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***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – December 6, 2017***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – November 7, 2017***

# CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE (CPRC)

# FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

# GENDER & WOMEN’S STUDIES

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| **DEGREE PROGRAMS BEING REVIEWED** | **BA Gender & Women’s Studies** |
| **EXTERNAL REVIEWERS** | **Dr. Suzanne Luhmann, University of Lethbridge**  **Dr. Lori Chambers, Lakehead University** |
| **INTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE** | **Dr. Kate Norlock, Philosophy** |
| **YEAR OF REVIEW** | **2016-2017** |
| **DATE OF SITE VISIT** | **February 6& 7, 2017** |
| **DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT BY WMST** | **April 1, 2018** |
| **DATE OF NEXT CYCLICAL REVIEW** | **2024-2025** |
| **DATE PREPARED BY CPRC** | **October 4, 2018** |
| **DATE APPROVED BY PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | **October 20, 2017** |
| **SIGNATURE OF PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | Jackie Muldoon Signature |

Gender and Women’s Studies (GWST) is an interdisciplinary program committed to excellence in teaching and research focused on women and gender relations in the past and present. Recognizing the diversity of women’s lives and the complexity of factors affecting their experiences, the program offers a range of feminist approaches and analyses while striving to develop new bodies of scholarship that challenge traditional frameworks of knowledge and contribute to feminist and social justice movements.

Reviewers were ‘particularly impressed with the engaged articulateness of the students,’ whom they met, and commented on the program’s commitment ‘to pedagogical innovation and attention to the diversity of learners in their classrooms. Courses offered represent the state of the field and are academically rigorous as well as pedagogically sound’.

The Gender & Women’s Studies program offers students an emphasis, consistent with Trent’s mission statement, on critical, analytic thinking and writing skills, interactive reading, and articulate participation in dialogue and debate. The program encourages empirical, theoretical, and experiential learning, an awareness of local, national, and international contexts and dimensions to issues affecting women and gender relations.

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

During the 2016-2017 academic year, the BA Gender and Women’s Studies program underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Suzanne Luhmann, University of Lethbridge and Dr. Lori Chambers, Lakehead University) and one internal member (Dr. Kate Norlock, Philosophy, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to the university on February 6th and 7th, 2017.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the undergraduate degree program. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit(s) completed a self-study which addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae; Course Syllabi; Learning Outcomes; Enrolment, Retention and Student Data; Calendar Copy; University Degree Requirements and TUFA Collective Agreement. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the two degree programs which involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-study, appendices, IQAP) in advance of the site visit. A two-day site visit took place where reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, and students.

Once the external reviewers’ report was received both the Program and Dean provided responses to the report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs based on the four review documents and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations selected for implementation and specifies: proposed follow-up, who is responsible for leading the follow-up, and the specific timeline for addressing the recommendation, if applicable. Academic units, in consultation with the respective Dean(s), will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due April 1, 2018.

**SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM STRENGTHS**

* Interdisciplinarity is an important strength of the degree. Drawing on the core of feminist theory, students can tailor their degree to any number of themes offering multiple perspectives on issues of paramount social importance.
* Faculty have a strong scholarly record. They are actively engaged, many as leaders, in inter- and multi-disciplinary production of gender and feminist scholarship in their disciplines. Specifically, their research contributes to the development of disciplinary feminist and gender studies scholarship nationally and internationally.
* There is a commitment to creativity and innovation in the Program.
* The Program has a strong academic focus on future societal needs and public good. In addition to advancing justice, fairness, and human flourishing, the Program has an enormous role to play in practical consideration in sustenance, security, and survival.
* Students majoring in Gender and Women’s Studies at Trent students have opportunities for experiential learning and transformative experiences beyond what are usually possible in the traditional classroom environment; including options in upper years to undertake community based research projects and courses on activism. Students spoke eloquently of their excellent learning experiences, for example, an extensive focus on training students for research within the program.
* Community engaged research opportunities offered at the 3rd and 4th year levels, cited by students as offering exceptional opportunities to participate in real, on the ground , research with organizations in the community.
* Strengths of the program include a focus on critical inquiry and problem-based analysis. As well the program foci emphasizes the training of transferrable skills, including communication, application of knowledge, ethical and professional conduct and socially responsbile engagement with communities and the world, all of which are invaluable to students.
* The New Walls to Bridges program with Sociology is an exciting addition to the program and its social justice orientation.
* The new speaker series facilitates intellectual and scholarly community building among faculty members with gender-related and feminist research interests. Students are exposed to new and emerging faculty research

