Self Study

Women’s Studies Institute

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Self Study

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A. Historical and contextual description of the unit

Faculty involvement in women’s studies at Georgia State University (GSU) began with the Women’s Studies Interest Group, which began meeting in 1974 and sponsored lectures, presentations, and discussions on women’s studies and feminist issues. Individual faculty members in the group developed women’s studies courses through their various departments. Interest in women’s studies at GSU continued to grow, and the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (B.I.S.) with a Concentration in Women’s Studies was approved in 1984. GSU’s Women’s Studies Institute (WSI) was established in July 1994 and began offering a Master’s of Arts in Women’s Studies in 1995. The first cohort entered in 1995, and the first MA graduates received their degrees in 1998. The BA in women’s studies was approved in 2003. In 2003, the faculty also approved the Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies.

The Women’s Studies Institute was developed to provide a location for interdisciplinary studies that interrogate social structures, identities, institutions, ideologies, and relationships. Additionally, from its beginning, the department has aimed to be an intellectual location for the study and research of gender as it intersects with race, class, national difference, as well as other significant categories. Its courses together have been designed to provide students with a historical understanding of women, feminism and gender, as well as a rich understanding of theories relevant to women’s studies as a discipline. Finally, the WSI in its development has been ahead of the national curve in so far as it has had an expressed commitment to understanding gender in a global context, rather than as a phenomenon only relevant to the West.

Two fellowships are sponsored by the WSI. The Martha Wren Gaines Research Fellowship is co-sponsored by the Special Collections Department of the Pullen Library and is awarded each year to a student involved with archival research related to the Donna Novak Coles Georgia Women’s Movement Archives and/or the Lucy Hargrett Draper U.S. Equal Rights Amendment Research Collection. The Ethel Woodruff Draper Research Fellowship in the Development of Young Women is a research award endowed by the J.W. and Ethel I. Woodruff Foundation. This award is granted to a graduate student engaged in research related to the development of young women in a variety of environments, including education, health and nutrition, and family.

Diane Folks was the Institute’s first Director. The WSI has been under the direction of Linda A. Bell, Professor of Philosophy, since 1998. It now has two additional tenure-track faculty whose tenure lines are in the Women’s Studies Institute. Allaine Cerwonka, who holds a joint appointment with the Department of Political Science, was hired in 1999 and currently serves as the WSI’s Director of Graduate Studies. Layli Phillips was hired in 2000 and also teaches in the African American Studies and Psychology Departments. Julie Kubala began teaching in the Institute in 2001 as a part-time instructor. Charlene Ball serves as the WSI’s Academic Professional and in addition to teaching women’s studies periodically, serves as undergraduate advisor and office coordinator.

The faculty of the WSI is implementing plans to extend the scope of graduate studies, developing a specialization in “Social Change Leadership” within the M.A. program. This concentration will require a thesis, like the existing MA concentration; however, it will have a special focus on providing training to students who plan to work in the grassroots and nonprofit sectors.
Description of the unit

Number of faculty by rank and tenure status:
Core faculty: 1 Full Professor, 1 Associate Professor, 1 Assistant Professor
Part-time Instructors: 1
Affiliated faculty: 7 Full Professors, 31 Associate Professors, 16 Assistant Professors

Types of programs and number of students in each:
BA majors: 16
BA minors: 24
MA: 29
Graduate Certificate: 1

Average Number of Credit hours generated per year for last 3 years:
The chart below explains the average credit hour production by faculty over the past three years; however, is an incomplete picture given the particularities of our unit. Since the WSI depends on Affiliated Faculty to teach most of the courses it offers and all credit hours generated by these faculty members are assigned to the home department of the Affiliate Faculty, many of the credit hours generated by the WSI are invisible. Even the hours produced for the university by Women’s Studies majors in Women’s Studies core classes, like Introduction to Women’s Studies (WSt 2010), Feminisms (WSt 3010) or Feminist Methodologies (WSt 8004) are credited to another department when anyone other than a Core Faculty member from the WSI teaches them.

One might say that an obvious solution to this problem would be for the WSI to assign only its Core Faculty to WSt courses, and to the courses required for majors in particular. This is not possible however because of the small number of Core Faculty, especially given that one of the three is the Chair who, like all department chairs, has a reduced teaching load. Another drawback of this solution is that the WSI’s aim is to provide its students with an interdisciplinary education, a goal which is best achieved by offering courses that are taught by an interdisciplinary group of faculty.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>3 Year Average Credit Hour Production by Faculty (2001 - 2003)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>886 hours</td>
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<td>Major</td>
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<td>NTT</td>
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<tr>
<td>229</td>
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<tr>
<td>75</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Faculty research productivity as measured by annual average of refereed articles, external funding generated, internal funding generated, and conference presentations over the last 3 years:

Our discussion of faculty research productivity is limited to the Full-time Core WSI Faculty, as advised by Joan Carson. Since this discussion is limited to only three faculty members, we can probably speak with greater specificity than other departments. Each of the Core Faculty has published 1 refereed article in the past 3 years. Two other members also produced a single-authored book each, published with a major university press.

The Core Faculty presented a total of 15 conference papers, averaging to 5 per year for 3 years.

All of the grant money awarded to Core faculty in the past three years has come from sources internal to Georgia State. Internal grant money for the Women’s Studies Institute over 3 years has totaled $16,500. Average yearly sum for internal grants for the department over the last 3 years was $4,633.

Layli Phillips: $4,000 Research Initiation Grant
Allaine Cerwonka: Writing Across the Curriculum $2,000; Freshman Learning Community Faculty Grant $2,000; and Research Initiation Grant $8,500.
B. Goals and objectives

The Women’s Studies Institute is one of the newest and most innovative academic units at Georgia State University. Having established our fundamental mission and structure, we are now poised for the next stage of institutional development. At this point, the excellence and distinction we seek requires growth and expansion. We offer a plan for the next phase of our growth and expansion in our goals and objectives outlined below.

Goal 1

To position the GSU Women’s Studies Institute as the best terminal M.A. granting women’s studies program in the U.S., capitalizing on the unique strengths and characteristics of both GSU and the WSI, and, in the process, to become the model of interdisciplinary excellence and globally focused scholarship and exchange within both GSU and the field of women’s studies.

Objective 1.1

To add 5 tenure-track faculty lines and 1 permanent lecturer position within the next 5 years.

Rationale

Our core faculty is currently comprised of two regular faculty members and a chair who is slated to retire sometime during the 2004-05 academic year. In order not only to retain the institutional viability of our program, which includes a master’s degree program, a graduate certificate, a major, and a minor, but also to fortify our contribution to general education at GSU and strengthen and realize the potential of our unique program on a national and international basis, we need to increase the size and academic diversity of our core faculty. Our strategy for increasing faculty size is consistent with the Georgia State University mission statement, which includes the following specific objectives:

- Interdisciplinarity
- Building an urban campus with strong links to the metropolitan community
- International partnerships and focus on global issues
- Developing diversity and incorporating diversity into the curriculum
- Contributing to human and social welfare concerns
- Developing excellence in research
- Connecting with the professional community
- Distinguishing ourselves from other programs and universities nationally

It is significant that these objectives are also consistent with current initiatives of the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA), which include globalizing women’s studies, diversifying core faculty and curricula, enhancing graduate education, and interdisciplinarity. Finally, such enhancement of our faculty will better enable us to contribute productively to all four types of scholarship identified by the Carnegie Foundation, including: the scholarship of discovery (research), the scholarship of integration (theory), the scholarship of application
(service), and the scholarship of teaching (pedagogy). Ultimately, we wish to become the best Women’s Studies master’s program in the U.S. and to become known as a crucially important site in the women’s studies academic pipeline, with particular emphasis on the preparation of diverse urban students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. In addition, by hiring new faculty, we wish to set the stage for future joint degree programs linking the WSI M.A. with other graduate and professional degrees at GSU.

**Resources Needed**

The faculty resources listed below are needed. We expect to hire at the assistant professor level to capitalize on the national upsurge in new Women’s Studies Ph.D.’s as well as to appeal to graduates of similar interdisciplinary or otherwise cutting-edge doctoral programs. We also hope to hire individuals who will serve as vibrant points of scholarly connection to other GSU departments, programs, and centers. We expect to offer compensation packages that are nationally competitive and commensurate with employment in a major metropolitan area at a Research I institution. We expect one of these hires to be a replacement for our retiring faculty member.

1. Activism and social movements specialist with expertise in grant-writing, U.S. or transnational activist organizations, and community outreach. This person would teach courses in feminist social movements and grant-writing for the activist track and as well as the practicum for activist interns. This person would also coordinate and supervise the activist internships.

2. Third world women specialist with expertise in women and feminism of Africa, the Caribbean, or Latin America, as well as postcolonial theory, transnational feminism, globalization as pertains to these regions, and, if applicable, women’s NGOs or other activist organizations in these regions. This person would teach courses on third world women and feminism, postcolonial theory and feminism, in addition to other specialty areas, and would support the teaching of existing core courses.

3. Middle Eastern, Asian, or Eastern European women specialist with expertise in women and feminism of the Islamic world, southeast Asia, east Asia, or post-communist Eastern Europe, as well as transnational feminism and globalization as pertains to these regions, and, if applicable, women’s NGOs or other activist organizations in these regions. This person would teach courses on Islamic, Asian, or Eastern European women and feminism, in addition to other specialty areas, and would support the teaching of existing core courses.

4. Africana women specialist with expertise in cultural studies and/or critical race theory. This person would teach courses on Black feminism, cultural studies, and/or critical race theory and would support the teaching of existing core courses.

5. Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender studies and queer theory specialist. This person would allow us to establish regular LGBT studies and queer theory courses, a staple of most women’s studies programs. This person would have a secondary specialization in women’s writing, third wave feminism, and/or feminist theories of the body, medicine, or health. This person would also support the teaching of existing core courses, such as Queer Theory and Thinking the Body.
6. Generalist who can consistently teach multiple sections of undergraduate core courses such as Introduction to Women’s Studies, Feminisms, Girls, etc., in a permanent lecturer capacity.

