ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW-WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM

PREFACE:

John Carroll University is a Jesuit Catholic university (one of twenty-eight in the United States), founded in 1886, and located in University Heights, Ohio. Our mission is to “inspire individuals to excel in learning, leadership, and service in the region and in the world.” Throughout our 127-year history, we have dedicated ourselves to providing Jesuit education not only to enrich the lives of graduates, but also to challenge them to enrich the lives of others in order to create a more just society. These aspirations are expressed in our shared Jesuit mission of forming “men and women for others.”

We form critical thinkers through a curriculum founded on Ignatian pedagogy. We support our faculty in their roles as scholar-teachers, believing that engaged researchers who invite students into their specialized areas of discovery offer an extraordinary learning experience. We ensure that every student has a faculty advisor and that classroom learning is extended through meaningful co-curricular programs.

Our success is evidenced by extraordinarily strong retention rates, high persistence rates, and enviable four-year graduation rates. Our alumni make a difference, whether they rise to prominence or work with integrity and dedication in their careers and communities.

Operating on a semester calendar, John Carroll University is a four-year, not-for-profit university which offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees through the College of Arts and Sciences and the John M. and Mary Jo Boler School of Business.

Currently there are 3,525 undergraduate and 387 graduate students enrolled for an enrollment total of 3,912 students. Of the total 417 faculty members, 193 are full-time and 224 are part-time employed. The market value of John Carroll University’s endowment as of 5/31/14 is $205,196,988. (Fact Book, 2015-16)

The Women’s and Gender Studies Program (WGS) is housed in the Office of Interdisciplinary Programs located in the basement of the Administration Building. Its current and founding director is Katherine M. Gatto, Ph.D., Professor of Spanish and Hispanic Studies, Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures. Currently the program lacks a secretary or an office assistant, and the office is locked. The program officially began in January, 2013, when Dr. Gatto offered, for the very first time in the history of John Carroll University, WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies. The WGS currently offers a major and a minor. The major in WGS requires 36 semester hours of coursework: Three women’s and gender studies courses (nine hours)-WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies; WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context; WG 450, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. It also requires nine additional courses to be distributed as follows: three courses (nine hours) from the humanities; three courses (nine hours) from the social sciences, including psychological science; three courses (nine hours) from the list of approved women’s and gender studies courses. At least nine of the 27 additional hours must be at the 300 or 400 level. The minor in WGS complements a wide variety of majors and requires 18 semester hours of coursework: three women’s and gender studies courses (nine hours)-WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies; WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context; WG 450, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. Three additional courses (nine hours) from the list of approved women’s and gender studies courses. No more than two of these courses may be from the same
discipline. Normally, at least one will be from the humanities and one from the social sciences. The three WGS core courses are offered every year, with usually one or two sections of WG 101 every semester and with WG 301 and WG 450 offered in the spring semester. In addition WG 299 courses are also offered every semester; these are occasional courses with different subject matter related to WGS, e.g., Women and Violence: Local and Global; Gender, Work, and Family; Introduction to Queer Studies; Women of Africa: Literature and Film; Women’s World Cinema; Hispanic Women Writers. The following departments and/or disciplines have regularly contributed to the course offerings on a by semester or annual basis: Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures, Communication and Theatre Arts, English, History, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychological Science, Sociology and Criminology, Theology and Religious Studies.

I. MISSION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

A. Mission Statement:
The Women’s and Gender Studies Program seeks to instill in students a desire to excel in learning and a commitment to global engagement to bring about gender equity in the pursuit of humane values and social justice. (Excellence, Engagement, Equity are the three “buzz” words I have created to reflect the underlying rationale for the program. They appear in the second updated version of the initial brochure.) The mission statement summarizes the essence of some of the ideas present in the initial proposal for the program created by Dr. Dianna Taylor and Dr. Brenda Wirkus from the Department of Philosophy, with my own additions. Both the initial proposal and the brochure were approved by Dean Jeanne Colleran in the spring semester of 2013.

