

ACADEMIC PROGRAM NAME CHANGE JUSTIFICATION FORM

Date: 10/3/2023

Department/Division: Institute for Women's Studies

School/College/Unit: Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Proposed Effective Date: 12/1/2023

PROGRAM NAME CHANGES:

Current Program Name: Institute for Women's Studies

Proposed Program Name: Institute for Women's and Gender Studies

PREFIX CHANGES:

Current Prefix and Name: WMST Women's Studies

Proposed Prefix and Name: WGST Women's and Gender Studies

JUSTIFICATION:

Attach a justification and rationale for the requested changes, and include any relevant documentation. If this change is in response to an accreditation body, please include that language in the proposal.

NOTE: When the new name is effective, the old name will no longer be available and all students will be moved to the new program name.

APPROVALS:

Attach documentation of approval from all involved units.

Institute for Women's Studies Name Change to Institute for Women's and Gender Studies

Rationale for name change

- Accurately reflects our faculty areas of research and teaching.
- More accurately describes our growing curriculum.
- Corresponds to the direction the field has taken in recent decades.
- Will enhance our ability to recruit, retain, and educate students.
- Reflects feedback from student focus groups and academic advising.

Overview

Following an evaluation process, faculty in the Institute for Women's Studies voted on September 20, 2023, to change the name of our unit from the Institute for Women's Studies to the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies.

Adding gender studies to the title of our institute illustrates the existing interdisciplinary foundation of scholarship in our field, which includes a focus on women's lives, narratives, and leadership and extends into the study of gender as an analytical category in social, cultural, economic, political, historical, and scientific dimensions.

The name change is appropriate because:

1. Faculty in the Institute carry out research on gender and teach about gender. Our course titles reflect this:

- WMST 1000: Seminar on Women's Studies and Gender
- WMST 2010: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
- WMST 2010: Introduction to Transnational Women's and Gender Studies
- WMST 3110: Gender, Race, Class, Sexuality
- WMST 3260: Gender and Popular Culture
- WMST 3270: The Gendered Politics of Food
- WMST 4170S/6170S: Environment, Gender, Race, Class
- WMST 4130/6130: Transnational Perspectives on Women and Gender
- WMST 4011: Understanding Research in Women's and Gender Studies
- WMST 4280: Global Perspectives on Gender
- WMST 4770: Women, Gender, and Climate Justice
- WMST 7010: Graduate Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
- WMST 8030: Transnational Gender Studies
- WMST 8290: Seminar in Global Perspectives on Gender

Even our courses whose titles do not explicitly mention gender address issues including gender inequality, gender norms, gender performance, etc.

2. It corresponds with the direction of the field over the last few decades. Most (almost all) of the programs in the region and nation have included "gender studies" in their title. (See Jashik 2009 and Appendix below.)

3. Recruiting and retaining students will be enhanced because “gender” signals a broader focus to many and is therefore likely to attract more students to our courses.
4. Undergraduate students in our annual focus group suggested that this name change would more accurately describe their degrees. Indeed, students in the focus group have consistently recommended a name change over the past several years.

Discernment Process

Faculty discussed the name change in the steering committee meeting on September 20, 2023, and voted unanimously to approve it.

Complementary Initiatives to Grow Majors and Program

The University of Georgia’s Institute for Women’s Studies is a leading undergraduate program in Women’s Studies, offering a major, minor, an undergraduate certificate in LGBTQ Studies, and a graduate certificate. It is ranked 11th in undergraduate degrees awarded in Women’s Studies in the United States (Data USA, 2023).

IWS was recently awarded a \$100,000 Affirming Multivocal Humanities grant from the Mellon Foundation. Three-quarters of the funding is dedicated to undergraduate research and creative projects. The remaining quarter is dedicated to developing a pedagogical network focused on best practices around women’s and gender studies in the state/region. Both of these initiatives will contribute to strengthening and growing our degree programs.

References

Jashik, S. 2009. “Evolution of American Women’s Studies” *Inside Higher Education*.
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/03/27/evolution-american-womens-studies>

“Women’s Studies.” Data USA, datausa.io/profile/datausa.io/profile/cip/womens-studies?redirect=true. Accessed 11 Oct. 2023.

Appendix: Comparisons in Georgia and Nationwide

Institutions with programs named Women's Studies

Only a few universities still have programs called "Women's Studies." These include San Diego State University, University of West Georgia (minor only), Tennessee State University (minor only) and Spelman University (Comparative Women's Studies).

Other Programs in Georgia

Georgia State University:	Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Georgia Southern:	Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Georgia College:	Women and Gender Studies minor
Georgia Southwestern State:	Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies
University of West Georgia:	Women's Studies (minor only)
Georgia Tech University:	Gender studies
Georgia Gwinnett:	Gender Studies
Mercer University:	Women's and Gender Studies
Oglethorpe University:	Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Agnes Scott:	Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
Emory University:	Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies

UGA peer and aspirational institutions

University of South Carolina:	Women's and Gender Studies
Clemson University:	Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
Florida State University:	Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill:	Women's and Gender Studies
North Carolina State University:	Women's and Gender Studies
Louisiana State University:	Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Auburn University:	Women's and Gender Studies
Arizona State University:	Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
University of Maryland:	Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Mississippi State University:	Gender Studies
Oklahoma State University:	Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies
Texas A&M University:	Women's and Gender Studies
Texas Tech University:	Women's & Gender Studies
University of Alabama:	Gender and Race Studies
University of Tennessee:	Women's, Gender, and Sexuality
University of Alabama at Birmingham:	Women's and Gender Studies
University of Arkansas:	Gender Studies
University of Delaware:	Women & Gender Studies
University of Florida:	Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
University of Houston:	Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies
University of Kentucky:	Gender and Women's Studies

University of Mississippi:	Women and Gender Studies
University of Oklahoma-Norman:	Women's & Gender Studies
University of Southern Mississippi:	Women's and Gender Studies
Virginia Tech University:	Women's and Gender Studies
West Virginia University:	Women's and Gender Studies
Pennsylvania State University:	Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
University of Texas at Austin:	Women's & Gender Studies
University of California- Los Angeles:	Gender Studies
University of California-Berkeley:	Gender and Women's Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign:	Gender & Women's Studies
University of Michigan:	Women's and Gender Studies
University of Minnesota:	Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies
University of Wisconsin:	Gender & Women's Studies
University of Virginia:	Women, Gender & Sexuality