

Bylaws of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program
University of Pittsburgh
Approved 10/06
Amended 11/16

The Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program (GSWSP) is an interdisciplinary program of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Pittsburgh. As such, the Program operates in accordance with the regulations of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences and the University. Any provision in these Bylaws that is not compatible with provisions of the official policies and regulations of the Dietrich School and University shall be resolved in accordance with the relevant Dietrich School or University regulation.

§1 - The Program

I. Mission and Purpose

- A. The University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program is an interdisciplinary academic program focusing on excellence in teaching and research relating to gender, sexuality, and women. The Program is committed to promoting feminist and LGBTQIA activism, pedagogy, and scholarship that engage with the larger local, national, and global communities. Program offerings provide opportunities for students and faculty to explore the historical development, cultural variations, and changing representations of gender and sexuality as they organize identities, interactions, and institutions and intersect in complex ways with sex, race, class, ethnicity, ability, age, religion, and nation. The Program actively supports campus efforts to make courses and research more inclusive and diverse and to provide opportunities for collaboration and intellectual exchange.
- B. The spirit of this Statement serves as a guide for the interpretation and implementation of all provisions of these Bylaws and for the conduct of all Program business.
- C. Any revision of the Mission Statement must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program Steering Committee members.

II. Policies and Procedures

- A. The policies and procedures of the GSWSP are set forth in the Handbook of the Program.
- B. The GSWSP Director shall oversee the creation and annual updating of the GSWSP Handbook detailing current guidelines and procedures for GSWSP operations relevant for the GSWSP office, GSWSP committees, and the work of the Director and all instructors.

§2 - The Steering Committee

I. Role and Functions

A. The Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program Steering Committee (SC) is the body empowered to make policy decisions and to approve structural and operational proposals for the Program. In consultation with the GSWSP Director, the voting members of the SC make policy decisions about curriculum, assessment, cross-listing, hiring, appointments and affiliations, events programming, and (where University policies and structures permit) non-confidential Program finances. All members of the SC are entitled to participate in SC deliberations and to propose and develop policy and operational initiatives. Members of the SC ordinarily serve each year on at least one standing or *ad hoc* committee, and GSWSP Affiliates are also encouraged to serve on SC committees (see §3).

B. During at least one scheduled meeting each year, the entire SC shall serve as a committee of the whole constituting the Planning and Budget Committee (PBC). As such, the SC shall aid in the preparation of the Program budget each year and establish funding priorities and policies. In preparation for serving as PBC, the Director shall circulate to the SC members at least one week in advance an accurate budget from the current/past budget year and a proposed budget for the coming year.

C. **Standing Committees:** The following shall be constituted as standing committees of the SC:

- Undergraduate Paper Prize Committee
- Tamara Horowitz Graduate Student Paper Prize Committee
- Dissertation Prize Committee
- Student Research Fund Committee

- Instructional Staff Selection Committee
- Programming and Research Committee
- Undergraduate Committee
- Graduate Committee

D. **New Committees:** New standing committees may be formed by the Director as needed. *Ad hoc* committees shall be formed at the discretion of the Director or by a majority vote of members present at an SC meeting.

E. **Committee Staffing:** SC members and GSWSP Affiliates shall be polled at least annually about their preferences for committee service. The Director shall make use of these polls in appointing committee chairs and members.

II. Composition

A. **Elected Members:** Members of the University of Pittsburgh faculty – including tenured/tenure-stream and non-tenure stream faculty – and graduate and undergraduate

students may be elected to a term of SC membership (see §2.III.E) . Elections are not competitive. The SC shall seek to ensure that the Steering Committee includes graduate and undergraduate student members.

