

PROPOSED Bylaws of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program

University of Pittsburgh

Approved 08/21/24

The Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program (GSWSP, the Program) 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 incompatible with provisions of the official policies and regulations of the Dietrich School or the University shall be resolved in accordance with the relevant Dietrich School or University regulation. Additional Program policies are specified in the Program Handbook; those policies must conform with, and are superseded by, these bylaws.

§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 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 shall be treated as an amendment to these bylaws and must be approved according to the mechanism articulated in **§5.I**.

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 propose updates to the GSWSP Handbook each March to the Executive Committee (EC; see **§3.V.A**) for its review and approval.

C. The EC has the ultimate authority to interpret and apply these policies and procedures in case of any disagreements.

§2 – Program Membership

I. Full Program Membership comprises all voting and non-voting members.

II. Voting Members.

A. Primary Faculty. The Primary Faculty comprises all full-time faculty members whose primary appointments are in the GSWSP.

B. Secondary Faculty. The Secondary Faculty are those full-time Appointment stream or Tenure stream faculty members whose primary appointments are outside of the Program but who have been approved for Secondary Appointments in the GSWSP by the EC, DSAS, and Provost.

1. Criteria for appointment as a Secondary Faculty member

a. Faculty eligible for Secondary appointments include those whose active, ongoing contributions in research, teaching, or mentoring align closely with the Program and whose service demonstrates a strong and consistent commitment to GSWSP.

b. To be eligible for a Secondary appointment, a faculty member must have been Affiliated with the Program for at least two years (see **§2.III.A**).

c. All holders of Secondary appointments at the time of the approval of these bylaws will continue in their appointments until the expiration of their current terms, at which point they will be renewed according to the same procedures as other Secondary faculty (see **§2.II.B.3**).

2. Expectations of Secondary Faculty members. Secondary faculty should demonstrate an ongoing commitment to research, teaching, mentorship, and service through some combination of:

a. regular research, scholarship, and/or publication on topics related to gender, sexuality, feminism, or women's studies;

b. teaching GSWSP core or cross-listed courses;

c. active mentoring of GSWSP graduate students;

d. program service (with a minimum expectation of service on 1 standing committee annually and such other standing or ad-hoc committees as determined in consultation with the Director and with attention to the equitable distribution of labor across the Program).

3. Appointment of Secondary Faculty.

- a. At the beginning of March each year, the Director will issue a formal call for interest in applying for secondary faculty status. The Director will notify any current secondary faculty whose terms are expiring that they must re-apply to maintain their appointments.
- b. All faculty who wish to be considered must submit a current cv and a brief (1-2 page) statement of eligibility framed in term of the criteria set out in **§2.II.B.1.**
- c. There is no limit to the number of terms a faculty member may serve.
- d. The Director will present application materials to the EC by the beginning of April. All candidates must be approved by the EC before being recommended to the Provost.
- e. Applicants receive voting rights provisionally upon approval by the EC; their terms formally begin and end as specified in the Provost's letter of appointment. Any applicant not approved by the Provost loses their voting rights upon formal notification of the Provost's decision.
- f. Secondary Faculty members seeking renewal of their appointments retain full rights and status within the Program.

C. Other Program Faculty. Visiting and part-time GSWSP faculty whose appointments are in the GSWSP may elect to be Voting Members of the Program.

D. Primary, Secondary, and Other Program Faculty together with the GSWSP Director constitute the Voting Members of the program. Each person has only one vote.

III. Non-voting Members

A. Program Affiliates. Program Affiliates are full-time or part-time faculty, staff, students, or community members whose research, teaching, course of study, or professional work aligns with the mission of the Program and who demonstrate willingness to participate in the activities of the program, broadly understood.

1. Eligibility. Any qualified person may request an affiliation by submitting a c.v. (or resumé) and a short cover letter (including by email) to the Director. The Director and the EC should encourage qualified persons to request affiliation.
2. The EC shall approve all requests for Affiliate status by majority vote.
3. Expectations of Program Affiliates. Program Affiliates should be involved with the Program in whatever way makes most sense given their roles and expertise. They should be willing to serve from time to time on standing or ad-hoc committees for the Program, participate in programming, or otherwise support the Program through their efforts.

Participation must be appropriate to a Program Affiliate's role at the University and consistent with Dietrich School and University policy.

4. The list of Program Affiliates should be reviewed each April by the Director to ensure that it remains current.

B. Teaching Fellows. Teaching fellows are graduate students who act as instructors of record for GSWS courses. They are Program Affiliates ex officio.