B. Student Learning Goals/Objectives:
The Women’s and Gender Studies Program helps students to:

- Recognize how the social and cultural constructions of gender have shaped the experiences of men and women historically and geographically
- Understand connections between gender and power in a global context
- Examine gender roles from multiple perspectives and disciplines
- Evaluate feminist critical scholarship and methodologies
- Analyze the connections between gender inequalities and other forms of discrimination (race, class, ethnicity, etc.)
- Develop abilities and skills to deal positively and effectively with gender issues
- Appreciate the ethical and social justice dimensions and implications of the study of gender

C. University and Academic Learning Goals:
The Four University Learning Goals informed by John Carroll University’s Jesuit, Catholic heritage are centered on the Intellect, on Character, on Leadership, and on Service.

- **Intellect**—The Women’s and Gender Studies Program (WGS) develops habits of critical analysis through careful reading, critical thinking, creative thinking, information literacy, effective writing, effective speaking, teamwork, problem solving, civic engagement, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning, and integrative thinking. This is accomplished through the three core course requirements (please see attached syllabi for WG 101, WG 301, and WG 450) and through a variety of interdisciplinary courses required for both the major and the minor (please see attached syllabi). The integrative approach to the development of the intellect is assured through required courses from the humanities, the social sciences, and even from the natural sciences.

- **Character**—The Women’s and Gender Studies Program (WGS) strives to develop the whole person by offering a number of related activities to the coursework. These are...
intended to cultivate a habit of reflection in regard to global engagement and respect for diversity. Above all, these activities seek to put into practice the values and talents developed academically and to extend the influence of Ignatian principles beyond oneself to others by modeling rigor, generosity, gratitude, inclusivity, solidarity, and a desire for the greater good. Coursework is complemented and enriched through opportunities such as community service, excursions (Cleveland Museum of Art, First Ladies National Historic Site, “Tingle Tangle”), film showings, lecture series (Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today), social and cultural gatherings (Musical and Literary High Teas, Meet Your Major), study and immersion trips abroad (Mexican Women’s Oral Histories, Tepoztlan, Mexico, December 28, 2015-January 17, 2016; Dr. Santa Casciani’s travel course to Italy), and other special projects such as documentary film making, e.g., *Women of Tepoztlan, Mexico* (available summer of 2016). A study abroad opportunity in the Dominican Republic is being explored and the Tepoztlan study abroad will be repeated in 2016-2017.

- **Leadership** - The Women’s and Gender Studies Program actively promotes dedicated global engagement to bring about gender equity in the pursuit of humane values and social justice. Students are encouraged to organize and participate in such activities as “Take Back the Night,” film showings, such as “Poverty, Inc.,” and “The Mask,” participation in the making of the video, “A Million Rising,” “Halloween Party” with students dressed as famous women of history, etc., and to take on a leadership role in organizing these events.

- **Service** - The Women’s and Gender Studies Program requires that students do service as part of the WG 450 capstone course, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. This enables students to understand and promote social justice through advocacy and engaged volunteering. WGS majors and minors have done service learning in: Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center, Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland, Northeast Reintegration Center, Women Safe, Renee Jones Empowerment Center, Transitional Housing, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center, and Eliza Bryant Village.

Clearly the integrative interdisciplinary approach of the WGS program connects directly to the nine Institutional Academic Learning Goals. Such courses as PH 123, Women Scientists and Radioactivity, and PH 123 Lab and HS 310, Women in Europe since 1500, among others, allow students to gain knowledge of the human and natural world. Critical analysis and aesthetic appreciation are practiced and inculcated in courses such as WG 101, wherein students are asked to respond in writing to such eternal questions as “what is beauty?” after a visit to the Cleveland Museum of Art, and to write a reaction paper to a lecture on Frida Kahlo, or to a reading of Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*. EN 491, Feminist Literary Criticism, contributes greatly to the habits of critical analysis and aesthetic appreciation. Creative and innovative thinking is expressed verbally in class presentations and discussions and in written form through reaction and research papers. Awareness of a global and diverse world is developed through courses such as WG 299, Women’s World Cinema; IC 370, Hispanic Women Writers; WG 299, Women of Africa: Literature and Film, WG 301 Sex and Gender in a Global Context; SP 399, Hispanic Women’s Film; IC 299, Food, Film: The Global Gendered Table; FR 320, Women in French Literature and Culture. Understanding and promoting social justice is fundamental to such courses as HS 372, Race and Gender in Latin America; HS 497, Women in Modern Africa; or SC 385, Poverty, Welfare, and Social Justice in the U. S. Ethical dilemmas are explored in such courses as PL 330, Feminist Philosophies; WG 299, Gender, Work, and Family; PO 305, Sex, Gender, and Politics; SC 255, Prejudice and Discrimination. The religious dimensions of human experience are examined in such courses as TRS
322, Women in the Christian Tradition, and TRS 373, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton. Finally, the employment of leadership and collaborative skills applies to many of the courses in the WGS Program since students are regularly asked to make formal presentations, work in groups on a particular research project, and to present their findings to the entire class.

