

## UW 2-13 Review Committee Report Template

Committee: <i>AMST-SCGSJ 2-13</i>	Restructuring UW for the Future Recommended Action: <i>Reorganization of AMST-SCGSJ</i>
Committee Members: <i>Teena Gabrielson (chair), Jacquelyn Bridgeman, Alexandra Kelly, Lilia Soto, Frieda Knobloch, Jessica Nelson, Michele Jarman, Ulrich Adelt</i>	Submitted to Provost Carman on: <i>October 1, 2021</i>

<b>Executive Summary</b> (Limit to 250 words)
<p><i>This 2-13 proposal recommends: 1.) a restructuring of American Studies into the School of Culture, Gender, and Social Justice (SCGSJ) and, 2.) the consolidation of “majors to one major with concentrations”.</i></p> <p>History, American Studies, and the SCGSJ all approve of the move of American Studies from History to the SCGSJ. Slight modifications to existing organizational structures will allow for the continued support of faculty, staff, and students in these units.</p> <p>The SCGSJ and AMST strongly oppose the recommendation to consolidate existing majors into a single major with concentrations. At the September Board of Trustees meeting, the SCGSJ presented a Notice of Intent for new degrees (BA and Minor) in Social Justice. As explained in that discussion, each of the degrees currently offered by the SCGSJ fulfills a specific, distinct, and unique need. American Studies is joining the SCGSJ with robust undergraduate and graduate degree programs that are well established. These programs enhance the work of the SCGSJ and enrich student opportunities; this benefit of the restructuring would be lost if the degrees were to be combined. Further, any anticipated efficiencies thought to be gained through consolidation have already been achieved by the SCGSJ through its current structure and approach to degree delivery. Finally, to the extent that the proposed change was predicated on the idea that the single consolidated degree would be the proposed Social Justice degree, the new degree program is designed to leverage the strengths of the School to attract and retain new students and to offer a broader and substantively different degree than those currently offered by the School. It is imperative to note that the Social Justice degree complements, <i>but cannot and does not replace</i>, the existing degrees offered by the School.</p>

<b>Benefits</b> (Limit to 1 page)
<p>In this section, describe the benefits of the proposal, including benefits to organizational structure, staffing efficiencies, research and scholarly synergisms, improvements in educational programs, and community engagement.</p> <p><i>Insert response here:</i></p>

The SCGSJ and AMST have had close ties and have shared faculty for several years. Accordingly, the main benefit of this restructure is that it will allow for efficiencies and better sharing of resources and coordination among programs that already work closely together.

**Organizational Restructure** (Limit to 3 pages plus org chart)

In this section, describe the organizational structure that is needed to achieve the intended goals of the restructure (i.e., to position UW for the future and to respond to a significant reduction in the university's budget). Provide a recommended organizational chart that includes positions (by job title only) needed to administer and support the new organization/academic unit. Include a rationale that supports the recommendation. Specifically address how the recommended structure enhances synergism among disciplines, improve student experiences and success, emphasize growth of programs for 21<sup>st</sup> century themes, incorporate better efficiencies, better position the University for R1 research classification, and provide economic support to the state of Wyoming.

*Insert response here:*

One of the strengths of the SCGSJ has been its ability to coordinate and synergize disparate programs into a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. It has been able to do so through a structure whereby each of the academic programs that comprise the SCGSJ remains distinct and autonomous yet shares resources and coordinates in such a way that it allows for strengthening and additional support for each distinct program. At present the SCGSJ structure is such that it has a director of the school as a whole, and a director for each of the constituent academic programs. That structure has worked extremely well since the SCGSJ's inception, and there is every reason to believe that continuing that structure is best moving forward. Accordingly, the current AMST program director will remain AMST director and will assume a co-equal place with the directors of the SCGSJ's four existing academic programs. Maintaining this structure is budget neutral as each program director receives compensation through a course release.

**Efficiencies** (Limit to 1 page)

In this section, address strategies for improving efficiencies in the new organization/academic unit that will be needed to meet budgetary constraints and provide students with a high-quality educational experience.

*Insert response here:*

In addition to the synergies identified above, this new organization of academic units will not produce any increased costs and thereby will contribute to our efforts to meet the current budgetary constraints. When this reorganization is positioned within the larger landscape of restructuring, we expect to be able to build out a staff center that will fully support faculty and students without additional costs to the college. Synergies in research and teaching will further contribute to a high-quality educational experience for students.

**Academic/Discipline Specific Expertise** (Limit to 3 pages)  
English/Creative Writing; Visual & Performing Arts

This section is optional. You may want to think about areas of faculty expertise that should be emphasized to position the department to be nationally and internationally competitive in its scholarship and creative endeavors. You may also include in your recommendation the ideal number of faculty positions that will be needed to provide students with a high-quality education experience and to deliver current and/or future degree programs.

*Insert response here:*

**Unintended Consequences, Mitigation Strategies, and Suggestions for Alternative Approaches**  
(Limit to 2 pages)

In this section describe unintended consequences the proposal may have result from implementation of the proposal (including any budgetary consequences). Make recommendations on how such unintended consequences might be mitigated. If you have alternate suggestions for how to achieve budget reductions or achieve optimal organizational structure, please provide them here.

*Insert response here:*

As noted above, the SCGSJ has already worked hard to leverage the expertise and strengths of the School to create a shared degree in Social Justice that will attract new students and complement existing degrees. However, this degree cannot and does not replace the current degree programs offered in the School or American Studies for the following reasons:

Over the course of the last two years, the SCGSJ and American Studies underwent extensive program review and reviewed each of its existing degrees in order to update, streamline, and make the delivery of each more efficient. As a result, the SCGSJ and AMST currently offer degrees on par with much larger universities at a fraction of the cost. The portion of this proposal that suggests that the existing degrees should be combined into one degree with concentrations, would require the SCGSJ to redo the process just completed. There is nothing to be gained in terms of efficiency, synergies, or cost savings because those efficiencies, synergies, and savings have already been achieved through our recent work.

What's more, although there is overlap between our existing degrees, each degree represents a unique, specific discipline. A person trained in African American and Diaspora Studies, for example, is not qualified to teach in Native American and Indigenous Studies and vice versa. A degree with concentrations in the existing programs would still require us to hire people with expertise in the areas of concentration. Given this, and the fact that the existing degrees are already quite streamlined and efficient, there is nothing to be gained through the proposal. However, there are certainly negative consequences and costs that would be likely to occur.

