

OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS

Agenda Item 3.3     The Ohio State University, Doctor of Philosophy in Women's Studies

**RESOLUTION**

BE IT RESOLVED: upon the recommendation of the Chancellor and with the concurrence of the Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study as well as the Initiatives Committee of the Ohio Board of Regents that the following new degree program is approved:

The Ohio State University  
Doctor of Philosophy in Women's Studies

## **BACKGROUND**

### **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

#### Doctor of Philosophy in Women's Studies

Ohio State University seeks Regents' approval for a new doctoral degree program entitled Doctor of Philosophy in Women's Studies. This new offering, which would become Ohio's first Women's Studies Ph.D. program, will build upon the solid foundation of the University's Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degree programs in Women's Studies.

Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary field of research and teaching that focuses on gender as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon affecting artistic expression, social relationships, and self-concept. It considers the ways in which class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and age shape the female and male experience. Women's Studies is one of the fastest growing fields of inquiry to emerge in higher education over the course of the past two decades.

Consistent with other national models in this field, the Ohio State University program will be based upon three knowledge categories: a.) gender representation; b.) difference and diversity; as well as c.) gender, power, and social change. The graduate students in this program will acquire a foundational knowledge in interdisciplinary research and scholarship based upon the three primary specialization categories listed above plus the secondary specializations and electives, which include: a.) visual and narrative cultures; b.) Latina/black women's studies; c.) the state, economies, and social change; and d.) sexuality studies.

The demand for new doctoral graduates in this area has been expanding rapidly. For example, national surveys in the discipline reveal that, over the past four years, there have been more than one-hundred and eighty academic openings; however, during this same period of time, fewer than twenty Women's Studies Ph.D. graduates have been produced. Moreover, there is an expanding international and national market demand for Women's Studies scholars in policy and research institutes within both the public and private sectors.

The Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study has reviewed extensive written documentation provided by Ohio State University on this proposed doctoral program and, in response to expert reviews of these descriptive materials, provided the University with appropriate critical comments. The University, in turn, provided additional written descriptive materials and sent its program representatives to the May 24, 2002 meeting of the Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study. After a detailed presentation by representatives of the University's Department of Women's Studies that was followed by questions from individual campus representatives, the Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study voted with unanimous assent to approve the Ph.D. degree program in Women's Studies at Ohio State University.

It should be noted that Ohio State University will not receive any additional doctoral subsidy as a result of mounting this new doctoral degree program. Rather, it is understood that the University will fund the program out of its existing state share of instruction revenue stream plus the additional student tuition and sponsored program support that the new program will garner.