

Approved by the Regents
July 19, 2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST: Approval to Establish an Academic Department
NAME OF DEPARTMENT: Department of Women's Studies
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2007

The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts requests approval to reorganize its Women's Studies Program into a Department of Women's Studies.

The Women's Studies Program (WSP) is an interdisciplinary academic unit that was originally created in the College in 1973. As a field, women's studies investigates the systems of gender, politics, and representation that shape women's lives. The program itself is a diverse intellectual community dedicated to excellence through feminist research, teaching, and activism. It seeks to build interdisciplinary collaborations among faculty and students that bridge gender, ethnic, economic, and national divides; create new knowledge about women, gender, race, and sexuality; challenge distributions of power; and improve the lives of all women and men. Even while remaining interdisciplinary, women's studies as a field has attained a kind of disciplinary function with its own canon of theoretical texts, research questions, methodologies, and pedagogies.

In winter 2006, a majority of faculty and students in WSP voted affirmatively to change the status of the program to a department. The Dean and Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts carefully reviewed the recommendations of the external review committee and came to an agreement with their conclusion that Women's Studies should be given departmental status. The Executive Committee approved a motion to forward this request to the Regents on March 13, 2007. We anticipate no financial costs associated with this change.

Recommended by:

Recommendation endorsed by:



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History, and Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts



Teresa A. Sullivan, Provost and
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

July 2007