First, as noted above, one of the advantages the SCGSJ has, and that it intends to leverage moving forward, is the ability to offer a strong, robust slate of degrees at the same level or

above our peers, at a lower price point. Combing our existing degrees into one would eliminate that competitive advantage. It would also negatively impact UW's ability to attract a diverse student body and faculty. In addition to the degrees offered, each of the existing degree programs has specific UW communities that it supports and serves. Additionally, the visibility of our programs and degrees is a key factor in attracting members from diverse groups to UW as well as retaining them once here. Combining our degrees would severely hamper our ability to serve those communities and erase the visibility that helps to support the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff. Concentrations do not have the same visibility as majors and minors. Our degrees recruit and retain students, advance their intellectual and professional development, and enhance their success post-graduation - whether it be in health care, science and engineering, law, education, social work, law enforcement, politics and policy, non-profits, the arts and everything in between. The importance of our degrees is demonstrated by student statements that can be found in the Appendix to this report.

As noted, the SCGSJ recently presented a Notice of Intent for a shared degree in Social Justice. To the extent that the portion of the proposal aimed at combining the degrees contemplated that the combined degree would be the Social Justice degree, that simply will not work. Although the proposed Social Justice degree will draw from several of SCGSJ's existing courses, it is a degree that will offer a set of skills and learning outcomes significantly different from those of the SCGSJ's existing degrees, and is intended to provide opportunities to a different set of students than those who currently tend to major and minor in our existing degrees.

Mitigation of these potential negative consequences is easy. Simply leave the existing SCGSJ and AMST degrees as-is.

#### **Other**

Additional information may be provided as appendixes.

See appendix for student letters of support and feedback from A&S impacted staff.

APPENDIX I, LETTER OF SUPPORT, DEPARTMENT HEAD OF HISTORY

UNIVERSITY  
OF WYOMING

Jeffrey D. Means, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Department Head  
Department of History and American Studies  
Mailing Address: DEPT 3198 • 1000 E University Ave • Laramie, WY 82071  
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September 23, 2021

SCG&SJ-AMST 2-13 Committee

College of Arts & Sciences

University of Wyoming

Dear Dean and Committee,

The Department of History fully supports the inclusion of American Studies into the School of Culture, Gender, & Social Justice. This move not only prevents the possible elimination of a valuable Humanities Program, it reinvests much needed resources into the relatively new School of Culture, Gender, and Social Justice. This move will greatly benefit both programs, and the College of Arts & Sciences.

Sincerely,

**Jeff Means**

Dr. Jeffrey D. Means  
Associate Professor and Department Head  
Department of History and American Studies

## APPENDIX II, STUDENT LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Lora Sherrodd

September 9, 2021

Dear University of Wyoming Upper Administration,

I am writing to you today to share my experience as an African American and Diaspora studies minor during my time at the University of Wyoming and why it was an essential part of my study. I full-heartedly believe that I am a more well-rounded person since claiming this minor and that many of the opportunities that have come my way since graduating have been because of my experience in AADS.

Firstly, I majored in jazz studies at the University of Wyoming. By choosing to add my minor in AADS I was able to gain a deeper understanding of jazz history and traditions by studying African American history alongside it. This resulted in changing my worldview which allowed me to not just have an appreciation for the music but an appreciation for the history and culture as well.

Secondly, adding an AADS minor allowed me to gain valuable research skills of which I would need when attending graduate school. I would have not been able to gain these skills from studying music alone. The AADS minor requires one to complete a capstone project which entails vigorous research and critical thinking. This has provided me with a head start compared to my peers in my current graduate program at Temple University by allowing me to expand on my research from my capstone for my graduate thesis.

Finally, I am currently a candidate for a Jazz and Gender Coordinator position at Berklee College of Music. I can confidently say that if I did not have research skills or a background in social justice, which are skills I acquired by claiming my AADS minor, I would not have been considered as a candidate for this position.

The study of African American and Diaspora studies has opened up these opportunities which would not have been available to me otherwise, as well as will continue to do so as my education and career path evolves.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Lora Sherrodd

Richelle Clifton:

As a student of color who graduated from a Wyoming public high school, I often felt my education on Black history was lacking. When I arrived at the University of Wyoming (UW), I was so pleased to see there were courses and spaces specifically focused on Black history, art, and culture. For the first time I learned about Black history in the state of Wyoming, including

the history of the Black 14, Black homesteaders in Wyoming, Black cowboys and rodeos, and more. I felt affirmed knowing that UW understood how important it was to have an entire degree program focused on African American and Diaspora Studies (AADS). The faculty in the AADS department became some of my most inspiring mentors, who encouraged me to pursue graduate studies after receiving my bachelor's degree in psychology and AADS. Because of my experiences in the AADS department, I am now pursuing my PhD in clinical psychology, with a program of research focused on sociocultural factors impacting Black adolescent health. The AADS program at UW was incredibly important for me and has shaped my interests in my graduate studies. The value of the AADS degree and department at UW cannot be overstated.

**From: Colleen Floyd, GWST Minor, 2020 Graduate**

**MA Program, Student Affairs in Higher Education, University of Miami, Ohio**

My undergraduate minor in Gender and Women's Studies (GWST) drastically altered the trajectory of my life. I remember my first day in WMST 1080 with Dr. Alison Harkin and instantly realizing I was in the right place. That introductory course set off a fire inside me and inspired each and every one of my aspirations. My GWST courses gave me the language to understand the world around me, instilling a deep passion for justice. In each course I took, I was met with incredible faculty, who were not only brilliant scholars, but people who cared about me and my education. Their courses pushed me to make sense of myself and the numerous identities I hold in the context of the world. I reflect fondly on the numerous office hours digging deeper into new concepts and additional feminist literature waiting for me at class, simply because my professors thought of me. When I am asked to recall a memory from undergrad, I always turn to the day Dr. Michelle Jarman invited me to dinner with the 2017 Shepard Symposium Keynote Speaker and renowned disability scholar, Dr. Alison Kafer. Our dinner has been the single most impactful event of my life and I am forever grateful.

In all four years of my time at the University of Wyoming, it was my GWST faculty and courses that made me feel most at home and connected to not only the university, but the state as a whole. My education as a GWST minor recipient is called upon each day as a graduate student and student affairs professional. I use the history, theory, concepts, and analytical tools from my GWST minor on a daily basis, easily recalling and applying the information because my education was so strong. I graduated from the University of Wyoming (UW) with a Bachelor's of Art in Political Science and minors in Gender and Women's Studies and Statistics; while I took a wide variety of courses, my GWST courses best set me up for my master's program. I have been able to maintain a 4.0 GPA in a rigorous graduate program, present at professional conferences, submit publications, and seek other professional opportunities because of my GWST minor. In my current pursuit of a Graduate Certificate in Women and Gender Studies at Miami University, I am advantaged because my GWST education was so thorough. I am better able to analyze and engage with the literature assigned because of the GWST faculty at UW. In my current role as the Graduate Assistant for the Dennis L. Carlson Sexuality Education Studies Center at Miami University, I use my GWST minor to educate my 200+ students and provide the Miami community with free menstrual and sexual health products. I found the most incredible community, education, and faculty through GWST and credit

the program to my success and continued love for learning. I would like to personally thank Dr. Michelle Jarman, Dr. Alison Harkin, Dr. Cynthia Hartung, Dr. Renee Laegreid, and Dr. Tammy Heise for a world class education and the countless ways they changed my life.