**Plan for Implementation:**

Year 1—Hire the Activism and Social Movements specialist and the LGBTQ specialist.

Year 2—Hire the third world specialist and the African American/cultural studies/critical race theory specialist.

Year 3—Hire the Islam/Asia/Eastern Europe specialist and the permanent lecturer.

**Objective 1.2**

To develop collaborative relationships with the African American Studies Department, the Latino Studies Program, the Middle Eastern Studies Center, and other units with whom substantial mutual interest can be identified.

**Rationale**

Because the WSI already posits itself as a globally focused interdisciplinary unit where issues of race, class, nation, and the like are imbricated with the study of women and feminism, it makes sense for the WSI to form stronger and more formal relationships with GSU entities representing these concerns. Forming such collaborations will also improve the cultural climate for the WSI’s diverse student body, many of whom are attracted to our program due to the perception of greater-than-average attention to issues of race, culture, and nation in our curriculum and faculty research interests.

**Resources Needed**

None.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1 – Meet with heads of African American Studies, Latino Studies, Middle Eastern Studies to begin discussing mutually beneficial possibilities for collaboration. Bring suggestions before the WSI faculty.

Year 2 – Based on what was discussed during Year 1, begin implementing collaborations.

**Objective 1.3**
To establish international study abroad courses and student and faculty exchange relationships with universities offering women’s studies programs in English outside the U.S.

**Rationale**

An original cornerstone of the GSU Women’s Studies Institute is a focus on women, globalization, and transnational feminism. This emphasis is consistent with the Board of Regents’ and GSU’s larger focus on international partnerships and global issues. One way to make learning about global issues concrete is to allow students to interact with people from other countries and study abroad. Learning is also enhanced and important international relationships are established when students from other countries visit our country, university, or program. Since GSU is already forming exchange relationships with suitable universities in other countries, it is a natural next step for the WSI to develop specific and complementary programs. Of particular interest to the WSI are programs in third world and former second world countries. At this time, we are interested in exploring possible relationships with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies with campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad, and Barbados, the Department of Gender Studies at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, the Centre for Women’s Studies at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and the Women’s and Gender Studies Department at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. We expect, however, that new or different possibilities may emerge in conjunction with the connections of our new hires.

**Resources Needed**

Establishment of study abroad courses (which could be co-offered with other GSU units such as African American Studies, Latin American Studies, or Middle Eastern Studies), study abroad scholarships, travel money for GSU faculty serving as instructors abroad, stipends for exchange students.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1—In conjunction with the Office of International Services, Programs, and Study Abroad, set up the first study abroad course with the University of the West Indies, to be held during Maymester or Summer 2005.

Year 2—Continue this program; invite students from UWI to study at GSU; explore the viability of programs in other countries.

Year 3—Offer a study abroad program with another country, preferably one with ties to one of our new faculty.

Year 4—Continue existing programs; invite new students from countries where we have relationships; continue to explore the viability of programs in other countries until a total of 3 programs have been set up. Establish a cycle for the offering of the 3 study abroad programs and exchange relationships with students from those countries. Advertise our graduate program in
those countries and recruit students. Explore extramural funding to enhance the programs and link them with research activities.

Year 5—Begin extramurally funded programs with continued support from GSU.

**Objective 1.4**

To host one postdoctoral fellow per academic year, supported by extramural funding.

**Rationale**

A postdoctoral fellow responsible for one specialty course per semester would allow us to expand our elective offerings at both the graduate and undergraduate levels by bringing in expertise that was not part of our regular faculty. In addition, regular postdoctoral fellows would support the colloquium series we hope to establish (see below). Finally, hosting postdoctoral fellows supported by extramural funding would boost the national and international prestige of the WSI and GSU.

**Resources Needed**

Multi-year extramural funding of about $45,000 per year from a large agency such as Rockefeller or Ford and individuals interested in coming to the WSI.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1 – Research funding sources and prepare an application.

Year 2 – Begin hosting postdoctoral fellows if funded; reapply if not funded.

Year 3 – Continue as with Year 2.

**Objective 1.5**

To strengthen our relationships with existing “traditional” disciplines and departments at GSU, thus clarifying the nature of interdisciplinarity, by sharing expertise and offering information as needed.

**Rationale**

In order for true interdisciplinarity to exist at an institutional level, actual exchange relationships must exist between different disciplines and departments. In some respects, the WSI, having been established as an interdisciplinary unit—namely, an institute—from the start, can serve as a nexus through which this interdisciplinarity can be expressed within the institution. One area of expertise that the WSI possesses is in the area of integrating gender into the curriculum.

**Resources Needed**
Faculty, staff, and student assistant time.

**Plan for Implementation**

The WSI will educate the GSU community about WSI resources by tailoring informational materials to specific departments within the GSU community. For instance, we will prepare a handout on the benefits of cross-listing courses for the Chair to distribute at the Chairs’ Council meeting. We will also prepare information for specific departments (e.g., English, Social Work, African American Studies, etc.) outlining which WSI course offerings would be uniquely suited to their students, particularly those pursuing Women’s Studies Certificates or minors. We will prepare information about WSI programs and course offerings for both undergraduate advisors and graduate directors. These various informational materials will serve as advertising for WSI courses, thus potentially increasing credit hour generation, but also serve the general purpose of fostering genuine interdisciplinarity at GSU. Given adequate resources (for instance, a course release for a WSI faculty member), we will also prepare a faculty workshop on teaching gender within the disciplines for faculty members or departments who desire guidance on this aspect of curriculum transformation.

**Goal 2**

To facilitate linkages between GSU, the WSI, and the larger community at the local, national, and international levels by generating feminist leaders who are prepared to address social justice issues in a variety of contexts, thereby serving the GSU mission of contributing to human and social welfare and connecting with the professional community.

**Objective 2.1**

To establish an Activist Track (“Social Change Leadership”) within our existing M.A. program.

**Rationale**

A distinct subset of students enters our Women’s Studies M.A. program each year with the professional objective of rendering service or demonstrating leadership within an activist-oriented organization that specializes in women’s issues. In addition, some students enter our program with interest in law, public policy, judicial activism, or representational politics. Given that service or leadership in such areas rarely requires the Ph.D. but benefits from education beyond the B.A., our existing program is ideally suited for the development of such an academic specialty track. Students would be required to take the same courses and write the same type of scholarly thesis as all M.A. students in the WSI. However, specialty courses on the history of social movements, grant writing, and theories of social change will become available to students as well as a structure for graduate-level internships. The fact that the Institute is situated on a metropolitan campus within a large and diverse urban area only augments our suitability for this purpose and our ability to contribute to larger GSU mandates, as outlined above. The fact that GSU already serves as a point of intersection and interaction for leading members of both political and business communities in Atlanta, the state, and nationally further justifies the suitability of the WSI for offering this option. Establishment of the Activist Track would
enhance the WSI’s service mission within its community and contribute to the development of community-based initiatives. It would also potentially strengthen GSU’s ties to international, immigrant, and migrant communities in Atlanta and the larger state of Georgia, as well as across the nation and overseas. Establishment of the Activist Track would distinguish the WSI and GSU nationally and internationally, as few women’s studies departments or programs elsewhere offer this option, and none specifically at the Master’s level. It is our goal to collaborate with such existing GSU resources as the Nonprofit Management Concentration in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies in the provision of this option, although such avenues will need to be developed within the 5-year period. It should be noted that the WSI has already taken several steps towards the establishment of the Activist Track, including determination of course, thesis, and internship requirements and proposing and gaining approval for the new courses that would be required.

**Resources Needed**

It is envisioned that the Activist Track will provide students with both practical knowledge and feminist specialization for leadership in nonprofit and community organizations with a social justice mission. As a foundation for this program, we have already developed and gained approval for the following Master’s-level courses and added them to our regular curriculum:

- History, Theory, & Practice of Feminist Activism & Social Movements
- Grant Writing
- Activist Proseminar/Practicum
- Graduate Activist Internship

Adding the faculty listed in Objective 1.1, particularly the activism and social movements specialist, will greatly facilitate this much needed expansion of our curriculum and ensure that these courses are offered regularly.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1—Hire activist and social movements expert (see Objective 1.1); explore collaborations with Nonprofit Management Program

Year 2—Begin offering Activist Track courses 1 and 2

Year 3—Begin offering the Activist Internships and Proseminar/Practicum

**Goal 3**

*To ensure the creation and dissemination new knowledge in the form of high quality women’s studies scholarship by establishing an environment in which women’s studies research is institutionally valued and supported and in which faculty are intellectually stimulated and motivated. Visibility of high quality scholarship is the most important way for academic departments to distinguish themselves. Ensuring that all WSI faculty are research active with*
Appropriate supports for rigorous and innovative scholarly activity will distinguish both the WSI and GSU in the long run.

**Objective 3.1**

To reduce the standard teaching load to 2/2 for all research active WSI tenured and tenure-track faculty, in keeping with the GSU College of Arts & Sciences workload policy.

**Rationale**

A teaching load of greater than 2/2 curtails adequate time for research of the caliber expected at a Research I institution. Providing faculty with a guaranteed, regular 2/2 teaching load would promote research activity and move GSU closer to bona fide Research I status.

**Resources Needed**

None.

**Plan for Implementation**

The guarantee of a 2/2 teaching load would need to be established by the upper administration.

**Objective 3.2**

To regularly provide summer research funding at the rate of 10% for all research active WSI Core Faculty. This funding would be contingent on faculty having applied for extramural funding during the year.