C. Visiting Scholars. The EC may, by a majority vote, recommend Visiting Scholar status for scholars not otherwise affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh. Visiting Scholars will be recommended for appointments for up to two semesters. They are Program Affiliates ex officio. Upon approval by the EC, the Director shall initiate the formal University appointment process.

D. Other Members. Alumni, students, and friends of the Program may be made Members at the discretion of the Director, for purposes of inclusion on mailing lists, etc.

IV. Program meetings

A. The full Program Membership shall be convened at least twice annually, including at (or just before) the start and at the end of each academic year.

B. The Voting Members convene for specific purposes as described herein.

§3 – Program Officers, Structure, and Governance

I. The Director

A. Role and Functions

1. The Program Director is the executive officer of the GSWSP. The Director is appointed by the Dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences upon recommendation by the Program (see **§3.1.B**) to a three (3) year term. That term may be renewed once, at which point the Director must step down for at least one term before being eligible to serve as Director again. The Director is an ex officio member of the EC.

2. The Director has general responsibility for implementing the Program's bylaws, policies, and procedures, as well as those of the University; for overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the Program; for convening EC and Program meetings and for appointing Program officers, with the approval of the EC; for communicating with the Membership; for preparing the Program's budget and presenting it to the EC for approval; for maintaining records of the Program's activities; and for promoting the Program and its Mission throughout the School, the University, and the wider community.

3. The Director shall represent the Program in meetings of Chairs and Directors, the Humanities Council, the University Senate, the Academic Leadership Team, Provost's Advisory Committee on Women's Concerns, and in other such administrative forums where their presence may be required or advantageous for the Program.

4. The Director is responsible for overseeing the Primary Faculty in matters related to their professional advancement and promotion.

a. The Director, in consultation with each Primary Faculty member who holds the rank of Teaching Assistant or Teaching Associate Professor, shall appoint a mentor for that faculty member. Mentors will be drawn from among the Secondary Faculty or the Program Affiliates, as appropriate given their areas of substantive expertise.

b. The Director will conduct annual assessments of each Primary Faculty member (see §4.1).

5. The Director shall ensure that accurate and up-to-date records of all matters of importance to the Program—including but not limited to the Bylaws, the Program Handbook, personnel records (including search materials, annual review materials, review letters, and documentation surrounding retention and promotion), meeting minutes, budgets, lists of Secondary Faculty and Program Affiliates Program Membership in all categories—shall be securely maintained and transmitted to the next Director.

B. Eligibility. Any Primary or Secondary Faculty member at or above the rank of Associate is eligible to serve as Director of the Program.

C. Selection of the Director

1. In September of the final year of the Director's term, the Director shall appoint an election manager; the election manager should be a current member of the EC who is not interested in running for Director. At that time, if the incumbent Director is eligible for another term, they will inform the election manager of their intentions with respect to seeking a second term.

2. The election manager will issue a call for nominations to the Membership (informing them of the incumbent's intention to seek a second term, if applicable). Individuals may self-nominate; in the case that someone is nominated by a colleague, the election manager shall confirm with the nominee their interest in standing for office.

3. The EC, excluding any members seeking the office of Director, will interview all the candidates and determine whether, in its view, each is qualified for the position. This review should take place by the end of October.

a. Any disqualified candidate may be restored to the ballot by petition of 25% of the Voting Faculty.

b. A petition may consist of emails of support sent from a voting member's pitt.edu verified email address.

4. The election manager will organize a forum in which all Program members interview each of the candidates, one at a time. This should take place before Thanksgiving.

5. Following these meetings, the election manager shall distribute a secret ballot via DocuSign (or whatever equivalent technology the University may be using) to the Voting Faculty.

6. To be elected, a candidate must win an absolute majority of the votes of the Voting Faculty and an absolute majority of the votes of the Primary Faculty (a *concurrent majority*).

a. In case there are more than two candidates, the election will take place using ranked choice voting. When all the votes are tabulated, if no candidate has a concurrent majority, the candidate with the fewest votes will be eliminated and votes for that candidate redistributed to the voter's second (third, fourth...) choice until a winner emerges. Voters should be clearly instructed NOT to rank candidates whom they do not wish to see elected.

b. In the event that there are only two candidates (remaining) and neither achieves a concurrent majority, the election is decided by a majority vote of the EC, excluding any members who may be live candidates.