Richelle Rawlings-Carroll: September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

To whom it may concern,

In light of the restructuring and budget cuts at the University of Wyoming, I learned that the African American and Diaspora Studies major and minor, along with other degrees in the School for Culture, Gender and Social Justice, are currently being reviewed for possibly being integrated into a single degree. As UW Alumni with a BA in History and AADS, I feel that this would be a huge injustice at a time when these departments are needed more than ever. With the current state of the racial climate and continued discrimination of the LGBTQ communities, awareness and knowledge concerning the issues should be more concentrated and made more widely available. Many of the courses need to be integrated into the various degree programs available.

The main reason that I feel as I do is because the skill set and issues addressed in AADS and Gender and Social Justice are completely different. Each requires it's own specific focus. I use the knowledge gained from my BA in AADS every single day, especially while teaching at the high school level. African American students struggle with issues of isolation and discrimination based on a misunderstanding of Black History by those they go to school with as well as the limited population in Sweetwater County.

Meanwhile, the LGBTQ students are dealing with completely unrelated issues of acceptance, inclusion, and identity. Combining these degrees and departments implies that the unrelated issues can merely be lumped together. In fact, I wound up pursuing my BA in AADS in addition to my BA in History when budget cuts forced me to look outside the History department to fill my credits. I chose several AADS courses. After completing three classes, I knew that African American history was unique and could not be lumped into the History degree if I was to gain adequate knowledge for a future career within the discipline.

Additionally, I am currently pursuing a genealogy certificate, realizing that a large gap in AADS is the knowledge of family lines and the history of African American families. Yet, the missing tropes of family ties is only one small part of the rich history needing to be researched, analyzed, and taught. This knowledge motivated me to pursue my MA in History so that I can write the missing narratives with adequate credentials to be considered an expert in the field. My experience and education at UW decided my future trajectory. Without the AADS specific BA program, I would not have discovered the need for the work or my passion to be a part of it.

I have been thrilled to see the growth in African American studies and the addition of programs. The minute I finish my Masters in March, I hope to start commuting back to UW for some of the courses and events. The online Black History Conference was so impressive! I joined the events as often as I could. These are the issues of the current day. We have to have an educational

program focusing on the specific successes, issues, and history of the African American community.

I sincerely hope as well as encourage the administration to grow the programs in these two disciplines. They are a necessary program of study in light of the current issues we face today.

I appreciate your time and consideration in the important matter.

Sincerely,

Richelle Rawlings-Carroll

2019 UW Graduate

**From:** Mike Morrow

**Sent:** Thursday, September 16, 2021 8:10 PM

**To:** Lilia Soto <[lsoto1@uwyo.edu](mailto:lsoto1@uwyo.edu)>

**Subject:** Latino Studies Letter

Re: Latino Studies at the University of Wyoming

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is to express my endless gratitude to both the University of Wyoming in general and the Latino Studies department specifically. When I entered the university as an out of state student I did not know anyone on campus and I struggled to adjust to the culture of the mountain west. I experienced the rugged Wyoming landscape as almost foreign in its presentation. Thankfully my adjustment to the campus was eased by the familiar and welcoming culture of the Latino Studies department. This was a space that made the transition to my new environment less difficult. While I settled into Laramie and became more connected to the city and school, I was able to branch out using the Latino Studies classes as a sort of home base.

The benefit of feeling like I belonged was only a portion of the riches that the Latino Studies minor added to my life. The program was rigorous in its demand for critical thought and analysis. The readings were lengthy and dense, helping me to increase my tolerance for information gathering and comprehension. The continuous writing assignments allowed me to increase my written competency by leaps and bounds. To provide evidence for the benefit I only need to cite my verbal and analytical GRE scores, which were 88% and 93% respectively. It is in my opinion that these scores were a direct reflection of the complex work that occurred within the Latino Studies major. Reading hundreds of pages of graduate level writing a week and writing analyses of the papers between coffee breaks and sleep cycles.

When I entered my graduate program at a Latino serving institution I was prepared beyond the required prerequisites and I often led the class in both critical analysis and frameworking. As a graduate student in mental health my minor in Latino Studies made my resume more marketable than any of my peers. My very first client, who suffered from complex grief, was an undocumented immigrant and DACA student. Of course I was familiar with DACA and the ins-and-outs of the law because of my readings within the minor. This knowledge allowed me to build rapport quickly despite the demographic differences between the client and

I. After the first year of graduate school it was time to move into a community clinic. I was the first in my class to be offered a paid internship, which turned into a full time job offer. One clear reason I was recruited by this agency was due to my ability to think about ethnic enclaves from the perspective of a global intersection. A perspective I only possess because of the brilliant professors and intricate writings offered in the program.

The thought analysis I was allowed to develop in my minor informs my professional writing today. For example, as I see a client who may have experienced migration into the United States from a Latin American country I have a deeper and more meaningful interpretation of the person's story, history, and overall presentation. This ability to write and conceptualize from a more intergenerational perspective has led to promotions and pay increases, which I again attribute directly to the Latino Studies minor. Without a this minor I would have written approx 36 less papers than I had, I would have never been exposed to anti-racist/anti-sexist literature at a high volume, or have had the opportunity to become intricately familiar with human migration.

I would like to end this letter by saying thank you to both the University of Wyoming and the Latino Studies department. The minor in Latino Studies has provided me with a niche marketable designation that is appreciated by employers in mental health as a differentiator, which communicates complexity and cultural competency. The Latino Studies minor in general will become more necessary and more in demand as the west continues to change in demographics. The need for skilled cross cultural communication is only going to increase as the Latino population inturn increases. The University of Wyoming has the opportunity to be cutting edge in its approach to cultural studies and I implore the reader of this letter to dream of the tireless possibilities that exist in this degree. The world needs more Cowboys, more out of the box thinkers, more people who are willing to challenge themselves with the critical analysis that exists in the current Latino Studies literature.