1. **Membership eligibility:** In order to be eligible for SC membership, ordinarily a candidate must have attended at least three consecutive meetings of the SC or must have demonstrated a commitment to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies by teaching or taking GSWS or cross-listed courses, undertaking research or coursework related to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, and/or supporting teaching and scholarship related to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies through advising, library work, or community projects. However, the SC may vote to confer membership (see §2.III.E) on a person who does not fulfill these membership criteria.
2. **Obligations of membership:** SC members are expected to attend SC meetings unless they are ill, have requested a leave of absence from the SC, or are prevented from attending by unusual circumstances or important scheduling conflicts. Members ordinarily serve on at least one standing or *ad hoc* committee each year.
3. **Term of membership:** Each member is elected for a three-year term. A member's term ends after three years even if the member takes a leave of absence from SC membership during her or his term, or is otherwise inactive during her or his term of membership (e.g., while on leave or away from the University). Terms also expire when members leave the University (e.g., when a faculty member is no longer employed by the University, or a student graduates or ceases to be enrolled).
4. **Renewal of membership:** A current SC member whose term is about to expire may be elected to an additional term of membership. Terms may be consecutive, and there is no limit to the total number of terms an SC member may serve. Members who have had recent difficulties fulfilling the obligations of membership are directed to consider carefully whether they are prepared to stand for reelection to membership in the governing body of the Program. SC members whose SC membership is not renewed automatically remain Affiliates of the GSWSP at the conclusion of their terms on the SC.
5. **Student membership:** Graduate and undergraduate student members of the SC shall enjoy all the privileges of membership except that they may not, in the SC or on GSWSP committees, review academic work in competition for prizes or funds submitted by persons at or above their academic ranks.
6. **NTS faculty membership:** NTS members of the SC shall enjoy all the privileges of membership except that they may not, in the SC or on GSWSP committees, review academic work in competition for prizes or funds submitted by persons at or above their academic ranks.

B. Members created by GSWSP Appointments:

1. Any faculty member employed by the Program shall serve as a voting member of the SC.
2. The incumbent GSWS instructional staff shall serve as voting members of the SC.

- C. *Ex Officio* members
Representatives from campus organizations shall be members by virtue of office. *Ex officio* members, unless they are also eligible and elected to the SC as student representatives, shall engage in deliberations and represent their organizations but are not voting members.
- a. A representative from the Campus Women's Organization or equivalent organization shall be an SC member *ex officio*.
 - b. A representative from the Rainbow Alliance or equivalent organization shall be an SC member *ex officio*.
 - c. There may be *ex officio* representatives from organizations representing other groups with concerns related to GSWS, such as transgendered people or groups of women in specific fields.

III. SC Meetings

- A. The SC shall ordinarily meet three times per semester, although additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary.
- B. Although SC meetings may be run by whatever process seems to serve the ends of inclusive discussion, careful deliberation, and informed voting, disputes about procedure shall be resolved by the use of *Robert's Rules of Order* unless the relevant protocol in *Robert's Rules of Order* conflicts with the GSWSP Bylaws. The Director shall ensure that a copy of *Robert's Rules* is available at every meeting.
- C. A quorum shall be constituted by the presence of 50% of voting SC members.
- D. In order for SC members to participate knowledgeably in deliberations of the Program, the Director shall ordinarily circulate an agenda for each SC meeting at least three business days in advance of the meeting. Ordinarily, any SC member may recommend items of business to be added to the agenda in advance of the meeting. Items of business raised at an SC meeting without such notification shall not be decided by a vote unless two-thirds of the members present at an SC meeting for which a quorum obtains vote in favor of taking immediate action.
- E. Unless otherwise specified, decisions of the SC shall be made by a simple majority (50% + 1) vote of those present at an SC meeting for which a quorum obtains. The Director shall ensure that an up-to-date list of elected, appointed, and voting-eligible *ex officio* SC members be available at every meeting in the event that a quorum is called.
- F. Members unable to attend a given SC meeting may submit absentee ballots to the Director in advance of the meeting or soon afterward about a question put to a vote at that meeting. However, the majority of those present at a meeting may vote not to accept absentee ballots if they believe that an amendment to the question or the importance of

debate at the meeting makes absentee voting inadvisable. In this case, the question may be decided at the SC meeting by a majority vote, so long as a quorum is present.

