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## Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy-- Final Report on a Women's Studies Program

Mary Beth Pringle

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Wright State  
University

Department of English Language  
and Literatures  
Dayton, Ohio 45435  
513/873-3136

June 8, 1992

Charles E. Hathaway  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Wright State University  
Dayton, Ohio 45435

Dear Dr. Hathaway:

In behalf of the Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy, I am pleased to submit this recommendation to you for a Women's Studies program at Wright State University.

Members of the Task Force are grateful to you for bringing us together to consider an issue we believe is critical to the University's mission. In addressing your charge to our committee, we have benefited from conversations with many groups on the status of women in the academy: with Wright State students, faculty, unclassified and classified staff; with community leaders; as well as with people from other colleges and universities in Dayton, the state, and the nation.

While our findings lead us to be deeply concerned about women in the Wright State community, we unanimously feel that a Women's Studies program here will do much to promote greater sensitivity to women's issues and a greater commitment to promoting gender and ethnic harmony at our University.

I know you will thoughtfully review the attached report. Once you've had a chance to digest its contents, I'll call to schedule a meeting so we can discuss it in more detail.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Pringle, Chairperson  
Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy at Wright State University

c Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy

June 8, 1992

To: Charles E. Hathaway, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy  
at Wright State University

Subject: Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy--  
Final Report on a Women's Studies Program

### ***Report Summary***

To help Wright State University fulfill its "commitment to providing leadership that addresses the educational, social, and cultural needs of the Greater Miami Valley," the Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy recommends the University establish a Women's Studies Program, Center, and Board. This three-part Women's Studies structure will foster an "intellectually exciting community" and a more positive learning environment, both of which we see as fundamental to the University's mission. A Women's Studies program will ensure that Wright State University's majority population, its nearly 10,000 female students, will better see their histories and perspectives reflected in the education they receive. Such a program will help prepare both male and female students at Wright State to achieve positions of equality in their professional and personal lives. The Task Force has unanimously concluded that a Women's Studies program at Wright State University must contain the following three elements:

- 1) A **program** with a **minor** and **certificate** in Women's Studies offered through the College of Liberal Arts and with its Director housed in the college
- 2) A **Women's Center** as an identifiable locale on campus to house resource materials and serve as a gathering place for scholars, community leaders, and students
- 3) A permanent **Women's Studies Board** to oversee the activities of the Center

The Task Force strongly believes that these elements must be simultaneously established if the University is to mount an effective Women's Studies program. Following the successful start up of the minor, certificate, Center,

and Board, the Task Force envisions B.A. major and master's-level degree opportunities. This report outlines the need for a Program, Center, and Board, and addresses other considerations pertinent to their establishment.

### ***Background of the Report***

At your direction, the Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy has been meeting since September of 1991. You asked the Task Force to address two questions: 1) What is the status of women faculty at Wright State University? and 2) Should the university develop a Women's Studies program? The first question will be treated in a memorandum entitled "The Status of Women Faculty at Wright State University." Our findings in response to the second question are detailed below.

After surveying students, faculty, unclassified staff, community groups, Ohio college and university Women's Studies programs, and nationally recognized Women's Studies programs, the Task Force unanimously concludes that Wright State should immediately create a Women's Studies program. In our judgment Wright State has the necessary faculty resources to begin such a program. Further, there is widespread University and community interest in its development.

### ***Background on Women's Studies at Wright State***

A Women's Studies program at Wright State is long overdue. Although courses in Women's Studies have been offered at Wright State since the University's founding in the 1960s, these courses were scattered across disciplines and lacked the cohesiveness a Women's Studies program might have brought to them. In 1977 the College of Liberal Arts began offering a Women's Studies option through its Selected Studies program. Here, again, the effort to bring Women's Studies to Wright State failed because the option lacked focus and official sanction.

It is unfortunate that Wright State continues to lack such a program, especially since Ohio ranks fifth among states with the highest number of Women's Studies programs (New York with 69, California with 64, Massachusetts with 47, Pennsylvania with 41, Ohio with 30). All the universities with which Wright State generally compares itself--including Akron, Cleveland State, Toledo, and Youngstown State--have Women's Studies programs. In fact, of the four-year state universities in Ohio, only Central State, Shawnee State, and Wright State do not have Women's Studies programs.

## ***Background on Women's Studies in the Nation***

More than 500 colleges and universities in the United States now offer undergraduate majors, minors, or certificate programs Women's Studies. It is now an established major at 187 colleges and universities in the United States (*NWSA Directory of Women's Studies Programs, Women's Centers, and Women's Research Centers*, 1990 edition).

The major professional organization in the field, the National Women's Studies Association, has more than 4500 members. Nearly every major academic professional organization has a caucus, division, or subcommittee on feminist research and on the application of feminist theory. In some areas, literature and history, for example, Women's Studies is viewed as one of the most important, if not the most important, theoretical development of the twentieth century. For example, last year more than 50% of all sections and special sessions at the national Modern Language Association meetings and at the Midwest Modern Language Association meetings pertained to Women's Studies topics. A comparable proportion of scholarly presentations at national and regional gatherings of historians examined women's issues. At the American Political Science Association meetings this coming September, "Women and Politics" is a formal section with 13 panel sessions.

Along with the growth of Women's Studies programs, courses, and associations, the number of scholarly journals devoted to feminist issues has also proliferated. In 1987 alone, a dozen new feminist journals commenced publication. Scholarly publications include *Signs, Journal of Women in Culture and Society, Feminist Studies, Frontiers, A Journal of Women's Studies, Women's Studies Quarterly, Women's Studies International Forum, International Journal of Women's Studies, ISIS, Women's International Journal, The Feminist Teacher, Hypatia, Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, Sage, A Scholarly Journal on Black Women, Women and Environments, Women and Health, Women and Therapy, Women's Studies in Communication, African Women, Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies, Diva: A Quarterly Journal of South Asian Women, Gender and Education, Gender and History, Gender and Society, Genders, Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, Journal of Women and Aging, Reproductive and Genetic Engineering, Transformations: The New Jersey Project Journal*, just to name a few. Moreover, the *Women's Review of Books*, published by the Wellesley Center for Research on Women, routinely lists more than 50 new titles in nonfiction, fiction, drama, and poetry each month. This partial listing is complemented each month by new catalogs announcing another

series on some aspect of Women's Studies. The *Women's Studies Abstracts* tries to keep up with the flood of new research through an annotated bibliography issued quarterly.

It's easy to see why a program in Women's Studies is so valued. Women's Studies has led the way in academic multicultural studies and is an invaluable theoretical and practical introduction to the curriculum. An historian of science at an eastern university said, "Including women's experiences in the curriculum has challenged theories and assumptions in nearly every discipline--in arts and humanities, in the social sciences, and in the natural and even physical sciences. For example, feminist criticism has broadened the ways in which creativity is assessed; new developments in social analysis have transformed perspectives on sex and gender; and biological research is investigating new questions on the role and structure of females of all species." Now, for example, the National Institutes of Health demand inclusion of women in study populations and development of appropriate methods to study women. They support the Women's Health Initiative, a program to encourage research on women's health issues and research conducted by women.

The more we learn about women's lives, the better able we are to compare women's experiences with men's and the more balanced our resulting view of humanity. As the University of Dayton's Women's Studies mission statement asserts: We believe that "students--male and female--will best serve their generations and the generations to come if they are prepared to . . . make equality a reality."

### ***Relationship of Proposed Women's Studies Program to the Strategic Goals and Mission of the University***

Recognizing Wright State University's mission of "advancing and disseminating knowledge through the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and professional service," the Task Force is confident a Women's Studies program would promote fulfillment of all these goals.

- ***Through Teaching and Research***

Faculty have expressed interest in teaching in a Women's Studies program, have a documented history of providing "outstanding learning experiences" for students, and are, in many cases, already deeply involved in Women's Studies research. Through them Wright State can achieve national prominence in the field. In fact, a Women's Studies program at Wright State would have a synergistic effect on the

productivity of these excellent scholars who are engaged in a field that truly involves "freely investigating the frontiers of knowledge."

