The Women and Gender Studies Program Bylaws

Article I – Purpose

The Women and Gender Studies Program mission is threefold: to provide academic programs in women’s and gender issues, to promote student outreach, and to support gender-related research.

Article II – Members

Section 1. Classes of Members

1. Core Faculty. Core faculty are tenured or tenure-track faculty **and term faculty** with a full- or half-time appointment in Women and Gender Studies.
2. **Program Faculty. Program faculty have contributed significantly to the primary mission of the Women and Gender Studies program through teaching, mentoring and/or administration. Program faculty will have a 3-year, renewable term, with the exception of former directors and those whose teaching load is in the Women and Gender Studies program who will have an automatic (no application necessary), permanent appointment, and members of the Executive Committee.**
3. Affiliated Faculty. Affiliated faculty may be tenured, tenure-track, term, adjunct, or administrative faculty with a specialization relevant to Women and Gender Studies and/or gender scholarship. Affiliated faculty will have five-year, renewable appointments as long as they remain employed at Mason. Retired faculty may continue as affiliates vis-à-vis their emeritus status.

Section 2. Qualifications/Eligibility for Membership

1. Core faculty must have a full- or half-time appointment in Women and Gender Studies and have been hired in accordance with the procedures outlined in Article II, Section 5.
2. **Program faculty must apply for this status and demonstrate their suitability. Faculty interested in holding the status of “program faculty” must submit a recent *curriculum vitae* or résumé and letter of interest for consideration that demonstrate a commitment to Women and Gender Studies. The letter of interest must show involvement in some way in a specialization in women and gender studies—through, for example, programming, teaching, research, and/or local, national, or global activism. To demonstrate commitment to the Women and Gender Studies Program, affiliated faculty are expected to attend at least one Women and Gender Studies general faculty meeting per year. Compared to affiliate status, program faculty are expected to make a greater and more consistent contribution to the Women and Gender Studies program.** **Some examples of the requirements of program faculty include, but are not limited to the following:**
   * 1. **Faculty who have taught, organized or mentored courses offered in the Women and Gender Studies program at least once in the past two years.**
     2. **Served on the Executive Committee in the last 2 years**
     3. **Served on MAIS thesis and project committees at least once in the last 2 years**
     4. **Faculty representatives in units whose courses meet Women and Gender studies requirements or are approved electives in the Women and Gender Studies degree programs, for example MAIS or African and African American Studies. The representative is determined jointly by the unit and the membership committee.**
     5. **Faculty/staff representatives of key stakeholder units that collaborate on regular, on-going programming, for example LGBTQ Resources or Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education. The representative is determined jointly by the unit and the membership committee.**
     6. **Former directors of the Women and Gender Studies program.**
3. Faculty who wish to become affiliated with the Women and Gender Studies program must submit a recent *curriculum vitae* or résumé and letter of interest for consideration that demonstrate a commitment to Women and Gender Studies. The letter of interest must show involvement in some way in a specialization in women and gender studies—through, for example, programming, teaching, research, and/or local, national, or global activism. To demonstrate commitment to the Women and Gender Studies Program, affiliated faculty are expected to attend at least one Women and Gender Studies general faculty meeting per year of affiliation. Further, affiliates should perform at least one of the following activities within the five-year affiliation period:
   * 1. develop or teach a course related to women or gender issues
     2. recruit students for the minor, certificate or MAIS degree
     3. serve on graduate student thesis committees
     4. organize and supervise internships
     5. plan a program through the Women’s Center or on a topic of interest to Women and Gender Studies
     6. serve on a Women and Gender Studies committee
     7. host a discussion on current scholarly or administrative work
     8. participate in a Women and Gender Studies research community
     9. attend a Women and Gender Studies event or program, like the   
        Scholar’s Lecture or the Sojourner Truth Lecture

The Membership Committee votes upon renewal of program and affiliated faculty at the end of the appointment (3 years for program faculty and 5 years for affiliate faculty) based upon the above criteria. The renewal application should demonstrate contribution to and ongoing involvement in Women and Gender Studies. (see Membership Committee, Article IV, Section 1)

Section 3. Director

A. The Women and Gender Studies Program will be administered by the Women and Gender Studies Director (hereafter known as the Director). The Director will be appointed by the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences with the advice and approval of the Executive Committee and Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty.

B. The Director represents the Women and Gender Studies Program at the College and University levels. The primary responsibilities of the Director will include administering the program on a day-to-day basis, teaching courses in the Women and Gender Studies curriculum, working with the administration and departments offering Women and Gender Studies courses to implement the curriculum, coordinating course selection, facilitating the development of new courses and the evaluation of all courses, coordinating the advising of students in the Women and Gender Studies Program, convening meetings of the program and affiliate faculty (preferably once a semester), and Women and Gender Studies Executive Committee (preferably three times a semester), and carrying out the policies of the Women and Gender Studies Executive Committee.

