2004-2005 Women’s Studies Program Assessment Report

A. **Undergraduate Assessment by Degree/Certificate Program**

1. **List in detail your Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each undergraduate degree/certificate offered.**

   **Certificate in Women’s Studies:**
   --Application of critical thinking
   --Grasp of key concepts in Women’s Studies to include the social construction of gender, sexuality/gender connections, intersections among gender, race, class and other vectors of power and identity, and social stratification.
   --Improved writing
   --Improved oral communication
   --Awareness of interdisciplinarity
   --Understanding of gender/race/colonialism analysis in Pacific-Asian context
   --Ability to connect the classroom with “real world” feminist issues

   **Major through Interdisciplinary Studies:**
   --Application of critical thinking skills
   --Application of key concepts in Women’s Studies to include the social construction of gender, sexuality/gender connections, intersections among gender, race, class and other vectors of power and identity, and social stratification.
   --Improved writing
   --Improved oral communication
   --Awareness of interdisciplinarity
   --Understanding and application of gender/race/colonialism analysis in Pacific-Asian context
   --Ability to connect the classroom with “real world” feminist issues

2. **Where are these SLOs published (e.g., department web page)?**

   A general overview of our SLO is outlined in our program brochures and on our website; individual faculty publish SLO in syllabi each semester.

3. **Explain how your SLOs map onto your curriculum, i.e., how does your curriculum produce the specific SLOs in your students?**

   Women’s Studies is responsive to course evaluations so when students tell us we are not “getting through” and teaching what we intend to teach, we modify our methods and materials accordingly. This has enabled us to stay current in our respective fields while responding to students’ changing interests and increasing sophistication about subject matter we address in our courses.
We use a variety of evaluative methods (multiple choice, short answer, essay questions, research project, etc.); all of our classes require written work from students.

4. **What specific methodologies were used to collect data?**

Student evaluations of all courses (both CAFÉ assessments and program questionnaires are collected from all students each semester; our response rate averages 90-95%), exit interviews with majors and certificate students every other year (response rate averages 95%).

Student evaluations are collected toward the end of each semester. We use a set of standard questions relating to:

1. How effectively students felt the class met identified learning objectives;
2. Student perceptions of the skills/knowledge they gained from taking the course;
3. Whether they increased understanding of key concepts by taking the particular course.

In addition, individual instructors select questions designed to address their particular pedagogical needs and concerns.

Assessments cover all students in Women’s Studies courses including those taking cross-listed courses at introductory and upper division course levels. We also attempt to conduct exit interviews with all our undergraduate certificate students and all our undergraduate majors by contacting each of them by telephone at their last known contact number.

Assessments take place in two settings: student evaluations are completed in the classroom and exit interviews generally take place via telephone interviews.

5. *How were the assessment data/results used to inform decisions concerning the curriculum and administration of the program?*

--Forms and procedures have been improved to streamline usability.
--Program requirements were revised to provide a more integrated and transnational approach.
--Undergraduate students have been more fully included in our colloquium series
--We now give awards for excellence in leadership as well as excellence in research
--We are seeking approval to offer our own B.A in Women’s Studies

6. **General Education Assessment Within the Major:**

*How have you met the above requirements in your degree program?*
Women’s Studies emphasizes small classes where active learning can take place. Several upper division courses, including those without a (W) designation, require research projects with a lengthy paper requirement. Most, whether identified with an (O) focus designation or not, require students to engage in a significant level of class participation. Students frequently remark that the stereotype of Women’s Studies classes as “easy” is “certainly not true at UH!”

Students interviewed generally report that as a result of taking having majored in Women’s Studies through Interdisciplinary Studies they improved their writing and research skills and that their critical thinking skills had also improved.

B. **Graduate Assessment by Degree/Certificate Program**

1. **List in detail your Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each graduate degree/certificate offered.**

   **Graduate Certificate in Advanced Women’s Studies:**
   --Proven ability to apply critical thinking skills
   --Mastery of key concepts in Women’s Studies to include the social construction of gender, sexuality/gender connections, intersections among gender, race, class and other vectors of power and identity, and social stratification.
   --Improved writing
   --Improved oral communication
   --Application of interdisciplinarity to written work
   --Proven ability to apply gender/race/colonialism analysis in Pacific-Asian context
   --Proven ability to connect the classroom with “real world” feminist issues

2. **Where are these SLOs published (e.g., departmental web page)?**

   A general overview of our SLO are outlined in our program brochures and on our website; individual faculty publish SLOs in syllabi each semester.

3. **Explain how your SLOs map onto your curriculum, i.e., how does your program of graduate studies produce the specific SLOs in your students?**

   Because our graduate certificate program is quite new (began in Fall 2001) we have been focused on determining whether, 1) overarching program goals are appropriate and, 2) whether these goals are being met.

   By requiring students to conduct original research (we are one of the few Women’s studies programs among the 50 nationally offering a certificate to do so), our students must show through the quality of their work, that they can meet the objectives of the program.
Through attendance at a regular seminar series attended year-round by all faculty and many of our affiliates and by because they have ready access to advising and other support, students have multiple opportunities for productive exchanges that enhance their scholarship and help them fully integrate and meet the SLO.

4. *What population(s) is covered by your assessment(s)?*

Our course evaluations cover all students in our graduate level Women’s Studies courses including those taking cross-listed courses. We conduct exit interviews with all our graduate certificate students. In Spring 2005 three (3) students received their certificates but their telephone exit interviews have not yet been completed.

5. *Please list/describe all the assessment events and devices used to monitor graduate student progress through the program.*

--Capstone experience attended and evaluated by Women’s Studies faculty that includes written and oral feedback to the student
--tests, exams, research papers
--individual advising

6. *Please list/describe how your graduate students contribute to your discipline/academic area?*

All students are expected to produce publishable quality papers for their capstone presentation. This requirement has been crafted to prepare students for professional meeting presentations and requires extensive preparation and a formal presentation of their original research.

One former certificate student has co-authored a series of working papers with one of our faculty members.

Three of our students have begun teaching women’s studies courses here at UHM and/or on other campuses since receiving their certificates.

Most of our graduate certificate students are still working on completing their M.A or Ph.D. degrees in other fields.

7. *What attempts are made to monitor student post-graduate professional activities?*

Our assessment/follow-up is still relatively straightforward since we are a new and still small program. We have only graduated eight (8) students and most of our students have remained in Hawaii. Exit interviews are conducted by telephone after completion of the program.
8. *How were the assessment data/results used to inform decisions concerning the curriculum and administration of the program?*

No changes to the graduate curriculum have been made thus far.