7. The name of the selected candidate shall be announced to the Voting Faculty and forwarded to the Dean by the end of the fall term.

D. Recommendation for Removal or Vacancy

1. The EC may, in extraordinary circumstances, recommend to the Dean that a Director be removed from office prior to the completion of their term. Such a recommendation must be unanimous (excluding the Director).

a. Should the EC recommend removal, a letter signed by all EC members should be sent to the Dean detailing the reasons for the recommendation.

3. Should a Director step down or be removed from office prior to the end of their term, selection of a new Director shall follow the process described herein. The process should be coordinated with the Dean's office and should begin as soon as is feasible, with the schedule preserved and the dates adjusted as necessary.

3. In the event of any vacancy, the EC shall recommend to the Dean an Interim Director from its membership until such time as a new election can be held. If a Director steps down during the third year of the term, and a new Director has already been elected,

that person shall be offered the opportunity to serve as Interim Director until the beginning of their elected term.

II. Director of Undergraduate Studies

A. The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUGS) has primary responsibility for overseeing the undergraduate programs and curriculum of the Program.

B. The DUGS is appointed by the Director from among the Primary Faculty to a three-year term. While there are no formal term limits, rotation in office is encouraged. The appointment must be approved by the EC. The Director may, after consulting with the EC, remove the DUGS in case of improper performance.

C. The DUGS chairs the Undergraduate Committee (see **§3.V.B.**) and is an ex-officio member of the EC.

D. The DUGS is the advisor for undergraduate majors and minors.

III. Director of Graduate Studies

A. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) has primary responsibility for overseeing the Program's graduate certificates and curriculum.

B. The DGS is a member of the graduate faculty appointed by the Director from among the Primary Faculty, Secondary Faculty, or Program Affiliates. (An Affiliate who becomes DGS should be appointed to the Secondary Faculty.) The Director may, after consulting with the EC, remove the DUGS in case of improper performance.

C. The DGS chairs the Graduate Committee (see **§3.V.C.**) and is an ex-officio member of the EC.

IV. Officers

A. For the purposes of these bylaws, the Director, DUGS, and DGS are the Officers of the Program.

V. Committees

A. Executive Committee

1. Membership

a. The Executive Committee (EC) consists of the Director, the DUGS, the DGS, two members of the Primary faculty, and two members of the Secondary Faculty. Each of the members named here shall have one vote on the Committee.

i. The Primary Faculty members serve staggered two-year terms and rotate. The first cohort shall be chosen by lot, with one member chosen for a 1-year term and the other for a two-year term. Subsequently, as

each member rotates off, a replacement is chosen by lot from among those who have not already served, until all incumbent faculty have served once, at which point the same procedure will be re-initiated (with the immediate past member excluded for one year). Any Officer exiting from their administrative role enters the rotation at the end of the queue.

ii. The Secondary Faculty members on the EC serve two-year terms at the invitation of the Director and in consultation with the DEI committee (see **§3.V.D.5**). Terms are not renewable, but faculty can serve repeated, non-sequential terms. These terms are staggered, and one of the initial appointments shall serve a one-year term, which in this case only may be immediately renewed.

b. Should any Primary Faculty member be unable or unwilling to serve for any reason, the Director may postpone that person's service until such time as the person is able to fulfill the role. Postponement should only be used in cases of compelling need (e.g., family, medical, or academic leave); service on the EC is a regular expectation of Primary Faculty members.

c. Should any Primary Faculty member need to step down early in case of compelling need, a replacement will be selected from among the eligible Primary Faculty according to the usual procedure. If less than half of the unfinished term remains, the new member completes the unfinished term and continues into a regular 2-year term. If more than half remains, the new member completes the unfinished term and rotates off of the EC.

2. Functions

a. The EC is the executive decision-making body for the Program. It approves membership (see **§2**), approves the annual Program budget, qualifies candidates for election for Director (see **§3.I.C.3**), and provides advice and oversight of GSWSP programming, research activities, strategic planning, policies and procedures, and other initiatives. It also has special responsibilities with respect to the revision of the Mission and Bylaws (as specified in **§1.I.C** and **§5.I**). The EC serves as the Planning and Budget Committee of the Program. None of these functions overrides the Director's agreement with the Dean of DSAS, the relevant portions of which should be shared with EC members.