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT**

Many of these opportunities are included as part of the formal recommendations however highlights would include:

* A minimal number of courses are offered each year providing limited choices for students in any given year.
* Opportunities to explore further cross-listing with Indigenous Studies should be explored, specifically in the areas of Indigenous Critical race and Indigenous feminisms.
* The Program should consider increasing enrolment through the introduction of courses that attract students from across the university; pursue the cross-listing of courses and investigate making certain WMST courses required for other disciplines.

**COMPLETE LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION 1**

**That all courses become half courses in order to reduce the scheduling problems cited by students.**

Program Response

All courses, with the exception of the Honours Research Seminar, are half courses already.

Decanal Response

Discussions about implementing a block system for timetabling are presently underway, and the Humanities decanal group have participated in consultations this past academic year.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

**That the program reviews the scheduling of upper year GWST courses in light of existing scheduling problems.**

Program Response

Upper level classes are scheduled so they do not overlap. Some cross-listed courses may still overlap in the upper years. The Program will continue to ensure that 3000- and 4000-level courses are blocked in timetable.

Decanal Response

Discussions about implementing a block system for timetabling are presently underway, and the Humanities decanal group have participated in consultations this past academic year.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

**That the program imposes some pre-requisites on fourth year courses run by the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies.**

Program Response

In order to offer some choice of fourth year courses and increase enrolment, changes have been made to prerequisites in the fourth year courses. We have not noticed a difference in the academic performance or success of majors and non-majors in the fourth year courses. We have noticed that having an interdisciplinary group enhances class discussions.

Decanal Response

The program’s sense of this issue is important; the program should emphasize to students the benefits of multi-disciplinarily in class discussion (if not already a practice). Moreover, it is important to relay that feminist and intersectionality are issues in every field of inquiry, and this makes it imperative to engage students across the disciplines.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

**That the program considers whether the expectation of students taking courses in sequence needs to be revised, and review curriculum accordingly.**

*Making prerequisites and requirements more flexible would allow students to take courses and change to GWST major later in their university careers.*

Program Response

We have few required courses, which already makes it relatively easy for students to major/joint major later in their university careers. Compared to other programs, our requirements are minimal. Pre-requisites have been reduced substantially since the time of the last external review.

Decanal Response

There is some evidence that most students benefit from more straightforward and flexible course options in fulfilling their major requirements. Some programs are now designing the major with the majority of students’ needs in mind, while also identifying courses that are strongly recommended for students wishing to pursue graduate studies (a minority of students). The department may wish to give some thought to continuing its efforts at streamlining program requirements. The WMST requirements are comparable to many other programs at Trent, and there is no pressing need to make further adjustments.

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

**That faculty meet and review/exchange syllabi in order to reduce repetition between years and courses.**

Program Response

This is a good idea; we have noticed a fair bit of curriculum creep with our increasing reliance on part time and non-permanent faculty. Syllabi could be shared online to check for duplication. The program could provide a template for non-permanent faculty to ensure that key pieces of the curriculum are being taught.

Decanal Response

The solutions suggested above will resolve this issue.