Although the University strives to "develop fully the intellectual potential and aesthetic sensitivity of each student," it must have Women's Studies program to do so. To educate students for the future through "knowledge of the past and present" it must more fully reflect the vital role women have played in society. Women's history and perspectives must be more fully reflected in the education students receive. A Women's Studies program would encourage understanding of women in different cultures and promote an attitude of gender sensitivity and equality. It would showcase women who can be considered role models and give students a more accurate perspective when looking at the male-dominated books they have read all their lives. With this added perspective, students would be sure to develop more fully the intellectual potential and aesthetic sensitivity the University desires for them.

- *Through Service*

As a metropolitan university that is "committed to providing leadership addressing the educational, social, and cultural needs of the Greater Miami Valley," Wright State is a preeminently suitable university for a Women's Studies program. Not only would such a program be of service to the women (and men) in the surrounding communities and to the numerous women's organizations that have responded positively to our surveys, but it would also be effective in educating and developing the twenty-first-century work force--a work force that will increasingly need and demand multicultural knowledge, including knowledge of women's cultures.

Wright State's strategic plan emphasizes diversity as a method of "knock[ing] down barriers" for students. Women's Studies is an important part of this diversity and has effectively and humanely destroyed barriers for several decades. In addition, the plan recommends seizing of other initiatives when those arise. At present, the Associate Vice-President for Minority Affairs is beginning a university-wide emphasis on "building a community," an effort that members of the Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy are actively supporting. As the work of that group has shown so far, a Women's Studies program can contribute to such an endeavor.

Finally, it befits a "mature" and "comprehensive" public university to provide its students, faculty, and surrounding community with the services of a Women's Studies program. A Women's Studies program is key to the University at this stage of its development. It is curious and regrettable that Wright State has all the elements for a program in place, but doesn't have a program. Such a program would go a long way in "address[ing] the . . . general problem of underrepresentation of minority groups and women on the faculty and staff." It would also speak volumes to the many women and other minority groups already here who feel, as the Task Force's report on the status of faculty women will show, that the University seems unsupportive of them.

### *Societal Demands for a Women's Studies Program*

The Task Force discovered a strong demand and an abiding interest in the community for a Wright State Women's Studies program. To assess the nature and extent of that demand and interest, the Task Force developed a survey linked to two of the university's strategic goals: 1) extending the University's resources into the surrounding region, and 2) encouraging professional service and University outreach. We distributed the survey to local chapters of the American Association of University Women, the Business and Professional Women's Club, the League of Women Voters, Zonta International, Abilities Unlimited, The National Organization for Women, and the Junior League. The survey was also widely circulated at Clark State, Edison State, and Sinclair.

The responses to the survey were enthusiastically supportive. 1) Four organizations representing 438 members formally endorsed the development of a Women's Studies program by Wright State. These organizations suggested activities and programs, and indicated they would promote and co-sponsor such events. 2) Fourteen individuals, representing the other three organizations, indicated a need for and value in Wright State's developing a Women's Studies program.

Three particularly noteworthy responses were: 1) the student transferring from Sinclair who was "horrified" to find Sinclair had more Women's Studies offerings than Wright State, 2) the respondent who indicated her church would be interested in hosting speakers from Wright State's Women's Studies program, and 3) the response from an executive director of a local agency who said she'd hired "several Wright State graduates" who "could have benefited from Women's Studies courses." For example, in a course such as "The Political Economy of Women" currently offered by the Economics Department, students learn to confront their racism, sexism, and

classism. By studying the labor market experience of women from an historical and multicultural perspective, students come to understand the historical and ideological roots of their own "isms" and their ability to promote or eliminate discrimination and other systems of domination as future educators, lawyers, human resource directors, employers, etc. The favorable response by the students, both male and female, indicates that more classes of this type are sorely needed. Indeed, human resource majors have asked that the "Political Economy of Women" be required for all business majors.

The Task Force quickly found that metropolitan-area organizations, community leaders, and others had clear ideas about what a Wright State Women's Studies program should offer. This fact emphasizes the appropriateness and timeliness of such a Wright State program.