G. SC meetings shall ordinarily be open to interested members of the University community, including GSWSP Affiliates and guests. However, the SC may sometimes close a meeting or a portion of a meeting in order for members to discuss a sensitive or confidential matter. Meeting attendees, including *ex officio* members unless they are also elected to the SC, do not count toward a quorum or vote.

H. The GSWSP Director shall ensure that minutes of each SC meeting are recorded, archived, and distributed to the SC membership in a timely fashion.

§3 - Affiliates of the Program

I. Role and Functions

A. Program Affiliates are not automatically SC members and do not bear responsibility for the governance of the Program, but they are supporters and institutional friends of the Program who may participate in SC meetings and serve on GSWSP committees.

B. GSWSP Affiliates are welcome to attend SC meetings and to contribute to SC deliberations, unless the SC closes a meeting. Affiliates shall be notified of SC meetings and shall receive agendas in advance. A GSWSP Affiliate may apply for SC membership as outlined in §2.II.A.1.

C. Affiliates may volunteer to serve on GSWSP committees, which are staffed as outlined in §2.I.D.

II. Mechanism and Criteria for Affiliation

A. Affiliation may be initiated by a University faculty or staff member or student who would like to be affiliated with the GSWSP. Requests for affiliation shall be made to the GSWSP Director.

B. Affiliation requests are approved or declined by the GSWSP Director.

C. Faculty members and graduate students who teach cross-listed courses, former SC members who are not currently serving a term of membership, Visiting Scholars appointed to the GSWSP, the GSWSP Bibliographer, instructors teaching or cross-listing in the Program, liaisons from campus organizations (such as the American Association of University Women, Campus Women's Organization, and Rainbow Alliance), and other members of the University community may become GSWSP Affiliates. Interested graduate and undergraduate students and University staff members may also become Affiliates of the Program.

D. SC members automatically become Affiliates of the GSWSP at the conclusion of their terms on the SC.

E. Affiliation is generally for a 3-year term, renewable without limit. Terms of affiliation for liaisons to the GSWSP, however, are coextensive with the period of service as liaison. Terms also expire when Affiliates leave the University (i.e., when a faculty member is no longer employed by the University, or a student graduates or ceases to be enrolled).

§4 - The Director

I. Role and Functions

A. The Program Director is the executive officer of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program. She or he is appointed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Provost upon election by the SC. The Program Director shall oversee the undergraduate and graduate offerings and degrees or certificates offered by the Program. In general, the Director shall be responsible for executing the Program's Bylaws, regulations, policies, and procedural guidelines, as well as those of the University; for overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the Program; for overseeing operations, files, and staff in the Program office; for administering program finances; and for keeping Program participants informed of matters that concern the Program, including scheduling regular meetings of the SC.

B. The Director shall represent the Program to the administration (including service as an *ex officio* member of the Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Concerns), the University at large, and the profession generally, particularly in hiring and other negotiations and in dealing with student complaints and problems. The Director is encouraged to make connections with University faculty who might be interested in becoming GSWSP affiliates or SC members or in teaching or cross-listing GSWSP courses.

C. The Director shall be responsible for the administration of Program business and shall fulfill the following specific functions:

1. schedule meetings of the SC, promulgate the schedule of SC meetings to SC members, and preside over SC meetings;
2. supervise the Program office staff;
3. supervise and mentor the instructional staff;
4. in consultation with the appropriate committees, administer and coordinate course scheduling and staffing;
 - a. Procedure for approval of new GSWSP undergraduate courses:
 - i. Once each semester (end of October for Fall meeting and February for Spring meeting), the Undergraduate Committee shall meet for the purpose of reviewing new undergraduate course proposals for the Program. Any regular faculty member or full-

time NTS faculty member can submit a proposal. Proposals must include a course description, a sample syllabus with learning goals, a plan for assessing achievement of the learning goals, and a rationale for adding the course to the Program curriculum.

ii. Criteria for Approval of New Courses: Proposed courses should fit within the Program's mission, have anticipated enrollment sufficiently high that the course could be offered at least once every other year, potentially meet requirements for the Major or certificate, clearly fill, on an ongoing basis, a need in the Program curriculum (i.e., not a "topics" course), and not significantly overlap with existing courses.