**RECOMMENDATION 6**

**That faculty members be encouraged to have conversations with GWST students to help them develop both an awareness of and a language to articulate the skills and knowledge acquired in their GWST training.**

Program Response

We do this in different courses; for example, students learn how to write grant proposals in the Feminist Research course, and they design poster presentations and orally present their research to a public audience in the honours research seminar. We can work to incorporate more of these kinds of assignments into other courses. Our new website has careers section which will cover this and should help answer many of these questions. We will make sure learning outcomes at the course-level specify transferrable skills.

Decanal Response

The program is already addressing this need; though on-going efforts are certainly welcome. This is also something that the humanities and social sciences can address on a broader scale through workshops, talks, and other events.

**RECOMMENDATION 7**

**That further courses in disability, critical race, sexuality, eco-feminism, girls, prison, and masculinity studies be developed.**

Program Response

The program already offers courses in many of these topics, including: a new course on disability introduced in 2017-2018, two courses in gender and the environment, critical race theory is integrated throughout the curriculum, topics on gender, sexuality, masculinities and women in prisons (Walls to Bridges) are offered through cross-listed courses with Sociology, and a new course on girls is cross-listed with English (new in 2017-2018).

Decanal Response

Gender and Women’s Studies as a field advances quickly, and new approaches, perspectives, and findings are constantly advanced. The Gender and Women’s studies program has sufficient breadth and dynamism in its course offerings and a demonstrated commitment to advancing new approaches and perspectives. And as noted above, the integration of WMST courses with courses in other disciplines also helps to achieve on-going momentum in new and diverse areas of inquiry. Any changes related to the above should be considered in light of how manageable they are, and how necessary they are, as is the usual practice in the department.

**RECOMMENDATION 8**

**That better interconnection with Indigenous Studies be developed.**

Program Response

Issues related to indigenous women are integrated into the GWST courses. We see this as an important priority and key to how Trent models its education system. Several GWST courses are cross-listed with the School of Chanie Wenjack for Indigenous Studies, and include topics on Indigenous women and Indigenous populations. We have always been open to collaboration and these courses are popular with our students. The program often addresses Indigenous women or invited Indigenous speakers for the annual Margaret Laurence lecture.

Decanal Response

The program already has important ties to Indigenous Studies at Trent in addition to covering indigenous issues in its courses.

**RECOMMENDATION 9**

**That a recruitment plan and strategies be developed to bring students into the major.**

*Some recruitment activities could include: an information flyer to all incoming first year students; individual letters sent to students in good standing in the introductory courses - inviting them to become majors; invite instructors from upper year courses to introduce themselves and present their next term courses to intro course students; use social media to advertise GWST; have majors speak to intro course students about their decision to major in GWST; bring GWST alumni to Trent to speak about how their degrees have benefitted their careers, and feature alumni on the departmental webpage.*

Program Response

These are all good ideas. We will take them into consideration. The updated department webpage has career information and should help promote the program.

Decanal Response

The suggestions made are helpful, and other ideas may emerge in discussions with marketing and communications. New prizes and awards could also be used to market the program and draw attention to the discipline. If not already the practice, it is helpful to staff open houses with faculty members as well as departmental students or undergraduate society representatives. Prospective students really enjoy speaking with existing students (and often prefer it).

**RECOMMENDATION 10**

**That further collaborative or joint degrees with other units be explored, especially in professional and large enrolment programs (for example a critical criminology joint major/minor).**

Program Response

We can pursue this and are open to collaboration.

Decanal Response

The Law and Arts applications are promising and the gains realized should be known in the next 2-3 years. A Gender and Women’s Studies degree is a powerful pairing with a law degree, and should be advertised as such. A link between Sociology and Women’s Studies may prove beneficial, though perhaps it would need to offer some advantage above and beyond those already available to WMST-SOCI joint majors. Other interesting initiatives can be explored in the interests of creative opportunity.

**RECOMMENDATION 11**

**That the introductory courses be made mandatory for other degree programs.**

Program Response

The introduction course is already very large and we have had to divide it into two sections. We do not feel that mandatory courses would be well-received by other programs.