The following are programs/activities that community organizations and leaders suggested in response to our questionnaire:

### *On Academic Issues*

- More classes that focus on women
- Credit-bearing workshops (e.g. "Women in the 90s")
- Explorations of female paradigms in various academic disciplines
- Programs on academic topics: women and politics, the intersections of gender and race, children's issues, women and poverty, women in literature, women in history, gender issues in communication
- Programs on feminist pedagogy, creativity and women, linguistic and cultural aspects of women's studies
- Women's Studies activities co-sponsored with Clark State and an articulation agreement
- Presentations on women scientists
- Guides for women re-entering the university

### ***On Desired Community Services***

- A free speakers' bureau
- A women's center
- An information resource-center for women
- Special video, book/poster and music collections for community use

### ***On Careers***

- Presentations on undervalued careers (e.g. childcare and other service professions)
- Role model/mentoring programs
- Practical workshops on marketing and job skills
- Programs for older women re-entering the work force
- Programs on non-traditional careers
- Workshops on wage discrimination
- Presentations about coping with on-the-job discrimination

### ***On Family***

- Workshops on non-sexist child-rearing
- Programs on stress, finances, credit, budgeting time, child-care assistance
- Programs for single mothers

### ***On Health and Well-Being***

- Programs on self-defense, nutrition, sexuality, AIDS
- Programs on self-esteem

### *On the Arts*

- Plays that focus on women
- Lectures on women artists, musicians

### *On Current Events*

- Presentations by and about local women
- Programs that concentrate on women's perspectives on current events
- Celebrations such as a joint program with the League of Women Voters celebrating 75 years of women's voting
- Workshops presenting the history and current status of the women's movement

### *Student Support for a Women's Studies Program*

Students are interested in and supportive of such a program. To assess the level of student interest in Women's Studies, the Task Force surveyed graduate and undergraduate students. The survey produced 100 responses, half from women and half from men. Fifty of those responses indicated support for and/or interest in taking Women's Studies courses. Forty-two indicated little interest in such a program, and eight were unsure. Respondents provided lengthy and varied lists of courses they have taken or would like to take.

Here are representative student comments:

- "I would be very interested in taking Women's Studies courses and I would like to earn a minor, major, or concentration in the subject. I consider Women's Studies a very needed part of my college education and experience, so much so that I most likely will transfer if a program isn't developed at Wright State."
- "So far I've taken two classes in Women's Studies (Gender and Labor Economics). Many men like me really don't believe a problem exists for women. Through these courses I feel I've come to understand a lot."

- "I consider a Women's Studies program important for college students, especially females. The Eurocentric male history and viewpoint is all one is exposed to before college. College should be a time to experiment with and think about new ideas."
- "Yes, .. I think that a Women's Studies program would be beneficial for both male and female students."
- "Women's Studies are important for both male and female students. Many men never have the opportunity to consider things from a woman's point of view. Women's Studies courses and programs can be eye openers for them. A Women's Studies program can't be developed at Wright State too soon. One is needed NOW!"
- "Yes--I've already taken as many Women's Studies courses as I could, and I would major in Women's Studies if it were possible."
- "I've been frustrated by the lack of Women's Studies courses available here."
- "When I transferred to Wright State I was dismayed, even shocked, that my search through the catalog and bulletins revealed no women's anything. It poked a hole in my near and dear illusion that universities by their very nature, intent, and soul were on the cutting edge of everything new, exciting, and necessary."

The Task Force was concerned about the angry, fearful tone of the few negative comments we received. These comments--for example, one that said "After all, is a university for higher education or minority ass kissing?"--also underscore the need we see for a Women's Studies program.

### ***Faculty Resources for a Women's Studies Program***

A questionnaire was distributed to Wright State University faculty, asking whether they had taught courses and/or workshops in Women's Studies or would like to teach such courses (See *Current Courses and Workshops that Could Be Part of a Women's Studies Curriculum* in this report). The survey produced a remarkably long and varied list of courses the faculty have taught or would like to teach as part of a Women's Studies program.

Regrettably, a very few colleagues offered negative or even hostile comments regarding the possibility of a women's studies program. The tone

of these responses--one stated, "Virtually all feminists are cranks. Many of them are vicious cranks with many resemblances to Nazis"--also affirmed the Task Force's view that a Women's Studies program is needed to address the fears of and misapprehensions toward feminism held by certain colleagues.