C. Any decision-making authority not designated to another entity (e.g., the Executive Committee) is retained by the Director, including, but not limited to, budgetary, personnel, facility, and staff support issues. (For annual evaluations, see Article II, Section 6.)

D. The Director will consult with the appropriate Associate Dean of University Life, as per section 4 A and E below.

E. Procedures for appointment, renewal, and evaluation of the Director will be consistent with procedures established for Department Chairs in the faculty handbook. In addition, a subcommittee of three members of the Executive Committee, at least one of whom must be a core faculty member, will conduct an interim evaluation of the Director preferably in the second semester of the second year. The committee conducting the interim evaluation will solicit the input of Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty, staff and students.

Section 4. Associate Director

A. The Associate Director of the Women and Gender Studies Program reports to the Director. The Associate Director works at the intersection of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) and University Life.  To ensure that this integration works smoothly, the Director, the Associate Director, and the appropriate Associate Dean of University Life will communicate regularly to discuss Women and Gender Studies Program business and activities.

B. The Associate Director will assist the director in carrying out the policies set by the Executive Committee and in fulfilling the mission of Women and Gender Studies. The Associate Director will be responsible for developing and evaluating co-curricular programs related to gender and women’s issues as pertinent to students, faculty, and the larger university community in line with the Women and Gender Studies mission, and will assist the Director in generating support for student and faculty research. The Associate Director will promote community-building activities for various Women and Gender Studies communities (Women and Gender Studies affiliates, Women and Gender Studies students, the university), as well as foster ties with feminist, women’s rights, and gender justice organizations outside the university.

C. The Associate Director will ensure that the Women and Gender Studies Center serves as an inclusive space and will also be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the Center including monitoring program and center budgets, coordinating communication among Women and Gender Studies faculty and affiliates, supervising staff and interns, and collaborating with University Life offices.

D. The Associate Director will teach, on average, one course per semester in the Women and Gender Studies program.

E. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Associate Dean of University Life on the annual performance review and written evaluation of the Associate Director.

Section 5. Hiring Procedures for Core Faculty

A. All core faculty may serve and at least one must serve on the five-person Search Committee. The Director, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will identify tenured or tenure-track program and/or affiliated faculty to fill any remaining positions on the Search Committee. The Search Committee will choose its own chair in accordance with university policy. The Search Committee will be responsible for writing and placing the ad for the position, for reviewing materials from applicants and for establishing a list of the most qualified candidates for the advertised position. The Search Committee will invite members of the Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty to review applicant files and to provide evaluations of the applicants to the committee.

B. Candidates brought to campus for an interview will be interviewed by the Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty and the members of the department identified as their discipline department if the appointment is joint. If a candidate does not have a PhD in Women and Gender Studies, the Search Committee and the Director will consult the chair of the identified discipline department to determine the way in which the department will participate in the candidate’s on-campus interview.

C. The Search Committee will solicit and review the evaluations of the candidates by the Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty and discipline department, if appropriate, and will determine whether the candidates meet the qualifications for the position. After all candidates have been interviewed, the Search Committee will evaluate all interviewed candidates who have been judged qualified by the Women and Gender Studies tenured and tenure track core and program faculty. The Search Committee and any core faculty not serving on the committee itself will report its recommendation to the Director, the Executive Committee and the affiliated faculty.

D. The Director will forward a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Section 6. Annual Review of Core Faculty

Faculty members will be reviewed each year for the purpose of determining salary recommendations and assessing their contributions and productivity in the areas of Scholarship, Teaching, and Service. By September 1 the core faculty will submit their annual reports for the period September 1 to August 31 of the previous academic year under review. The Director, in consultation with the Salary Advisory Committee, will evaluate the faculty member’s performance and the Director will determine the salary recommendation. The Salary Advisory Committee will be comprised of two tenured members of the Executive Committee or Program Faculty and one tenured core faculty member. Tenured core faculty members will serve in rotation bi-annually on this committee. The Director and the faculty member will meet to discuss the evaluation. The faculty member will receive a copy of the salary recommendation letter that will subsequently be sent to the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Section 7. Three-Year Renewal for Core Faculty

A. The Renewal Committee will be composed of 5 tenured faculty as follows: at least three Women and Gender Studies faculty members (one of whom must be a core faculty member) and at least two from the candidate’s related disciplines. The Director and the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core faculty and the tenured members of the Executive Committee will prepare an initial slate of nominees for the Renewal Committee. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. Before the ballot is sent to the electorate, the renewal candidate may eliminate one person on the slate. If the elimination results in the slate having a deficit in either number or constituency, the Director, the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core faculty and the tenured members of the Executive Committee will identify a replacement. Election will be held by mail (or email) ballot. Only tenured core, program and affiliated faculty can nominate and vote. The Renewal Committee will elect its chair.