D. Contribution to Core Curriculum:

The WGS Program has regularly contributed to the outgoing University Core Curriculum and is already contributing to the new Integrative Core Curriculum. WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies has regularly received the “D” designation for diversity under the old core. This is also true of WG 299/EN299, Introduction to Queer Studies. In the new core, WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies, and WG 299, Introduction to Queer Studies, also fulfill the Issues in Social Justice requirement, part of the Jesuit Heritage. Faculty in WGS are working to have other courses in the WGS curriculum satisfy course requirements in the Integrative Core Curriculum.

E. Other University-wide Programs:

The WGS Program regularly participates in other departments’ offerings through the cross listing of courses. One need only to look at the list of courses approved for inclusion in the Women’s and Gender Studies major or minor. In fact, the majority of the courses are offered through other departments. WGS regularly offers the three core courses of WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies; WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context; and WG 450, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. Occasional courses listed under the rubric of WG 299 have been: Women’s World Cinema; Gender, Work, and Family; Intro to Queer Studies; Women in a Contemporary World; Images of Masculinity; Women in Ancient Greece and Rome; Gendered Violence: Global, Local. These courses were also cross listed with other departments. The WGS courses have also been accepted for credit for the Peace, Justice, and Human Rights major and minor. Service or Experiential Learning is a key component of the WGS Program since the major and minor cannot be completed without a set number of service hours, and a research paper that applies theory learned in the academic setting to the praxis acquired in the service setting. Many of the nine academic learning goals are realized through this combination of theory and practice. Finally, the WGS Program has collaborated with JCU’s Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion in the sponsorship of a number of programs including guest lectures and the screening of groundbreaking films.