**Rationale**

Summer is often the time of highest research productivity for faculty, yet the 10-month pay schedule virtually insure that most faculty will be scrambling for summer funds. Often, faculty who wish to conduct research end up teaching summer courses to supplement their academic year pay. Perusal of academic program review documents for other departments indicates that such support has been provided to other departments in the past and perhaps currently and it seems a logical extension of its mission that a Research I institution would provide this, particularly for faculty who work in disciplines where extramural funding is less common or harder to obtain (e.g., the humanities). This program would also stimulate the pursuit of extramural funding, thus potentially raising overall the money faculty receive for grants. This would also enhance our ability to attract excellent candidates for our tenure-track positions.

**Resources Needed**

Funds in the amount of 10% of all research active WSI core faculty’s AY salaries.

**Plan for Implementation**
Funding would be available beginning Summer 2005.

**Objective 3.3**

To provide one competitive summer research fellowship at the rate of 10% for a research active member of the WSI Affiliated Faculty.

**Rationale**

WSI Affiliated Faculty must often find extra time and resources to support their women or feminism-focused research, over and above existing departmental or disciplinary commitments, despite teaching and service for the WSI. This small fellowship would be a way for the WSI to actively support not only its Affiliates, but also women’s studies and feminist research at the institutional level and at the level of the field. It would be expected that the selected Affiliated Faculty member would offer a colloquium for the colloquium series based on the research funded.

**Resources Needed**

Funds covering 10% of the selected faculty member’s salary.

**Plan for Implementation**

Funding would be available beginning Summer 2005.

**Objective 3.4**

To establish a colloquium series involving 6 speakers per year (3 during Fall semester and 3 during Spring semester).

**Rationale**

A colloquium series would foster scholarly exchange between the WSI and others by providing a point of interaction between a) the WSI and other units of GSU and b) the WSI and other Atlanta-area women’s studies programs. It would also lend visibility to the WSI and GSU. Furthermore, because colloquia provide a forum in which scholars can present work-in-progress as well as form research collaborations, they stimulate both research productivity and publication. Ideally, we envision our speaker series as following the following regular format:

- September – Postdoctoral Fellow
- October – WSI faculty member
- November – A local feminist activist or nonprofit sector leader
- February – faculty member from another institution in the Atlanta area whose work focuses on women or feminism
- March – Harper Endowed Lecturer (as a keynote for Women’s History Month)
• April – A WSI student

**Resources Needed**

Support for a graduate assistant who will be responsible for scheduling and advertising the colloquium series, funds for making flyers and posters, and honoraria for the November, February, and March speakers and travel expenses for the March speaker.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1 – Assign graduate assistant responsibility for scheduling and advertising the colloquium series in consultation with WSI department head and begin offering colloquia. Continue in subsequent years.

**Goal 4**

*To raise the visibility and increase the distinctiveness of the GSU Women’s Studies Institute.*

**Objective 4.1**

To raise the visibility of the WSI nationally and internationally through increased marketing of our programs and faculty.

**Rationale**

Appropriate marketing materials, such as brochures, posters, mailers, and newsletters are essential to both the visibility of a program and the recruitment of students. Currently, the WSI lacks a systematic set of marketing materials—the types of which are very common at other institutions. The absence of these materials is felt, for instance, when we are invited to advertise our program at national professional conferences or when prospective students call and request information from us and we have none to offer. We will improve not only our visibility, but also our reputation, by producing high quality marketing materials. See Objective 4.6 for discussion of our departmental website.

**Resources Needed**

Funds for printing and mailing high quality materials.

**Plan for Implementation**

Year 1—Determine the type of materials desired and gather the information needed for the materials. For purposes of comparison, collect similar materials from other women’s studies programs nationally. Work in collaboration with GSU design and printing professionals. Produce materials and update as needed.
Objective 4.2

To increase participation of WSI faculty in the national professional organization of the women’s studies field, namely, the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA).

Rationale

If national visibility is to be achieved for the WSI, regular participation in the NWSA is essential. The GSU WSI is already an institutional member of NWSA, but WSI faculty participation in the conference is low. Participation in the conference will stimulate scholarly research among faculty and the students they work with and will promote further student involvement in the discipline as faculty involve students in the conference.

Resources Needed

Travel funds sufficient for faculty to attend both the annual meetings of the NWSA and their regular disciplinary conference (or other more specialized conferences). The double burden of faculty in interdisciplinary units in terms of their conference attendance must be recognized, acknowledged and institutionally supported.

Plan for Implementation

Effective immediately, information about the NWSA conference will be more widely circulated. Faculty and students will be encouraged to submit proposals to the conference and become involved in various arms of the organization. An annual pre-conference meeting where students can practice their presentations and obtain faculty and peer feedback will be established as a way of preparing students for academic presentations and strengthening faculty involvement in student socialization into the discipline.

Objective 4.3

To support the field of women’s studies and raise the visibility of WSI faculty by encouraging faculty to serve the profession through membership on appropriate editorial boards and in the leadership of national or international professional organizations.

Rationale

Representation on editorial boards and in positions of organizational leadership are indications that faculty are influential and have reached a high level of national or international recognition for their scholarly work. As the GSU WSI builds its program, its faculty must be represented within these ranks.

Resources Needed

Research time and support for faculty to build their scholarly reputations.
Plan for Implementation

By establishing this goal, making it known, and providing opportunities for networking (for example, through our colloquium series and through increased participation in our national conferences), faculty will find and seize the requisite opportunities.

Objective 4.4

To serve as a site where the general public and mass media can obtain timely, accurate, and sophisticated feminist analyses of current events and problems of general interest.

Rationale

In this media-driven age, universities are increasingly called upon to provide voices of both expertise and reasoned critique to address pressing social concerns and current events and to move or clarify public debate. Because many social issues involve women and because women have valuable insights on all issues, GSU’s Women’s Studies Institute should enjoy a prominent role in that public discourse engaged by the university.

Resources Needed

WSI faculty willing to speak in the public forum.

Plan for Implementation

Interested Core and Affiliate Faculty will be encouraged to sign up with the GSU Speaker’s Bureau and the WSI as a whole will make greater efforts to actively address and formulate statements related to public issues as they arise.

Objective 4.5

To initiate and maintain appropriate women’s studies-based outreach activities.

Rationale

As part of our public institutional mandate, units of GSU should share knowledge with communities outside the academy and strive to improve public life.

Resources Needed

Faculty who are interested in outreach activities.

Plan for Implementation
Faculty may choose from a number of avenues, including enrolling with the GSU Speaker’s Bureau, offering outreach in schools during Women’s History Month, making presentations for or offering services to established community organizations, and the like.

**Objective 4.6**

To update the WSI website and web-based capabilities.

**Rationale**

The Internet is now the first place most people look for information. A good website attracts business—whether prospective students in the U.S. or abroad, colleagues who are trying to make contact from around the world, or members of the media who are trying to reach us for information. A good website is good and economical PR.

**Resources Needed**

People in the WSI community who are already web-literate and skilled at website direction (for example, students on assistantship) or paid experts from outside.

**Plan for Implementation**

An effort to update our website is already underway, but the process is not yet complete.

**Goal 5**

*To improve our delivery of both undergraduate and graduate education while making our degree programs more competitive.*

**Objective 5.1**

To establish the WSI M.A. program as a crucial site in a “women’s studies pipeline,” whereby we actively recruit highly diverse and academically strong undergraduates to our M.A. program and facilitate their movement into leading Ph.D. programs, while also actively supporting the specific needs of undergraduates who wish to go to graduate school in women’s studies and M.A. students who wish to go on for the Ph.D. in women’s studies.

**Rationale**

One strength of GSU is the diversity of its student population, facilitated by its urban location and its commitment to commuter students. As the field of women’s studies grows and becomes increasingly institutionalized (witness, for instance, the proliferation of women’s studies Ph.D. programs in the last decade), the need for well-prepared students from all backgrounds becomes more pressing than ever. The WSI is poised to play a crucial role in the preparation of women’s studies students—future women’s studies scholars—from all backgrounds.
Resources Needed

A strong, well-staffed women’s studies department with money to support students.

Plan for Implementation

Over the next several years, establish relationships with a number of undergraduate institutions and graduate programs with similar interests in the academic preparation of diverse students. Target our marketing and networking efforts with these institutions. Some examples of institutions with which we might concentrate our efforts include Spelman College, a historically Black women’s college in Atlanta with an established women’s studies program, and the University of Texas-San Antonio, a university with a large Latino population that is newly establishing a diversity-focused women’s studies program. Examples of universities where we actively pursue the admission of our students desiring Ph.D.s include Emory University, the University of Maryland-College Park, which has a sizeable women-of-color faculty and actively recruits diverse students, and Rutgers University, known for its programmatic global focus. Conversations about such relationships have already begun with some of these institutions and would now benefit from becoming more explicit and formalized. Proposed faculty hires in Objective 1.1 will also help attract and provide formal and informal mentoring for students of color and students from the global South and East who matriculate in our program.

Objective 5.2

To increase admission standards for the M.A. program.

Rationale

Currently, the WSI has some of the lowest admission standards of any department at GSU. Our experience has shown that lower admission standards are associated with more student attrition and a greater workload for faculty who must provide remedial services to students (for example, extensive writing tutoring “off the record”). In addition, because we have low admission standards, we often admit students for whom women’s studies was a second, third, or default choice, again associated with greater student attrition and more remedial work for faculty. Higher admission standards would ensure that we would attract more committed, skilled, and proficient students with a higher likelihood of success in the program and of contributing to the field in the long run.

Resources Needed

None.

Plan for Implementation

The WSI will compare its own graduate admission standards with those of other GSU departments as well as with women’s studies departments at comparable institutions to determine the appropriate standards.
**Objective 5.3**

To improve the retention and graduation rates of M.A. students.