Sincerely,

Michael Morrow, MS, MFTC

**From:** Alin Y Badillo-Carrillo

**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 12:27 AM

**To:** Lilia Soto <[lsoto1@uwyo.edu](mailto:lsoto1@uwyo.edu)>

**Subject:** Support of Latino Studies

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Hi Dr. Soto,

I hope your semester is going well. I am reaching out because I was made aware that the University of Wyoming is in the process of restructuring Latino Studies under the School of Culture, Gender, and Social Justice and I write to state I do not support the merging of the program. As a Latino Studies alumni, I

would like to emphasize how minoring in the program changed my life and has been a valuable asset in my current dual master degree program in Public Health and Latin American Studies.

I am a first generation DACA student who grew up knowing little of my history and struggled to identify myself in the world. The program allowed me to discover, own, and value my history. More importantly, it taught me to love myself. Without the program, I wouldn't have finished college, yet alone, pursue a dual masters degree. Which, I want to highlight it was my Latino Studied minor that inspired and shaped the career I am pursuing.

I am currently a dual masters student in Public Health and Latin America Studies at the University of Mexico. In my program I concentrate in epidemiology and community and regional planning. More in depth, I specialize in housing, labor, mental health, and access to health care among the Latinx community. My Latino studies minor at the University of Wyoming gave me the tools and knowledge that are the invaluable fundamentals of my career. Without them, the work I do would be non-existence.

As a student who has spent more than 10 years in academia in interdisciplinary programs, I have had the opportunity to understand the different impacts a department, concentration, and an "ethnic program" have on the lives of students and mine. Merging the programs will deny other students the opportunity to take all Latinx classes, classes which changes lives. Not to mention, it will make me feel like Latinx studies are being dismissed and silenced by merging us with other programs who also deserve their own departments. Universities have a history of silencing the voices of marginalized communities by combining us into one story, which continues to perpetuate the colonizing and racist structures that have historically oppressed us. In addition, an ethnic studies program only makes sense if an institution has not one department that teaches the history of marginalized populations but since the University of Wyoming already has various departments there is no need for merging. Although we don't have as many students as the school of business or stem, the student in these programs are students who are minority students and often times are filtered out by other departments who are not equipped to serve students of color, first generation, or immigrants. It is because of departments like Latino studies who continue to increase the graduation rate of BIPOC students and make education meaningful.

I hold the University of Wyoming dearly in my heart. I value the university and all the work they do. However, I also expect the university to advocate, redistribute the power, and provide quality knowledge to students equitably. I also expect the university to value the education experiences of students. I strongly urge the university to reconsider the decision to merge Latinx studies under ethnic studies. In fact, I implore they make Latinx studies a major.

Dra. Soto, I am always indebted to you and the department. It was because you and the department saw my value, believed in me, and went above and beyond to prepare me for life that I am passionate and always standing up for injustices in the work I do and life. I am hopeful that Latino Studies will not merge with ethnic studied, and in turn, become a major instead.

Grateful,

Alin Badillo

**From: Liam Guille, UW Student, Class of 2021**

**Molecular Biology Major, Queer Studies Minor**

“As a graduate of the molecular biology program at UW, one of my best decisions during undergrad was to pursue a minor in Queer Studies. While my STEM training equipped me with the ability to perform rigorous research, Queer Studies provided the ability to develop cross-cutting questions that make my work uniquely impactful. In my graduate studies in Genetic Counseling at Johns Hopkins University, I have found myself, again and again, using what I learned in the Queer Studies program. Building a framework around Queer Theory has given me the tools to refine my counseling approach into one that helps address every individual, even when much of our modern healthcare system seeks to standardize patient needs. These skills allow me to stand out from my peers as someone who has the technical skills that meet the STEM demands in healthcare and the background to apply those skills in a relevant and compassionate way. Without my experience in the Queer Studies program, I would not be where I am today.”

**From: Sandra Wotawa**

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:49 PM

**To:** Lilia Soto <[lsoto1@uwyo.edu](mailto:lsoto1@uwyo.edu)>

**Subject:** LTST Letter

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sandra Wotawa, and I was a student at the University of Wyoming and had a minor in LTST. As a proud Wyomingite I am frustrated by the news of a potential reconstruction of the LTST program. A program that offered me, a first-generation college student, my first educational experience of having an educator that looked like me and sounded like me. I cannot begin to explain how powerful and transformative the opportunity to be in a program that reflected my heritage was, mainly, because I never thought that such a space existed in the first place. In many ways, my time in LTST offered a reclaiming of my Latinx history, my identity as a Mexican student, and it empowered me as a woman of color.

To dismiss the LTST minor to a broader program is to deny opportunities of inclusion for students who can respond actively to what they learn and who could inspire change. Through the mentorship of the LTST professors I was able to find my voice and the confidence to be a better student and a better human. For non-ethnic students, these classes made students aware of global experiences, encouraging students to think critically about the experiences of those around them.

As a life-long Catholic raised in Wyoming I had a very small understanding of the complexities of belonging to a religion that met my spiritual needs but, at the same time, recreated cycles of

racism and oppression for many parishioners of color. The LTST program helped me take back a space within the Catholic church that I thought had been taken away from me. These deep personal experiences have given me zeal to work harder for unity and for visibility of Latinx Catholic devotions in the diocese of Cheyenne as the first spanish-speaking employee of St. Paul's Newman Center and the first female and youngest chair of the Hispanic Ministry Planning team for the diocese. All because of the education and many skills that the LTST program helped me develop. Most recently, my work with the National V Encuentro has offered a space for many Latinx Catholics to live in full communion with the broader community, while affirming their cultural identity by establishing the first of many pastoral plans for Hispanic Ministry, a first for the Diocese. My desire is to promote accompaniment for Latinx Catholics rooted in welcoming, listening, and acceptance not judgment. An opportunity that was not always available to me.

Today, I ask that you give the same accompaniment and support to LTST. A program that has enriched all aspects of my life and that will continue to positively impact the state by educating and empowering future leaders.

Sandra Wotawa

**From:** Jose Guillermo Rivas  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2021 10:32 AM  
**To:** Lilia Soto <[lsoto1@uwyo.edu](mailto:lsoto1@uwyo.edu)>  
**Subject:** Letter

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Jose Rivas a former student at the University of Wyoming. I graduated in 2015 with a B.A. degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Latino Studies. I graduated as a finalist for the Tobin Award, an award given to outstanding graduating students. I also pursued a graduate degree from the University of Wyoming in Counseling, and in 2018 graduated with my masters. I am proud to be a Wyoming Cowboy in mind, heart, and soul.

I write to you today, concerned with the possibility that LTST is being restructured into the School of Culture, Gender, and Social Justice as a track, but not a minor. I arrived to UW knowing little of how to apply my personal experiences, culture, and community needs to an academic forum. The LTST program along with all their faculty and staff, guided me and brought out the best in me. I became a better student, but most importantly I learned how to become an agent of change for my local, state, and national communities. I became a leader and happy to say that I apply my studies every day at work as a school counselor and therapist. Without the support of LTST, I would not be where I am today.