3. The EC meets monthly and as necessary, convened by the Director.

4. The EC must have a quorum to vote on membership, approve the annual budget, qualify candidates for election, or award research or teaching grants to faculty. A quorum shall be 5 members. All members must vote on revisions to the Mission or

Bylaws. In case the EC should decide an inconclusive election, all members eligible to vote must do so (see **§3.I.C.6.b.**).

B. Undergraduate Committee

1. The Undergraduate Committee comprises the Primary Faculty, and at least one member of the Secondary Faculty (appointed by the Director). It is chaired by the DUGS, who is an ex officio member.
2. The Undergraduate Committee has responsibility for:
 - a. approving new course proposals (see **§3.IV.B.3**);
 - b. approving courses for cross-listing (see **§3.IV.B.4**);
 - c. recommending changes to the undergraduate curriculum or degree requirements (subject to a veto by 2/3 of the EC);
 - d. reviewing and approving the undergraduate course scheduling and staffing.
3. The Undergraduate Committee shall meet monthly and as necessary, convened by the DUGS.
4. New course approval process.
 - a. Once each semester (at its October and February meetings), the Undergraduate Committee shall meet for the purpose of reviewing proposals for new undergraduate courses in the Program. Any TTS or AS Primary or Secondary Faculty member may 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.
 - b. 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 minors; 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. New courses that cannot be offered regularly should be offered as "topics" courses instead.
 - c. 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.

d. 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.

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

5. The Undergraduate Committee has responsibility for determining which courses should satisfy the major or minor requirements for GSWSP.

6. The Undergraduate Committee shall verify that all new faculty, including visiting faculty, graduate teaching fellows, and graduate teaching assistants are assigned pedagogical mentors.

C. Graduate Committee

1. The Graduate Committee comprises three members of the Primary or Secondary Faculty appointed by the Director. It is chaired by the DGS, who is a fourth, ex officio member. At least half of the committee's total membership should be members of the graduate faculty.

2. The Graduate Committee has responsibility for the Program's graduate certificate and curriculum, including:

a. approving new course proposals (see **§3.IV.C.3**);

b. overseeing the graduate curriculum, including certificate requirements, mentorship, and graduate student teaching;

c. determining which courses will satisfy program credential requirements (i.e., "cross-listed" courses for the certificate);

d. supporting the DGS in other matters relating to graduate student training and professional development.

e. selecting awardees for the Program's graduate student awards.

3. New course approval process:

a. Once each semester (at its October and February meetings), the Graduate Committee shall meet for the purpose of reviewing proposals for new graduate courses in the Program. Any qualified Program member who is a member of the graduate faculty may propose a new course. 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.

b. 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 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. New courses should only be approved if they will be offered regularly.

c. 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.

d. 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.

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

D. Standing Committees

1. The Undergraduate and Graduate committees are standing committees of the Program.
2. Iris Marion Young Award committee. The IMYA committee oversees the process for selecting award winners and for organizing the Award Ceremony.
3. Awards and Prizes committee. The Awards and Prizes committee is responsible for overseeing the selection of winners for all faculty and undergraduate awards and prizes (other than the IMYA), including small grants, internships, honorary prizes, and other competitive awards and positions. It is not a hiring, retention, or promotion committee.
4. Programming committee. The Programming committee plans and helps to organize events for the Program, including any research themes.
5. The DEI committee works to support and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Program, including in its staffing, policies, and programs. It coordinates with the Graduate and Undergraduate committees about DEI in the curriculum.
6. New standing committees may be created by vote of the EC.

E. Ad hoc Committees.

1. The Director may create such ad-hoc committees as facilitate the conduct of Program business, with the assent of the EC, including search committees, program or events committees, and renewal and promotion committees (see §4). The EC may also request that the director form such committees.

2. Except as specified above, no ad-hoc committee may be created that supersedes the authority of any standing committee in its domain as described herein.

§4 – Primary Faculty Renewal and Promotion

I. Criteria for Renewal and Promotion

The EC shall develop and maintain explicit guidelines for conducting annual performance evaluations and promotion at all ranks. These criteria and guidelines should be published in the GSWSP Handbook and clearly communicated to Primary Faculty annually. Faculty should also be apprised of any changes. Should changes to the criteria or guidelines be made in the midst of a faculty member's contract, that faculty member has the option to elect that their next retention or promotion decision be based on the criteria in place at the start of the current (pre-change) contracts.

II. Annual reviews

A. All Primary Faculty members at the rank of Assistant or Associate will develop, in consultation with the Director, a set of plans and goals for their work at the start of each academic year.

