

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Board of Regents  
**From:** Board Office  
**Subject:** Establishment of an Interdisciplinary Graduate Minor in Women's Studies  
**Date:** January 6, 2003

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**Recommended Action:**

Refer Iowa State University's proposal for a new Interdisciplinary Graduate Minor in Women's Studies to the Board Office and the Interinstitutional Committee on Educational Coordination (ICEC) for review and recommendation.

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**Executive Summary:**

New Graduate Minor Iowa State University is requesting approval of a new Interdisciplinary Graduate Minor in Women's Studies following the required review and approval of the Graduate College and the Faculty Senate.

Option for Masters and Doctoral Students ISU has seen an increase in the number of graduate students from a range of disciplines taking Women's Studies courses in order to complement and enhance their programs of study. The proposed Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Graduate Minor will allow masters and doctoral students to officially integrate the interdisciplinary work on women and gender into their programs of study. The graduate minor is designed to provide students with knowledge of theories and methods within a variety of approaches in feminist scholarship. The program seeks to integrate and synthesize knowledge from many disciplines and to offer students opportunities for systematic study of gender and women's experiences and perspectives in all knowledge fields.


Currently, some ISU graduate students opt for the Graduate Interdisciplinary Studies degree with Women's Studies designated as one of three chosen fields. This option, however, does not allow for combining a degree in a traditional discipline with Women's Studies as a supporting field.


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Program Review  
Questions

The Board of Regents Program Review Questions are attached to  
this memorandum.

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Robert J. Barak

Approved:   
Gregory S. Nichols

h/aa/docket/2003/January/isu7

## A. Regents Program Review Questions (Minors)

### Masters/Ph.D. Degree, Interdisciplinary Minor in Women's Studies

#### 1. Need

- a. How will this proposed program further the education and curriculum needs of the students in this discipline?

While primarily designed to further the educational needs of students in other fields than Women's Studies, students who decide to take the Women's Studies graduate minor at the Masters level could go on to pursue Ph.D.'s in Women's Studies at other institutions, including the University of Iowa.

- b. How does it further the educational and curriculum needs of other units in the college or university?

The Women's Studies interdisciplinary graduate minor will enhance students' programs of study within a number of disciplines, initially in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Design, and the College of Family & Consumer Science. We anticipate that some students in several departments in the remaining colleges will also become interested in and take this option. This graduate minor will further the educational needs of these students by helping them understand interdisciplinary scholarship and allowing them to integrate interdisciplinary work on women and gender into their programs of study. The minor will also strengthen the students' career potentials by expanding their range of job opportunities.

#### 2. Duplication and Collaboration

- a. What programs in this field of study are available in other colleges and universities in Iowa?

University of Iowa has a Ph.D. in Women's Studies, while University of Northern Iowa has the M.A. degree in the field. Neither institution offers a graduate minor. Other colleges and universities in Iowa offer only undergraduate programs in Women's Studies. The proposed Women's Studies interdisciplinary graduate minor would be unique in the state.

- b. With what representatives of these programs have you consulted in developing this proposal? Provide a summary of reactions of each institution consulted. We consulted with the other two Regents universities and they were highly supportive of our proposal. The letters of support are appended to this proposal.

- c. In what ways is the proposed program similar to those mentioned in 2a? In what ways it is different?

As indicated above in 2a, the proposed program is at the graduate level, but no other college or university in Iowa offers a graduate minor.

- d. How does the proposed program supplement the current programs available?  
It provides a different option for study in the field of Women's Studies than those offered by other universities and colleges in the state.
- e. Has the possibility of some kind of inter-institutional program or other cooperative effort been explored?

The Women's Studies Programs at all three Regents' Universities in Iowa have been involved since 1999 in inter-institutional collaboration. We have held annual meetings for Women's Studies programs in Iowa, have shared information about events on our campuses, and have discussed plans for jointly sponsored conferences. In the future, we will explore more possibilities for collaborative programming.

- f. List the Iowa institutions in which articulation agreements are being developed for the proposed program.  
N/A
- g. Provide the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code for the proposed Program.  
05.0207

3. Are there accreditation standards for this program? If so, please provide a copy of the accreditation standards.

While currently there are no accreditation standards, the National Women's Studies Association is working toward establishing standards.

4. Does the proposed program meet minimal national standards for the program, e.g., Council of Graduate Schools or other such bodies?

Yes. It conforms in structure to graduate minors in traditional disciplines. Our proposal was developed after surveying graduate minors in Women's Studies nationally and we have designed a program similar to established and successful Women's Studies graduate minors in such institutions as Cornell, Florida State, Indiana University, Purdue University, University of Minnesota, North Carolina State, Penn State, University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin, and University of North Carolina.

5. Please report any additional resources required.

The program requires only reallocated resources. The Women's Studies Program has been budgeted a half-time position beginning in the fall of 2003. This will allow us to teach the two proposed courses.

Based on the number of POS committees on which Women's Studies faculty serve that deal with topics of women and gender, as well as the recent numbers of students in the undergraduate major, the projected growth in the graduate minor is:

1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year	5 <sup>th</sup> year
5-7 students	8-10 students	10-12 students	12-15 students	15-20 students

Additional resources may be required when the program enrolls 30 or more students. However, that is not anticipated during the first five years of the program. No additional costs (or *incremental increases in expenditures*) will be necessary as a result of the new program for the next three years. Courses will be taught with current faculty allocations, and students will be advised by existing faculty.

6. Please report any reactions of the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education.

The proposal was submitted to the Council on November 27, 2002 and no concerns were expressed.