Aside from all the academic support and learning opportunities I had, lifelong friendships and professional relationships were created during my time in the LTST program. I can say with confidence that I can reach out to the program for support in my current and future endeavors, the faculty and staff have become lifelong colleagues and mentors. It saddened me to hear of the restructuring of the program. Again, I ask that you reconsider your decision, as it may impact the future of Wyoming and our communities.

## Jose G. Rivas

Professional School Counselor- Teton County School District  
Counselor- La Familia Counseling  
MS School Counseling- University of Wyoming

September 14,2021

Dear Dr. Jarman,

I am writing to lend my support for the Queer Studies Program at the University of Wyoming. I am currently a fourth year PhD student at the University of Colorado Boulder in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology where I work with Dr. Nichole Barger to improve restoration of degraded drylands using microbial ecology. While my formal PhD degree program is in Ecology, queer studies has proven to be a highly valuable component of my education. My advisor once told me that what stood out to her on my CV, when she first considered me as a student, was my Queer Studies Minor. Our department is highly attuned to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and actively seeks to bring diverse students and allies to the institution. It may be that my Queer Studies minor at the University of Wyoming earned me the position I currently have in a highly competitive ecology graduate program.

I have no doubt that having this degree on my CV will continue to provide opportunities within academia and beyond. For instance, I am currently applying to an internship program with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) to contribute as an author on their assessment of water, food systems, human health, and climate change. In my application I highlight my Queer Studies minor as a major contribution I bring to the table. It is a lens which allows me to grasp the social inequalities of these intersecting global problems, such that I will be a better researcher, collaborator, listener, and writer for these science-policy efforts.

The Queer Studies Program at the University of Wyoming should be fully supported now and into the future because it's theory and applications go far beyond the field itself. I owe much of my current success in academia and my confidence/strength as an individual to what I learned in the Queer Studies Program from courses, students, and faculty.

Thank you for your time,



Sierra Jech



## *Linford Elementary School*

*120 S. Johnson Street  
Laramie, WY 82070*

*(307)721-4439 Phone*

*(307) 721-4439 Fax*

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Ada Mushati, and I am writing this letter to express my concern over the future of the Latina/o Studies program at the University of Wyoming. I am a University of Wyoming alumni. I graduate in May of 2019 with a Bachelor's in Psychology and Sociology and a minor in Latina/o Studies. In May of 2021 I graduated with my Master's in Social Work. The Latina/o Studies program did so much for me. Without it, I would not be where I am today.

In my Master's program, the University of Wyoming gives us the option to write a thesis for our graduation. I wrote an autoethnography on being the daughter of Mexican immigrants living in white spaces. I credit the Latina/o Studies program for this idea. Before taking classes within Latina/o Studies, I was unaware of the terminology that went with the things I was experiencing. I was unaware my feelings were being felt by others in my classes and in literature. It gave me a sense of belonging, and I felt less alone.

Currently, I am the School Social Worker at an elementary school that has a significant Latinx population. The Latina/o Studies program gave me tools that I need everyday to work with this population. This program gave me information that I can use to pass on to the parents of my Latinx students. I can help put them in a more informed position that will help them advocate for themselves and their children.

Lumping the Latina/o Studies program into a broader program is making feelings of less importance come to the surface. Too often, I was not given the attention or information I needed growing up in a predominately white community because I was the minority. I felt as if my experiences did not matter because I did not represent a large enough population. This is what this lumping means to me. It is telling incoming students that the importance of Latina/o Studies is not enough to stand alone, it has to be grouped because its existence is not significant enough. Lumping will also cause valuable content to be lost. I have to say it is extremely disappointing because it is only making me revisit my experiences going to school in a predominately white community. There was nothing that belonged to me.

I ask that you please reconsider this decision. Latina/o Studies is extremely valuable and provides education on a population that is only growing here in the United States. It is important and it should not be lumped in with other subjects. Please keep the Latina/o Studies program so there is something at the University of Wyoming for Latinas/os to call theirs, and for people to become better informed on a population that will continue to grow in this country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ada Mushati'.

Ada Mushati, PCSW  
School Social Worker  
Linford Elementary  
(307) 721-4439 ext. 57051  
amushati@acsd1.org

My name is Bianca Estefania Infante De La Cruz and I am a first-generation immigrant alumni from the University of Wyoming. I first pursued a bachelor's degree in International Studies and Spanish with a minor in Latino/a Studies. I just recently graduated with a Master's degree in American Studies.

I am writing this letter because I just recently found out that the University of Wyoming is considering restructuring programs and one of them is to put all ethnic studies programs under one. In this letter, I am raising concerns and disagreements with this proposal as I believe it will affect other students, especially minority students, who benefit from these types of programs by learning about their history and other methods of knowledge. This program offers the opportunity to absorb interdisciplinary methods of apprehension that will be given back to communities in the United States. You can see this in my own personal experience as an Alumni who graduated with a minor in Latino/a Studies who wished that there was a major in this field at the University of Wyoming.

As a first-generation student, who also held DACA status, I was unaware of my option after graduation. In 2014, just months after graduating from high school I decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Biology. The decision to pursue higher education began to bring obstacles as I was unaware of how to navigate academia. I was confused about my decision to attend higher education and I was ready to drop out. It was not until Spring 2015 when I took my first Latino/a Studies class that changed my career and my life course. I took *Chicano in Contemporary Society* that allowed me to learn about the history and the theories of immigration. This class related to my own life experience since I arrived in the United States. It answered questions that I had growing up as an immigrant child and it made me understand the reasons why my parents decided to migrate. I was fascinated by my new knowledge and I was determined that I wanted to give back to the immigrant community. I changed my major to International Studies focusing on Latin America because there was not a major in Latino/a Studies.

I decided that I wanted to pursue a minor in Latino/a Studies because I wanted to continue to further my understanding of Latinx and Chicanx history. It also became an interest of mine because I wanted to give back to the Immigrant and Latinx population. Even today, I am using my minor with my two employment opportunities in Jackson, Wyoming. I am currently a bilingual advocate for Community Safety Network that provides services to individuals who are suffering from Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Assault. I am also a legal assistant with Immigrant Hope WY/ID that provides lower rate services to the immigrant community who are seeking immigration relief. I cannot express how grateful I am for having chosen to minor in Latino/a studies because every day I am referencing back to what I learned.

Please, do not merge all ethnic studies programs into one, as I believe it will affect not just Latino/a Studies, but the other ethnic studies program. I would recommend creating majors on those programs as it can benefit several students who are looking to increase their knowledge.