II. Faculty:

A. Faculty profiles:

The program’s core faculty includes one full-time, tenured, full professor, Dr. Katherine M. Gatto, Professor of Spanish and Hispanic Studies, founder of the program, who has also served as its director since 2012. Previously, Dr. Gatto served as the Chairperson of the Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures Department (1990-97), and as Acting Director of the University Honors Program (1988-89). From 1997-1999, Dr. Gatto also served as the coordinator of the part-time faculty for the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures. Dr. Gatto taught all three WG core courses the first time that they were offered in addition to having created a number of new courses, WG 299/IC 370, Hispanic Women Writers; WG 299, Women’s World Cinema; and WG 299/SP 399, Hispanic Women’s Film. Dr. Gatto also created the first study abroad opportunity for the WGS program in Tepoztlan, Mexico, during the winter-spring interterm (December 28, 2015-January 17, 2016). She offered a course on Mexican Women’s Oral Histories (Sp 299) in which students filmed interviews with the women of Tepoztlan. During the spring semester, 2016, she will be editing the footage with an undergraduate assistant and
Communications major, and a colleague in Spanish. The documentary should be ready by the summer, 2016. Another course, Mexican Gastronomy (1 credit), was also developed for the WGS Program. There are also two part-time adjunct instructors. Dr. Suzanne Ondrus has been with the program since 2014. She possesses a Ph.D. in Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies from the University of Connecticut, 2014, and is an award winning poet. She has had extensive experience living and working abroad and brings this knowledge to the three classes she regularly teaches, WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies; WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context; and WG 299/English 299, Introduction to Queer Studies. She will be offering a new course in Fall, 2016, WG 299, Women of Africa: Literature and Film. Dr. Ondrus has made tremendous contributions to the WGS Program by recruiting 20 speakers for talks on women’s and LGBTQI issues. She also invited a Fulbright scholar from Uganda, Dr. Okaka Dokotum, to campus and facilitated his talks and activities. She has collaborated with JCU’s Center for Student Diversity & Inclusion on programming resources. Ms. Jamie Newman, ABD, is the other part-time adjunct instructor. She was advanced to that status on August 15, 2001. Her dissertation title which she still needs to complete is “Courtroom and Participant Narratives about Fatherhood and Child Witness to Domestic Violence: Child Custody Decisions in Domestic Violence Civil Protective Orders.” Within the WGS Program Ms. Newman regularly teaches WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies, and the capstone course, WG 450, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. Ms. Newman has been instrumental in expanding the opportunities for service learning through the Center for Service and Social Action which is required as part of the capstone experience. She, too, has created several new courses for the WGS program including WG 299, Gender and Violence: Local, Global, and WG 299, Gender, Work, and Family. In all classes students are regularly involved in research or creative projects, e.g., the 5-page Sitcom Gender and Power Analysis Paper, which is a group project, required in Dr. Ondrus’s WG 101 class. Other faculty who have taught or teach in the program are Medora Barnes, Ph.D., Sociology and Criminology; Mary Beadle, Ph.D., Communication and Theatre Arts; Santa Casciani, Ph.D., Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures; Michael Eng, Ph.D., Philosophy; Gwen Compton-Engle, Ph.D., Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures; Karen Gygli, Ph.D., Communication and Theatre Arts; Anne Kugler, Ph.D., History; Susan Long, Ph.D., Sociology and Criminology; Malia McAndrew, Ph.D., History; Graciela Lacueva, Ph.D., Physics; Pamela Mason, Ph.D., Political Science; Maryclaire Moroney, Ph.D., English; Joan Nuth, Ph.D., Theology and Religious Studies; Martha Pereszlenyi-Pinter, Ph.D., Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures; Debra Rosenthal, Ph.D., English; Hélène Sanko, Ph.D., Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures; Dianna Taylor, Ph.D., Philosophy; Brenda Wirkus, Ph.D., Philosophy; and Sheri Young, Ph.D., Psychological Science.

B. Faculty Development and Evaluation-omitted for Interdisciplinary programs

C. Professional Service and Community Engagement:

The faculty of the WGS Program regularly attend conferences, give papers and presentations, and publish books and articles in peer reviewed journals. Dr. Gatto founded, organizes, and hosts the lecture series, Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today, which began in the spring of 2013, and consists of two guest lecturers per semester. The lectures are open to the JCU community and the public at large, and are advertised in “JCU Today” and the WGS website. The WGS program is also an institutional member of the National Women’s Studies Association. Students in WG 450 are required to do service learning and are thus regularly engaged in the non-profit sector. Dr. Ondrus helped create the Chagrin River Review, and is its poetry editor. The WGS Program also has worked with the Violence Prevention and Action Center and the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence in an effort to examine and better understand effective strategies for preventing sexual violence and promoting safe and healthy relationships on college campuses.
III. Curriculum:

