

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies (WGSS) Reconsidered Assessment Plan

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Developed by:

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I. Department Student Learning Statement

In the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department (WGSS) at Macalester College, students investigate key questions raised within feminist and queer theories and the fields of women's and LGBTQ studies. We examine our core topics in contexts of interlocking systems of cultural and political difference based on race, nation, class, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, and ability, including comparative national and transnational perspectives. Students in WGSS develop practical and theoretical skills for understanding and engaging the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts shaping our world.

II. Department Learning Goals and Outcomes

By the time that students complete a major in our department, they should be able to

1. Articulate key questions within and divergences between feminisms and queer theories within the late 20th and early 21st century.
2. Communicate theories, questions, ideas, and concepts to a variety of audiences in both oral and written forms.
3. Use practical skills and theories to engage the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts shaping our world.
4. Recognize difference and interlocking inequalities and be able to speak to their relationships.

III. Department Assessment Strategies

We will use the following 5 different assessment strategies (A – E) in determining the effectiveness in achieving the learning goals for WGSS students:

- A. **Student performance on exam questions in the courses in WGSS 200 (Feminist/Queer Theories & Methodologies) and WGSS 300 (Advanced Feminist/Queer Theories & Methodologies).** These courses are required for WGSS majors and are central to the WGSS curriculum. Either Corie Hammers or Sonita Sarker teach these yearly and together they will develop a set of common final exam questions for this assessment tool.

- B. **Capstone papers and presentations.** All WGSS majors complete a senior paper through completion of WGSS 400 (Senior Seminar—Theory to Practice) or an Honor's thesis. In addition, majors also give a public oral presentation of their work to an audience of students, faculty, and staff in the spring of their senior year. The writing is a multi-draft document completed under the supervision of the faculty member (Hammers or Sarker) teaching WGSS 400 or supervising the Honor's thesis. Faculty attending the presentations will evaluate the oral presentations.
- C. **Senior exit interviews.** Before graduation, a faculty member not centrally affiliated with WGSS conducts an exit interview with students. In this interview, we seek student input on the strengths and areas for improvement in WGSS. We also ask questions that are directly related to our learning goals.
- D. **Course evaluations in WGSS and cross-listed courses.** Before academic year 2014/15, we will develop a set of common questions that address the appropriate learning goals. These are to be used in all WGSS courses and we will also encourage faculty to use these questions in courses cross-listed with WGSS.
- E. **Final internship evaluation forms.** Questions already exist on the final evaluation forms for internships that address some of our learning goals.

The learning outcomes are to be assessed using the assessment strategies above (A – E) as indicated below:

1. Articulate key questions within and divergences between feminisms and queer theory within the late 20th and early 21st century. **A**
2. Communicate theories, questions, ideas, and concepts to a variety of audiences in both oral and written forms. **B, C, D, E**
3. Use practical skills and theory to engage the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts shaping our world. **B, C, D, E**
4. Recognize difference and interlocking inequalities and be able to speak to their relationships. **A, B, C, D**

IV. Four-Year Timeline to Implement Assessment Strategies

In general, the Senior Exit Interview (C) will be conducted every year, while the other four assessments will be performed on a rotating basis. To provide sufficient data for analysis, data will be collected for all four other assessments each year, but evaluated every fourth year. The year in which a given outcome is fully evaluated is marked below with an asterisk *.

2014: **B. Capstone papers*** (Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker are responsible for the assessment) and **presentations** (WGSS and Steering Committee faculty are responsible for the assessment, data compiled by the chair of WGSS)
C. Senior exit interviews* (These will be administered each year)
D. Course evaluations in WGSS and cross-listed courses (*In 2014, the WGSS faculty and steering committee will develop the common questions*).
E. Final internship evaluation forms. (The Steering Committee will select the questions on the form to be used for assessment, and the Chair will begin compiling data annually.)

2015: **A. Student performance on exam questions in the courses in WGSS 200 and WGSS 300** (*In 2015, the questions will be developed by Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker*)
B. Capstone papers (Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker are responsible for the assessment) and **presentations** (WGSS and Steering Committee faculty are responsible for the assessment, data compiled by the chair of WGSS)
C. Senior exit interviews* (These will be administered each year)
D. Course evaluations in WGSS and cross-listed courses* (In 2015, we will begin using the questions. The chair of WGSS will distribute the questions to faculty for use

in their evaluations and collect the data. Core faculty and Steering Committee faculty will perform the assessment.)

E. Final internship evaluation forms.

2016: **A. Student performance on exam questions in the courses in WGSS 200 and WGSS 300*** (Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker are responsible for the assessment.)

B. Capstone papers (Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker are responsible for the assessment) and presentations (WGSS and Steering Committee faculty are responsible for the assessment, data compiled by the chair of WGSS)

C. Senior exit interviews* (These will be administered each year)

D. Course evaluations in WGSS and cross-listed courses (The chair of WGSS will distribute the questions to faculty for use in their evaluations, collect the data, and continue compiling data.)

E. Final internship evaluation forms.

2017: **B. Capstone papers** (Corie Hammers and Sonita Sarker are responsible for the assessment) and presentations (WGSS and Steering Committee faculty are responsible for the assessment, data compiled by the chair of WGSS)

C. Senior exit interviews* (These will be administered each year, but assessed in 2017 over the 4 years by the chair of WGSS)

D. Course evaluations in WGSS and cross-listed courses (The chair of WGSS will distribute the questions to faculty for use in their evaluations, collect the data, compile the data and assess it over three years.)

E. Final internship evaluation forms.* (The Steering Committee will assess the collected data.)