Thank you for your time,

Infante

Sincerely,  
Bianca

Dear Reviewing Committee,

The elimination of the BA and MA American Studies programs would not create the safety net that might be the perceived result. As the MA program is fully funded through a separate endowment, this push for elimination seems rushed and overlooked. As a Wyomingite it has been my dream to complete a graduate program at UW and the dissolution of this program would force me to take my future elsewhere.

Inclusivity, being one of the four pillars Ed Seidel emphasizes on, is the epitome of this program. Passionate and driven professors have taken me under their wing and have truly shown me the importance of community involvement, and the need to think across boundaries to create the most impactful actions.

Interdisciplinary, also one of the four pillars, has been the structure of my entire education at the university. High quality courses within the Law School, Education program, and other social justice informed subjects have allowed me to develop my own philosophies and pedagogies that will equip me for my future in the public sector here in Albany county.

It is with a heavy heart that I must set aside schoolwork, volunteering, and canvassing for candidates to show why this program is meaningful. Without American studies my social network here in Laramie would not be half of what it is today. Thanks to this diverse program and the quality professors I am able to expand and capitalize on my civic duties and give back to the community that has given me so much.

If there is anything more you would like to hear from me do not hesitate to contact me at the information below.

Thank you for your time,  
Illyanna

**Illyanna Saucedo**

*University of Wyoming Senior Student*

*College of Arts and Sciences*

*American Studies Major*

To the Review Committee,

I graduated in 2010 with a MA in American Studies, and it is truly painful to have be writing *another* letter to the University of Wyoming in support of keeping the program. But this time, not only is the BA threatened but the entire the department.

During my two years I spent on my degree, I had the opportunity to work with some incredibly smart and caring professors as well as my small cohort of fellow grad students. The handful of AMST classes required for the degree challenged my world

view, inviting me to look at historic and contemporary issues from a variety of vantage points. The classes I took on historic preservation opened up an entire new field of study to me, one of which I pursued after graduating by serving as the first executive director of Alliance for Historic Wyoming, Wyoming's only statewide historic preservation nonprofit. I continue to utilize this deeper appreciation for Wyoming's historic structures by doing preservation work on my own historic house. Prior to AMST I never would have seen myself hanging from a ladder re-glazing steel windows or studying YouTube videos about patching historic stucco. Additionally, while working on my MA in American Studies I also earned a BFA in art and often found myself benefitting from American Studies' encouragement of interdisciplinary work, pulling my growing skills in graphic design and expanding knowledge of art history into my AMST classes and vice versa.

I also had the chance to co-teach an AMST Intro to Historic Preservation class two years ago. The students were varied and included 3 football players; testimony to how hard the department has worked to draw in a number of students with different backgrounds and reasons for attending UW. Teaching the football players was so eye-opening – so few had ever been asked for their opinion on anything, and it was amazing to see them become more comfortable with voicing their own thoughts and start noticing the spaces around them. In fact, after a walking tour of historic buildings in downtown Laramie, all of them were blown-away by how “cool” our little town was (a direct quote).

I wrote a letter last time the BA was threatened and now I write to you again. American Studies offers small programs, but they are mighty. They encourage students to grow into thinkers. To pull in varied areas of their interests and create degrees that will take them new places they didn't know existed. AMST encourages interdisciplinary work – something that has been articulated as core to UW. As well as inclusivity. Last time the BA was on the chopping block, AMST stepped up and recruited an impressive number of undergrad students. When the Cooper House was being considered for demo for new dorms, alumni, community members, students, faculty, and staff all proclaimed their outrage and the building was saved (again). It is so disheartening that we are once again having to defend not only the BA, but also the MA and minor.

This program has value. And while I understand that UW is facing another round of unprecedented budget cuts, this program should not fall victim. It is important. It upholds the values that you all have outlined as important: *“the university should*

*become more digital, more entrepreneurial, more interdisciplinary, and more inclusive."*

Please keep American Studies in its entirety and allow it to continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

M. Hilery Lindmier

*BA in English, BFA, MA in American Studies – all from UW*

Dear Dr. Alexander and review committee,

I am writing as a proud alumni of the University of Wyoming's graduate program in American Studies (MA, 2009) and as a four-year instructor in the UW Upward Bound Program. I specialize in interdisciplinary, remote and Indigenous-inclusive education in the Canadian north, and the years I spent as a student of American Studies at UW continue to have a major influence on my work.

I was incredibly disheartened this week to learn that the American Studies program faces institutional review. Not for the first time, I feel compelled to voice my ardent support for the program and to urge that the institution realize what a fantastically unique asset American Studies is to the university and to the state of Wyoming.

Given the "4 pillars" that UW has recently identified as priorities going forward, the review of the American Studies program seems *especially* perplexing. I can testify that the work done at every level in the Cooper House is highly entrepreneurial and interdisciplinary, whilst inclusivity and digital scholarship are absolutely core to the work of American Studies.

There can be very few programs in the country that offer students such a solid grounding in the history, identity, and cultural heritage of their region, as well as helping them develop a real sense of civic responsibility and pride in their communities. Anyone who loves the state of Wyoming and its people will recognize the many misconceptions and stereotypes the region struggles with. During my time with the Upward Bound program I got to know generations of diverse young people from all over the state and I can ensure you that UW students - both undergraduate and graduate - come to campus with the kind of questions that very few other programs can help them explore. As an endowment-funded program with the kinds of external connections it takes decades to build, American Studies also boasts unique links with public sector organizations and prepares students for a diverse range of careers in public life. These are invaluable resources for UW students as they enable a connection between academic study and the real world.

The American Studies program is also intrinsically global in its outlook and this is also one of its most valuable contributions to the diversity and inclusivity of the campus. I arrived in 2007 as the first postgraduate fellow from the British Association of American Studies and worked as a TA in the Cooper House before going on to complete my Ph.D. at The Ohio State University. The fellowship that enabled my study in Laramie continues to be a prestigious connection for the University of Wyoming, and it is just one of the many impressive international links the American Studies program maintains.

The American Studies program, along with the talented faculty who teach there, foster inclusivity, interdisciplinarity and innovation of all kinds and it seems frankly bizarre that its future should be called into question at this time. The University, the state of Wyoming and its young people would be immeasurably worse off without these degrees, and I strongly hope that this is not something that is discovered the hard way.

Sincerely,

Dr. Drew Lyness

Yukon University

**Dr. Drew Lyness,**

**Indigenous Governance & English Literature**

**School of Applied Arts**

To whom it may concern:

I am a full-time temporary lecturer in the School of Culture Gender and Social Justice. I teach courses in American Studies and African American and Diaspora Studies. I am currently teaching two courses in American Studies this fall, and they include the Intro 2010 course, and Senior Seminar 4985. I am reaching out to you as a former BA and MA graduate of the American Studies program of the University of Wyoming, and as a lecturer. This program has been foundational in my world view for nearly 14 years now, and I believe as a former student and lecturer I have an interesting perspective on the importance of the work it does, and what it offers the University of Wyoming.