A. Curriculum:
The WGS Program offers a curriculum of great breadth and attempts to also satisfy the need for depth of the curriculum through the three required core courses, WG 101, Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies; WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context; and WG 450, Women's and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. The program also seeks to create depth by continuing to create and offer new courses under the rubric, WG, as opposed to courses offered by other departments which can also satisfy the major and minor requirements of the WGS Program. Some new WG courses which have been created are WG 299, Mexican Women's Oral Histories; WG 299, Women's World Cinema; WG 299, Gender, Work, and Family; WG 299, Women in a Contemporary World; WG 299, Gender and Violence: Local, Global; WG 299, Women of Africa: Literature and Film. Breadth is assured through the participation of a number of departments offering courses that relate to women's and gender studies. The disciplines/departments represented are Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures, Communication and Theatre Arts, English, History, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychological Science, Sociology and Criminology. Students begin their study in the program with the introductory course, WG 101, Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies. They then proceed to take courses from other departments followed by WG 301, Sex and Gender in a Global Context. For the major in WGS, three courses are from the humanities, three courses are from the social sciences, including psychological science, and three courses are from the list of approved women's and gender studies courses. For the minor in WGS, students take three additional courses from the list of approved women's and gender studies courses. No more than two of these courses may be from the same discipline. Normally, at least one will be from the humanities and one from the social sciences. The complete list of approved courses is posted on the homepage of WGS. Finally, majors and minors take WG 450, Women's and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. The titles of the courses reflect the major areas and issues in the field of study, e.g., Gender, Work, Family; Gender and Violence: Local, Global; Readings in Feminist Theology; Our Unruly Daughters: Women and the Catholic Church in Spain and Latin America; Philosophy of Love and Sex: Critical Perspectives on Intimacy; Feminist Literary Criticism; Images of Masculinity; Prejudice and Discrimination; Eating Disorders; Women in Mass Media, etc. The WGS Program’s goals reflect John Carroll University’s Learning Goals and the nine academic learning goals that inform the Integrative Core Curriculum. The Women’s and Gender Studies program helps students to recognize how the social and cultural constructions of gender have shaped the experiences of men and women historically and geographically, understand connections between gender and power in a global context, examine gender roles from multiple perspectives and disciplines, evaluate feminist critical scholarship and methodologies, analyze the connections between gender inequalities and other forms of discrimination (race, class, ethnicity, etc.), develop abilities and skills to deal positively and effectively with gender issues, and to appreciate the ethical and social justice dimensions and implications of the study of gender.

B. Course Profile:

Normally, each semester, four courses are offered under the WG rubric. The number of courses offered by other departments and that apply to WGS vary semester by semester. However, between the four
courses offered by the WGS program and those offered by other departments there are always enough courses to meet the needs of the WGS majors and minors. If not, students can always opt to take an independent study, WG 498, to fulfill all the requirements and to graduate on time. Class sizes can vary from 5 to 28 students. WG 101 enrolls the largest number of students while WG 450 enrolls the smallest numbers. Since the program was just started in January, 2013, one would hope that the number of students enrolled in WG 301 and WG 450 will increase as the number of majors and minors also increases. Although the director of the WGS program has taught all the core courses and created new ones for the WGS curriculum, currently the adjunct instructors teach the WGS core courses because the director is needed in the Spanish section of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures Department since the retirement of professor, Dr. Antonio Perez-Romero, who has not been replaced. Dr. Gatto is a specialist in the literature and culture of Spain and is the only one who teaches those courses in the Spanish section. Her colleagues are specialists in Latin American studies. This is the first self-study that is being conducted of this fledgling program. Student feedback has been very positive to the courses offered within the WGS curriculum. They speak of the courses’ content as having opened their eyes to a new reality, a new way of seeing the world.

C. Enrollment Trends:

The enrollment trends have been steady in that the beginning course, WG 101, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies draws the most number of students. This particular course satisfies the “D” requirement of the old core, and the Issues in Social Justice of the new core. This may explain the popularity of this particular class. Also, since the discipline of WGS does not exist in high school, it may draw the curiosity and interest of incoming freshmen. The other WG offerings draw fewer students and enrollments are based on interest in the topic, or, on the number of students interested in pursuing WGS as a major or minor area of study.

IV. Student Learning:

A. Pedagogy:

Eclectic pedagogy is utilized within the program given that many faculty from different departments teach within the program. All faculty are cognizant of the program’s goals listed above, and are passionate about the ethical and social justice dimensions and implications of the study of gender. Classes are mainly student centered and discussion based, and can also include lectures by the instructors or guest lecturers, group presentations, panel discussions, audiovisual materials, paired work, debates, different exercises and activities presented by the textbooks utilized, and reflective writing.

