

Degree/Certificate: Women's & Gender Studies

Major/Option: Women's & Gender Studies

Submitted by: Elizabeth Kissling, Ph.D.

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Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2013-14

Part I – for the 2013-14 academic year: Because Deans have been asked to create College-Level Summary Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

1. **Student Learning Outcome:** The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.

Students will analyze connections among societal structures such as gender, race, class, age and sexuality that contribute to women's oppressions.

2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

_____ SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;

___X___ SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

_____ SLO met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

This SLO essentially defines intersectionality, a key theoretical concept in women's and gender studies, and is thus an SLO in nearly every Women's & Gender Studies course. It is especially important to the capstone course, as synthesis is the central course objective.

Assessment of this SLO was embedded in written and oral assignments, most notably in the Discussion Leader assignment and class discussions, and its achievement was demonstrated in the final project as well. Copies of the Discussion Leader assignment and evaluation rubric are attached (Appendix I).

4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.
 - a. Findings

Student-led discussions varied in depth and intensity, which is to be expected, but given the specificity of the assigned documents, the focus questions and class discussions generally addressed axes of identity that the document under scrutiny failed to adequately address (for example, the N.O.W. Statement of Purpose, although seen as far-reaching at the time, but the students' first reactions were how limited it was in terms of class, race, and sexuality).

Student scores were frequently lower than I expected, usually because the student omitted the final part of the assignment: "On the day it is your turn to lead discussion, you will hand in your list of focus questions and a one page critical summary of the document. Within 24 hours of class, post your critical summary on our Canvas discussion board so that everyone can have a copy." The lowest score was 70% (28/40), highest score was 95% (38/40). Class average is 82.5% (33/40, 10 students).

The students' final project was to write their own manifesto in collaboration. In this document, they not only addressed connections among societal structures such as gender, class, race, and sexual orientation, they defined intersectionality and insisted that it is critical to their feminism. This document is attached (Appendix II).

b. Analysis of findings

This class consisted of ten seniors completing either a major in Women's and Gender Studies or a Gender Studies Certificate. All had completed many WGS courses, and were well versed in the concept of intersectionality and applied it to all course materials. However, this knowledge is difficult to quantify easily.

5. What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

I do not see any need to improve student learning based on these findings, but program faculty may wish to consider more direct means of assessment (see #6 below).

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

N/A

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

This class consisted of seniors completing either a major in Women's and Gender Studies or a Gender Studies Certificate. All had completed many WGS courses, and were well versed in the concept of intersectionality and applied it all course materials. This ability was assessed indirectly in nearly every assignment and activity in the course. As stated above, their knowledge is difficult to quantify. It would be best if at the beginning of each academic year, or even each term, the WGS faculty could more consistently discuss upcoming assessments due at the end of the year and plan for more systemic measures of each SLO.

Discussion Leader Assignment

Part of our feminist pedagogy is shared responsibility for our own and one another's education. One way of doing this in WMST 490 is for each student to take responsibility for leading class discussion about one of the assigned manifestos. All students are expected to complete all of the assigned readings in advance, but the discussion leader will have read the piece with extra care and prepared four to six focused questions to guide our shared discussions. The discussion leader will also need to conduct additional research about the time period and the author(s) to help us locate their manifesto in its era.

The following questions may be useful to discussion leaders in developing discussion questions.

- What is the author(s) trying to accomplish in writing this document? What are the most important new ideas presented in this piece?
- Who is the audience for this document? In Michael Warner's terms, what *public* is created by this discourse? How are they expected to respond?
- What other public(s) may read or otherwise engage with this discourse? How might they react?
- What is the relationship of this manifesto to other feminist manifestos we have read and discussed in this class?
- What does this document contribute to our understanding of feminism? Of the particular branch of feminism promulgated by the manifesto?
- What assumptions about gender, justice, and equality are implicit? How can you tell? Why do you think the author(s) holds these views?

On the day it is your turn to lead discussion, you will hand in your list of focus questions and a one page critical summary of the document. Within 24 hours of class, post your critical summary on our Canvas discussion board so that everyone can have a copy.

Student _____

ORGANIZATION [10 points]

Did the student present an introduction that contextualized the manifesto in terms of author(s) and historical context? Was the material organized in a logical pattern that helped to clarify the student's ideas? Were the required elements of the assignment present and easily identifiable? Was a conclusion used to summarize the discussion coherently?

