



**SENATE RESOLUTION #2849**

**TITLE:** ASUW Support for the Gender and Women's Studies Program

**DATE INTRODUCED:** January 31, 2023

**AUTHOR:** President Brown

**SPONSORS:** Senators Engelby, Ewalt, Grimm, McLean; Directors Heddins, Sapien

1. WHEREAS, the purpose of the Associated Students of the University of Wyoming
2. (ASUW) is to serve our fellow students in the best manner possible; and,
3. WHEREAS, the University of Wyoming (UW) Gender and Women's Studies Program
4. within the School of Culture, Gender, and Women's Studies in the previous session of
5. the Wyoming State Legislative in 2022 was under threat of being defunded by the
6. Wyoming State Legislature; and,
7. WHEREAS, UW's Gender and Women's Studies Program was not defunded in 2022 but
8. was voted to be defunded by the Wyoming State Senate as explained in an article
9. from the Casper Star Tribune as shown in Addendum A; and,
10. WHEREAS, during legislative conversations surrounding UW's Gender and Women's
11. Studies Program, a state lawmaker stated that programs offered by UW's Gender and
12. Women's Studies Program taught a "progressive agenda" and "trains activists"; and,
13. WHEREAS, another state lawmaker said the Gender and Women's Studies Program is
14. "an extremely biased, ideologically driven program" with no "academic legitimacy;"
15. and,
16. WHEREAS, in light of these threats to the funding of the UW's Gender and Women
17. Studies Program, the program continued to be supported by President Seidel and Provost

18. Carman when they stated in a university statement that they disagreed with the Wyoming  
19. Senate's vote and would continue monitoring the issue as the state-budget process moves  
20. forward; and,  
21. WHEREAS, UW's Gender and Women Studies Program aims to achieve a number of  
22. learning outcomes as outlined from their webpage in Addendum B; and,  
23. WHEREAS, the program webpage states, "A minor or degree in Gender & Women's  
24. Studies or Queer Studies will arm you with critical thinking and applied skills that will  
25. enable you to succeed in diverse, 21st century work forces and communities. You will  
26. learn how to: (1) analyze socio-historical and contemporary power dynamics across  
27. rural, local, community, transnational, and global contexts, (2) articulate the history,  
28. strategies, and goals of interconnected movements for social justice, and (3) perform and  
29. develop intersectional, interdisciplinary feminist and queer analysis;" and,  
30. WHEREAS, during the 2023 Wyoming Legislative Session, UW's Gender and Women  
31. Studies Program could conceivably be under threat yet again from lawmakers.  
32. THEREFORE, be it enacted that ASUW fully supports the continued funding and  
33. mission of the UW Gender and Women's Studies Program; and.  
34. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that ASUW does not support any efforts from the  
35. Wyoming State Legislature to interfere or obstruct academic freedom at the University  
36. of Wyoming; and,  
37. THEREFORE, be it further resolved that upon passage of this resolution it will be sent to  
38. all relevant lawmakers in the Wyoming State legislature as deemed appropriate by the  
39. ASUW Director of Governmental and Community Affairs in consultation with the  
40. ASUW President.

PASSED: 20-0-2

Referred to: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee of the Whole \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Passage: \_\_\_\_\_ January 31st, 2023 \_\_\_\_\_ Signed:   
(ASUW Chairperson)

“Being enacted on \_\_\_\_\_ January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 \_\_\_\_\_, I do hereby sign my name hereto

and approve this Senate action.”   
ASUW President

**Addendum A**



March 4, 2022

Victoria Eavis

A legislative committee on Friday decided against a budget amendment that would have stripped the University of Wyoming's gender and women's studies department of all its funding.

Instead, the Wyoming Legislature's Joint Conference Committee replaced the gender studies measure with a provision that requires the university to report to two legislative panels on the school's general education requirements, as well as any policies or regulations that incentivize or disincentivize students to take certain coursework outside of their majors.

The change was "truly a compromise position" that was hashed out behind the scenes between House and Senate members of the committee, said Rep. Tom Walters, R-Casper. The Senate was in favor of cutting the gender studies funding while House members approached it with "a hard no," he explained.