B. Advising:

Major and minor declarations and advising are carried out by the director of the program, Dr. Katherine M. Gatto. The adjunct instructors, Dr. Suzanne Ondrus and Ms. Jamie Newman also advise the students on an informal basis. Ms. Newman, since she regularly teaches the WG 450 capstone course, has been greatly involved in helping the students select the non-profit where they wish to carry out the service-learning component of the program. More students choose WGS as a minor, or choose WGS as a second major. Since the program is so new, and for many, also the discipline, students need to be more informed as to how they can utilize this field of study in their careers. There is information posted on the WGS website, and “Meet Your Major” programs have been held once or twice per year since the program’s inception.
C. Student Scholarship, Internships, Experiential learning, Creative Work and Volunteerism:

Coursework is complemented and enriched through opportunities such as community service, excursions, film showings, lecture series (Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today), social and cultural gatherings, study and immersion trips abroad (Tepoztlan, Mexico; Italy), and other special projects. One of our graduates received a graduate assistantship and currently works in the Women’s Center at Cleveland State University. Another student works in recruitment of minorities at Kent State University. Our first major will be pursuing a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science at Kent State University in the fall. A cornerstone of the WGS Program is the experiential learning that takes place in WG 450, the capstone course.

D. Professional Development, Post-Graduation, and Alumni Outcomes:

Students are regularly informed about Master’s and Ph.D. programs during advising, Meet Your Major, and also through announcements on the WGS bulletin board, located on the first floor of the O’Malley Center, across from the CMLC’s display cases. There is also another bulletin board purchased by the program in the basement of the Administration Bldg., across from the office of Interdisciplinary Programs, that showcases the lecture series, Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today.

V. University Support and Resources:

University support is manifest in the annual budget. Budgetary items include library purchases, publicity, work-study, honorariums for guest speakers, travel, and refreshments. Unfortunately, as of December, 2015, there is no secretarial or office support for the program.

VI. STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Each student in every WGS course receives a syllabus that outlines course expectations, learning goals, assessment, grading, and a schedule of classes. In every course the syllabus is reviewed the first day of class. At that time any questions that students may have are answered by the instructor. Instructors of courses who wish to be included within the WGS Program are contacted and the director clarifies with them the expectations for any course accepted for the major or the minor in WGS. The syllabus is then reviewed by the director. Both the major and the minor series of courses provide all students with a serious and scholarly way to become familiar with a vast body of knowledge that has historically been neglected: the ways in which social structures including gender, sexuality, race, and class affect the lived experience primarily of women, but also of men. Student learning outcomes are clearly evident and assessed through WG 450, Women’s and Gender Studies Capstone: Integrating Theory and Practice. This course through interdisciplinary and intersectional frameworks inherent to Women’s and Gender Studies explores the relationship between feminist theory and practice. Through readings, viewing panel discussions and lectures students explore how feminists define activism and then apply theoretical knowledge to the real world through service learning. Students begin to examine the relationship between the academy and real world struggles (town and gown). The program’s goals addressed in this course are: to recognize how the social and cultural constructions of gender have shaped the experiences of men and women historically and geographically; to understand connections between gender and power in a global context; to examine gender roles from multiple perspectives and disciplines; to evaluate feminist critical scholarship and methodologies; to analyze the connections between gender inequalities and other forms of discrimination (race, class, ethnicity, etc.); to develop abilities and skills to deal positively and effectively with gender issues; and to appreciate the ethical and
social justice dimensions and implications of the study of gender. John Carroll University Goals addressed in the Capstone course are the following: demonstrate an integrative knowledge of human and natural worlds; develop habits of critical analysis; apply creative and innovative thinking; act competently in a global and diverse world; understand and promote social justice; apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas. Students demonstrate if and how they have satisfied the course’s learning goals and John Carroll University’s learning goals by attendance and engagement, completion of class assignments, keeping a service journal, writing a capstone paper, and by making a capstone presentation.

VII. COMPARATIVE POSITION:

A. COMPARISON WITH DIRECT COMPETITORS:

Since the program was just initiated in January, 2013, it is still in a period of formation and expansion.

B. BEST PRACTICES IN FIELD:

Strong and enthusiastic administrative support is needed. Currently the WGS program does not even have a secretary, and thus, doesn’t have an office. Ideally, there should be a Women’s Center on campus, a physical space, that gives a certain “reality” and recognizes the importance of the program (out of sight, out of mind, so to speak). A study abroad program centered on women’s issues to give the program a global engagement and perspective is also very important. Women’s challenges are global and the U.S. brand of feminism is not necessarily shared or applicable to other parts of the world. This already has been initiated by the director of the WGS Program, Dr. Katherine Gatto, in Tepoztlan, Mexico, but it is in its preliminary stages. Dr. Santa Casciani has also offered a travel/study course on women in Italy. Paid internships, a centralized office location, ideally within a Women’s Center, wherein the director of the program and the administrative assistant share office space, and regular social gatherings would help to create a sense of community for both faculty and students and promote a “community of reflective practice.” The WGS website and the two bulletin boards do help in this respect to keep the JCU community and the public informed.