### ***Faculty Who Can Bring Strength to a Women's Studies Program***

The following faculty expressed interest in teaching courses and/or workshops through Wright State University's Women's Studies program:

- Jeanne Ballantine, Professor, Sociology and Anthropology
- Anna Bellisari, Assistant Professor, Sociology and Anthropology
- Gregory Bernhardt, Associate Professor, Education and Human Services
- David Barr, Professor, Religion
- Anita Curry-Jackson, Assistant Professor, Social Work
- Donna Curry, Assistant Professor, Nursing
- Charles Derry, Professor, Theatre Arts
- Katharine Dvorak, Assistant Professor, Religion
- Stephen Frederick, Associate Professor, Health and Physical Recreation
- David Garrison, Associate Professor, Modern Languages
- Phyllis Green, Assistant Professor, Urban Affairs
- James Guthrie, Assistant Professor, English Language and Literatures
- James Jacob, Associate Professor, Political Science
- Cynthia King, Associate Professor, Classics
- Jeanne Lemkau, Associate Professor, Family Practice
- Marguerite MacDonald, Associate Professor, English Language and Literatures
- Martin Maner, Professor, English Languages and Literatures
- Virginia Nehring, Associate Professor, Nursing
- Paulette Olson, Assistant Professor, Economics
- Roberta Pohlman, Associate Professor, Health and Physical Recreation
- Susan Pollock, Associate Professor, School of Professional Psychology
- Mary Beth Pringle, Professor, English Language and Literatures
- Anjali Rastogi, Associate Professor, Computer Science
- John Rudisill, Professor, Psychiatry
- Donna Schlagheck, Associate Professor, Political Science
- Marvin Seiger, Professor, Biological Sciences
- Harvey Siegal, Professor, Community Health

- Jim Steinberg, Assistant Professor, Sociology-Lake Campus
- Nancy Trimble, Instructor, Nursing
- Anne Walter, Associate Professor, Physiology and Biophysics
- Celesta Warner, Instructor, Nursing
- Ann Wendt, Assistant Professor, Management

### ***Current Courses and Workshops that Could Be a Part of a Women's Studies Curriculum***

Here is a list of courses and workshops faculty said they had taught or would be qualified to teach:

- Language and Gender
- Cross-Cultural Families
- Women in Corporate Organization
- Women in Exercise and Sports
- Women's Health and Wellness
- Psychology of Women
- Study of Gender and Sex Roles
- International Women's Studies
- Empowerment of Women in Childbearing
- Organizational/ Management Skills for Women
- Women in (Classical) Antiquity
- Maternal Employment and Child Development
- Sex Equity in the Schools and Agencies
- Social Services for Women
- Empowering Women to Speak in a Different Voice
- Substance Abuse Problems Among Women
- Women's Political Behavior in International Relations
- The Feminist Movement
- Asian Women in America
- The Female World
- Film Genre: Melodrama and Feminist Criticism
- Self Defense for Women
- Women and 18th Century British Literature
- The Heroine in Contemporary American Fiction
- Major Contemporary American Women Writers

- Southern American Women Writers
- International Perspective on Contemporary Women Writers
- The Female Quest in American Literature
- Poetry by and about Women
- Breaking Free: The Literature of Women's Liberation
- Psychology of Sex Roles in Literature
- African-American Women Writers
- Women's Studies through Literature
- Major Women Writers: Virginia Woolf
- Women Readers of Male Writers
- Women's Nonfiction Writing
- Personal and Autobiographical Writing by Women
- Modern British Women Writers
- Women in Western Religion
- Women in American Religious History
- Women in World Religion
- Political Economy of Women
- Economics of Gender
- Sex and Gender
- Psychology of Women

This is, of course, only a partial listing of courses and workshops Wright State has offered and might offer through a Women's Studies program. At the time the survey was conducted, some faculty were on leave and some who had taught Women's Studies courses in English, history, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and modern languages did not respond.

### ***Recommendations for Establishing and Operating Wright State's Women's Studies Program***

The Task Force also makes the following recommendations for establishing and operating a Women's Studies program at Wright State:

1. We believe the Women's Studies program should be housed within the College of Liberal Arts. Programs that the CLA has successfully housed and nurtured include Urban Affairs, International Studies, and African and African-American Studies. The Task Force consulted with Dean Perry

Moore about the content of and recommendations in this report. The Dean agreed with our findings and offered the program his endorsement.

2. The program's Director should be recommended by the Women's Studies committee and appointed by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. The Director would manage the activities of the Women's Studies program with help from the Women's Studies committee and would oversee the Women's Center with help from the Women's Board.

3. The Women's Studies committee should be composed of faculty who will teach, have taught, or are teaching in the Women's Studies program. Students should also serve on this committee.

4. In the interest of promoting strong interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship, the program's Director should attend Chairs' meetings.

5. The main goal of the Women's Studies program must be to develop Women's Studies as a discipline. Another major goal should be to promote interdisciplinary study. To promote interdisciplinary work, individual faculty members should be encouraged to develop interdisciplinary courses and course components. Departments should be urged to hire faculty with expertise in Women's Studies. This latter process can be improved by including Women's Studies faculty on relevant search committees.

6. Faculty involved in the Women's Studies program should develop discipline-specific bibliographies that reflect recent scholarship by and about women for use in departmental course development and library acquisitions.

7. While one of the goals of the program must be to mainstream Women's Studies into the university curriculum, Task Force members believe that our primary focus must be to develop Women's Studies as a separate discipline. We were guided in making this decision by Betty Schmitz's *Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum: A Guide and Bibliography* (The Feminist Press).

8. The program should ensure that women of all ethnic backgrounds, sexual preferences, ages, and classes are included. We believe those developing and directing the program should work closely with the Bolinga Center staff to mainstream materials about African-American women and racism into the Women's Studies curriculum.

### ***Why the Task Force Proposes a Minor and a Certificate in Women's Studies***

By offering a minor in Women's Studies, Wright State University has a unique opportunity to fulfill a niche as a public institution in that both of the Women's Studies programs in the Dayton area are located in private institutions, Antioch and the University of Dayton. A Women's Studies minor at Wright State has the potential of attracting a large number of students who might pursue such a minor but are financially or academically unable to do so at a private university. No other public institution in the metropolitan area provides this service. Clearly, the demand for Women's Studies courses exists in the Dayton area. The programs at Antioch and the University of Dayton have experienced significant growth over the last decade.

By offering a certificate program in Women's Studies, Wright State would be providing a crucial service to area women and men who wish to pursue an interest in Women's Studies without enrolling in a degree program. Given Wright State's commitment to non-traditional students, offering such a certificate seems appropriate. Also, since Antioch is the only other university in the area to offer a certificate program in Women's Studies, Wright State, as a public university, can meet an important community need by offering a more economical program.

#### ***The Women's Studies Minor***

The Women's Studies program should offer a Women's Studies minor for students traveling more or less traditional paths toward a degree.

Requirements for the minor would be:

- Women's Studies interdisciplinary core course-4 hours (See *Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Core Course--below*)
- Seven cross-listed 300- and 400-level Women's Studies courses

Independent study courses would count toward the minor with approval from the Director of Women's Studies. Early in the program, students would prepare a written explanation /justification of the package of courses they are taking for the minor. As a capstone to the minor students would submit a portfolio of their work in Women's Studies courses. Because of the

relationship between the problems of women and those of other minority or disadvantaged groups, two courses in the minor could pertain to African-American or intercultural studies.

### ***The Women's Studies Certificate***

The Task Force believes the program should also immediately offer a certificate program to attract non-traditional students: those with or without degrees who wish to pursue work in Women's Studies.

Course requirements would be the following:

- Women's Studies interdisciplinary core course--4 hours (See *Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Core Course--below*)
- Six cross-listed 300- and 400-level Women's Studies courses

Independent study courses and graduate-level courses could count toward the certificate with approval from the Women's Studies Director. Early in their work toward the certificate, students would prepare written explanation/justification of the package of courses they were taking for the certificate. As a capstone to the certificate, students would submit a portfolio of their work in Women's Studies courses. Here, too, students could count toward the certificate two courses in minority or intercultural study.