"We reviewed it, discussed it, arm wrestled over it. We don't want to blow up a \$2.5 billion budget over a few words," he said, in a reference to the entire state budget.

Rep. Cathy Connolly, D-Laramie, who is a professor in the gender studies program and has been advising students at UW for 29 years, said the university is not incentivizing or disincentivizing students to take certain classes.

The compromise provision also requests that the report include details on what was referred to in the committee meeting as "student registration bumps" or the idea that some students will get put to the front or back of lines during class registration. Why that would happen is unclear, nor is it clear that the practice exists at UW.

"I've never heard that language before," Connolly said. "I'm baffled at the misinformation that comes out of legislators' mouths regarding the university."

The committee's decision came exactly one week after the Senate approved a budget amendment by Sen. Cheri Steinmetz, R-Lingle, stripping the department of funding.

Steinmetz framed her attempt to remove the funding as an effort to stop teaching UW students to be "activists." Her measure succeeded in a 16-14 vote.

The Senate's vote spurred a broader conversation about the Legislature's role in deciding what should and shouldn't be taught in the state's classrooms. It also raised questions about what would happen to students who were either gender studies majors or taking classes through the program.

*PASSED: 20-0-2*

In the last five years, the gender and women's studies department graduated 81 students. In the 2021 fall semester, there were roughly 450 students enrolled in gender and women's studies classes, including those that are cross-listed with other departments.

A mirror version of the Senate amendment was brought in the House, but it died there after the rules committee in that chamber deemed it not "germane" to the budget.

That discussion over what is germane has come up multiple times in the budget session as lawmakers try to prevent colleagues from effectively passing laws via the budget.

### **Addendum B**



# **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES**

## **Gender & Women's Studies and Queer Studies**

A minor or degree in Gender & Women's Studies or Queer Studies will arm you with critical thinking and applied skills that will enable you to succeed in diverse, 21st century work forces and communities. You will learn how to

- analyze socio-historical and contemporary power dynamics across rural, local, community, transnational, and global contexts
- articulate the history, strategies, and goals of interconnected movements for social justice.
- perform and develop intersectional, interdisciplinary feminist and queer analysis.

## **Undergraduate Learning Outcomes and Objectives**

These learning outcomes reflect our curricular investments across the undergraduate programs. Students in the GWST major will be expected to have broader knowledge across these areas. Minor students in GWST and Queer Studies should gain understanding and skills in all of the numbered outcomes with varied / individualized exposure to bulleted objectives.

### **Learning Outcomes.**

#### **Students will:**

**Engage in intersectional, interdisciplinary feminist analysis.**

**Objectives:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the field
- Understand interrelatedness of gender, race, ethnicity, class, disability, sexuality, age, religion, and other social categories
- Apply theoretical frameworks of feminism, gender and women's studies, queer studies, sexuality studies
- Apply methods and methodologies

**Analyze socio-historical and contemporary power dynamics underpinning group relations, social institutions, and systems of representation.**

**Objectives:**

- Gain knowledge of multiple forms of oppression and marginalization
- Understand historical and contemporary context in which women, queer, and gender non-conforming individuals have exercised their agency
- Analyze systemic and institutional strategies of exclusion and inclusion

**Situate their analyses within various place-based contexts, including the rural, local, community, transnational, and global.**

**Objectives:**

- Link rural justice issues to broader social movements
- Understand intersectional environmentalism and ecofeminism
- Apply decolonial, First Nation, and indigenous perspectives
- Connect crip, queer, critical race and ethnic studies approaches to place, environments, and the land

**Understand and articulate the history, strategies, and goals of interconnected movements for social justice.**

**Objectives:**

- Gain historical understanding of social movements and social justice
- Articulate interrelated and intersectional nature of feminist, LGBTQ+, racial, disability, environmental, immigration, labor, and economic justice movements
- Translate feminist and social justice theories into service or activism

**Demonstrate mastery of critical thinking skills necessary to succeed in diverse, 21st century work forces and communities.**

**Objectives:**

- Be prepared to assume leadership roles in diverse workplaces and communities

*PASSED: 20-0-2*

- Practice critical thinking through research, writing, and application of theory in interdisciplinary contexts
- Demonstrate information and digital literacy
- Engage in fieldwork, internship, community, non-profit or advocacy work