Decanal Response

Expansions of courses in the ways suggested by the reviewers should not be rejected prima facie because of concerns about resources. It is possible to negotiate resources around new initiatives, particularly where there are signs of academic interest, merit, and growth. There have also been shifts in views about required courses (or highly recommended courses) in other programs, so there may be reason for more optimism about required WMST courses in other programs. This approach can be of great benefit to other programs and sometimes it is just a matter of making the advantages clear.

**RECOMMENDATION 12**

**That research activities of LTA and part-time instructors be supported.**

**That LTAs not only teach in large lower level courses but also teach in their areas of research.**

Program Response

LTAs and CUPE instructors have access to conference travel, research funds, and professional expenses. The department has a speaker series as of fall 2015 through the Canada Research Chair and our LTAs have the opportunity to present, are well as the ‘Suds and Speakers’ series, where our faculty, including LTAs, present their research.

LTAs do teach in their areas of research, for example one has designed a course specifically related to her research on popular culture. It has been typical that WMST permanent faculty have not been able to teach in their specific area of expertise, given the small number of faculty and the need to cover core courses.

Decanal Response

In addition to the above, the dean has been working with the program on the question of more equitable teaching loads for LTAs, with full view of the constraints and pressures on the unit.

**RECOMMENDATION 13**

**That the department chair or a representative attend the annual WGSRF administrators’ meeting for networking and collegial exchange of ideas for program administration and curriculum development.**

Program Response

Previous chairs have regularly attended. In 2016, the chair could not attend due to a conflicting conference.

Decanal Response

It seems reasonable for the chair or another faculty member to attend when already attending Congress for their own research projects (as schedules permit). There are other opportunities and means for networking about administrative and curricular needs and innovations.

**RECOMMENDATION 14**

**That face-to-face meetings take place and that a clear governance structure be introduced for the program.**

Program Response

This is easy to rectify; we can schedule regular executive and committee meetings, rather than through business arising. The department is so small that a separate curriculum committee seems impractical, but one faculty could work with students on curriculum as a point person; with similar arrangements for other department events. All permanent faculty and the department chair serve as personnel committee each year, sometimes with external members to meet minimum requirements for personnel committee.

Decanal Response

The importance of regular departmental meetings has been emphasized. It is worth considering, however, that an executive committee is not usual for a department of this size. Normally, executive committees are put into place in very large departments. The usual suite of committees for a department of this size would be as follows:

* Departmental committee, including department members, cross-listed faculty, LTAs, CUPE, student reps
* Personnel committee
* Curriculum committee, as needed

**RECOMMENDATION 15**

**That block scheduling program be implemented to reduce schedule conflicts.**

Program Response

It has been department practice to ensure that we do not have conflicts in the scheduling of WMST courses, as well as cross-listed courses.

Decanal Response

Block scheduling is in development and consultations will continue next year.

**RECOMMENDATION 16**

**That secretarial resources be shared more equitably.**

Program Response

Agreed, but an issue for senior administration.

Decanal Response

While the reviewers’ comment about student numbers in this faculty is incorrect, the point that this program is under-resourced administratively still stands.

**RECOMMENDATION 17**

**That a dedicated and central space be created for GWST students or that the existing library/lounge with Philosophy and Classics be shared more equitably.**

Program Response

Great idea, we would like a separate space for GWST students. This is something the dean’s office could do for us. A keypad would ensure access. We will consult with IDST and POST who have resource rooms for their majors with keypad access.

Decanal Response

Space constraints may make it difficult to fulfill this recommendation. In the meantime, it is very important to find ways to make the existing space welcoming to WMST students.

