

APPENDIX Q

Request for Authorization to Establish a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Women's and Gender Studies at North Carolina State University

Introduction

North Carolina State University notified General Administration of its intent to plan a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Women's and Gender Studies (05.0207) on April 27, 2005. The university now requests approval to establish the program in March 2006.

Program Description

The Women's and Gender Studies Program at NC State has existed as a minor since 1989 and as an area of emphasis within the Multidisciplinary Studies degree program since 1996. The proposed program is interdisciplinary; it requires 122 hours; and it will be housed in the Interdisciplinary Studies program within the College of the Humanities and Social Sciences. The curriculum helps to fulfill NC State's goal to prepare students to live and to work in an increasingly diverse culture. The proposed Women's and Gender Studies degree is designed to lead students to critically examine and reinterpret existing data and common assumptions about gender and gender identity, to become acquainted with contributions made by women in various fields of endeavor, and to gain insight into feminist theories and methodologies. The degree also enables students to examine both women's and men's lives as they are affected by gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, age, race, class, ethnicity, religion, and national differences. Moreover, students will learn to examine public policies from a feminist perspective, using research and analytic methods that encourage the translation of research into responsible social involvement and leadership.

Program Need

In the United States, there are approximately 600 organized undergraduate and graduate majors or minors in Women's Studies. Of these, more than 200 offer a major and more than 100 offer master's degree programs. There are also more than 75 centers or institutes for research on women, numerous professional journals, and more than 40 feminist presses. NC State students were queried in a spring 2005 survey about their interest in a Women's and Gender Studies major and nearly 90 percent responded that NC State should have a major in Women's and Gender Studies. The 21 women and gender studies courses at NC State have a combined enrollment of nearly 800 students. Similar to liberal arts majors, graduates of Women's and Gender Studies programs often pursue diverse graduate and career objectives, and they function as policy analysts, counselors, teachers, bankers, lawyers, artists, and accountants.

Resources

The proposed degree program has been designed to strengthen existing programs without stressing resources. The teaching load is spread across several departments, and all the courses needed for the major are already in place. Any faculty resource needed will be handled with internal reallocation. It is projected that five students will be admitted into the program each year to manage the program's size. The current resources for offering

the minors and gender studies courses will be used for offering the proposed major in Women's and Gender Studies. The same faculty, library acquisitions, personnel, and equipment will be used to offer the proposed degree program. Expansion into other disciplines, such as science, agriculture and engineering, will be funded by National Science Foundation grants.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve North Carolina State University's request to establish the Bachelor of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies in March 2006.