

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. Any items or issues not discussed below in these bylaws shall be handled according to the policies and procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

Article II – Members

Section 1. Classes of Members

- A. Core Faculty. Core faculty are tenured or tenure-track faculty and term faculty with a full- or part-time appointment in Women and Gender Studies.
- B. Program faculty may be tenured, tenure track, term, administrative faculty, classified staff, or postdocs who 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 or interim directors, who will have a permanent appointment, and current members of the Executive Committee.
- C. 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 affiliated faculty vis-à-vis their emeritus status.

Section 2. Qualifications/Eligibility for Membership

- A. Core faculty must have a full- or part-time appointment in Women and Gender Studies or have another type of appointment as stated in Article II, Section 1.A.
- B. Program faculty must apply for this status and demonstrate their suitability unless they have previously directed the Women and Gender Studies program or are appointed representatives from academic or student support units with which Women and Gender Studies regularly collaborates. Appointed representatives receiving program faculty status must be approved by the membership committee. Faculty interested in holding the status of “program faculty” must submit a letter of interest and a recent *curriculum vitae* or résumé that demonstrate a commitment to Women and Gender Studies. The letter of interest must demonstrate a specialization in women and gender studies through, for example, programming, teaching, research, and/or local, national, or global activism. Compared to affiliated faculty, program faculty are expected to make a

greater and more consistent contributions to the Women and Gender Studies program. Examples of contributions to Women and Gender Studies that warrant program faculty status include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Taught, organized or mentored courses offered in the Women and Gender Studies program at least once in the past two years.
- b. Served on the Executive Committee in the last 2 years
- c. Served on MAIS thesis and project committees at least once in the last 2 years
- d. Served on a search committee
- e. Served on a promotion and tenure committee

C. Faculty who wish to become affiliated with the Women and Gender Studies program must submit a letter of interest and a recent *curriculum vitae* or résumé that demonstrate a commitment to Women and Gender Studies. The letter of interest must demonstrate a specialization in women and gender studies through, for example, programming, teaching, research, and/or local, national, or global activism. Further, affiliated faculty should perform at least one of the following activities within the five-year affiliation period:

- a. Develop or teach a course related to women or gender issues
- b. Recruit students for the minor, certificate, SIS concentration, or MAIS degree
- c. Serve on graduate student thesis committees
- d. Organize and supervise internships
- e. Plan a program through the Women and Gender Studies Center or on a topic of interest to Women and Gender Studies
- f. Serve on a Women and Gender Studies committee
- g. Host a discussion on current scholarly or administrative work
- h. Participate in a Women and Gender Studies research community
- i. Attend a Women and Gender Studies event or program, like the Scholar's Lecture or the Sojourner Truth Lecture

D. Renewal applications are due every 3 years for program faculty and every 5 years for affiliated faculty. The renewal application should demonstrate contribution to and ongoing involvement in the Women and Gender Studies program.

Section 3. Voting

- A. Members of the Executive Committee may propose motions, second them, or vote on them.
- B. Voting on tenure related personnel matters (third year review, recommendations for tenure and promotion) is limited to core and program faculty who are tenured as specified in the University Faculty Handbook.

- C. 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.
- D. 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.
- E. Voting by secret ballot may be conducted by paper ballot, mail ballot to be returned by email or regular mail, or electronic ballot.

Article III – Meetings

The Executive Committee will meet at least bimonthly during the semester to conduct business. At least one meeting each year will be open to the program and affiliated faculty not serving on the Executive Committee. 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 IV – Program Administration

Section 1. Director

The Women and Gender Studies Program Director, as the primary administrative officer, is 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. Procedures for appointment, renewal, and evaluation of the Director will be consistent with procedures established for Department Chairs and Program Directors in the Faculty Handbook and by CHSS.

Section 2. Associate Directors/Staffing

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences will fund an associate director for the academic administration of the program and University Life will fund a position for the student affairs administration and center activities.

Section 3. Faculty Fellow

The faculty fellow, pending budget approval from the Dean, will be appointed by the director based on the anticipated needs of the program or in response to a call for proposals. The fellow will be appointed for one academic year and will receive *either* a stipend *or* course release based on their preference.

Article V – Committees

Section 1. Executive Committee

- A. Membership
- B. a. The Women and Gender Studies Executive Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Director. The Executive Committee must have three University Life faculty/staff and one administrative faculty member or classified staff member from across the university and, 5-7
- C. instructional faculty, at least three of whom must be tenured. All core faculty whose term or tenure line is in Women and Gender Studies, as well as any administrative faculty or classified staff who are working in the program will serve as members of the Executive Committee.
- D. Core Faculty have full voting rights and are permanent members of the Executive Committee. However, they only have to attend these meetings if at least 50% of their appointment is in WGST. All core faculty are still welcome to attend though if they desire. If there is a particularly important EC meeting that the director feels all core faculty should attend, the director will reach out to faculty on a case by case basis.
 - b. Members of the Executive Committee who are elected will serve staggered three-year terms and will be elected by a vote of the core, program and affiliated faculty.
 - c. 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. If someone resigns from the executive committee, the Director will also appoint a replacement to finish the person's term.
 - d. Duties: The primary responsibilities of the Executive Committee will be to advise the Director in setting and implementing program policies, developing new academic programs, and developing programming for students, faculty and staff in the service of the mission of the program. A subset of committee members will participate on standing and ad-hoc committees as outlined below. 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.