B. Candidates will provide the Committee with an updated *Curriculum Vitae*, copies of their scholarly work and works in progress, teaching evaluations, syllabi, course assignments and other relevant teaching materials, a statement of research accomplishments and plans, an account of their teaching and curricula development activities and a statement detailing their service to the program, the college and the university. These materials must be submitted in the form of a portfolio no later than October 1 of the year in which the candidate is being reviewed or renewed.

C. The Committee will review the candidate’s scholarship, teaching and service, and will draft a letter of recommendation that delineates its review of each area under consideration. It will call a meeting of the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core and program faculty to discuss the letter and the case. Tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core and program faculty who have read the candidate’s file and attended the meeting will vote on the case in secret ballot. The Committee will forward its letter, the advisory vote, a summary of the faculty discussion and its recommendations to the Director.

D. Upon receiving the letter from the Women and Gender Studies Renewal Committee, the Director will evaluate the case and make a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Director will include a copy of the committee’s letter with the recommendation.

E. The Director will forward copies of the Committee’s and Director’s letters to the candidate.

Section 8. Promotion and Tenure for Core Faculty

A. The Women and Gender Studies Promotion and Tenure Committee will be composed of 5 tenured faculty, out of which two must be Women and Gender Studies faculty (one of whom must be a core faculty member) and two of whom should have relevant expertise in the candidate’s related disciplines. The Director, the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core faculty and the tenured members of the Executive Committee will confer with tenured faculty and faculty chairs in the candidate’s related discipline(s) to identify faculty with expertise in the candidate’s field(s) who may serve on the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Director and the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies core faculty and the tenured members of the Executive Committee will then prepare a slate of nominees. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at a faculty meeting of tenured program and affiliate faculty members. The priority for all nominations is to identify tenured faculty who have expertise in the relevant areas of the candidate’s discipline(s). The members to the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be elected in the spring semester before the candidate’s review year. Election to the committee will be held by mail (or email) ballot. Only tenured core and program faculty can nominate and vote. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will elect its chair. In cases of promotion to Full Professor the qualifications for committee membership will conform to the rules stipulated in the University Faculty Handbook.

B. Before the end of the spring semester preceding the candidate’s review year, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will advise the Director on the selection of at least of five external scholars in the candidate’s field. The Director then will solicit the letters from the selected scholars. These referees will be drawn from two lists. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will generate one list of possible external referees. The Director will obtain from the candidate a separate list of possible external referees and the names of up to two scholars to be excluded as referees. The final list will contain no more than 40% chosen by the candidate. The candidate will not see the final list or any of the outside letters. Candidates should provide scholarship and any relevant material for outside reviewers by June 30. The Director sends the materials to the outside reviewers on or before July 10.

C. Candidates will provide the Promotion and Tenure Committee with a dossier composed of an updated *Curriculum Vitae*, copies of their scholarly work and works in progress, teaching evaluations, syllabi, course assignments and other relevant teaching materials, a statement of research accomplishments and plans, an account of their teaching and curricula development activities and a statement detailing their services to the program, the college and the university. This file should be available for review by the Committee no later than 1 October.

D. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will review the candidate’s record of scholarship, teaching, and service. The Committee will compose a letter that documents and critically reviews that record. That letter will be made available in a central location for tenured Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty to review. The Committee will call a meeting of the tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies faculty to discuss the case. Tenured members of the Women and Gender Studies faculty who have read the candidate’s file and attended the meeting will vote on the case in secret ballot. In cases of promotion to Full Professor a vote of the full professors on the Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty will be reported. The Committee will forward its letter, the vote, a brief summary of the faculty discussion, and its recommendations to the Director.

E. Upon receiving the letter from the Women and Gender Studies Promotion and Tenure Committee the Director will evaluate the case and make a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Director will include a copy of the committee’s letter with the Director’s recommendation.