**RECOMMENDATION 18**

**That creative ways of sharing resources be develop and that joint appointments be encouraged across faculties, in particular with Social Sciences.**

Program Response

We have been doing this since the inception of the program. Cross-appointments are more difficult, given the labour involved in teaching and doing service in two departments. Given the intensification of workloads in small departments, there is little incentive. The department is however, approaching particular faculty who might be open to a cross-appointment. The program would be willing to move the program to the Social Sciences division if requested.

Decanal Response

The joint majors seems to suggest that Social Sciences may be more academically aligned home for Gender and Women’s Studies. For 2016AY, the percentage of joint majors pairing their WMST degree with a social science major is 53%; a humanities major 28%; and a science major 19%. That students from a wide variety of disciplines decide to pick up WMST as a joint major is evidence of its importance to a wide variety of fields and occupations. The Social Sciences might also prove a more satisfactory home for the research of some of the members of Gender and Women’s Studies.

This said, it will be important to make decisions about the program’s location on academic grounds and with a view to supporting the program’s increased growth and advancing its academics in all other respects.

**RECOMMENDATION 19**

**That the program continues to put pressure on the library to maintain a good collection of books.**

Program Response

Agreed.

Decanal Response

Given that the library is concerned to provide a good collection of books, it will also be important to assist and support the library in its efforts where possible. It will also be beneficial to make use of the resources for teaching and digital humanities that the library will offer when the renovations are complete.

**RECOMMENDATION 20**

**That a more coherent and transparent plan be developed at Durham and for interconnection between the two campuses.**

Program Response

This has been completed. Direction for curricular development and associated resources have been driven by Durham; however, Durham has been responsive and has encouraged WMST to develop a minor. Demand for courses appears to be monitored and we are pleased that we have been allowed to grow in this location. One area of concern remains - reaching out to Durham based students to form a cohort and to feel supported as GWST students. One possibility is to elect a Durham student rep who might travel to Peterborough for meetings. A GWST LTA would help stabilize the Durham program.

Decanal Response

This is a solid recommendation, and will be taken under advisement. Administrative and academic structures between Durham and Peterborough are currently evolving, so there are good opportunities to shape program development and structures at the Durham campus.

**RECOMMENDATION 21**

**That the program requires a tenure track appointment.**

*This is an exemplary Department in terms of student achievement and learning, excellent teaching, research productivity and collegiality. Support is needed from the administration to maintain this quality of student experience. Such an appointment would also support graduate programs across the university, and allow Gender and Women’s Studies to be a hub for all faculty members interested in research in this area.*

Program Response

While we would very much welcome a new tenure-track appointment, one tenured-track faculty is not going to stabilize the program. Two minimum are needed in light of retirements, losses never replaced, and retirements before the next review. While not all faculty agree, the department could also benefit from a teaching appointment (Senior Lecturer).

Decanal Response

Succession planning and development is critical for this program. Stabilizing Gender and Women’s Studies is a paramount objective given its necessity for knowledge acquisition about human beings, culture, society, and beyond. The discipline is also deeply relevant to other programs at Trent, and central to the public good.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**The applicable Dean, in consultation with the Department Chair/Director of the relevant Academic Unit shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The Reporting Date for submitting a follow-up Implementation Report is indicated below and is the responsibility of the Academic Unit in consultation with the Dean.**

**DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT: APRIL 1, 2018**

The Implementation Report should be submitted to the applicable Dean(s) who will then forward the Report to the Office of the Provost.

