Governance Document --- Department of Women's Studies

It is recognized that this document may not contravene the constitutions and laws of the state of Florida; rules, regulations, and policies of the Florida Board of Governors; rules, regulations, and policies of the University of South Florida; and any applicable collective bargaining agreement or legislatively-mandated management right. The foregoing authorities will govern in the event that any provision of a local governance document is inconsistent with or in conflict with them.

Mission and Values Statement

The mission of the Women's Studies Department at the University of South Florida is feminist undergraduate and graduate education, research, and practice for social justice by engaging students in the discovery and production of knowledge that emerges from feminist perspectives on culture and society.

- We seek to expose limitations in traditional higher education (in literature and the arts; history, law, and public policy; sociology, anthropology, and the social sciences; in area and ethnic studies; and in health, science, and technology) resulting from the exclusion of women and other marginalized groups to create knowledge that is transformative and inclusive.

- We seek to provide students with the analytic competency that results from engagement with a curriculum focused on the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and nation and that promotes responsible citizenship in a diverse global environment.

- We seek to connect our work as academics with the social and political world outside the university; to educate our students about social inequalities that result from sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, and ethnocentrism; and to link knowledge, research, teaching, and activism.

- We seek to empower students through a feminist critique of social, cultural, and institutional structures that enables them to think more knowledgeably and critically about their own lives and that inspires them to work as active citizens for informed social justice.

MEMBERSHIP

A. Defining the Faculty
i. Membership in the Department of Women's Studies shall include full-time faculty whose salaries are administered through the department.

ii. Those faculty who have joint appointments with other units, shall be considered members of the department if 50% or more of their budgeted salary is administered through the department.

iii. Faculty members on leave from the department shall retain voting privileges in the decisions, among others, on the retention or appointment of chair and on amendments to this governance document.

B. Hiring:

Requests for hiring and hiring practices will take into account the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences’ policies and the current University climate. The Chair will consult with the faculty regarding these issues.

When the Department has permission to conduct a faculty search, the Chair will appoint a Search Committee; after following standard College and University rules, regulations and policies for conducting a search, the search committee will make its recommendations to the Chair, the Chair forwards names to the Dean.

II. MEETINGS

A. Regular meetings of the department will usually be held once a month, except during the summer.
B. Other meetings may be called at other times by the Chair or by any member of the faculty.
C. Notification of all meetings shall be distributed by email to all members of the department at least two working days prior to the meeting.
D. A majority vote of all faculty members is required for all major issues, e.g. curriculum and catalog changes.
E. Minutes of each department meeting will be reviewed and approved at the subsequent meeting. Minutes of the last meeting held in the spring semester shall be circulated and approved prior to the end of spring term.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. CHAIR

1. Charge: The Department Chair, with the assistance of other department administrators and committees, and in consultation with the faculty, directs the
nominations for College and University committees.
f. In consultation with the faculty, to allocate department resources

g. To handle student grievances, in conjunction with either the Undergraduate Director
or the Graduate Director, as appropriate.

h. To offer to the faculty a variety of models for determining merit pay for the faculty's
vote, when merit pay is available.

i. To support feminist scholarship on campus and the community to the degree that
resources are made available for such activities.

B. DIRECTOR OF THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

1. The Director of the Undergraduate Program shall be appointed by the Department
Chair and will serve for three to five years. She is eligible to serve in this position
for a longer period (not to exceed eight years) if she so desires, the Chair agrees, and
there is special departmental need for this service. The Director will be responsible for
organizing the undergraduate program and will chair the Undergraduate Program
Committee. As long as there is a reasonable number of majors, the Undergraduate
Director will be responsible for advising majors and minors, assisting in graduation
checks, evaluating transcripts, being available for orientation dates set aside for
advising, and all the normal functions involved in acting as the liaison between students
and the advising office of CAS. In the case that there is a very large number of majors,
additional advisors will be appointed.

2. The Undergraduate Director will be released from teaching one course per
year. If funds are available, she will have a preferred option to teach one course
during the summer.

C. DIRECTOR OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

1. The Director of the Graduate Program shall be appointed by the Department
Chair and will serve for three to five years. She is eligible to serve in this position
for a longer period (not to exceed eight years) if she so desires, the Chair
agrees, and there is special departmental need for this service. The Director will
be responsible for organizing the graduate program, advising graduate students,
and coordinating the activities of the Graduate Program Committee, including the
Comprehensive Examination Committee (as needed).
2. The Graduate Director will be released from teaching one course per year. If funds are available, she will have a preferred option to teach one course during the summer.

IV. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE
1. Composition:
This committee shall consist of two or more members of the department, including the Undergraduate Program Director. Notice of appointment will be given at the beginning of the Fall semester. All members of the department shall be eligible to serve. The Director of the Undergraduate Program will chair the committee.
2. Duties:
a. Review undergraduate curriculum and recommend necessary revisions.
b. Develop and implement undergraduate recruitment procedures.
c. Maintain communication with the Graduate Program Committee.
d. Provide reports to the faculty on the undergraduate program as needed.
e. Proofread and correct the major's information on the undergraduate catalogue on an annual basis.
f. Conduct an exit survey of majors prior to graduation.

B. GRADUATE COMMITTEE

1. Composition:
This committee shall consist of two or more members of the department, including the Graduate Program Director. Notice of appointment will be given at the beginning of the Fall semester. The Director of Graduate Studies will chair the committee.
2. Duties:
a. Review graduate curriculum and recommend revisions.
b. Receive, review, and present to the Department members all graduate course proposals and course revisions.
c. Contribute to advertising and promoting the Graduate Program.
d. Act on all graduate applications.
e. Review applications for and recommend appointments to graduate assistantships; make recommendations for university and college fellowships.
f. Provide a report to the Department members on the status of the graduate
program as needed.
g. Proofread and correct the graduate program’s information on the graduate
catalogue at each printing.
h. Maintain communication with the Undergraduate Program Committee
i. Develop and update the graduate handbook as needed.
j. Conduct an exit survey of students prior to graduation.

C. FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Composition:
a. The Committee shall consist of all full-time tenured and tenure-track members
   of the department, with the exception of the Chair.
b. The Committee shall elect a chair who is tenured and whose rank is associate
   professor or higher.
2. Duties:
a. Conduct the annual peer review of faculty for the department and complete
   the annual review summaries on all faculty members. The final draft of each
   faculty member’s evaluation must be approved by the entire committee and
   signed by the committee Chair before it is placed in the
   faculty member’s file.
b. Advise the Chair on matters concerning the well-being of the Department.
c. Review departmental administration and recommend procedures and practices
   of departmental management.

D. PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE

Composition:
The committee shall consist of all full-time, tenured faculty members in the
Department at the level of Associate Professor or higher, except for the
Department Chair who will not be a member of this committee. The committee
will elect its own chairperson. Voting will be restricted to those members of the
committee with tenure and at a higher faculty rank than the candidate. In lieu of
at least three eligible voting members, the Chair of the Department with
concurrence of the faculty and the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs will appoint
an Interim Promotion and Tenure Committee members.

The Department follows the College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion
Guidelines, with the following proviso: Due to the inherent interdisciplinarity of
feminist scholarship, evaluation criteria for tenure and Promotion in the Women’s
Studies Department will take into account both the feminist character of the
body of scholarship, and any one of a variety of productivity criteria, including but not limited to a book, book chapter/s, refereed articles, creative work.

2. Duties:

a. Review applications and documents, and make recommendations for the department on candidates for promotion and tenure.

b. Review applications and documents, and make recommendations for the department on candidates for the mid-tenure review of tenure-track faculty members.

V. FACULTY EVALUATION PROCEDURES

a. The annual faculty evaluation process consists of two independent evaluations of faculty members: one, by the peer Faculty Advisory Committee, and one by the Department Chair. Faculty members are evaluated for Teaching, Research, and Service.

b. TEACHING

Several considerations enter into the evaluation of faculty instruction. These include: (1) workload assigned to teaching, (2) resources available given the nature of the teaching workload, (3) student evaluation of instruction (both quantitative and qualitative evaluation), (4) peer evaluation of teaching, (5) number of new preparations, (6) variety of courses assigned, (7) use of innovative techniques, (8) revisions, updates, modifications of courses taught, (9) development of new courses and program proposals, (10) teaching aids, materials, etc. for courses, (11) efforts to improve teaching skills, (12) number and nature of graduate student committee service (e.g. M.A. theses, doctoral dissertations), (13) number and nature of undergraduate and graduate independent studies, (14) publications and/or presentations related to teaching, (15) guest lecturing, (16) participation in teaching enhancement workshops, and (17) teaching awards and honors, and nominations for such awards, (18) and/or any additional evidence of teaching-related activities.

In addition to student surveys (taking into account the level, size, and type of class), consideration will also be given to student comments, teacher-designed student surveys, major external teaching fellowships, peer reviews, syllabi, tests, assignments, and web site innovations.

c. RESEARCH
The department requires distinction in scholarship and other creative activity. In evaluating each faculty member, the department shall consider the quality of the work, including its value to the faculty member’s field; sufficient quantity is necessary both to permit a reliable judgment and to ensure continued commitment. Published work is most important; however, the department recognizes that a faculty member’s scholarship and other creative activity also includes both work in circulation and work in progress.

Recognizing the interdisciplinarity of Women’s Studies scholarship and of faculty research programs, individual faculty may choose different paths or combinations thereof, e.g. writing scholarly articles or books (or book chapters).

An ‘outstanding’ will be reserved for published work, in peer-reviewed journals or by respected presses. Faculty are invited to submit evidence of the impact of the published work which will also be taken into account.

A ‘strong’ will be given when there is evidence of activity, such as a project in progress or paper presentations at a professional conference.

d. SERVICE

Service falls into three general categories: to the University, to the profession, and to the community. University service is further broken down into service to the department, the college, and the university at large.

Outstanding should be awarded to faculty who maintain a consistent record of good departmental service according to the standard assignment and hold key positions in important international, national, or regional professional organizations; or edit, co-edit, or serve as book review editor for a journal in their area; or organize conferences; or participate actively in important university or college committees or organizations; or perform departmental service well beyond the standard assignment. A record of leadership of community service activities (including service to public schools, community colleges, public lecture series and panel discussions, contributions to TV, radio, and newpint, and other forms of community education) in addition to a consistent record of departmental service can equal Outstanding merit. Faculty members whose service is truly exceptional in some way can receive carryover credit for two years.

Strong should be awarded to faculty who maintain a consistent record of good departmental service according to the standard assignment. Also considered will be participation in international, national, and regional professional organizations; work for journals or organizing conferences; activity on university or college committees; and community service.
Satisfactory should be awarded to faculty who adequately perform departmental service activity according to the standard assignment.

Unsatisfactory should be awarded to faculty who do not fulfill the standard departmental service assignment.

VI. AMENDMENTS TO THIS DOCUMENT

This governance document may be amended at any regular meeting of the department provided the specific amendment in writing shall have been distributed with the agenda of the meeting at least two days prior to the meeting.
A 2/3 majority vote of the total voting faculty is required to amend this document.
Written proxies, sealed and delivered to the Chair prior to a meeting will be allowed only when amending this document or when electing faculty.
Date of Approval: