

WOMEN'S STUDIES ARTICULATION MEETING 2021

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL on ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS (BCCAT)

MINUTES

7 May 2021, UNBC (via Zoom), 1 PM—4 PM Pacific

ATTENDEES:

Ann McKinnon (Okanagan College); Robynne Healey (Trinity Western University); **Jacqueline Holler (Chair, University of Northern British Columbia)**; **Sharon Josephson (SLP, Okanagan College)**; Thea Cacchioni (University of Victoria); Sandie Dielissen (Fraser International College); Janet Mayr (Selkirk College); Sally Mennill (Douglas College); Vicki Nygaard (VIU); Ilya Parkins (UBC-O); Nancy Pollak (Langara College); Ki Wight & Kirsten McIlveen (Capilano University); Tiffany Muller-Myrdahl (Simon Fraser University)

REGRETS:

Helen Lansdowne (Camosun College)

1. Welcome

1:05 PM. Call to order, acknowledgement of the traditional and unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, and welcome from Jacqueline Holler, 2021 Chair. Regrets and written report from Helen Lansdowne (Camosun).

Introductions

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED: Sally Mennill (Douglas); SECONDED: Nancy Pollak (Langara). CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes: 2019 meeting (SFU-Harbour Centre)

The minutes were corrected to include the report from Douglas College and to amend the VIU report for accuracy.

MOVED (with corrections): Sally Mennill (Douglas); SECONDED: Nancy Pollak (Langara). CARRIED

4. Business Arising: NONE.

5. Institutional Reports and Announcements

Camosun College. Helen Lansdowne submitted a written report indicating that all GSWS were online this year, producing both well-known challenges such as not knowing one's students or being sure about student engagement *and* significant benefits, for example the diversity of the student body (including a record number of international students) and broader participation in chat room discussions than in F2F classes. Course offerings may be expanded in the coming year.

Capilano University. Ki Wight reported on the offerings of 11 sections of WGST in fall 2019, spring 2020, summer 2020, fall 2020, spring 2021, and summer 2021. Upper-level courses are being developed on women and comics,

and feminist killjoys. Kirsten McIlveen is continuing her work with the Walls to Bridges program, and the new “Women and Prisons-Gender Confined” upper-level course is running again due to high demand. Articulating these courses to other institutions was discussed. Sometimes no credit has been granted for these specialized courses, or third-year credit is not granted.

ACTION: S. Josephson will follow up on the issue of third-year credit for special topics with BCCAT; is this an issue in other committees? Advice on how to address it?

The issue of competencies for teaching in WGST has arisen. The committee discussed institutional and program approaches to these competencies. Programs appear to place varying emphasis on features such as (a) expertise in gender-based or feminist approaches; (b) credentials in the area (for example, training in Women’s and/or Gender Studies as opposed to in another discipline); (c) history of activism and community engagement; and (g) lived experience and/or group membership. Despite the pandemic, several significant events were hosted by WGST, including an IWD event in March 2020 with Cree grandmother, actor, and activist Sophie Merasty, who unfortunately passed away in July.

Douglas College. Sally Mennill reported that enrolments continue to grow and that the student body at Douglas continues to shift; a much higher proportion of those enrolled are now international students, and many students now come to courses already identifying as feminists and understanding core concepts. A new course on sexualities (GSWS 1102) was added and extremely popular; a new History of Sexuality course (HIST 1160) has also been added. Sally has developed a third-year course on Reproductive Justice (GSWS 3101), which will be offered in January 2022. Despite the pandemic, several events were organized, including a panel discussion of racism on campus, a menstrual research day, and a talk by curator Dr. Kimberley Phillips. A new campus committee called the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Group was formed, with Ki the inaugural chair (a new chair was appointed in August 2020). The growth of the WSGS unit has raised hopes that within the next five years or so WSGS may become a fully fledged department.

Fraser International College. Sandie Dielissen reported that FIC continues to have steady enrolment of international students during the pandemic. FIC offers one Gender, Sexuality & Women’s Studies course, GSWS 101 (Gender Talk). Ten sections of this course have been offered since spring 2019, with strong enrolments. Students have requested additional gender studies courses. Teaching gender-related content to international students has been incredibly rewarding. Much Indigenous content is incorporated into the course. Another course on Aboriginal Women in Canada has been offered.

Langara College. Nancy Pollak reported that 13 transfer credit sections were offered in the previous year. WMST has one full-time faculty and two part-time faculty, who are now regularized. All courses had good enrolments and long waitlists of international students. Langara also offered the WMST 1105 Lecture series, a non-credit and non-fee offering. WMST has concluded a program review, with the final report still pending. WMST has been working to ensure that all courses include indigenous perspectives and content on colonialism and decolonization. The growth of international student enrolment without accompanying academic and social support has been a concern for faculty. Student mental health and distress have been massive issues.

University of Northern BC. Jacqueline Holler reported that UNBC’s two colleges have been restructured into faculties. As of April 2021 Women’s and Gender Studies now falls within the Faculty of Indigenous Studies, Social Sciences, and Humanities. Twenty-seven courses were offered in the past two years, with good enrolments. New courses offered in 2020-2021 include second-year courses on Masculinities and Queer Sexualities. Despite COVID disruptions to student admissions, the Gender Studies MA has 6 students in stream, with 1 set to graduate in May

2021. Eight have been admitted for fall 2021. The Northern Feminist Institute for Research and Evaluation has been working toward a closer relationship with WMST/GNDR and hosted a successful conference on Responding to Sexual and Domestic Violence in Northern British Columbia in November 2019.

Okanagan College. AnnMcKinnon reported that enrolments are holding steady in GSWS courses, in part as the result of high international-student enrolments at OC, but there were some effects from the pivot to online. A new course has been developed: GSWS 208: Reproductive Justice. Some second-year courses are still earning first-year credit and some crosslisted courses do not transfer well. Some are earning credit in a discipline, such as ANTH, but not in GSWS. In addition, students find uneven pathways for transfer to other institutions. The committee discussed these recurrent issues and the possibility of establishing a flexible pre-major.

ACTION: S. Josephson to discuss with BCCAT the issue of flexibility in transfer and “credit clusters” and the possibility of funding for the development of a universal pre-major; BCCAT WMST committee chair to place this issue (flexible pre-major) on next year’s agenda for discussion as business arising.

Events have been affected by the pandemic but the department is looking forward to reengaging with students and the community in the coming year.

Selkirk College. Janet Mayr was not able to report orally because of the Chair’s error. Her written report noted that WS courses have continued to have strong enrolments over the past year despite COVID. The courses continue to be two 100-level Women’s Studies offerings. Selkirk has an Internationalization Strategic Plan (since 2017), but there are growing pains associated with internationalization, including workload stresses for faculty and problems with plagiarism and cheating. Selkirk is also nearing finalization of its first Indigenization Plan. Selkirk delivered nearly 35% of its courses face to face in winter 2021 and will prioritize face-to-face instruction going forward.

Simon Fraser University. Tiffany Muller Myrdahl reported that SFU’s program is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. The program has 11 f/t salary lines and 20 associate faculty members in other programs. The program is now contributing four courses to the Business degree. Reconciliation and decolonization are current commitments of the program. Online education has been successful but has had huge workload implications.

Trinity Western University. Robynne Healey reported that TWU’s Gender Studies minor continues to be a small but active program. All courses are housed in other units. A new tenure-track hire in Sociology will have Gender Studies as part of her remit. Faculty active in the Gender Studies program have been highly engaged in research dissemination despite the pandemic. However, TWU’s ongoing Institutional Prioritization Process (IPP) has raised concerns about the status of the program going forward.

UBC-Okanagan. Ilya Parkins, Coordinator, reported that UBC-O is in a period of growth and change, with healthy enrolments and budgets. Enrolments in GWS rose 28% in 2020–21, with a 25% increase in the intro course. New hires in other departments have also contributed to staffing capacity in GWS. A new course on feminist approaches to writing (GWST 240) has been approved. The coming year should see significant new course development. IN 2021, the program’s name will change to Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies, with the acronym GWST remaining the same.

Vancouver Island University. Vicki Nygaard, Chair of Studies in Women and Gender (SWAG), reported. The program typically offers eight courses per year with a strong focus on Indigenous themes. Enrolments are up, perhaps as a result of the online environment. However, all courses are currently taught by sessional instructors and full-time staffing is not currently possible. The online roll-out was successful but extremely demanding.

ACTION: BCCAT WMST committee chair to place this issue (assessment of online “pivot” and future of online learning in WMST) on next year’s agenda for discussion as business arising.

The department has commenced a departmental review. A new committee has been created in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities: A&H Decolonization and Anti-Racism Committee (DAARC), an initiative to explore pedagogical and curricular initiatives relating to decolonization and anti-racism.

Discussion ensued on the issue of microcredentials, such as two-week courses, and the potential for their transferability and eligibility for student loan.

ACTION: BCCAT WMST committee chair to place this issue (microcredentials and transferability) on next year’s agenda for discussion as business arising.

University of Victoria. Thea Cacchioni, who commenced her role as Chair in January 2021, reported that Gender Studies enrolments are very strong, and the program is the fastest-growing one at UVic with approximately 1500 undergraduate enrolments. Online instruction has carried great potential for inclusion of guest speakers, including many Indigenous artists. The department has hired Dr. Simi Kang, an interdisciplinary political ecologist. Dr. Jang will be developing new courses in the near future. The department has embarked on an inventory of its practices to promote decolonization and anti-racism, commencing with teaching and moving on to research and service.

5. BCCAT Business

5.1. SLP report (Sharon Josephson). Sharon offered assistance wherever she can help with higher-level articulation matters and policy issues. She also reported on the BCCAT Kick-off discussed below.

5.2 Report from BCCAT Kick-off (3 March 2021) (Jacqueline Holler).

- About 65% of BCCAT’s 65 articulation committees met in 2020, either in spring or in fall; most were shorter meetings and online.
- Transfer credit has not been disrupted by pivot online.
- BCCAT Moodle has transitioned from former hosting by KPU and is available.

5.3. Pending articulation requests. There were no outstanding requests.

7. New Business

6.0. Location and date of next meeting.

The committee elected to meet again in May 2022; a poll for dates will be initiated.

6.1 selection of host, secretary, and chair for 2019-2020.

Sally Mennill volunteered to serve as Chair; host TBD.

8. Adjournment 4:00 PM.