Section 2. Standing Committees

- A. Membership Committee: The Membership Committee will be composed of two to 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. 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 work with the associate director to maintain a current list of program and affiliated faculty and contact program and affiliated faculty about the renewal process.

- B. Evaluation Committee: The Evaluation Committee will be composed of two to three members of the Women and Gender Studies core, program, or affiliated instructional faculty and will choose its chair. Members of the Evaluation Committee will be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Evaluation Committee will work with the Director to conduct annual evaluations of core faculty and with the Director and Undergraduate Director responsible for academic programs to conduct regular evaluations of adjunct faculty in WGST as required by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the University and detailed in Article VII. The Evaluation Committee will also conduct annual and interim evaluations of the Director and oversee the renewal process for sitting Directors. The Evaluation Committee may be called on to assist with evaluation of Associate Directors and University Life professional staff.

Section 3: Ad Hoc Task Forces and Special Committees

The Director or 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. Among the special committees will be search committees and renewal and RPT committees.

Section 4: Search Committees

- A. Searches conducted solely or primarily by Women and Gender Studies:
 - a. For searches conducted solely or primarily by the Women and Gender Studies Program, search committees will consist of five members. The Director, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will appoint the five-person Search Committee selected from among core, program, and affiliate faculty and including at least one member of the core faculty. The Director will choose the chair in accordance with university policy. The search committee will be responsible for following CHSS and University procedures when writing and placing the ad for the position, reviewing materials from applicants, and 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. Finalists 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 how the department will participate in the candidate's on-campus interview.
- c. The search committee will solicit and review 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, who will notify members of 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.

B. Searches conducted in conjunction with other programs and departments:
For searches conducted in conjunction with other programs and departments (e.g. joint or cluster hires), at least one core or program faculty member from Women and Gender Studies must serve on the search committee. Faculty members representing Women and Gender Studies are responsible for ensuring that Women and Gender Studies core, program, and affiliate faculty are given an opportunity to evaluate finalists for the position and that any votes or comments received from WGST faculty are taken into account during final deliberations.

Article VI – Promotion, Tenure, and Renewal

Section 1. Promotion, Tenure, and Renewal Procedures for Tenure-Line Core Faculty

A. Promotion, tenure, and renewal procedures within the program shall comply with requirements set forth in the Faculty Handbook of George Mason University, the CHSS Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, and the Provost's Annual Promotion and Tenure Memo. Promotion and Tenure for tenure-line core faculty follow the CHSS timeline for promotion and tenure determined annually by the college. Procedures for

identifying external reviewers and submitting required material for review follow those detailed in the CHSS_PT_Guidelines. The Promotion and Tenure timeline generally begins with the Candidate notifying the Director of their desire to seek promotion and/or tenure in early January of the year before promotion and tenure will be evaluated.

B. Faculty coming up for review shall be identified by the Director. The Director will communicate with candidates about the materials required for the dossier, the deadlines for submission, and the overall timetable for the review process.

C. The Director will initiate the process for convening a Renewal Committee or a Promotion and Tenure Committee for each candidate. These committees will be composed of three 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, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will confer with 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 Renewal or Promotion and Tenure Committee and will then prepare a slate of nominees. The priority for all nominations is to identify tenured faculty who have expertise in the relevant areas of the candidate's discipline(s). 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 ballot. Only tenured core and program faculty can vote. The Renewal Committee or 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.

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 and the candidate's dossier will be made available for tenured Women and Gender Studies core and program 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 and program 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 4. Term Faculty Promotion

A. Term faculty promotion and multi-year appointment and reappointment cases will follow the guidelines laid out in the Provost's annual memo and the CHSS Term Faculty Promotion Process Timeline. The Director will identify term faculty who are eligible for promotion or multi-year reappointment and will communicate with candidates about the materials required for the dossier, the deadlines for submission, and the overall timetable for the review process. The Director, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will appoint a Promotion Committee consisting of three term or tenured instructional faculty with the rank of associate or full professor; one member must be a term faculty member.

B. The Promotion Committee will review the candidate's record of teaching and service consistent with the contract and any extant memoranda of understanding for the candidate for promotion. The Committee will compose a letter that documents and critically reviews that record. That letter and the candidate's dossier will be made available for review by term and tenured Women and Gender Studies core and program faculty holding the rank of associate or full professor. The Committee will call a meeting of these faculty to discuss the case. Women and Gender Studies 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 vote, a brief summary of the faculty discussion, and its recommendations to the Director.

C. Upon receiving the letter from the Women and Gender Studies Promotion 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 Director's recommendation.

D. The Director will forward copies of the Committee's and Director's letters to the candidate.

Article VII – Review of Faculty

Section 1. 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 Evaluation Committee (Article V. Section 2.B), will evaluate the faculty member's performance and the Director will determine the salary recommendation. 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 2. Review of Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct faculty are evaluated every other year or every four classes and are always evaluated during their first year of service. Evaluations are conducted by the Director and

Undergraduate Director of the Women and Gender Studies Program and at least one member of the Evaluation Committee following the procedures outlined in the Adjunct faculty evaluation policy.

Article VIII – Parliamentary Authority

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

Article IX– 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.

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