B. The Director will conduct annual reviews of Primary Faculty at the end of each academic year.

1. Each spring, Primary Faculty members will submit faculty activity reports summarizing their accomplishments for the year, including (when relevant) a discussion of their progress and performance in relation to the plans and goals they have jointly identified (see **§4.2.A**). The Director will take these evaluations into account when issuing their own assessment of the faculty member, in the form of an annual review letter.

2. Faculty may choose to respond to these assessments in the form of a written letter. The Director will acknowledge receipt of such responses in writing (email) and may respond with a modified assessment. Whatever the case, the original assessment and any responses and modifications shall be retained by the faculty member and the Program.

3. The self-evaluations, Director's assessments, responses to the assessment from the faculty member, and modified assessments will become part of the permanent employment record of the faculty member and consulted in cases of renewal and promotion.

III. Promotion

A. All Primary Faculty members are eligible for promotion according to the criteria outlined by the DSAS and the Program (see **§4.I**).

B. When a candidate is eligible for promotion, the Director shall appoint a five-member promotion committee from among the Voting Membership of the Program to manage and

evaluate the candidate's case. The Committee shall consist of members above the analogous rank of the candidate for promotion.

1. In the unlikely event that there are insufficient faculty above analogous rank among the Voting Membership, the Director shall, in consultation with the EC, enlist Program Affiliates to round out committees.

C. By September 15, candidates for promotion shall submit dossiers, the contents of which are specified in the Program Handbook.

1. The contents of the dossier, with all relevant materials, shall be made available to the Voting Members of the Program who are above the analogous rank.

D. The committee evaluates the dossier and makes a formal recommendation, in the form of a report, to the Director, by October 15.

E. The Director circulates the report to all "rank above" Voting Members as defined by DSAS and calls a meeting of those Members to discuss the case.

1. Following the meeting, the Director shall distribute a secret ballot via DocuSign (or whatever equivalent technology the University may be using) to secure the votes of the Qualified Voting Members.

F. The Director shall convey the committee report, the Director's summary of the discussion, and Director's recommendation to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, along with the other required material for the promotion dossier.

1. The Director's summary shall be a summary of the discussion among the Qualified Voting Members and the Director's own assessment of the case. If the Director's recommendation differs from the vote of the Qualified Voting Members, the reasons for the disagreement shall be clearly explained.

§5 – Procedures for Amending and Revising the Bylaws

I. Amendments to the Established Bylaws

A. The EC may recommend amendments to these bylaws to the full Voting Membership.

1. Proposed amendments must be circulated to the Voting Membership two weeks in advance of a special meeting held to discuss the proposals.

- a. The first part of the meeting shall be open to all Program members.

- b. The second part of the meeting shall be open only to Voting members.

2. Following the special Program meeting and any amendments, a summary of the discussion and the final proposed text, along with the reasons for any alterations from the previously circulated text, shall be distributed to all Voting Members.

3. The Director shall distribute a secret ballot via DocuSign (or whatever equivalent technology the University may be using) to determine the views of the faculty. Amendments require a 2/3 majority of the Voting Membership and a majority of the Primary Faculty to pass.

B. 20% of the Voting Membership of the Program may propose an amendment for consideration to the EC.

1. If the EC approves the proposal by a majority vote, the process outlined in **§5.I.A** is followed.

2. If the EC rejects the proposal, it must respond in writing to the petitioning Members explaining its rationale.

a. The petitioning Members may, by securing the support of a majority of the Voting Membership, override the decision of the EC.

b. Support may take the form of an email sent from a Voting Member's pitt.edu verified email address.

c. If an override effort is successful, the text of the proposed amendment will be circulated, discussed, amended, and voted upon following the procedures outlined in **§5.I.A.1-3**.

II. Major revision of the bylaws

A. If the EC determines that the existing bylaws are no longer appropriate for guiding the governance of the Program, it may, by a 2/3 vote, form an ad-hoc committee to review and propose major revisions, directing the committee to address specific matters or to undertake a comprehensive review.

B. The bylaws committee shall consult widely with the Program Membership in open forums and shall solicit input through anonymous surveys.

C. The bylaws committee shall, consistent with its charge from the EC, produce and submit to the Voting Membership its proposed changes and a narrative explaining the rationale for those changes.

D. The proposed revision shall be circulated, discussed, and voted upon following the procedures outlined in **§5.I.A.1-3**.