Women and Gender Studies

Alumni Survey Report
(Summary Version)

Compiled by:
Office of Academic Assessment
University of Southern Maine
Fall 2012
USM Women and Gender Studies (WGS) Alumni Survey 2012

N=32

1. Major of student:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A WGS major</td>
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<tr>
<td>A WGS minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A double major in WGS and another discipline</td>
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2. I graduated from USM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to 1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between 1990-1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between 1995-2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between 2001-2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between 2005-2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between 2009-2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>In 2012</td>
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<td>Left program</td>
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3. "Being able to major in Women and Gender studies was a very important factor in my decision to get a degree from USM"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have no opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. “My education in Women and Gender Studies at USM improved my written communication skills.”

- Strongly agree 81.3%
- Somewhat agree 15.6%
- Somewhat disagree 3.1%
- Strongly disagree 0%
- Have no opinion 0%

5. “My education in Women’s and Gender Studies has improved my critical thinking skills.”

- Strongly agree 90.6%
- Somewhat agree 6.3%
- Somewhat disagree 3.1%
- Strongly disagree 0%
- Have no opinion 0%

6. “My education in Women’s and Gender Studies has improved my oral communication skills.”

- Strongly agree 53.1%
- Somewhat agree 40.6%
- Somewhat disagree 3.1%
- Strongly disagree 3.1%
- Have no opinion 0%

7. “Overall, I would describe the quality of teaching in the Women and Gender Studies program as:

- Excellent 87.5%
- Good 9.4%
- Adequate 3.1%
- Less than adequate 0%
- Poor 0%
8. If you were a WGS major, did you complete an internship or a thesis as your capstone project during your final semester in the program?

- Internship 69.2%
- Thesis 30.8%

9. Did the internship placement assist you professionally after graduating from USM (in securing employment or in obtaining admission to a graduate program):

- The internship was very useful professionally 27.8%
- The internship was somewhat useful professionally 38.9%
- The internship had no impact professionally 27.8%
- The internship had a negative impact professionally 5.6%

10. If you completed a thesis, did the process of writing the thesis assist you professionally after graduating from USM (in securing employment or in obtaining admission to a graduate program):

- Writing a thesis was very useful professionally 50.0%
- Writing a thesis was somewhat useful professionally 20.0%
- Writing a thesis had no impact professionally 30.0%
- Writing a thesis had a negative impact professionally 0%
11. My current occupational status is best described as:

- I am employed in the private sector 40.0%
- I am employed in the public sector (government employment) 10.0%
- I am employed in the non-profit sector 36.7%
- I am enrolled in a professional degree program (teacher education, law, social work, business) 6.7%
- I am enrolled in a post-graduate academic degree program but have not yet been admitted. 3.3%
- I am engaged in full-time parenting or other uncompensated labor. 0%
- I am unemployed 3.3%

Additional responses about my occupational status:
- I am self-employed, or own a creative business.
- My occupation is not related to my major.
- I am doing a variety of things, finishing 2nd degree, writing a book, etc.

12. Did any of the following impede your progress to completion of a BA with 4 years?

- No impediments 27.6%
- The need to engage in paid employment 44.8%
- Family/personal responsibilities 24.1%
- Scheduling of required classes 3.4%
Additional responses related to progress of degree:
• I had completed many requirements at a previous time, making it possible to finish.
• Work-study funds helped me finish my degree in 4 years.
• Health issues or substance abuse issues impeded my progress.
• Personal issues impeded my progress, but department staff was helpful.
• Working many hours while attending college impeded my learning.

13. Looking back, was there an area within feminist studies that you now feel was under-developed/under-represented in the WGS curriculum during the time you were completing your BA? If so, what course or course would you recommend be offered?
• Economics and public policy; women in government and entrepreneurship
• Feminist women's health topics
• More on social justice
• The theory course was under developed
• A quantitative/qualitative research class
• Modern feminist/political thought
• History of US women and feminism explored further
• Queer gender and trans-feminism
• Ethics and philosophies regarding 2nd and 3rd world realities
• Anthropology of Sex and Gender was never offered
• Careers for the WGS major

14. USM WGS is working on a Master’s degree proposal. When the MA is approved, would you be interested in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>Enrolling in a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>Enrolling in several linked classes that led to a graduate certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>Enrolling in the Master’s program to obtain an MA in WGS</td>
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</table>
15. Looking back at your experience in the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at USM, it is a field of study that you would recommend to current and future students;

- I would strongly advise students to enroll in WGS classes or major in WGS 81.3%
- I would somewhat advise students to enroll in WGS classes or major in WGS 15.6%
- I would somewhat advise against students enrolling in WGS classes or major in WGS 0%
- I would strongly advise against students enrolling in WGS classes or majoring in WGS 0%
- I would have no recommendation 3.1%

Additional responses about experiences in WGS program:
- Women’s studies combined with another major gave a good foundation of understanding race, gender, class and systems of power.
- WGS program was life-changing and eye-opening, and would recommend to all students due to the ideology and it helps promote an activist-oriented lifestyle.
- WGS helped me find my own interests and explore them deeply.
- WGS is a strong program, important issues, great faculty.
- WGS helped me develop critical thinking skills, and challenged my thinking.
- Getting a job is difficult with a liberal arts degree, so more marketable skills would have been helpful to be implemented in the program.
- WGS gave me a language to have a voice.
- I feel that every student at USM would benefit immensely from an introductory course in WGS as part of their core curriculum.
- WGS promotes human compassion and admiration of diversity.
- WGS has an interdisciplinary style which allows students to tailor their experience to their interests, and works to include non-traditional students who have had negative
school experiences in the past.
- WGS has informed my thinking and decision-making since graduating.
- WGS is an excellent education and prepared me for Master’s level coursework.
- WGS has helped me navigate the labor market in my male-dominated field.

**Additional responses about quality of teaching in WGS program:**
- The quality of teaching was excellent in most courses.
- Most professors in the WGS program go beyond their roles to assure student success; by taking time to tutor, advocate and inform students.
- Some professors in the WGS program live and practice what they teach, that is, being active-oriented, and very inspiring.
- Most professors think outside the box and teach students real world topics, but some topics need to be related to student’s future goals after graduation.
- The wide variety of courses offered was impressive, and included lots of diverse content.
- The faculty often held high standard in regards to their students work, writing, skills, and communication.
- The courses in WGS were more challenging than other majors, and the faculty were often more rigorous, but passionate and fully engaged.
- One concern was the turnover of advisors; so some consistency would have helped me develop a better relationship with faculty.
- The WGS embraced cross-curriculum education, often cross listing WGS classes in other disciplines, thereby exposing WGS students regularly to other models of thinking.