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  *If no follow-up is recommended, please clearly indicate ‘No follow up report is required’ and provide rationale.*  *Indicate specific timeline for completion or addressing recommendation if different than Due Date for Implementation Report* | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| **Recommendation #1**  That all courses become half courses in order to reduce the scheduling problems cited by students.  **Recommendation #2** That the program reviews the scheduling of upper year GWST courses in light of existing scheduling problems.  **Recommendation #15** That block scheduling program be implemented to reduce schedule conflicts. | No follow up report is required.   * All courses offered solely by the Women’s Studies program are now offered as half credit courses. * A review of Trent’s scheduling has taken place; issue addressed satisfactorily in program response. |  |
| **Recommendation #3** That the program impose some pre-requisites on fourth year courses run by the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies. | No follow up report is required.  The Program made some changes to prerequisites in fourth year courses to increase enrolment. Students benefit from multi-disciplinarity in class discussion. |  |
| **Recommendation #4** That the program consider whether the expectation of students taking courses in sequence needs to be revised, and review curriculum accordingly. | No follow up report is required.  WMST requirements are comparable to many other programs at Trent. |  |
| **Recommendation #5** That faculty meet and review/exchange syllabi in order to reduce repetition between years and courses. | Report on faculty review and sharing of curriculum in course syllabi. | Chair |
| **Recommendation #6** That faculty members be encouraged to have conversations with GWST students to help them develop both an awareness of and a language to articulate the skills and knowledge acquired in their GWST training. | Provide update on incorporating transferable skills into coursework and revisions to learning outcomes which specifically address transferable skills.  Report on website updates. | Chair |
| **Recommendation #7** That further courses in disability, critical race, sexuality, eco-feminism, girls, prison, and masculinity studies be developed. | No follow up report is required.  Integration of GMST courses with other disciplines has helped to offer students courses in emerging areas. |  |
| **Recommendation #8** That better interconnection with Indigenous Studies be developed. | No follow up report is required.  The Program currently collaborates with Indigenous studies and has a number of cross-listed courses with the School of Chanie Wenjack in Indigenous Studies. |  |
| **Recommendation #9** That a recruitment plan and strategies be developed to bring students into the major. | The program is already doing well however, provide update on activities. | Chair |
| **Recommendation #10** That further collaborative or joint degrees with other units be explored, especially in professional and large enrolment programs (for example a critical criminology joint major/minor). | No follow up report is required.  The program is already multi-disciplinary and collaborates with many academic units. |  |
| **Recommendation #11** That the introductory courses be made mandatory for other degree programs. | No follow up report is required.  This is not a reflection on the quality of the program. |  |
| **Recommendation #12** That research activities of LTA and part-time instructors be supported. That LTAs not only teach in large lower level courses but also teach in their areas of research. | No follow up report is required.  LTAs and CUPE members have access to conference travel and research funds, as well as professional expenses.  The Dean has been addressing more equitable teaching loads. |  |
| **Recommendation #13** That the department chair or a representative attend the annual WGSRF administrators’ meeting for networking and collegial exchange of ideas for program administration and curriculum development. | No follow up report is required.  Members have been attending the annual meeting and are networking through other avenues. |  |
| **Recommendation #14** That face-to-face meetings take place and that a clear governance structure be introduced for the program. | Report on the formal governance structure and provide an update on scheduled program meetings (face-to-face). | Chair |
| **Recommendation #16** That secretarial resources be shared more equitably. | No follow up report is required.  This recommendation is out of the program’s purview. |  |
| **Recommendation #17** That a dedicated and central space be created for GWST students or that the existing library/lounge with Philosophy and Classics be shared more equitably. | No follow up report is required.  Currently, there is a shared space for students. |  |
| **Recommendation #18** That creative ways of sharing resources be develop and that joint appointments be encouraged across faculties, in particular with Social Sciences. | Provide update on sharing of resources. | Chair in consultation with Dean |
| **Recommendation #19** That the program continues to put pressure on the library to maintain a good collection of books. | No follow up report is required.  The Chair is encouraged to work closely with the Dean and University Librarian on maintaining an adequate quality of collection and resources to students. |  |
| **Recommendation #20** That a more coherent and transparent plan be developed at Durham and for interconnection between the two campuses. | Provide an update. | Chair in consultation with Dean |
| **Recommendation #21** That the program requires a tenure track appointment. | No follow-up report is required by the Chair.  This is a faculty resource issue under the purview of the Dean. | Dean |