iii. The Undergraduate Committee will discuss and vote on all proposals; a proposal must be supported by a majority of Undergraduate Committee members to be approved. The Undergraduate Committee will report all course approval decisions to the Steering Committee at the SC meeting following the proposal meeting.

iv. Any proposed course that is not approved will be returned to the sponsoring faculty member with a memo explaining the reasons for the decision and suggestions for revisions where appropriate.

v. The committee may recommend that a proposed course be offered as a special topics course.

b. Procedure for approval of new GSWSP graduate courses.

i. Once each semester (end of October for Fall meeting and February for Spring meeting), the Graduate Committee shall meet for the purpose of reviewing new undergraduate course proposals for the Program. Any regular faculty member or full-time NTS faculty member can submit a proposal. Proposals must include a course description, a sample syllabus with learning goals, a plan for assessing achievement of the learning goals, and a rationale for adding the course to the Program curriculum.

ii. Criteria for Approval of New Courses: Proposed courses should fit within the Program's mission, have anticipated enrollment sufficiently high that the course could be offered at least once every other year, potentially meet requirements for the Major or certificate, clearly fill, on an ongoing basis, a need in the Program curriculum (i.e., not a "topics" course), and not significantly overlap with existing courses.

iii. The Graduate Committee will discuss and vote on all proposals; a proposal must be supported by a majority of Graduate Committee members to be approved. The Graduate Committee will report all course approval decisions to the Steering Committee at the SC meeting following the proposal meeting.

iv. Any proposed course that is not approved will be returned to the sponsoring faculty member with a memo explaining the

reasons for the decision and suggestions for revisions where appropriate.

v. The committee may recommend that a proposed course be offered as a special topics course.

5. supervise applications for SC membership, especially with respect to their fulfillment of eligibility requirements;
6. approve or decline requests for Program affiliation;
7. oversee the appointment and functioning of GSWSP committees;
8. oversee and administer Program finances, and prepare and present a basic budget for the annual SC meeting at which the SC serves as a committee of the whole for purposes of functioning as a Planning and Budget Committee;
9. serve as Advisor on graduate certificate requirements and recommend and recruit faculty to supervise graduate students' research as appropriate;
10. supervise applications for Secondary Appointments and Reappointments to the Program, as outlined in §6.II and III;
11. generate and oversee the Program's print and web materials, ensuring that they are accurate and up-to-date, or delegate these tasks appropriately; and
12. oversee appropriate fundraising and development activities for the Program, in collaboration with the University and the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

D. The Director shall ensure that significant decisions about policies and programming are brought before the SC, that the SC is informed regularly about non-confidential Program finances and expenditures, and that the SC has budget estimates and other materials important for annually serving as a Planning and Budget Committee. However, the Director is empowered to make modest commitments and authorize modest expenditures on behalf of the Program in order to expedite business that is believed to be uncontroversial or routine.

E. The Director shall notify SC members in advance of their terms' expiration and determine whether they wish to stand for election for a new term of membership. The Director shall informally consult with members whose recent Program participation raises questions about their prospects of being elected to a new term of membership.

F. The Director shall notify Program Affiliates in advance of their terms' expiration and determine whether they wish to have their affiliation renewed.

G. The Director shall be responsible for overseeing the creation and annual updating of a GSWSP Handbook detailing current guidelines and procedures for GSWSP operations relevant for the GSWSP office, GSWSP committees, and the work of the Director and other staff (including graduate and undergraduate student advising), as well as the timetables and procedures by which the Program's course offerings are determined and staffed. The Handbook should include a calendar tracking important Program deadlines and desirable schedules of activity.

II. Term of the Director

A. Upon appointment, the Director shall serve for a term of three years, renewable by mutual agreement of the Program, the University, and the Director. The Director shall not serve more than 2 consecutive terms; there is no limit on the total number of terms (or years) a Director may serve.

III. Election of the Director

A. In the fall of a Director's second year, the Director shall appoint someone to chair a Search Committee for the next director. This chair shall if possible be a previous Director employed by the university.

B. Two additional members of the Search Committee who are ineligible or have decided not to run for Director will be elected by email or mail ballot of the SC membership, either as a result of nominations or in the form of a ballot naming all eligible members.

C. The Search Committee shall consult with the current Director to determine her or his willingness to stand for election again, if an additional term is permissible under the provisions of these Bylaws. The Search Committee shall receive nominations and arrange a meeting or series of meetings to allow the candidate or candidates to make a statement and to be interviewed by the SC and interested graduate and undergraduate certificate students. Elections need not be contested.

D. Voting for the new Director shall be by secret ballot, which may be filed as an absentee ballot for SC members unable to attend a meeting, and the outcome reported to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies faculty and students, and to the Dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences with whom the successful candidate shall negotiate the terms of appointment.

§5 - Secondary Academic Appointments to the Program

I. Purpose: As an academic program at the University of Pittsburgh, the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program may recommend Secondary Appointments in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies for University of Pittsburgh faculty members whose research expertise and/or teaching contributes substantially to the mission of the Program. Faculty members with Secondary Appointments will automatically become GSWS Affiliates.

II. Appointment Criteria and Mechanism: Faculty members with pertinent interests may be recommended by the SC for a Secondary Appointment in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies. The Director shall work to identify eligible faculty members, and the Director or any SC member may urge a faculty member to apply for the SC's endorsement. An applicant for this endorsement must send a letter of application and a current *curriculum vitae* to the GSWS Director, who shall review the application and acquire any further information or materials bearing on the applicant's request. The Director shall forward appropriate applications to the

SC. A majority of voting faculty members of the SC present at a meeting for which a quorum obtains shall then determine whether to make a recommendation of Secondary Appointment to the Dean of Faculty in Arts and Sciences. The GSWSP Director shall send a letter, on behalf of the SC, to the Dean requesting approval of the Secondary Appointment according to the guidelines of the School of Arts and Sciences. The Director shall forward appropriate materials to the Dean of Faculty in Arts and Sciences and notify the applicant of any additional materials required by the Dean.

III. Reappointment: Faculty members holding Secondary Appointments in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies must be considered for renewal every three years. The renewal process for Secondary Appointments shall begin at the end of the spring semester prior to the conclusion of a three-year term. The GSWSP Director shall send reminders each spring to faculty members whose three-year terms will expire in the following academic year. Any faculty member wishing to renew a Secondary Appointment must send a request for renewal and a copy of his or her current *curriculum vitae* to the GSWSP Director. These materials will be circulated to the SC membership in advance. The GSWSP Director will understand a majority vote in favor of reappointment to constitute the Program's recommendation of reappointment, and the Director will convey this recommendation to the Dean along with any other materials required.

§6 - Procedures for Amending and Revising the Bylaws

I. Amendments to the Established Bylaws: Once the initial Bylaws are adopted, amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by SC members. Proposed amendments must be added to the agenda of a subsequent meeting by a two-thirds majority of members present at an SC meeting. Proposed amendments must be circulated in writing to the SC membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which a vote shall be taken. Amendments to the Bylaws require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the SC membership. Voting shall be by secret ballot. If a conclusive vote cannot be taken at the meeting, any voting member of the SC not present shall receive an absentee ballot that shall be returned within five business days from the date of distribution.

II. Revisions of the Bylaws: When it appears that a few Amendments to the bylaws are insufficient to the task of rendering the Bylaws fit for appropriately guiding the governance of the Program, the Director shall appoint a Bylaws Committee to review and propose revisions. The Bylaws Committee shall produce and circulate a version with proposed changes and a narrative with the changes and rationales. The proposed revisions must be circulated in writing to the SC membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the proposed package of revisions shall be discussed and a vote shall be taken. Proposed revisions to the Bylaws, as changed during discussion at such a meeting, require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the SC membership. Voting shall be by secret ballot. If a conclusive vote cannot be taken at the meeting, any voting member of the SC not present shall receive an absentee ballot that shall be returned within five business days from the date of distribution.