F. The Director will forward copies of the Committee’s and Director’s letters to the candidate.

Section 9. Voting

At general faculty meetings only Women and Gender Studies core**, program** and affiliated faculty and elected student representatives to the Executive Committee may propose motions, second them, or vote on them. **Voting on tenure related personnel matters (third year review, recommendation for tenure and promotion) is limited to core and program faculty members who are tenured as specified in the University Faculty Handbook and per Article II sections 7 and 8 of the by-laws. Core, program** and affiliated faculty are eligible to vote on procedures of the Women and Gender Studies Program and on the selection of the Program Director as well as members of the Executive Committee and other standing committees. **For votes that require a quorum, the voting body is restricted to members of the core and program faculty as well as members of the Executive Committee. In order to pass, a measure must receive a simple majority of 1/3 of those eligible to vote.** Mail ballots include those that are distributed to the members by email as well as by regular surface mail. All members have the option of returning ballots by email as well as regular mail. It is the responsibility of the Women and Gender Studies Program to maintain confidentiality of the ballots within the office.

Article III – Executive Committee

Section 1. Membership

A.  The Women and Gender Studies Program will be governed by a **fourteen-** member Women and Gender Studies Executive Committee.  The Executive Committee must have **three University Life faculty/staff** and **seven** instructional faculty, at least three of whom must be tenured. All core faculty serve as members of the Executive Committee. In addition, there must be an undergraduate and a graduate Women and Gender Studies student representative. **The Associate Director and the Program Coordinator also serve on the Executive Committee. The Director will chair the Committee as a nonvoting ex-officio member.**

Women and Gender Studies faculty and UL faculty/staff representatives will be elected by the Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty. The undergraduate student representative will be selected through a democratic electoral process determined by Women and Gender Studies minors; the graduate student representative will be selected through a democratic electoral process determined by Women and Gender Studies graduate students. Faculty members of the Executive Committee will serve staggered three-year **terms and be selected by a vote of the core, program and affiliated faculty**. Student representatives will serve one-year terms.

B. In the event of a short-term vacancy on the committee, such as in the case of a faculty member on leave, the Director will appoint a temporary replacement from among the Women and Gender Studies faculty.

Section 2. Duties

The primary responsibilities of the Executive Committee will be to advise the Director, set program policies, and approve new course offerings and other curricular decisions. A subset of committee members will participate in the annual review of core faculty (as per Article II, Section 6) and in the hiring of new faculty (as per Article II, Section 5). The Executive Committee will conduct interim evaluations of the Director (as per Article II, Section 3) and advise the Director in personnel and staffing matters. Executive Committee members represent the program at both Women and Gender Studies events and college-level functions and have responsibility for initiating and undertaking special projects that foster the growth of the Women and Gender Studies program. The Executive Committee will initiate and conduct research, and encourage others to do so, that contributes to the growth of the Women’s Center. The Executive Committee will appoint members of the Membership Committee (as per Article IV, Section 1).

Article IV – Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The Women and Gender Studies Program shall have one non-governing standing committee, the Membership Committee. The committee will be composed of three members of the Women and Gender Studies core, program or affiliated faculty and will choose its chair. Members of the Membership Committee will be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve staggered three-year terms. The Membership Committee will review letters of interest from faculty wishing to be appointed as program or affiliate faculty with the Women and Gender Studies Program and will vote whether to extend the three-year program status and/or five-year affiliate status to those interested. The Membership Committee will vote whether to renew program and affiliate faculty appointments based upon the criteria laid out in Article II, Section 2. The Membership Committee will send to all new and renewing program and affiliate faculty a copy of the Women and Gender Studies Bylaws and a welcoming letter containing the requirements for program or affiliate status and a list of suggested events and activities in which program and affiliate faculty are encouraged to participate.

Section 2. Ad Hoc Task Forces and Special Committees

The Executive Committee may create special committees or task forces to deal with specific organizational mandates. The special committees and task forces shall vote internally on their chair or spokesperson. These special committees or task forces shall be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee, and renewed or discharged.

Article IV – Meetings

The Women and Gender Studies faculty will hold a general meeting preferably once each semester. More frequent meetings may be convened by the Executive Committee, by five or more Women and Gender Studies core, program or affiliated faculty requesting the Executive Committee to hold such a meeting, or by the Director. Meetings of the Women and Gender Studies faculty may be attended by Women and Gender Studies core, program and affiliated faculty and interested members of the public.

Article V – Parliamentary Authority

Meetings will operate with the goal of consensus, and when necessary in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.

Article VI– Amendment of Bylaws

Revision or change in the Women and Gender Studies bylaws must be discussed in the Executive Committee. Core, **program and affiliated faculty** will be informed of proposed revisions and a discussion and final vote will be made at a subsequent general faculty meeting(s), **paper ballot** **which may be conducted in person or virtually. Amendments must be approved by a simple majority vote of core and program faculty.**

Last updated September 13, 2016.