Studies.  
7. Knowledge of upper level work in the other track withing the program.  
8. The ability to analyze representations--mass media, literature, histories, politics, etc.--from the frameworks withing Women's Studies or Gender Studies.  
9. The ability to make connections among three elected courses.  
10. The ability to bring a Women's Studies or Gender Studies perspective to an upper-level course outside the program.  
11. The ability to construct a focused bibliography and to summarize and critique a piece of literature within the bibliography.  
12. The ability to develop a research or scholarship proposal in Women's Studies or Gender Studies.

**Step 3: Identify program components (Due May 15, 2009)**

**The requirements for the major are built around the outcomes.** This major was approved by the faculty in the spring of 2007 (outsiders viewing the major for the first time, might think of it has having four pieces, labeled A. B. C. and D below).

A. For Outcome #1, **Each track requires a foundational course**: WGS 106 Introduction to Women's Studies or WGS 116 Introduction to Gender Studies.

B. For Outcomes # 3, # 6 and #11, **Each track requires a theory course**: WGS 360 Feminist Theory for Women's Studies or WGS 360 or A&S 332 or 333 for Gender Studies.  
or .

C. In addition, majors in each track are required to take **at least one course from each of the following emphases**. The six courses must be selected in consultation with the program director or the faculty member in the program. (See the college catalog for the listing of courses)

**Institutions or Knowledge Systems** (Outcome #3)**.** This requirement emphasizes the study of the systemic nature of gender or of the critical perspectives brought to a discipline by feminist theory or gender theory.

**Representations** (Outcomes #5 and #8). This requirement emphasizes feminist approaches or gender study approaches to the examination of gender in representation; this requirement also can involve the recovery and examination of representations that previously had been invisible due to gender bias.

**Global Perspectives** (Outcome #4). This requirement emphasizes the importance of gaining knowledge far from one's own subject position. For this unit, students must choose a course outside their own cultural and geographical experience.

**Historical Contexts** (Outcomes #2 and #5). This requirement emphasizes the study of women or gender in specific and detailed historical context(s) or the study of the methodology of women's or gender history.

**Self Making.** (Outcomes #3 and #5). This requirement emphasizes the feminist and gender studies examinations of processes and narratives that transform beings into gendered humans.

D. Finally, **the major includes a capstone experience** of at least one of the following: directed study, Honors thesis, practicum, or internship. This integrative experience is also likely to address outcome #12, especially since the major was developed, in part, to respond to the fact that students (at Albion and elsewhere) interested in women's or gender studies were moving away from concentrations, with their integrative requirement of an internship, and towards majors, with their integrative requirement of a directed study or a thesis.

During the advising process required for the selection of courses for the emphasis, outcome #7 is addressed, and during that same advising process and during the final interview (mentioned below), outcome #9 is addressed.

**Step 4: Select methods/data sources and instruments (Due May 15, 2009)**

Since the major was approved in the spring of 2007, there is no point in an assessment tool for alums. The committee's current assessment plan features the capstone experience as the platform for the assessment of the major. The assessment will take the form of an interview: a small committee of WGS teachers will meet with each major. The committee will include one silent observer--the supervisor of the student's capstone experience. Participating committee members will ask the student a series of question about the capstone experience based on WGS's stated outcomes. As the student answers, committee members will rate the student's responses, using a rubric. (With the permission of the student, the answers will also be tape recorded.) At the conclusion of the interview, the members will have a brief discussion of the student's overall performance. One of the members will write a summary of this discussion.

**Step 5: Analyze and interpret the data (Due Early Fall 2009)**

(enter step 5 here)

**Step 6: How will the data collected be used for decision-making, strategic planning, etc. (Due Early Fall 2009)**

*NOTE:You will need to submit a summary report of your findings to the Assessment Committee for review. In that report, please include details of how the data will be used, any program changes that will be made (or not made). Questions to ask yourself/to include in the report are as follows:*

* *How, exactly, will your data be used to help with program planning and improvement?*
* *Will your program form a committee to review assessment findings, and make recommendations for change or improvement in a timely manner?*
* *Will your entire department convene to discuss assessment results and program changes?*
* *Who will make formal recommendations for curricular or other changes—the chair/head? The committee?*