As a BA student, I had taken many English and History classes, but I found my home in American Studies through the recommendation of several professors towards the end of my community college experience. As a transfer student, I found the community of the Cooper House incredibly welcoming and it soon became apparent this was where I belonged. Looking at history through mediums such as film and novels

provided fascinating new ways to think about the knowledge I'd accumulated in my life.

As playing and writing music are two of my passions, it is my belief that seeing music not just as notes on a page, or as simply sound, is a valuable thing that started to come together during my period as a BA student. The realm of creativity that was offered in many of the classes I took allowed me to literally bring my drums into the Cooper House and perform a composition, and to think about the meaning of performance in jazz and rock and roll. I found myself writing about the role of bebop drummers not only as artists that stretched the jazz idiom, but as individuals who were stretching the boundaries of the racial and social climate of the 1940s. Being able to do this type of work, along with the incredible professors I worked with (notably Frieda Knobloch, Ulrich Adelt, and John Dorst) created a rewarding, challenging, and also highly creative bachelor's degree.

While I received a BA in the program, I continued on as an MA student. I switched from jazz as a concentration to rock and roll and film during my time as a graduate student. I was a graduate assistant for two courses (Cultural Diversity in America, and Intro to African American Studies) which allowed me the opportunity to lead discussions and to grade essays. Making the transition from a BA student to the MA program was a good way to begin graduate school, as I still had a community of great professors and was able to venture more deeply into my areas of interest through independent studies and a self- designed course load (once the capstone classes were taken).

On the undergraduate or graduate level, one learns everything in the world can be deemed a text, from the films we view, the art that gets produced, magazines that get written, music that is recorded and then streamed, to photographs and images that are published. American Studies is about understanding that a deeper meaning can be ascribed to something that may seem simple on the surface. This major is what college should provide for all of us: a way to sharpen and grow our critical thinking skills, and then apply those skills in the world around us.

In the last year I have been given the incredible opportunity to teach a few courses in the program. My AMST Senior Seminar course last spring was the largest group of seniors since the 1950s, and this fall I currently have 14 students in my Senior Seminar. It has been inspiring when I read their work, see how they interact with the texts in the

course, and get to witness the creation of young scholars focusing in on the things that matter the most in their lives. Given the social turmoil of this country, most of my students are interested in trying to decipher what is happening and how the world can become a better place. This is the importance of the field: they are thinking critically and applying that to their work. I encourage them to be creative, to think outside of the box, and to understand the importance of the voyage.

As a former student now working alongside my mentors, I want to encourage you to keep the American Studies BA and MA programs at this university. The university and students benefit greatly from the interdisciplinary courses that it offers.

Thanks and kind regards,

Jascha Herdt

The University of Wyoming leaders mention that the “priorities of becoming more digital, more entrepreneurial, more interdisciplinary, and more inclusive” are what they want to see moving forward (University of Wyoming, 2020). The American Studies program at the UW embodies each of the ‘four pillars’ described by the administration and they also focus on each of their students to ensure these goals and a more rounded student.

First among the pillars: digital. The American Studies program is more digital through their focus, outreach, and digitizing the past. The focus and outreach of any university program relies on technology to progress and remain a relevant field to pursue. Programs like American Studies examine the focus and use of technology and how it impacts one’s study and factors surrounding it. Sometimes the study is limited by how little records were preserved or recorded. The international outreach that the program has is helped along by and uses technology to further those partnerships. Every program within the university should be more digital as the world becomes more digital.

However, American Studies also uses technology to digitize and record the past. Dr. Graham is a folk life specialist. She has written papers, recorded interviews, and taken pictures of the folk life across Wyoming and other states. The internship program that Dr. Graham oversees also contributes to this preservation at times. Through my interactions with her, I’ve gotten a more complete look at history that may have been lost without her efforts. American Studies is using new technology to bring the past to people through digital means.

Second, the department can contribute to entrepreneurial thought specifically through their internship, the senior seminar and more generally through the course work. First, the course work. The course on American Culture and the Public Sector, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, examines “jobs and institutions” (University of Wyoming, 2020). By taking a broad look at a specific sector of the job market, students can gain more understanding and use that knowledge as a spring board. Students can take that knowledge and use it to make it the focus of their internship or senior seminar. When this is done, they can develop more ideas to help with their own entrepreneurial endeavors or be more ready to help others with theirs.

Next, and what I think is one of the more important elements of the pillars, interdisciplinary is emphasized through their faculty, classes, and degree path. Most of the faculty are members of other programs within the university. Dr. Adelt teaches for American Studies and African American and Diaspora Studies. Dr. Knobloch teaches in Creative Writing. The interim director, Dr. Sailor, is a professor of art history. Dr. Soto is the director of Latina/o studies. American Studies, like other studies programs at the University of Wyoming, has an interdisciplinary faculty (University of Wyoming, 2020). Each faculty member can draw on multiple field in their own right but also have many avenues to reach out for that knowledge.

Classes offered within the program tend to be cross listed with other programs or their prerequisites are in other departments (University of Wyoming, 2020). It is easier to name the programs that are not cross listed. Cross listed classes draw a large student cross section to each course, even excluding the first year seminar. Classes within the program use the interdisciplinary nature of the course to highlight aspects of America and uses it to study what the professor and student include in America.

Out of a few that are not cross listed are the senior seminar and internship. Those play into the focus of an individual’s degree path. My senior seminar, and others, was a project that was the accumulation of my focus in the program. Part of the focus is six classes outside of the major (two or three departments combining together for a focus). The other part is the seminar or the internship that combines these elements into a project or paper. Using what is learned from those other disciplines, the student uses them to build into their final project for their undergraduate program. So, even if they are not explicitly cross listed, other departments contribute to these courses.

The final pillar is to be more inclusive. The inclusivity of the department goes hand in hand with how interdisciplinary the program is. American Studies does this through their classes, the people involved, and the focus each student has in their degree path. Within the classes

and through the faculty, many perspectives and people groups are examined. The classes examine various minority groups, race, cultures, sexualities, and how that combines together for the people and America as a whole. The people involved are as diverse and inclusive as the coursework offered. The focus of each student, combining with the interdisciplinary elements, tend to work towards a more inclusive future. Through understanding and research that contributes to their specific degree path.