**Rationale**

Student attrition is not cost effective for GSU or the WSI, nor does it benefit the field of women’s studies. The WSI is a new, small unit that cannot afford to lose the students it attracts. Structures must be put in place to insure that we graduate the vast majority of the students who matriculate in our program. Currently, the WSI graduates 3.3 students per year, on average. The next goal for us is 10 students per year, which we believe can be achieved by the end of 5 years, assuming other key strategic objectives are met.

**Resources Needed**

More tenure-track core faculty who can mentor students and teach courses on a regular basis that attract students. See Objective 1.1.

**Plan for Implementation**

As we hire more faculty and raise our admission standards, part of the problem will be solved. In addition, we need to further routinize student milestones like the thesis proposal defense, comps, and the thesis defense itself, to insure that students graduate in a timely fashion.

**Objective 5.4**

To fund more academically competitive M.A. students for two years and improve the quality of the M.A. program by increasing graduate student stipends.

**Rationale**

Raising student stipends will facilitate the recruitment of more competitive students, since the best schools tend to give high-dollar, multi-year stipends to incoming students. Funding all students for two years will greatly facilitate graduation rates because students will not have to seek outside employment to pay for school, as many in our program now do. Currently, we offer only 5 graduate assistantships, which we must divide between new and continuing students. This means that over half of our M.A. students are not funded by GSU.

**Resources Needed**

10 graduate assistanctships per year, with the understanding that our initial goal will be to graduate 10 students per year. Depending on the ultimate size of our faculty, this numerical goal may change.
Plan for Implementation

Budget request in the annual budget and participation in the Arts & Sciences formula for graduate support, which is currently under development.

Objective 5.5

To provide competitive travel money to graduate students for study abroad, attendance at the annual NWSA conference and other important conferences, as well as travel to and from national and international internships related to the Activist Track.

Rationale

Travel is an important part of the development of a scholarly career, even for students, whose ability to afford travel is typically less than that of faculty. Many institutions already support student travel, even if the awards of travel money are competitive.

Resources Needed

Discretionary awards averaging about $500 per student, to be combined with students’ own funds, would facilitate students to attending a single conference for about 4 days.

Plan for Implementation

Budget request beginning with 2005-2006 annual budget.

Goal 6

To resolve workload issues affecting the WSI.

Objective 6.1

To clarify the roles and responsibilities of WSI affiliated faculty vis-à-vis WSI core faculty.

Rationale

The overall WSI workload encompasses such activities as teaching both required and elective women’s studies courses, directing theses, grading comprehensive exams, serving on committees (both student and departmental), helping plan and carry out WSI events, and attending WSI meetings. Currently, our system of maintaining Affiliated Faculty does not clearly specify the responsibilities of Affiliated Faculty vis-à-vis Core Faculty. Clarifying these responsibilities would help equitably distribute the overall WSI workload. Affiliation with the WSI should clearly benefit both the Affiliate and the WSI. To date, faculty meetings have not been sufficient for resolving these issues because most Affiliated Faculty do not attend WSI faculty meetings and there are not clear criteria for affiliation with the Institute.
Resources Needed

None. However, the addition of Core Faculty (see Objective 1.1) will provide faculty whose primary responsibility is the WSI and thereby reduce the number of key service roles performed by Affiliated Faculty (such as Graduate or Undergraduate Director, Chair of the Department, and teaching core courses for the major and the M.A.).

Plan for Implementation

First, the full WSI workload must be determined. A determination of which duties should or can only be met by core faculty will be determined. A protocol for affiliate status, based on duties which can be shared or which would best be fulfilled by affiliates, will then be created.

Objective 6.2

To resolve institutional workload issues that put interdisciplinary units like the WSI at a disadvantage in terms of credit hour tallies.

Rationale

Because the WSI does not get credit for courses taught by its Affiliates, and because many WSI courses are taught by Affiliates, the WSI is not able to account for its teaching productivity in the same way as non-interdisciplinary departments. Since the WSI is a small and relatively new unit, the vulnerabilities produced by this counting system are significant. Thus, as system that adequately accounts for the credit hours generated by the WSI unit is essential to the WSI’s long-term viability within the institution.

Resources Needed

More Core Faculty. See Objective 1.1.

Plan for Implementation

Additionally, the WSI and upper administration will continue to engage in conversations to resolve this issue, hiring more Core Faculty in the first 3 years following departmental review.

Goal 6.3

To increase the number of credit hours generated by the WSI.

Rationale

A better accounting scheme, combined with the other improvements suggested in this section, would allow the WSI to generate far more credit hours for GSU. Women’s studies classes are popular, and both GSU and the WSI should enjoy the benefits of this reality.
**Resources Needed**

More Core Faculty and a better accounting scheme for credit hour generation by interdisciplinary units.

**Plan for Implementation**

Hiring more Core Faculty and meeting with the administration to resolve credit hour accounting issues. See Objective 6.2.
C. The need for the program, both community need and student demand.

The WSI meets the following needs:

**Provides critical thinking and writing skills:**
The Women’s Studies Institute (WSI) fulfills a number of the larger goals that the university as a whole has identified as particularly important. With all of its programs (BA, minor, MA, graduate certificate) the Institute fulfills a need among the student body for improved writing skills. 100% of WSI courses require writing of some sort in the form of papers, journals, or essay exams. For each of these assignments, students receive feedback on their ability to make a convincing argument and in most cases on their ability to execute the techniques of effective writing. At the same exceptionally high level compared with other units in the university, women’s studies courses teach students critical thinking skills. The University’s Strategic Plan delineates the importance of preparing students for the world in which they live, stating “The ability to locate, receive, analyze, and transmit information in oral, written, and numeric form will be crucial…Those who learn how to learn are best equipped to capitalize on such an environment” (p.9). Critical analysis of other’s writing, dominant political and social ideas and academic frameworks are intrinsic to the way Women’s Studies defines itself as a discipline and is therefore a skill that is developed universally in all of our courses.

The course offerings generated from the WSI (either in terms of courses taught by Core Faculty originating in the WSI, or courses taught by Affiliated Faculty that have been requested or strongly supported by the WSI) very much foster the educational priorities outlined by the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ report entitled “Greater Expectations.” The report calls for “responsible learners” whose sense of social responsibility is fundamental to a healthy democratic society. The report argues that to develop responsible learners, the liberal arts education must foster: intellectual honesty; responsibility for society's moral health and for social justice; active participation as a citizen of a diverse democracy; discernment of the ethical consequences of decisions and actions; and deep understanding of one's self and respect for the complex identities of others, their histories, and their cultures. The Women’s Studies curriculum incorporates these “skills” to its learning goals at many levels and in this way aims to meet this need in higher education and for the nation more broadly.

**Provides specialty knowledge in gender for students and faculty in other disciplines:**
Some of our programs, such as the undergraduate minor and the graduate certificate, are designed to complement a concentration in another academic discipline at GSU. However, the unique interdisciplinary structure of Women’s Studies as a discipline means that each student is trained to apply a feminist analysis to at least one other “traditional” academic discipline. This means that the Women’s Studies Institute is fulfilling the need of traditional disciplines train their students in critical racial and gender analyses. The WSI also provides students at GSU specialized content information on women so important to, and often lacking in, other disciplines. These other disciplines that Women’s Studies supplements encompass the social sciences (e.g. psychology, political science, and sociology), the humanities (i.e. African-American studies, history and literature), the natural sciences and professional disciplines (i.e. education and business). In doing so, the WSI fulfills a significant function for the other academic units at GSU and by extension the student body in so far as there are very few scholars
outside of the WSI who are trained to teach students the vast literature that exists in every discipline about gender and, or the status of women. In a number of departments, there may be one faculty member who has a partial expertise in issues relating to women or gender; however, very few faculty have received formal training and the number of courses they are able to offer given the need to teach more survey and introductory courses within their departments is very, very small. When such courses are offered with the support of the WSI, such as (WST 4060) Sexual and Intimate Violence or (WST 4620) Psychology of Women, these courses typically attract a very high enrollment among non-women’s studies majors, as well as among women’s studies majors. In the 4 times the course Sexual and Intimate Violence was offered in the last 3 years, it attracted 210 students. The course Psychology of Women, in the 3 times it was offered, drew 134 students.

The need to provide students with specialists in the field of gender studies is not one of luxury, but rather a necessity for each discipline. Every academic discipline has at least one, if not several, significant journals in their field focused on questions of gender for their field. These include but are not limited to: *Women & Politics; Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion; Gender and Society; Psychology of Women Quarterly; Gender and Education; Asian Journal of Women’s Studies; and Gender, Place, and Culture*. Students enrolled in other graduate programs at GSU take these courses because they are not offered within the “traditional” curriculum of their home department and because of the quality of the education the faculty offers. Some other departments, such as the Religious Studies’ proposed MA program, have requested to include WSI’s course “Gender & Globalization” as part of their required courses. Of particular importance in our graduate course offerings are such unique courses as Feminist Methodology, Gender and Globalization, Queer Theory and Black Feminist Thought. Additionally, our faculty have been requested to participate in graduate committees for the following departments in the last three years: Communications, Education, Art History, Early Childhood Development (at UGA), Women’s Studies (at Emory), History, Political Science, Philosophy and Sociology.

In sum, the WSI meets this need for the study of gender in conjunction with traditional disciplinary approaches through participation in student committees, offering speakers and workshops, courses open to cross registration, a graduate certificate, an undergraduate minor, as well as an MA and BA that invariably includes exposure to at least one traditional discipline at GSU.

