

Approved by the Board of Trustees,
May 19, 2005

Board Meeting
May 19, 2005

ESTABLISH THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
WITH A MAJOR IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES,
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, CHICAGO

Action: Approve the Establishment of the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences with a Major in Gender and Women's Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Chicago

Funding: No Funding Required

The Chancellor at Chicago, with the advice of the Chicago Senate and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, recommends the establishment of a new undergraduate degree, the Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences with a Major in Gender and Women's Studies (GWS).

Over the past generation, gender has emerged as one of the most vital areas of research and teaching in higher education. Most professional associations in the liberal arts and sciences now have special divisions or sections devoted to the study of women, gender, and sexuality. In fields such as history, literature, psychology, and sociology, to name a few, scholarship on gender has experienced explosive growth, and the curriculum in liberal arts and sciences departments has expanded to include courses on gender at every level of study.

The first course in Women's Studies was taught at UIC in 1973. By the end of the 1970s, an undergraduate minor had been established, and the first director of the program had been hired. In the 1990s, the program secured its own faculty lines and

began hiring faculty whom it later tenured. Today, there are twelve faculty appointments in the Gender and Women's Studies Program, and many faculty members in other departments and schools offer courses that are cross-listed with GWS.

Creating an undergraduate major in Gender and Women's Studies responds to important trends in society, developments in higher education, and the growth of the program at UIC. The program already has a well-developed curriculum and a large enough faculty to sustain a major.

As an interdisciplinary major, it especially offers the opportunity to look at a critical contemporary issue through the multiple perspectives of the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Graduates of Gender and Women's Studies programs are prepared to enter a wide range of occupations. Emphasizing essential skills of writing, research, analysis, and critical thinking, GWS programs at other universities have seen their graduates take jobs in social services, criminal justice, publishing, teaching, educational administration, health services, business, law, medicine, and public policy advocacy.

Students admitted to the Gender and Women's Studies major will be required to complete a minimum of 120 semester credit hours, distributed as follows:

- (1) English composition, foreign language; humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences general education; cultural diversity course;
- (2) four required core GWS courses;
- (3) four courses from thematic clusters in Gender and Women's Studies; and
- (4) elective courses to make up the 120 hours.

The new Gender and Women's Studies major can be created without the need for any new state resources. The faculty members who will deliver the instruction for the proposed program are already in place.

The board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval, pending further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.