### ***The Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Core Course***

Although we can begin by using, for the most part, curricular resources already in place at the university, the Task Force recommends that an interdisciplinary core course be developed and taught by those teaching other courses in the program. This core course would provide an overview of Women's Studies theory and an introduction to various specialized areas. Because the course would be taught by faculty currently teaching other courses in the program, it would change depending on the expertise and research interests of those faculty. Each year, in conjunction with this course, the program might feature a major speaker--with lectures open to the public. This course should also make use of the expertise of local people from the campus or the community.

### ***Evaluating a Women's Studies Program at Wright State***

Although at present there is no accreditation procedure for programs in Women's Studies, the Director of Wright State's Women's Studies program

would be responsible for ensuring the total quality management (TQM) of the program. In doing so, we believe the Director should use the following criteria:

1. Student demand--The better the Women's Studies program the more students will want to be enrolled in Women's Studies classes. We would measure student demand by tracking enrollments in Women's Studies courses and numbers of sections offered per quarter.
2. Teaching evaluations--The more satisfied students are with the classes they take, the more highly one can judge the program the students are enrolled in. A careful assessment of students' evaluations of their experiences in each Women's Studies class will reveal much about the quality of the program.
3. Quality of student work--Students who produce high quality work are a sign of a successful Women's Studies program. Student work could be evaluated using two criteria: students' grades in Women's Studies courses and student awards for academic work.
4. Student perceptions of the quality of the program--Students' views of the program are obviously worthwhile. These perceptions can be gathered in a terminal interview with graduating seniors and individuals when they complete their certificate work. Too, we recommend follow-up studies conducted with Alumni Affairs.
5. Student success after graduation--A successful program is able to prepare its students to take their places in the work force or to further their academic preparation. Here we would track the diverse career paths of Women's Studies students after graduation.
6. Expansion of the curriculum--A growing program is likely to be better than a stagnant one. The pace of curricular growth (Iowa State measures success as one new course/academic year) would reflect students'/faculties' continuing commitment to the program.
7. Continuing expansion of staff--The larger the staff the more courses a program can offer and the more varied those offerings. An increasing number of staff teaching and participating in the Women's Studies program would reflect that program's growing University, faculty, and student support.

8. Professional quality of Women's Studies faculty--The better the Women's Studies faculty the better the program. The faculty's professional quality could be assessed by evaluations of faculty vitas, research, and teaching.
9. Presence of a feminist Perspective in Women's Studies courses--A successful Women's Studies course reflects sensitivity to gender, portion of a Women's Studies course (Iowa State uses a 50% measure) should focus on women and these issues.
10. Community Service--Students in a successful Women's Studies program are active in community service. They care about public issues. The greater the community involvement of students the better the program.
11. Satisfaction of Women's Studies faculty--Faculty who are satisfied with their jobs are a measure of a program's success. The more satisfied the faculty, the better the program. Any tool for measuring faculty job satisfaction would be an effective indicator of program quality.
12. University support for the Program--The more support the Women's Studies program receives from the university that houses it, the better that program is likely to be. Support can take many forms: internal grants, awards for faculty research, budget allocations.
13. Independent study panel--Many universities use an independent study panel to evaluate on an on-going basis specific courses and programs. Wright State might wish to use such a panel to evaluate, along with its other course offerings, a new Women's Studies program.

### ***Why Wright State Needs A Women's Center***

The Task Force strongly feels Wright State needs a centrally located Women's Center to complement its Women's Studies program. A Center would serve as a tangible sign of the University's commitment to its women students and to the Women's Studies program. In a practical sense, a Center is needed to house the Director, support staff, a graduate assistant, and the program's collection of resource materials on other Women's Studies programs, books, journals, articles, films, videos, periodicals, booklets, newsletters, clippings, and audio tapes on topics relating to women. Such a

collection, in addition to University library holdings, would be invaluable to those doing research projects in Women's Studies and to those responsible for overseeing the Women's Studies program and the Women's Center. As importantly, the Center should also include a conference room to serve as a gathering place for students, faculty, and community people interested in Women's Studies. Many of the programs proposed by community members who asked that a Women's Studies program be started at Wright State could take place in such an area. Talks by Women's Studies faculty, class gatherings, brown-bag lunch meetings for students, community workshops on women's issues, gatherings of community supporters, faculty research colloquia--all would find a home in Wright State's Women's Center.

### ***The Importance of Establishing a Women's Board***

Members of the Task Force believe that establishing a Women's Board to oversee activities of the Women's Center at Wright State is an important priority. Such a Board, comprised of the Director of the Women's Studies program, faculty, students, staff, and community members would ensure that the Center addresses the needs of the entire Wright State community and those of the larger metropolitan area as well. The Board would be responsible for planning center programs, arranging cooperative programs with other universities and organizations in the area, publicizing center activities, and mobilizing those interested in issues that affect women on campus and in the community.

### ***Resources Needed to Start a Women's Studies Program, Center, and Board***

Although we are acutely aware of Wright State's current financial crisis and although we have tried wherever possible to find ways of shaping a program that would cost as little as possible, Task Force members believe that at a minimum, a director, secretary, and graduate assistants would be required for daily operation of the program and Women's Center. We believe the Director must be given substantial course release time (at least half) and an office, separate from her/his departmental office, adjoining the Women's Center. The program would require office equipment: adequate computer facilities, telephones, as well as the usual office furnishings. The program would need a reasonable start-up budget for all services for which it will be expected to pay.

### ***Resources Available Outside the University to Bring Strength to Such a Program***

While the Task Force is confident that external support would be available to a Wright State Women's Studies program, we decided that such support was secondary to getting a program in place. We have already received technical help from the University of Cincinnati Women's Studies program. Continuing technical assistance and appropriate materials have been pledged by numerous other colleges' and universities' Women's Studies programs. We have communicated with staff from several foundations including the Ms. Foundation who have assured us grants are available for faculty and student projects. Community organizations, such as the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women, have expressed interest in co-sponsoring speakers, workshops, and seminars. The Task Force was impressed by the availability and breadth of community and national resources available to support program activities, faculty work and development, and student projects. We were advised, however, by colleagues at other universities that a program should be established before we attempt formal solicitation of funds. In light of this advice, the Task Force elected to postpone any more detailed inquiry until a formal structure has been established.

### ***Institutions and Individuals who Helped us Prepare this Document***

The Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy is grateful to the many people and institutions who helped us assess Wright State's needs and develop this report. We also appreciate the willingness many expressed to provide us with further technical assistance as our Women's Studies program takes shape. The following is a partial list of people who helped:

- Professor Hilda Smith, Director of the Center for Women's Studies Program, University of Cincinnati
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- Professor Kathy Hickok, Director of Women's Studies, Iowa State University
- Adelina Rodriguez, Secretarial Assistant, Women's Studies, Rutgers University

- Professor Lynn Goodstein, Director of Women's Studies, and Kathy Foster, Administrative Assistant, Women's Studies Program, Pennsylvania State University
- Professor Bonnie Zimmerman, Chairperson, Women's Studies Department, San Diego State University
- Professor Jana Everett, Director of Women's Studies, University of Colorado at Denver
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- Professor Carol Cyganowski, Director of Women's Studies, DePaul University
- Lisa Ann Robertson, Administrative Assistant, Center for Women's Studies, The Ohio State University
- Kent Anderson Leslie, Assistant Director, Institute for Women's Studies, Emory university

- Judith Martin, Director of Women's Studies, University of Dayton
- Marianne Whelchel, Professor of Literature, Antioch University

Also:

Appalachian State University, Office of Women's Studies  
 Goddard College, Women's Resource Group  
 University of Dayton, Women's Studies

### ***Implementation***

The Task Force is prepared to draft action steps to implement this recommendation. The specifics, of course, will depend upon your support and the resources made available for this program.

### ***Conclusion***

The Task Force on the Status of Women in the Academy urges the immediate establishment of a Women's Studies program, center, and board. We believe that the community climate at Wright State will surely be improved by the administration's giving women students, faculty, and staff an official, academic program and center on campus.

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