**Fosters interdisciplinary study and research at GSU:**
The WSI is one of the most significant mechanism by which the university fulfills its expressed goal of providing interdisciplinary study and research. The first point in the university’s mission statement states, “Georgia State is committed to the enrichment of its interdisciplinary research programs and centers that have achieved national and international recognition.” It further cites Women’s Studies as one of its initiatives for fostering interdisciplinarity at GSU at the teaching and research levels. This task is addressed in every gesture of the Institute from the unique interdisciplinary training of its faculty, the design of its major and MA, its graduate certificate and the programs the WSI sponsors that are designed specifically for interdepartmental participation. The success of this role as site of interdisciplinary discussion and training is apparent for instance in the series of workshops offered by the WSI in 2000 on Globalization which involved 64 faculty from 9 separate departments. And the workshop series offered also in
2000 on interdisciplinary teaching that drew 46 participants from 7 departments for the specific purpose of further training in interdisciplinary pedagogy that was absent in nearly all faculty’s initial professional training. All four of these workshops were also open to and attended by graduate students. The WSI also supports the interdisciplinary work of GSU faculty in other departments by appointing GRA to affiliated faculty.

**Offers the only MA degree in Women’s Studies in the state of Georgia:**
In addition to being the only MA program in women’s studies in the state, the WSI is one of less than 50 universities nationally to offer both an MA and Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies [as of 2001, there were approximately 35 programs offering a graduate certificate alone and most of these schools did not offer MA as well]. This is an important resource to the state, as suggested by the fact that students come not only from Georgia to pursue an MA at GSU, but also nationally and internationally. In the last three years we have had students in the program from China, Bangladesh, India, and the Ukraine.

**Contributes to the social vitality of the city, provides applied research and teaching, and creates community links between academic programs at GSU and communities within the urban Atlanta area:**
Although this need remains only partially fulfilled until the Activist Track (“Social Change Leadership”) MA concentration is fully funded and in place, the WSI aids in the university’s commitment to providing an education to students that builds on GSU’s unique urban location. WSI faculty have begun the process of designing a new concentration to the MA in Women’s Studies. This concentration (informally called the “Activist Track” or “Social Change Leadership”) is has developed a course of study that trains students in the skills of leadership in non-profit organizations or agencies without sacrificing the scholarly rigor students have traditionally received in the WSI MA program. This new graduate option is intended to serve the need of the larger Atlanta community for politically and socially involved professionals and citizens by producing graduates with concrete experience in non-profit work and other forms of professional community involvement. Although sharing some of the same goals as the Social Work Program at GSU, the MA “Social Change Leadership” track in the WSI will be unique in that students will develop a specialty in issues around gender and women and must write a graduate thesis. This program has already received a great deal of interest, despite the fact that the program cannot be put into effect until the university funds a tenure-track faculty person capable of teaching the required courses and overseeing the required internships. There is a particularly strong need for this program as fewer than a dozen Women’s Studies programs in the United States offer a specialization in activism/professional leadership at the Master’s level. Furthermore, the qualitative data from current and alumni MA students indicate a desire for “practical” training and for more of an emphasis on “activism.” This program will also help fulfill the university’s identified goals to. Additionally, the “Social Change Leadership” emphasis is also intended to train students for leadership positions within international organizations.

**Provides GSU and WSI students an international perspective in their education:**
The WSI is also the only Women’s Studies program in the state and one of the very few in the United States to offer a program that is explicitly international in its focus. This focus on international issues reflects the Institute’s commitment to understanding gender as it is inflected
by the important dynamics of race and culture and fulfills the university’s identified priority to
provide students with an international perspective in their educational development. In so doing,
the WSI addresses the needs and special interests of the city of Atlanta with its increasingly
multiracial and multicultural population. And the Institute helps the university more broadly
fulfill the educational goal of the university to provide an education to its students that allows
them to function in a world increasingly characterized by globalization and multiculturalism. The
WSI offers undergraduate and graduate courses that are specifically international in focus. And
with its course WST 2010 (Introduction to Women’s Studies) provides an option for
undergraduates to fulfill their Social Science Foundation requirement Area E.

*Achieves the priorities established by the National Women’s Studies Association:*
The WSI at Georgia State also aims to meet national needs as identified by the National
Women’s Studies Association Task Force (“Defining Women’s Studies Scholarship” published
June 1999). The NWSA identifies the following four areas for development of Women’s Studies
programs: I. Globalizing women’s studies; II. Continuing to diversify women’s studies core
faculty, students, and curriculum offerings; III. Responding to growth in graduate education; and
IV. Expanding the interdisciplinarity of research and teaching.

*Helps GSU redefine itself as a Research I institution and assume a position of leadership
within the Urban 13:*
The WSI in providing the interdisciplinarity, critical skills to students and faculty in gender
analysis, and offering a number of programs in Women’s Studies, helps meet the need identified
by Georgia State University to achieve Research I status. Independent women’s studies majors
and graduate program in women’s studies is an attribute of research universities that have
achieved a higher degree of rigor and funding in research and distinguishes the programs in top
public research universities (University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin at Madison,
University of Minnesota, and CUNY) from less ambitious public universities. It is also a feature
that GSU has in common with most of the other “Urban 13” universities. Discussed in more
length in Section H of this report is the fact that GSU has distinguished itself as a leader within
the Urban 13 by offering an MA in Women’s Studies and by creating tenure lines within the
department. However, it has not achieved the full potential of universities in the Urban 13 as
demonstrated by the University of Cincinnati, which has considerably more Core Faculty within
its Women’s Studies Department and therefore is able to meet the demand for a women’s studies
concentration at the undergraduate and graduate level at a rate that exceeds GSU. Additionally,
the qualitative data collected from student surveys include expressed desire for more Core
Faculty and more consistency in the curriculum between WST courses and cross-listed courses.
Therefore, the growth of high quality programs in the Women’s Studies Institute at GSU and
strengthening of its national reputation over the next five years will help fulfill the identified
GSU need for achieving higher rankings among other research universities nationally. The WSI
has achieved a considerable amount with the limited resources it has had. With the resources
recommended in Section B of this report, we believe we could meet the identified needs of this
report better and expand the interest in women’s studies among the student body and increase the
WSI’s contribution to the community of Atlanta and beyond in numerous ways.
D. The quality of the curriculum

BA curriculum

The Women’s Studies Institute has developed desired learning outcomes for students who graduate from our program with a B.A. or a minor in women’s studies. These desired learning outcomes, developed in 2002 as part of the mandated program review the WSI is conducting, are as follows:

I. Critical Thinking/Analytical Skills
   1. Students will learn to read critically and carefully, interpret, and challenge, interdisciplinary work.
   2. Students will learn how to build upon what they have read to formulate new research questions.
   3. Students will learn how to connect what they learn with lived experiences.

II. Communication Skills
   1. Students may engage in peer review of writing or group learning activities.
   2. Students will develop their ideas in written and/or oral formats.
   3. Students will learn to use appropriate writing conventions and formats.

III. Acquisition of Knowledge
   1. Students will learn about the diverse and interdisciplinary composition of the field of women’s studies.
   2. Students will learn a variety of theoretical ways to understand systems of oppression.
   3. Students will learn about the ways in which various forms of oppression (based on gender, race, class, sexual identity, age, etc.) intersect with each other across cultures.

IV. Application of Skills
   1. Students will develop the ability to identify, analyze, and suggest solution to pressing social problems.
   2. Students will apply women’s studies knowledge and skills in real world settings.

Students majoring and minoring in women’s studies must take WST 2010: Introduction to Women’s Studies (which is also part of the general education requirement in Section E of the Arts and Sciences core); WST 3010: Feminisms; 21 hours of WST prefixed courses (of which no fewer than two outside a single area); and either WST 4950, Internship, or WST 4920, Senior Research.

The WSI’s desired learning outcomes are measured at present through the student’s successful completion of either WST 4950, Internship, or WST 4920, Senior Research. These two courses serve as a capstone experience for women’s studies students. See Appendix D7 for discussion regarding how these individual courses helps achieve the WSI’s desired learning outcomes.
As part of the Provost’s initiative on learning outcomes, the WSI is developing a process to assess the student’s achievement of the WSI’s learning outcomes at the undergraduate level. The assessment will be presented in the Learning Outcomes Report to be completed February 2004.

MA curriculum
The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree prepares students either for doctoral work in women’s studies or in a related discipline or enhances careers in which students address issues related to the conditions of women’s lives.

Women’s studies is an interdisciplinary field of study that coheres around feminism as a critical perspective that can be applied to many areas of thought and action. The program of studies is designed to reflect that as well as to introduce a global focus. Ideally, each entering student will move together through four core courses: History and Theory of European and U.S. Feminisms; Globalization and Gender; New Directions in Feminism; and Feminist Methodologies. The remainder of their 30 hours of class work will be taken from other Women’s Studies as well as from cross-listed courses offered in other departments. The student’s progress is monitored by the Graduate Advisor and the student’s Thesis Director. The overall learning goals for the MA (coursework and thesis) are the same as listed above for the BA; however the level at which students should master those skills would be higher:

Learning outcomes statements and assessment procedure has not been officially developed at this point. They are in process as part of a university-wide learning outcomes assessment development. However, it is possible at this point to describe how learning outcomes are assessed in practice in the WSI. During the process of coursework, learning outcomes are assessed through writing (essay exams, review papers and research papers) in every graduate course. All students must take the core sequence of four courses that insures that students are exposed to the content (theory, central disciplinary literatures, international perspective on gender, etc.) defined in our learning outcomes.

Furthermore, before beginning the thesis writing, all MA students must create a portfolio that serves as a capstone to their course work. This portfolio includes a “comprehensive paper” (indicated as a “critical or analytical paper” in the graduate catalog) that demonstrates students’ mastery of skills faculty have deemed appropriate to the MA. These include proper grammar, spelling, style, and disciplinary style guidelines. Each comprehensive paper must also demonstrate an ability to craft an original thesis argument, conduct research to support the thesis and to develop the thesis through use of evidence and/or argumentation. The second element of the portfolio is a “preliminary thesis proposal.” This preliminary proposal typically builds on the proposal produced in the required Feminist Methodology (8004) core class. It must demonstrate an original research topic and include the sections standard to either humanities or social science theses proposals (e.g. the literature review, section on significance, methods section, etc.).

