

**Women's & Gender Studies Program
College of Arts & Sciences
University of Missouri-Kansas City
Bylaws**

[Adopted January 2013]

Introduction & Mission

First established in the 1980s, Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) at UMKC is one of 650 such programs in the United States. WGS is both an inter- and multi-disciplinary academic program devoted to the critical analysis of how gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality contribute to the diversity of women's and men's experiences. The program's interdisciplinary nature and cross-cultural academic training broadens students' understanding of gender and the experiences of women and men, girls and boys, in all cultures and societies. By placing gender at the center of scholarly inquiry, we not only examine the assumptions, methods, insights, and claims of the traditional academic curriculum but broaden it through our research interests, publications, and courses to add cutting edge feminist research, scholarship, and activism.

The WGS program offers an undergraduate minor and concentration, as well as an internship. WGS courses are offered by numerous UMKC departments, and a full list of courses scheduled is available every semester from the WGS office.

The mission of the Women's and Gender Studies Program is to foster teaching and scholarship on the social, cultural, and historical processes that gender human identities and experience.

Part I: Program Faculty and Affiliates

1.1. The GENERAL MEMBERSHIP consists of Associate Faculty, Affiliates, Graduate Affiliates, and Allied Faculty.

1.2. Associate Faculty shall be responsible for the welfare of the Program.

1.3. Associate Faculty status in the Women and Gender Studies Program is open to faculty and staff of the University community who demonstrate appropriate activity in any or all of these areas:

1.3.1. Teaching courses with significant content relating to women's lives, issues, and perspectives and/or gender systems or structures.

1.3.2. Undertaking research relating to women and/or gender in the above ways (1.3.1).

1.3.3. Engaging in service activities relating to women and/or gender in the above ways.

1.4. The responsibilities of Associate Faculty include:

1.4.1. Serving on and Chairing Program committees,

1.4.2. Participating in Program activities,

1.4.3. Drawing upon her/his expertise to develop and conduct Program courses, research, or service.

1.5. Only Associate Faculty shall have the right to vote on Program matters, consistent with the stipulations of these bylaws and University Policy.

1.5. Associate Faculty shall vote on such matters as accepting reports and approving the proposed annual budget and changes proposed to the Program's bylaws. As well, the Associate Faculty shall vote on accepting proposed new Associate Faculty, Affiliates, Graduate Affiliates, and Allied Faculty.

1.6. Interested individuals should initiate the following process to obtain Associate Faculty status:

- Submit to the Program Director an appropriate CV/ résumé and a statement indicating how their relevant teaching, research, and/or service interests or activities are directly related to the mission of the Women and Gender Studies Program (see 1.3.1-3).
- The Director, after review for appropriateness, shall pass these materials on to the Program Review Committee, who will formulate a recommendation to be submitted to the Associate Faculty.
- The Program Review Committee will present the applicant's materials and Committee's recommendation to the Associate Faculty, who will vote, by simple majority, whether or not to grant the requested status.

Program Affiliates, hereafter "Affiliates"

2.1. Affiliation with the Women and Gender Studies Program is open to faculty and staff of the University community who are supportive of the Program's mission and participate in Program events.

2.2. Interested individuals should take the same steps as outlined in 1.6 above to obtain AFFILIATE status.

2.3. Affiliates are encouraged to attend Program meetings and events but do not have full membership privileges, such as voting rights, and service responsibilities.

Graduate Student Affiliates, hereafter "Graduate Affiliates"

3.1. Graduate student affiliation with the Women and Gender Studies Program is open to graduate students currently enrolled at the University who demonstrate appropriate activity in any of the areas described in 1.3.1-3.

3.2. Interested graduate students should take the same steps as outlined in 1.6 above to obtain GRADUATE AFFILIATE status.

3.3. Graduate Affiliates may serve on committees and vote on Program matters that do not affect their course of study or from which they would benefit.

Allied Faculty, Visiting Faculty, and Scholars/Artists/Writers in Residence.

4.1. May include community activists, artists, and visiting faculty with short-term academic appointments at UMKC, paid or unpaid, who demonstrate research and teaching expertise in the interdisciplinary field of women's/gender studies.

4.2. Allied Faculty, Visiting Faculty, and Scholars/Artists/Writers in Residence are recommended for appointment by the Program Director with the approval of the Program Review Committee.

4.3. Allied Faculty, Visiting Faculty, and Scholars/Artists/Writers in Residence teach courses in Women's & Gender Studies, as defined by the Director in accordance with the academic needs of the program.

4.4. Allied Faculty, Visiting Faculty, and Scholars/ Artists/ Writers in Residence are eligible to serve, upon appointment by the Director, on all governance committees.

Part II: Program Review Committee

1. Membership

- a. The Program Review Committee consists of at least seven members: the Program Director, the Starr Distinguished Professor, members of the faculty and administrative staff, and at least one graduate student. Committee members represent a mixture of academic ranks and disciplinary departments that contribute cross-listed courses to the Program.
- b. The Program Director chairs the Program Review Committee.
- c. Any member of the Program faculty, as defined in Part I above, is eligible for appointment to the Program Review Committee.
- d. Members typically serve staggered three-year terms; consecutive terms are possible. Students on the Committee serve a one-year term that can be renewed.
- e. Members will be elected by the Program Faculty, with voting taking place electronically.

2. Meetings

- a. The Program Review Committee meets as often as necessary to conduct its business, but in any case it must meet at least once a semester during the academic year.
- b. The Program Director is responsible for distributing a notice of agenda items before the meeting and for providing minutes of each meeting within five working days to all committee members and to the Program Faculty.

3. Duties

The Program Review Committee is charged with the following:

- a. judging awards and grant applications made to the Program
- b. establishing guidelines for courses that may be cross-listed with Women's & Gender Studies
- c. establishing guidelines for core courses within Women's & Gender Studies
- d. approving core and cross-listed courses
- e. advising the Program Director on matters relating to Program development— e.g., hiring needs
- f. developing and implementing the assessment plan.

Part III: Faculty Meetings and Voting

- a. An all-faculty meeting will be held at least once per semester.
- b. All reasonable efforts will be made to reach consensus; when this is deemed not possible, a vote will be held, with a simple majority vote sufficient to decide the question.

Part IV: Procedures for the Ratification and Amendment of the By-Laws

A. Ratification

These by-laws will take effect when they have been ratified by a vote of two-thirds of those voting. An electronic vote will be organized by the Director.

B. Amendments

1. These by-laws may be amended by the initiative of the Program Review Committee or by faculty petition, but each method requires ratification by a faculty vote.
2. Proposals for amendments initiated through faculty petition must be signed by 20% of the voting faculty.
3. The faculty shall vote upon proposed amendments through a ballot conducted only

during the Fall or Spring semesters. To be adopted, a proposed amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the faculty voting.

N.B. In constructing these bylaws, the WGS Program examined models from a variety of departments and institutions. Particularly influential on some portions of this document were the bylaws of the Women's & Gender Studies Programs at Texas A&M University and the University of North Dakota. We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness.