

Program Assessment Report (PAR) on Completed Assessment

Year 1 [2014/2015] ~ Program: Women's Studies

1. Which set of PLOs was assessed this academic year (identify each PLO)?

PLO 2. Articulate an understanding of the complexity of power structures and models of authority, especially as they pertain to structural and institutional modes of power.

SLOs articulated to PLO 2 from two distinct courses assessed student ability to:

- apply the intersectional framework to understand inequality within various social institutions; and
- identify and explain how social structure influences the experiences of diverse groups within society.

2. Describe the assessment activities below. Please provide enough detail to convey the nature of the activities.

Assessment Method (Evidence)	Is the evidence direct or indirect
a. Student exams (SOC 220)	Direct
b. Student Assignments (SOC 315/WOMN 215)	Direct
c. Senior Exit Survey	Indirect

a. Student Exams. Dr. Meghan Rich assessed the PLO in “SOC 220: Social Stratification,” which fulfills both a foundational requirement for the concentration and major and an Area B requirement for the major. She assessed the PLO through a required essay question on the final exam: “Using Edin and Kefalas’s study *Promises I Can Keep*, explain some of the **larger social forces** (cultural and economic) that affect individual decision making for **all** women who are considering marriage and having children. On average, how do poor women compare to affluent women in these regards?”

b. Student Assignments. Ms. Justine Johnson collected relevant data in “SOC 315/WOMN 215: Feminism and Social Change,” which also serves both foundational and Area B requirements in the curriculum. She assessed the PLO through a required reflection essay assignment “Identity and Social Status.” The assignment and rubric is attached.

c. Senior Exit Survey.

Graduating majors and concentrators completed a recently redesigned exit survey which measures students’ experiences in specific courses, co-curricular activities, advising, articulation of the WS curricula with GE goals, and intended career goals and plans. See attached document.

3. What were the results of the assessment activities?

Results of Direct Assessment Activities by Dr. Meghan Rich and Ms. Justine Johnson

SOC 220: Social Stratification

Five Women's Studies students were in the class (out of 29 students enrolled), but only four students took the final exam. The total number of points one could score on this assessment item was 17.5 (out of 100 points total for the exam) and the average of the four students was 15.75, a 90%. All four of these students scored above an 80% for this test question, ranging from 80% to 100%. See attached document.

We will use Rich's results to help contribute to establishing baselines for future program assessment. In the meantime, we are very satisfied with her results and have no recommendations for curricular changes in support of PLO 2.

SOC 315/WOMN 215: Feminism and Social Change

There were a total of 26 students enrolled, and 20 essays have been attached. The total number of points one could score on this assessment item was 25 points (for a total of 9% of their grade). The average of the 26 students was 21.26, a 85%. 77% (N=20) of students scored above an 80%. See attached documents.

Results of Indirect Assessment Activities: Student Exit Survey

The Senior Exit Survey had a 50% response rate. Students reported overwhelmingly positive experiences in the program. Our students all rate WS faculty and their courses as better than average.

Our students report a high level of participation and leadership in student organizations, including United Colors, the Debate Society, the JKWC, and Scranton Inclusion, and point to the value of feminist theories of intersectionality to their co-curricular activities and discussions. We are pleased that our current curriculum, with its emphasis on the relationship between theory and practice, enables our students to transfer classroom knowledges to other contexts. Indeed, all students reported that they believed 50-100% of WS courses actively promoted leadership skills. Students also ranked opportunities for volunteer and outreach activities within our program very highly.

All students reported that WS courses were very helpful or somewhat helpful in developing knowledge and understanding of our PLOs (see question 22 a.-d. on attached surveys).

Students indicated a desire for some more specialized courses, including Black Feminism, Queer Studies, and Disability Studies. Faculty noted that units on each of these issues are present in existing courses and they have also been the focus of extensive co-curricular programming. Barring future joint appointments or a LA/W/S hire, it is unlikely that we will be able to expand our course offerings in these areas in the near future.

Students also indicated that they would be interested in greater internship opportunities in Women's Studies.

4. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

a. While students rated their improvement of most GE skills in WS classes very highly, responses to a question regarding information literacy were lower. In the future, faculty will be encouraged to highlight how specific assignments in fact contribute to information literacy. A short statement about how WS courses support GE aims will also be added to the WS statement included on each syllabus and circulated to faculty at the beginning of each semester. Further, the question will be amended to clarify that information literacy is not limited to technological facility. It will now read: "What percentage of classes in Women's Studies promoted or emphasized **information literacy** (*including the ability to*

identify, assemble, and critically evaluate information, as well as to use technology to complete your work or assess written material)?”

b. Program faculty agreed that we should focus on internship availability as part of our “closing the loop” activities in the coming academic year. Dr. Ledford-Miller volunteered to meet with career services to help us identify more specific opportunities for students.

5. Are there any new resources needed to make program improvements? If so, please include the resources and provide justification for each in the Budget section of the Annual Report.

Women’s Studies’ most consistent challenge is the stability of course staffing. We seek at least one full-time faculty member to serve as core faculty on tenured or tenure-track line located entirely within the Department of Latin American Studies and Women's Studies (LA/W/S). As detailed in program minutes and past annual reports, the department has identified needs for regular, dependable coverage of foundational/praxis courses.

6. Additional Activities. In addition to these assessment activities, the Steering Committee revised a key means of data collection, the Senior Exit Survey, and designed a new intake survey to be administered to all declaring concentrators and majors. They have also actively pursued two on-going projects, a CAPP-sheet analysis for all majors and concentrators since the approval of the major in 2009 and a systematic comparison of Women’s Studies Programs at peer and aspirant schools. Monthly minutes contain the details of both projects. The data collection phase of the program comparison is complete, and data analysis will begin next year.

*Submit to Ms. Rebecca Haggerty (Rebecca.haggerty@scranton.edu) with a notation in your Annual Report that “Program Assessment Report(s) (PAR) has been submitted under separate cover.”