These portfolios are assessed by two members of the department, one of whom is always a core faculty member to ensure consistency of criteria across portfolios. Upon a pass of the portfolio (called the “written comprehensive exam”), a student must successfully pass an oral examination of the thesis proposal (by the thesis committee) before being approved to begin working on the
thesis. The comprehensive exam (portfolio and oral exam) is designed to insure that students have successfully achieved the learning goals outlined above. The thesis itself is typically a minimum of fifty pages and is assessed in written form by the student’s thesis committee and then defended orally by the thesis committee as well as by other members of the department and public who choose to attend.

It is generally held by the faculty that the processes by which the learning goals are assessed at the MA level are quite effective. Regrettably, not every student achieves the knowledge base and skills necessary to complete course work and pass the comprehensive exam. Several students, for instance, have not been able to obtain a “B” average in courses or have struggled to polish a course paper to the quality expected in the comprehensive exam. However, this is the exception rather than the rule (perhaps 5%) and may suggest that the standards of admission to the program need to be re-examined more than they do that learning goals are not being successfully taught in WST course. And a certain percentage of students who do not reach the thesis-writing stage are also affected by circumstances beyond the control of the department (e.g. change in life circumstances, disinterest in finishing, etc.), which could be lightened in some cases by more funding available for graduate student support (see Objective 5.5).

The WSI will be further reviewing the assessment for learning outcomes as part of the Provost’s initiative in a review report to be complete in February 2004.

**Evaluation of the Quality of the Curriculum Based on Survey Responses**

Having described how women’s studies learning outcomes are achieved through the existing curriculum and related activities, such as internships, the comprehensive exam, and the thesis, let us now turn to a report and interpretation of the survey data on curricular quality from WSI faculty, students, and alumnae.

**Quantitative Data**

With regard to the faculty survey, two questions in particular give some indication of the faculty’s assessment of the quality of the curriculum. In response to the statement “The Institute’s program of study is academically challenging,” on a 5-point scale, 28.2% responded with a 5 (“Strongly agree”), 28.2% responded with a 4, and only 12.8% responded with a 3 or lower (30.8% of the respondents selected “Don’t know/Not applicable”). Thus, the vast majority of those responding knowledgably felt strongly that the WSI curriculum is challenging.

In response to the question “To what degree do your instructional activities focus on theory or research on gender, feminism, or women?”, 64.9% of respondents indicated that gender, feminism, or women are a major focus of their instructional activities and 16.2% indicated that gender, feminism, or women are a pervasive focus of their instructional activities (indicating a more extensive engagement than the response category “major focus”). Only 18.9% of respondents indicated that gender, feminism, or women are a minor focus of their instructional activities. Thus, it can be argued that the vast majority of women’s studies faculty answering this response item are meeting the disciplinary mandate of the women’s studies—another indicator of the quality of the curriculum.
In the report that compared the WSI survey data with GSU survey means, it became apparent that the mean WSI faculty rating of our curriculum as academically challenging is slightly higher than the GSU average (4.15 vs. 4.08). However, it is notable that WSI faculty were slightly more likely than other GSU faculty, on average, to feel they spent too much time teaching (3.57 vs. 3.18). What this suggests is that WS faculty recognize the highly demanding, critical and theoretical nature of women’s studies education, but, for whatever reason, find themselves overburdened with teaching responsibilities relative to their research tasks—a problem which could be ameliorated to a large extent by hiring additional women’s studies core faculty who would share the responsibility for directing MA theses and BA Senior Research projects.

With regard to the student surveys, far more questions were relevant to the assessment of the quality of the WSI curriculum. Undergraduate students’ overwhelming modal response to the following statements was “strongly agree”: “Faculty members in the department are interested in the academic development of undergraduate women’s studies majors,” “The women’s studies program of study is academically challenging,” “Faculty in the department are appropriately prepared for their courses,” “Class size is suitable for effective learning.” These same students modally rated the following items as excellent: “Teaching methods used by faculty” and “Procedures used to evaluate student performance.” Students’ modal responses did indicate some weaknesses in the curriculum, however. For example, few students strongly agreed with the statement “I feel the undergraduate program in women’s studies is preparing me for my professional career and/or further study.” Few students rated the academic advisement in the department as “Excellent,” and no students rated the career advisement in the department as “Excellent.” Students were split on their assessment of the availability of faculty to students outside the classroom. No students rated the frequency or variety of women’s studies course offerings as “Excellent.” Thus, there are areas within or related to the curriculum that the WSI needs to improve upon.

The pattern of responses by the undergraduate alumni was noticeably different from that of current undergraduates and not always systematically. Where it was systematic, there was a tendency of alumni to present lower ratings on many questions than current undergraduates. Similarly to current undergraduates, graduate students’ overwhelming modal response to the following statements was “strongly agree”: “Faculty members in the department are interested in the academic development of graduate women’s studies students,” “The women’s studies program of study is academically challenging,” “Faculty in the department are appropriately prepared for their courses,” “Class size is suitable for effective learning.” These same students modally rated the following items as excellent: “Academic advisement” and “Procedures used to evaluate student performance.” Similar to the the undergraduates’ responses, graduate students’ responses indicated some dissatisfaction with the frequency and variety of women’s studies course offerings. Although students ratings were relatively high overall, “Excellent” was not the most frequent response. From the graduate students’ perspective, the weakest aspects of the program fell in the areas of career advisement, effectiveness of teaching methods used by faculty, effectiveness of procedures used to evaluate student performance, judging by the variability of students responses across all anchor points and the lack of any overwhelming modal responses.
The responses of graduate alumni were very similar to those of current graduate students with the following exceptions: Graduate alumni indicated less endorsement of the statement “There was (is) open communication between faculty and graduate students about student concerns” than current graduate students. Graduate alumni’s responses regarding career advisement were less variable but not more favorable overall. Graduate alumni rated faculty as less available than current students, but they were more satisfied with the procedures used to evaluate student performance as well as with the frequency (but not variety) of women’s studies course offerings.

Overall, the themes that emerge from the quantitative data from faculty and students suggest that our curriculum is perceived as adequately challenging, but that its quality could be improved with the introduction of more diverse and frequent course offerings. In addition, there are issues related to teacher-student relations and evaluation procedures that need to be looked at more closely. With regard to the first point, hiring more core faculty would be a solution. With regard to the second and third points, the WSI needs to look internally at its patterns and protocols, which it will be doing as part of the Provost’s Learning Outcomes Assessment initiative.

Qualitative Data

Faculty, students, and alumni all provided qualitative data in the form of free-form responses in the “Comments” section of the survey. See Appendix D6 for an accounting of the major themes/suggestions that emerged from this data. We have summarized the themes however:

The WSI curriculum, broadly conceived, is established on a good foundation in terms of its content, approach, and structure; however, there is room for improvement in all three areas, as indicated by the quantitative and qualitative responses of faculty, students, and alumni. Across the board, there is demand for more WSI faculty and more WST courses. There is also consistent concern about the relations between Core Faculty, Affiliated Faculty, and students. Information about the WSI and its policies and procedures needs to be codified and better distributed to both students and faculty. In addition, the students would benefit from additional assistance in the area of professional development. Finally, the social climate of the WSI could be improved by holding more events that bring Core Faculty, Affiliated Faculty, and students together.
E. The quality of the students in the program

Both the input and output quality of graduate students in our program are variable. Input quality is affected by a number of factors, most notably the following:

1. The laxity of our admission standards. Currently, we have no lower limit on the GRE scores our applicants must have and we fail to systematically impose standards on other parts of the application, such as GPA, course background in women’s studies, or writing performance. This situation creates a number of problems, including a tendency to encounter students who have been rejected from other graduate programs at GSU, for whom women’s studies is only a second choice and for whom there may be less of a commitment to the field of women’s studies and to a women’s studies graduate education; a tendency to encounter students who are less than adequately prepared for graduate level work, leading to increased workload for women’s studies faculty who must engage in unofficial remedial tutoring with students, particularly in the areas of writing and research skills; and difficulties with applying uniform evaluation standards, in the classroom and outside it, across students with radically different preparation levels and skill sets. While we encounter many stellar students who are highly competent and committed to women’s studies, we also encounter a larger than desirable share of students who are not adequately skilled or whose true interests lie elsewhere. More often than not, these students fail, drop out, or otherwise disappear, contributing to an unnecessarily high attrition rate in our program.

2. The inadequacy of the graduate stipends we can offer. The majority our graduate students do not receive any form of graduate stipend, and those who do receive stipends receive low stipends. Those students who do not receive stipends and who are not of independent means typically work full- or part-time in jobs unrelated to their studies. Such jobs pull students’ attention away from their studies and present time management challenges to students, particularly those with families, of whom we have many. Another problem presented by the inadequacy of graduate stipends is our inability to recruit the best and brightest from our applicant pool in the competitive marketplace where other institutions are offering incoming students better compensation packages. Ideally, not only would we offer our best incoming students graduate assistantships, but we would offer them guaranteed funding for two years, the amount of time it should, in a best case scenario, take them to complete a master’s degree. As the “Admissions Statistics by Term and Program” table shows, far fewer students enroll in our program than we admit, and anecdotal evidence suggests that the inadequacy of our graduate stipends is one of the major reasons why. In the end, the stipend issue affects both input and output quality of graduate students.

Output quality is affected by a number of factors, most notably the following:

1. Shortage of faculty resources. Currently, most supervisory needs for both graduate and undergraduate students, including thesis advisement, comprehensive exam supervision and grading, directed study courses, honors thesis work, internships, and the like are met by the WSI core faculty. WSI Affiliates contribute to this work; however, Affiliates’ primary responsibility is to their home departments. The Core Faculty of the WSI needs to be expanded to adequately address the need for appropriate supervision of students as well as a fair supervisory workload for faculty. An additional problem that impacts student output quality is the constrained breadth
of faculty expertise vis-à-vis the vastness of student research interests. With only three Core Faculty, each of whom represents her discipline of training, there are times when students’ research interests do not map adequately onto areas of faculty expertise. The faculty hires identified in Objective 1.1 also take into account unmet needs among students for thesis advisement in an area not currently represented in the existing faculty (Core and Affiliates).