Finally, their student focus. The pillars mentioned by the university president and administrators are important to any university to grow and thrive. Another element, sometimes left on the back burner, is how each department focuses on the students that they are teaching. There are many programs and clubs throughout UW that help a student through their time. I was a part of Secular Student Alliance, a Bernie supporter group on campus, and a representative for my floor when in the dorms. Along with spending a good portion of my waking hours in the Multicultural Resource Center or the Veterans Services Center. All of these programs and clubs helped in their own way.

However, without Dr. Adelt, Dr. Knobloch, and the department as a whole, I would have had less focus in my degree path and less faculty support. Dr. Knobloch helped me through my senior seminar. She helped me edit my paper down several times, gave me advice on writing, and helped me understand an area of study more, even if it was not her area. More importantly she kept me in the program. I was unsure of whether to stay in the program. Dr. Knobloch's advice for my degree path helped me gain a better understanding of myself and what I should put my efforts towards. Her efforts amounted to more than the advisors for psychology and criminal justice did in this regard. Dr. Adelt was my advisor throughout my stay in the program. He was my first exposure to the field and why I initially added American Studies as my second major. He helped broaden my horizons and understanding of the broader culture around me. Lastly, the department as a whole helped me. There were many events were the department would get together for a seminar, presentations, or a holiday. Each student and professor added to the department and it gave me a richer understanding of academia as a whole. When entering the Cooper House, you are always greeted and helped when able. I spent many afternoons in the main room. American Studies as a department has a student focus that was lacking in other departments I witnessed.

The American Studies embodies the four pillars of being more digital, more entrepreneurial, more interdisciplinary, and more inclusive along with their incredible student focus. If the University of Wyoming cuts this department, it would be cutting a department that embodies what President Seidel and the administrators want in the university.

Please do not cut this program. Use it as a template or example of what the University of Wyoming can be.

Thank you for your consideration,

Britney Bartz

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October 30, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I recently discovered that the American Studies program was on the chopping block and my heart sank. From 2008 to 2012, I got my Bachelor's from the University of Wyoming within 3 separate programs (Psychology, Sociology, and Criminal Justice). From 2018 to 2020, I spent time earning my Master's degree in American Studies. The experiences were drastically different as I felt entirely connected to that American Studies community and to the true meaning of academia with respect to curiosity, creativity, and critical analysis. It was in this program that I was encouraged to pursue more in-depth research on what it means to me and to others when you are a burn survivor (the first thesis/dissertation on this subject at the University of Wyoming). These mentors that are present in the American Studies program covered the gamut of social sciences, history, literature, humanities, and ethnic studies. Within this department, people explored topics so vast and so applicable to the world that it was beyond belief how diverse these minds were in just the two years I was part of the program.

Besides these facts, the Wyoming community has benefited greatly from the minds found within the American Studies program as

the Public Sector class often discovered. American Studies has grown non-profit directors, grant managers, museum curators, and a whole host of other wondrous professionals, in these skills-focused courses. In addition, the internships have helped just as many non-profits in the Laramie and Wyoming community than most other majors that are present throughout the University of Wyoming campus. Such community engagement is listed as one of the pillars to the campus mission and yet very few majors I have noticed as a former University of Wyoming employee come close to this level of interaction and community support. How can we boil down the success of a program with only numbers of graduates in mind when the research and community relations have been the strengths of this program?

Yet, it is not only the connections of this major to the Laramie and Wyoming communities. Internationally, this program has gained such high praise that International Students from various countries have decided to complete their Master's in this department. As we have discussed for years at the University of Wyoming, a varied student population is a goal so that we too can grow holistic ideologies and immerse ourselves in a collaborative understanding of experience and knowledge growth. I was fortunate and went to Austria, Netherlands, and Germany, to meet students in a host of other majors and discuss a variety of topics relevant to the current world climate. Many were impressed with the ideas being grown at the University of Wyoming American Studies program, and this level of interest and accolade made me continue to realize what an amazing program it truly was.

This program is one of a kind as it functions as an opportunity for true holistic research that is rarely found in most science and art programs around campus. While they may not have many current students, their growth these previous years has showcased an emergence of a new student grounded in topics of personal interest and research rather than professor-led research. If this program is destroyed, you as campus administrators may be choosing to undermine such a positive shift and instead are focusing on one parameter (graduation rates) that is far from all-telling.

Please consider the many voices that have spoken up since this decision was presented as a possibility and recognize that there is still an opportunity for a change of mind and change of heart. American Studies was a decision I did not originally expect, but the amount of growth and the community of knowledge shapers is by far a strong asset

to the University of Wyoming, state, national, and global academic/non-academic communities.

Sincerely,

Sean Moran  
University of Wyoming American Studies MA Graduate  
Class of 2020

*Article in Sheridan Press regarding Misty Stoll, AMST BA and MA,  
Superintendent, Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site*

[https://www.thesheridanpress.com/news/local/stoll-comes-full-circle-to-fort-phil-kearny-state-historic-site/article\\_178d96ae-71a9-546d-91f0-4b46343e4a41.html](https://www.thesheridanpress.com/news/local/stoll-comes-full-circle-to-fort-phil-kearny-state-historic-site/article_178d96ae-71a9-546d-91f0-4b46343e4a41.html)



[Stoll comes full circle to Fort  
Phil Kearny State Historic  
Site | Local News |  
thesheridanpress.com](https://www.thesheridanpress.com/news/local/stoll-comes-full-circle-to-fort-phil-kearny-state-historic-site/article_178d96ae-71a9-546d-91f0-4b46343e4a41.html)

STORY— Misty Stoll, superintendent of Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site, grew up on the Powder River in Arvada. She is a sixth generation Wyomingite, [...]

[www.thesheridanpress.com](https://www.thesheridanpress.com)

## APPENDIX III, STAFF FEEDBACK

2-13 Committee, SCGSJ & American Studies Merger

Staff Notes – Listening Session, Friday, September 24, 2021:

Summary of Staff Concerns and Questions:

1. Staff in SCGSJ and AMST / HIST want to be proactive about planning, but are frustrated with the sense of being in limbo and not knowing who they should be training to take over tasks or what they should be learning in order to assume different responsibilities.
2. Because AMST was already planning to move to SCGSJ, might that timeline move more quickly than the full college reorganization, and if so, how can staff facilitate that move?
3. There is a general sense of anxiety and overwhelm in the shared staff office. Some staff will likely move with the reorganization, which makes planning difficult.
4. All staff members requested that they receive clear communication; that they are notified during the process whenever new information is provided; and most importantly, that they are involved in all steps of the implementation process.

As part of the conversation, staff members were encouraged to do a full accounting of their responsibilities, and to think about how they would like their roles to change or grow as a result of the reorganization. There was agreement from all involved that staff will be informed of any new information and involved with all aspects of implementation.