C. UNIQUE FEATURES:

Unique features of the WGS Program at John Carroll University include the lecture series, Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today, a strong webpage which could be expanded to social media, e.g., Facebook, if the program had an administrative assistant, Meet Your Major, classroom guest speakers, excursions and outings to museums and theaters, a strong capstone course that involves experiential learning, and a study abroad component in Tepoztlan, Mexico, and in Italy.

VIII. CONCLUSION:

A. Summary of Program Strengths and Weaknesses:

   Strengths
   • Breadth and variety of course offerings
   • Enthusiastic faculty
   • Cross campus cooperation
   • Experiential learning through the Capstone course
   • Strong core courses
   • Study abroad opportunity in Tepoztlan, Mexico, with Dr. Katherine Gatto and in Italy with Dr. Santa Casciani’s travel/study class on women
Lecture series, Women’s Lives Yesterday and Today
- Classroom guest speakers
- Excursions
- Musical and Literary High Teas
- Meet Your Major
- Film showings

**Weaknesses**

- Lack of administrative support
- Lack of secretary or administrative assistant
- Lack of office space
- Lack of Women’s Center
- Few majors
- Few minors
- More publicity needed; difficult to do without secretarial assistance
- A lack of an active and committed Board of Advisors (due to time constraints)
- Difficulty in advancing the many students in WG 101 to WG 301

The two most critical issues facing the program are the absence of administrative support, and, thus, no secretarial or administrative help, and the lack of a Women’s Center, i.e., a centralized physical space which would give the program greater visibility and importance. The third most critical issue and this once again assumes some sort of secretarial/administrative assistance is how to market the program to attract more majors and minors and to generate the sense of excitement around it that it deserves.

**B. Action Plan:**

- To have the support of the administration and to have administrative support is crucial; the program cannot sustain itself or grow without it. To give another example, there is no one to take care of student records, or to even enter student information into banner. There is no one to handle the budget, gather syllabi, communicate with faculty, maintain the website, to answer phone calls, etc.
- There must be an office for the program, even better, a Women’s Center
- A concerted marketing campaign needs to take place to attract more majors and minors and to get more information out there to the students about the program
- Study abroad opportunities for WGS need to be promoted; perhaps open the opportunity to colleges and universities in the area

1. **Vision statement:**
   The WGS Program is fully utilizing the talents and offerings of its faculty and participating departments. The program has at least 12-15 students in each of its upper division core courses, which assumes at least that minimum number of majors and minors. A full-time tenured faculty member is fully vested in the program. (Dr. Katherine Gatto was teaching the courses in the program but with the retirement of Dr. Antonio Perez –Romero, who was not replaced, she had to assume greater responsibility in the Spanish section of CMLC).
   There is a Women’s Center on campus. There is administrative and secretarial support and assistance. The study abroad opportunities are thriving.

2. **Improvements Using Current Resources:**
   Without secretarial or administrative support the program cannot maintain itself.
3. **Improvements Requiring New Resources:**
   The hiring of a full-time, tenure-track, Assistant Professor, to take responsibility for the program. This professor would be a member of a department on campus, but would primarily direct and teach in the WGS Program.
   The establishment of a Women’s Center on campus. Physical space would need to be found and allotted for two offices (Director and Administrative Assistant), and an adjacent gathering place for students majoring or minoring in WGS, with resource materials and related books on display.

**IX. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. How can the WGS Program maintain itself or even thrive without any support from the administration?
2. How can one market the program to the JCU community (faculty and students) and beyond without sufficient administrative help?
3. How can one find paid internships for WGS majors and minors?
4. How can the WGS Program increase its number of majors and minors?
5. Should we change the title of the program to include “sexuality studies” as well, since that seems to be the trend, i.e., Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies?

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Katherine M. Gatto
Professor of Spanish
Director, Women’s and Gender Studies
February 8, 2016