2. Unevenness of course offerings. One problem that we face with a small core faculty is that we must rely on Affiliates to offer many of the courses our students need, particularly electives. Because Affiliates are primarily committed to the teaching requirements of their home departments, the WSI cannot always be certain when or how frequently certain courses that students want or need will be offered. Thus, a student may enter our program expecting to be able to take certain courses that simply do not appear during the two year window when she is completing their studies due to vagaries of faculty availability for teaching those courses. In the end, students such as these are not as well-prepared at the end of their studies as they would have been had the needed or desired courses been available. Another issue has to do with the current small number of Core Faculty having to rotate on the core courses for the M.A. With four core courses and only three faculty (one of whom has a restricted teaching load due to serving as unit Chair), this means that Core Faculty often have to double up on teaching core courses (thus limiting their ability to teach electives in their areas of expertise) or commission affiliates to teach them, leading to greater variability in course content. As a basic rule, our Core Faculty teach the WSI’s core courses in insure consistency and because they as a run have the training most suitable; yet, each year, the WSI does need to rely on Affiliates for this duty. The goals and objective section delineates resources necessary so that eventually there are enough Core Faculty so that all Core Faculty can teach both core and elective courses for the WSI. Currently, this is not the case, and the output quality of graduate students is affected adversely. Finally, there is a training issue related to our methods course (WST 8004). Ideally, the WSI needs to be able to offer two different types of methods classes: One should teach new students the basics of women’s studies research, including how to write a thesis proposal. The other would focus on feminist and other critical theoretical and ethical issues related to method at a high level, suitable for advanced women’s studies M.A. students as well as M.A. and Ph.D. students in other departments, (for example, those pursuing the Women’s Studies Certificate). Currently, we are unable to staff this pressing need, and this failure compromises the methodological preparedness of our M.A. and Certificate students. Hiring more core faculty would be the best solution.

Less can be said about the quality of our undergraduate students. Only this year was our major degree program approved and we have not yet had our first cohort of women’s studies majors. Prior to the approval of the women’s studies B.A., students choosing to concentrate in women’s studies took advantage of the GSU interdisciplinary B.A. Thus, we do not currently have data on which to make comparisons about the quality of our undergraduate majors.

**Admission Requirements for M.A. Program in Women’s Studies**

1. Completed College of Arts and Sciences application for Graduate Study and Residency Information forms.
2. Two official transcripts from each college or university attended*
3. Official GRE scores**
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. List of references form
6. Statement of educational/ career goals
7. Official TOEFL or GSTEP scores (international applicants)***
8. GSU Financial Statement form with financial documents attached (international applicants)

* There is no grade point average required for admission to the M.A. program in Women’s Studies. Each application is evaluated holistically with emphasis placed upon the written statement of educational/ career goals and the letters of recommendation.

** There is no cut-off GRE score for admission to the M.A. program in Women’s Studies.

*** There is no cut-off score for the TOEFL or GSTEP for admission to the M.A. program in Women’s Studies.

Graduate Certificate Eligibility:

The following students are eligible:

- Students who are enrolled in an MA or Ph.D. program in another department at Georgia State University, who declare in writing to the Women’s Studies Institute their intentions to work on the certificate before taking a third WST course, and who submit evidence to the Institute when the requirement for the certificate has been completed.

- Students who apply to the Women’s Studies Institute for the certificate program and who meet the same requirements as other graduate students entering the M.A. program, with the exception that the GRE may be waived for those who have graduate degrees.

- Students in the Women’s Studies Institute M.A. degree program who are unable to complete the program and who have completed the requisite course work.
Mean standardized graduate admission test scores of applicants to graduate program, all students offered admission, and matriculating students for the past three years:

| MA_WST      | NUMBER OF STUDENTS | AVERAGE GRE Scores |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|             | TOTAL NUM | NUM SCORES | TOTAL NUM | NUM SCORES | TOTAL NUM | NUM SCORES | APPLIED | AVG VERBAL | AVG QUANT | AVG ANALY | APPLIED | AVG VERBAL | AVG QUANT | AVG ANALY | ACCEPTED | AVG VERBAL | AVG QUANT | AVG ANALY | ENROLLED | AVG VERBAL | AVG QUANT | AVG ANALY |
| SUMMER 2000 | 1         | 1             | 1         | 1             | 1         | 1             |            | 390.0     | 350.0     | 480.0     | 390.0     | 350.0     | 480.0     |            | 390.0     | 350.0     | 480.0     |            |
| FALL 2000   | 25        | 14            | 9         | 7             | 2         |               |            | 495.7     | 547.1     | 589.3     | 520.0     | 545.6     | 581.1     |            | 580.0     | 665.0     | 675.0     |            |
| SPRING 2001 | 27        | 5             | 27        | 5             | 12        | 5             |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            |
| SUMMER 2002 | 2         | 0             | 0         | 0             | 0         |               |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            |
| FALL 2002   | 36        |               |           |               |           |               |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            |
| SPRING 2003 | 36        |               |           |               |           |               |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            | 462.0     | 440.0     | 544.0     |            |
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### Admission Statistics

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Numbers of applications to graduate programs and numbers of accepted students for the past three years.
F. The quality of the faculty

The data provided in Section A on Core Faculty productivity suggests a research active faculty at all career levels. In the past 3 year period, Linda Bell has published her second single-authored book as well as a journal article. Layli Phillips has published an article, book chapters and is working on a single-authored book and the editing of an anthology. Allaine Cerwonka has published a single-authored book, an article and is completing a co-authored book. The grant support received by the Core Faculty suggests recognition from Georgia State University faculty peers for the potential of their new research projects. Again, the yearly average for internal grants was $4,633.

In terms of promotion and tenure, Linda Bell has achieved the highest rank possible at the university (full professor), suggesting that she has satisfied the university’s criteria for excellence at her level. Layli Phillips has recently been promoted to Associate Professor, indicating that she has been found “Excellent” in teaching or research and at least “Very Good” in the second area. Finally, Allaine Cerwonka will submit her tenure dossier at the end of academic year 2003-2004, which is her fifth year at GSU, but received a strong positive evaluation in her third-year review.

The committee compiling this Self-Study Report did not have access to teaching evaluations of the Core Faculty and therefore cannot make any statements about quality of teaching. We have indicated the number of MA theses each has graduated/is currently directing in the 3-year period of 2001-2003:

Core Faculty
- Linda Bell: 0
- Layli Phillips: 0 graduated/5 currently directing
- Allaine Cerwonka: 7 graduated/5 currently directing

Affiliate Faculty
- Wendy Simmonds: 2 graduated/0 currently directing
- Elizabeth Burgess: 0 graduated/2 currently directing
- David Weberman: 1 graduated/0 currently directing
- Julia Perilla: 1 graduated/0 currently directing
G. The adequacy of resources

Faculty resources

The faculty-student ratio and credit hour production paints a picture of the adequacy of resources for the WSI that needs further elaboration to provide an accurate description of the department’s needs. The Core Faculty are responsible for a disproportionate amount of teaching at the graduate level since the WSI is committed to maintaining consistency of content and emphasis in the Graduate Core classes (WST 8001-8004). So, at first blush, it might appear that there is an adequacy of faculty in this department since the faculty to student ratio is fairly low. However, the faculty’s accessibility to their students outside of the classroom has been compromised by the other tasks the Core Faculty are responsible for in the WSI that take up more of their time compared to the amount of time required by faculty in other department to administrative service (such a serving as graduate or undergraduate advisor before tenure). If there is a weakness to the template provided by the University for measuring need and resources, this is the need that is least well measured.

The WSI is a department of 3, one of whom has a reduced course-load because of her responsibilities as Chair. This means that the department is limited in the courses it is able to create and offer and increases its reliance on cross-listed courses. This is reflected in one student alumna’s written comments who noted that her education compromised by the lack of control over frequency and variety of course offerings. Because the WSI has so few Core Faculty, most of the courses it offers its students are determined by the needs of another department, for whom women’s studies students are understandably not its first priority. Other students comment on the lack of choice in MA thesis advisors since they did not have as much interaction with Affiliated Faculty as they might with faculty in a traditional department. Other’s note lack of accessibility of faculty for desired advisement and a sense of the faculty as over-worked. These comments appeared along with many comments about how they enjoyed their courses and felt challenged by them. We also note a difference in level of satisfaction between MA alumni and current MA students, in which the latter seem more content with the program overall. So while students seem to value their courses and learn in them, they are less satisfied in their choices and their access to faculty support outside of the classroom.

Within the WSI there is a sense that the amount of service work necessary to a department (functions like graduate advisor, undergraduate advisor, committee membership, responsibility for generating self-studies, thesis committee work), is too large to be adequately and effectively accomplished with the number of Core Faculty presently comprising the WSI. The WSI was develop with the expectation that Affiliate Faculty would assume the service and advising work of the department. Members of the Institute, among both the Core Faculty and the Affiliate Faculty, believe that that is an unrealistic expectation given the amount of work asked of faculty in their home departments. Further, students’ written responses suggest that students typically have less opportunity for interaction with Affliate Faculty than they need and therefore are limited in their choices and ultimately in their education.
Administrative resources

We currently have one full time Academic Professional III, Charlene Ball, constituting the primary administrative support for the WSI. Her support of the WSI has been exemplary; however, if the WSI should grow, we will need to add one or more staff people. One definite need on the horizon will be a staff person dedicated to the administration of the Activist Track once it is in place.

Technological resources

All of the computers in the WSI are 4 or more years old at this time. Our technology specialist, Baruti KMT, suggests that we upgrade our computers at the next available opportunity. It is our hope to obtain Dell Work Stations or comparable for each of our regular faculty as well as for our office staff. We will also need to replace/upgrade the computers used by our student assistants, who conduct a great deal of the clerical work for the WSI. It is further anticipated that during the 5-7 year period covered by our strategic plan and program review cycle that we will need a new copy machine as well as other office equipment reflecting current technology used in educational settings. Our overarching goal is simply to remain on par with the best equipment that is being procured for GSU at any given point in time.

Space resources

In July 2003, the WSI relocated from office in the General Classroom Building (the 611 suite as well as 507) to the South wing of the 10th floor of the Urban Life Building (rooms 1019-1029). This new space has allowed the WSI to spread out and enjoy a conference room as well as separate offices for our Academic Professional, student workers, and supply/copy area. We also now have an office for our two visiting lecturers to share. This move has been very beneficial for the WSI. As we hire more faculty, we will need to add more offices accordingly.

Laboratory resources

Currently, the WSI does not use laboratories.

GSU Foundation resources

Currently, the WSI has several accounts with the GSU Foundation, including: a) a Foundation Enrichment Account, which we can use for refreshments when we have visiting speakers. This account must be constantly replenished. b) the Draper Fellowship, which provides $5000 to one graduate student per year whose work focuses on adolescent girls. Ideally, we would add 3 more similar fellowships to make our GRAs more competitive. c) Two small, unnamed fellowship endowments, one of which goes to a scholar who wishes to work with material in the Georgia Women’s Movement Project (GWMP) archives and one which we can give to someone whom we deem as deserving. d) Our Mothers’ Fund, which generates a small amount that we can use to supplement the GRAs of the students who work in the GWMP archives. We have been putting effort toward GWMP-related fundraising every spring for the last several years in the form of our Annual Spring Event, and this fall we added a new fundraising vehicle, namely, the Salon, which the Institute may repeat in coming years. What would be helpful in the immediate future would be for someone to be put in the role of development officer for the College of Arts and Sciences to replace Paige.
Gleason as soon as possible. We need the full support of the university’s dedicated development officers and staff to help us continue to grow our Foundation.

Library resources
Thanks to the outstanding efforts of Anne Page Mosby, who retired this year, our library resources are, for the most part, excellent, particularly at the level of resources that would be needed by undergraduates. One benefit of our interdisciplinarity is that Anne was able to stretch our budget by getting librarians from other areas to purchase women’s studies-related materials that might be of interest to specific traditional disciplines. According to University Librarian Charlene Hurt, we really need to expand the resources available to support our program beyond the undergraduate level, although we will not be able to do so until additional money is available to us. Currently, we have money pledged to us that is earmarked for the GWMP archives, plus a small pledged (but not yet delivered) endowment for general women’s studies collections. A major need is more money for staff and space to keep the collections in archival conditions. Our newest and very competent library liaison, Rebecca Drummond, has prepared the more detailed Appendix G2 regarding our library resources.
H. The strengths and weaknesses of the program

Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of a women’s studies program or department is a complex task given the contentious evolution of women’s studies as an institutionalized field of study. Unlike traditional disciplines whose departments were often established at the time of their institution’s founding, most women’s studies programs and departments have worked their way into their institutions much later in the institution’s history and after much struggle to gain legitimacy, space, and recognition. Ours is no exception. Given this history, the institutional form of women’s studies programs and departments is highly variable, sometimes demanding the comparison of apples and oranges. Thus, in the comparative narrative that follows, the aforementioned realities must be borne in mind.

The GSU Women’s Studies Institute already embodies a number of strengths. First, we can claim a cutting edge curriculum that recognizes the importance of global issues and the way in which gender is interpenetrated with other vectors of difference such as race, class, nation, and sexuality in the production of social difference and oppressive processes. Second, we already attract a diverse student body at both the graduate and the undergraduate levels at a time when many women’s studies programs around the nation are struggling to attract students of color, international students, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Third, we are located in a major metropolitan area where we have at our disposal resources associated with government, business, and the arts, in addition to the wealth of resources associated with the large number of institutions of higher education in the area.

Yet, the fulfillment of our promise is also constrained by some weaknesses of the Institute. The most urgent weakness is the small size of our Core Faculty—only 3 people. If any one of those people becomes unavailable for any reason, for example, retirement, the acceptance of a fellowship, research-related travel, parental leave, sick leave, or any other type of absence, the Institute becomes shorthanded in the meeting of basic departmental functions. These include serving as Department Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, or Director of Undergraduate Studies, teaching of core courses or needed electives at the graduate or undergraduate level, directing theses, serving on thesis committees, serving on departmental committees, and simply representing the department to the larger community. Although Affiliated Faculty can assist with these functions, they cannot run the Institute without a strong Core Faculty, as their primary responsibilities lie with their home departments. Thus, increasing the size of the WSI Core Faculty is not only essential, but urgent.

Other weaknesses of the Institute include inadequate funding for faculty research, student assistantships, and conference travel (since many WSI faculty must attend not only women’s studies conferences, but also the conferences of their disciplines); the lack of scholarly outreach vehicles like a funded colloquium series; and inadequate promotional materials, such as brochures, posters, and a website that could attract more top students to the Institute. In addition, the WSI needs to refine its admission standards for the M.A. program and clarify the criteria for faculty affiliation with the WSI. Finally, although it is not a weakness of the WSI, the University’s accounting scheme for departmental credit hour generation adversely affects the WSI, since the WSI does not receive credit for its courses that are taught by Affiliated Faculty.
An ideal approach to finding comparables for the GSU Women’s Studies Institute might involve looking at women’s studies programs and departments at other members of the “Urban 13” (actually 21 institutions). However, this strategy is limited by the fact that not many of the other Urban 13 institutions have full-fledged women’s studies departments. Perhaps the best comparable from the Urban 13 is the Center for Women’s Studies at the University of Cincinnati. This department, which has been in existence since 1991, has a total of 8 core faculty (1 Full, 4 Associate, and 3 Assistant Professors). This department currently reports 27 M.A. students, 6 B.A. students, and 6 undergraduate minors. On average, it graduates 10 M.A. students per year. Since its inception, it has graduated 125 M.A. graduates. Currently, the M.A. program is highly selective, admitting only 1 out of 4 applicants per year, on average, for a typical class size of 10-14 students. In addition to its M.A., major, and minor, this department offers a graduate certificate, and joint M.A./J.D. degree, and internships. This program, which was the fourth in the nation to offer a women’s studies M.A., has been ranked number 35 out of 600 by the Ford Foundation and it boasts a $1 million endowment generated by its community friends and partners that it uses to host internationally renowned visiting professors on an annual basis.

Other notable comparables among the Urban 13 include the Women’s Studies Department at the University of Memphis, which is slated to begin offering both an M.A. program and an undergraduate minor in the near future; the Women’s Studies Department at Portland State University, that currently offers both an undergraduate major and minor; and the Women’s and Gender Studies Department at the University of Toledo, which also offers both an undergraduate major and minor. All of the other member institutions of the Urban 13, with the exception of one (Florida A & M University), offer a non-departmental, interdisciplinary women’s studies program of some form. These programs vary in the size and structure of their faculties (steering committee and/or affiliates), the number of their course offerings, and the types of degrees they offer (whether graduate or undergraduate certificates, majors, or minors). Temple University is notable in the size and vigor of its program, although it lacks departmental status and relies solely on affiliates for the delivery of its programs. One thing that is clear in this cursory comparison, however, is that the WSI at GSU is a leader among the Urban 13, perhaps second behind only the University of Cincinnati, due to the fact that we have an established and recognized M.A. program, as well as a full-fledged major, minor, and graduate certificate. Where we fall behind the University of Cincinnati at this point, and where we could most stand to grow, is in terms of the size and collective rank of our faculty and the number of M.A. students that we graduate annually.

Another significant comparison can be made by looking at National Women’s Studies Association Data. The NWSA publishes a document entitled *Guide to Graduate Work in Women’s Studies* that provides detailed descriptions of all the graduate women’s studies programs in the U.S., including breakdowns by location and program or degree type. The most recent (third) edition of this document was published in 2000. Using data from this text for comparison, it can be stated that Georgia State is one of 23 regular women’s studies M.A. granting institutions in the U.S. By comparison, 8 regular Ph.D. granting and 40 certificate granting institutions are listed. Additional schools offer graduate “concentrations” or “emphases” or Master’s or Ph.D. degrees that are embedded within traditional departments rather than free-standing. According to the document, at the time of its first edition in 1986, only 23 institutions offered any kind of graduate program in women’s studies. By 1991, that number had tripled to
By 1994, that number had risen to 111. In the 2000 edition, that number stood at 128. Since the third edition to the guide was published, at least two of the schools that were listed as M.A. granting have become Ph.D. granting institutions.

Importantly, the Guide reveals a number of important facts: 1) women’s studies is now an established field of study at major colleges and universities; 2) women’s studies is still a growing field, particularly at the graduate level; and 3) the proliferation of women’s studies graduate programs is allowing for individual programs to distinguish themselves and carve out unique niches within the panoply of offerings. Such distinction is the goal of the WSI at GSU.

The WSI serves an important role in the state of Georgia and the larger Southeastern region through the provision of its M.A. program. Emory University is the leading Ph.D. granting institution in the area and no other institution than Georgia State offers a dedicated women’s studies M.A. program in the area. Thus, for those who wish to pursue the entire pipeline within the Southeastern region, the GSU WSI M.A. program is a necessity, particularly to serve students who cannot for whatever reason proceed directly into a Ph.D. program after the completion of their undergraduate studies. Strengthening the WSI—including growing and expanding our faculty, our curricular programs and offerings, our research productivity, our amount of extramural funding, our endowment, and hopefully, in the long run, establishing a women’s center—is essential if we are to be ready for the accelerating regional, national, and international demand for women’s studies education.