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT

DEVELOPMENT OF QUESTIONS [10 points]

Did the student develop appropriate questions to help the class interpretation the manifesto? Was the student able to ask appropriate follow up questions? Did she or he address responses and audience questions?

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT

SUPPORT [10 points]

Were ideas supported with evidence and examples *grounded in the text*? Did the student cite sources for any ideas that were not her or his own?

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT

AUDIENCE ADAPTATION [10 points]

Was the student able to guide discussion effectively? Did she or he maintain student interest and attention? Did she or he help us reach a better understanding of the manifesto? Did the discussion leader **use the assigned time limit effectively**?

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT

TOTAL _____

EWU WGS Manifesto

Created jointly by students in WMST 490, Senior Capstone in Women's & Gender Studies, Spring 2014

We, the Women's and Gender Studies students of 2014, define feminism(s) following bell hooks, Julia Serano, and others, as a wide-ranging movement to end sexism, sexual exploitation, and sexist oppression, with a commitment to intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the fact that no individual's identity can be reduced to a single aspect; oppressions intersect in individual lives. For example, a woman may also be Black, queer, and/or have a disability. We speak to the community of Eastern Washington University, from the students to those who hold the power with which we all must negotiate our movements. While working within the current political system that our society runs on we must advocate for the minorities of EWU. We define minorities as anyone who can speak to a human experience from the margins of society.

While capitalist systems are not ideal, as capitalism is inherently unbalanced in terms of access to resources and who gets access, we recognize that we live within such a system and if we are to effect change at this time that we must engage with the systems currently at hand. To that end, while demanding allocation of funds toward various tangible outcomes is clearly rooted in current capitalist structures, we recognize that funding is not so much our priority as support of these outcomes. However, we freely acknowledge that the current social system being what it is, we can not gain support or an improvement in current campus social structures without funding or an extraordinarily large volunteer effort in the case of several of the moral outcomes.

To that end we have a vision of how EWU might be, and we stand firm by these ideals. Understanding that a call for action without tangible outcomes to work towards rarely results in any action at all, we define results of our intended moral outcomes as follows.

- **The EWU administration demonstrates that they value Women's and Gender Studies, as well as Race and Culture Studies, as disciplines** by such concrete means as more funding for culture studies programs, Indian Studies, Africana Studies, Chicano/a Education; tenure-track position in WGS (as well as in the Race and Culture Studies); and by actively advertising and recruiting for students in these programs at EWU. Each program has its own needs, which must be responded to as befits their needs. These programs are not boxes to check but a central part of EWU education and the Eastern values and mission statements.
- **All departments at EWU demonstrate a commitment to egalitarian classrooms and curriculum**, with an emphasis on a cooperative environment between and among students and professors. As such it is our goal that Eastern graduates can think intersectionally and have a recognition of all types of peoples/lifestyles/etc. in a respectful and peaceful way.
- **A safe space for all students** Just as the LGBTQ Pride center is a safe space for the LGBTQ community, we must create a safe campus for ALL students, faculty, and staff.
 - **A safe space for gender non-conforming students** (e.g., training for faculty and staff on issues such as trans* identities, gender entitlement, racial microaggressions, etc.) for which some tangible outcomes would be gender-neutral bathrooms to be mandated in the construction of all NEW buildings on campus, as well as the adaptation of one set of main

APPENDIX II

bathrooms (aside from disability bathrooms) in every building on campus to be gender-neutral. To have only disability bathrooms as gender-neutral is insulting to both persons with disabilities and gender non-conforming students as it 1) decreases easy access to such bathrooms for persons with disabilities and 2) implies that gender non-conformity is itself a disability and is therefore discriminatory.

- **EWU is committed to combating rape culture and ensuring that students are free from rape and sexual assault.** EWU goes beyond Title IX and creates a comprehensive sexual assault prevention and response program that is both visible and accessible to all members of the EWU community. This program should include a focus on potential perpetrators when it comes to prevention and the mental health and well being of the victim/survivor when it comes to response. The program must be inclusive of marginalized identities. There should also be an investment in programs that promote the concept that men can stop rape. Such programs have proven to dramatically decrease instances of sexual assault within a community.

As WGS students committed to intersectional understanding, we expect to hold Eastern accountable for recognition of the human rights of all members of our community.

Molly Fitzpatrick
Fira Hedlund
Janell Jordan
Aleisha Larsen
Taylor Luschei
Erika Miller
Tyler Peek
Jonathan Schmidt (Schmidty)
Clover Thompson
Rashaena Weston (Rae Ray)