



# Undergraduate Students (in Spring 2010)

From:  Sheena Hunter  
Subject: Women's Studies  
To:  Achieving Sustainability  CLAS-APPWG  
Cc:  Ann Schonberger

March 26, 2010 9:59:28 AM 

To Whom It May Concern:

The Women's Studies major is an asset to the University of Maine which places it among the ranks of schools well known for academic superiority. The elimination of the major will cause the minor to suffer greatly, and will eliminate opportunities for students who must compete for graduate school admission against students from top-ranking colleges. My Women's Studies major has opened doors for many opportunities to which I might not have otherwise had access, and has made me competitive with students from prestigious private schools. At a recent convention on Women, Law, and Public Policy in Washington, DC, I was one of few Women's Studies majors among Liberal Arts students from private colleges such as Wells, Wellesley, Rutgers, and Mount Holyoke. I stood out among my peers as a strong and distinguished leader in the knowledge of history, policy, and social issues; I also had the most research experience and was the most prepared to discuss current events.

The Women's Studies major is different for each student because aside from our required curriculum, we have many electives to choose from, and this allows us to explore the areas we find most relevant to our future careers. It is the combination of electives, courses outside of the department, and required courses which determine that outcome and application of each individual degree. My Women's Studies major combines the study of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, political science, and international affairs, and has required a depth of analysis that has given me the ability to understand and synthesize multiple perspectives at once.

So far, the skills of analysis and synthesis have helped me to earn scholarships, grants, and even admission to graduate school. My major has been well-received by interviewers who recognize that Women's Studies prepares me to think "outside the box." I have participated in national conventions in Washington D.C., I have won scholarships from prestigious international law firms, and I am currently engaged in research for the Margaret Chase Smith center under a scholarship I won because of the unique analytical skills I have acquired as a Women's Studies major.

Despite the fact that the majority of the Women's Studies faculty are adjunct professors who also teach courses outside of the department, I have never had a professor who was not willing to meet for coffee to discuss ideas or recommend further reading. I have

borrowed books from professors and engaged in analysis and discussion outside of the work required for their courses. Even my online professors have become mentors with whom I will likely maintain close relationships in the future.

Our professors work hard to ensure that by the time we graduate, we are well-networked and prepared to begin our careers—either in the work force or as graduate students. I have just recently been accepted to graduate school at Georgia State University in Atlanta, where I will pursue an MA in Women's Studies; afterward I hope to pursue my PhD in Sociology from Emory. My goal is to achieve my highest level of education and then return to Maine to work. My family and I are sad to think that if the Women's Studies major is eliminated, then so are my chances for returning to Maine to teach.

Please reconsider your recommendation to eliminate the Women's Studies major at the University of Maine. Though I am glad to see that the minor in Women's Studies is counted among the University's priorities, I am concerned that eliminating the major will reduce course availability and force Women's Studies into the narrow field of study that many mistakenly perceive it to be. Women's Studies is an integral asset to UMaine's quality of academics, and a minor will not contribute as much without the existence of a major.

I wish you the very best of luck with the difficult choices you are faced with. At this time, you have the opportunity to make history by moving the University of Maine either further into academic greatness or into academic obscurity.

Sincerely,

Sheena A. Hunter

To whom it may concern:

As a double major in Woman's Studies and Early Child Development and Family Relations, I urge you to keep the woman's studies program with a major as an option. Prior to me joining the Woman's Studies program I did not feel a sense of community amongst my peers. I had a greater plan for what I could achieve in my community locally and globally and did not see a future in early child development and family relations alone. As a Women's Studies student I have had the opportunity to take fascinating courses, find a community, receive opportunities for internships, and conduct independent research on topics local to us with intentions of giving back to our community.

Woman's Studies, and the epistemology of critical consciousness it embraces, offer an influential way for me to think about the world and one's specific surroundings. The discipline that Women's Studies has taught me could potentially benefit any academic major, however is strong on it's own as it also promotes and provides a ways of questioning cultural preconceptions and instructs one on how to look at greater society in terms of how it shapes experience with gender, race, class, sexuality, etc. I understand you are offering an option of a minor, however this is at the expense of not offering some of the more higher level course that were what I consider where I learned the most. Without classes such as: Globalization, Womanhood in America, Feminist Theory, etc. I fear this university would cut these classes if given the opportunity. By cutting such courses you are doing a great injustice to your

University community by not promoting awareness on campus (something that the woman's studies program is notorious for).

One of my first women's studies classes was on women in Violence. We analyzed the impact of violence in our community and how in turn we could work at the prevention. It is clear to me that a lack of recognition has been brought to this particular topic. My sophomore year I had a internship at Spruce Run as well as another work study opportunity at the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. I feel confident in saying this would not have happened if I were not a women's studies major. I have been able to accomplish so much as women's studies major largely due to the close faculty community, which has encouraged me to define my interests and to think women's issues with a more local as well as global perspective.

In regards to my personal future, there have been many questions as to what I could achieve by having such a major. I would like to say that as someone who plans on working with families as an advocate in our local Bangor community when I graduate with such a major. I will carry with me the critical consciousness, vitality and diversity that Woman's Studies probes its students to explore. There is no public or private space that cannot be bettered by this perspective and I plan on sharing that with our greater community.

Thank you for your time,

Rachel A. Johnson

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm a second year student majoring in Women's Studies and Sociology, and I am hoping to minor in Spanish. I am from Old Town, Maine. Both of my parents attended the University of Maine. My grandfather taught here, and my father has taught here for almost thirty years. The university has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. Like many motivated young students who grew up near the University of Maine, the last thing I wanted to do was come to school here. I was ready to break loose, and I wanted to go to school out of state more than anything. I was accepted at several competitive universities, and I had my heart set on attending Smith College, a private school known for educating and empowering generations of young women. Unfortunately, like many students in our state, I could not afford to go out of state for my education.

Reluctantly, I enrolled in the University of Maine in the Fall of 2008, knowing that even though I would rather go far from home, the University of Maine provided the options and resources for me to receive a world class education right in my backyard. I thought I would hate going here until I discovered the Women's Studies program. Taking classes in this department has given me an experience similar to the one I thought I would receive at a private college. My classes are of a manageable size, and my professors actually know my name. They comment on my ideas and my work, and they stop to talk to me outside of class. I've learned an incredible amount about how gender shapes our society and others around the world.


I've been amazed by the continuing disparities between men and women worldwide. I've been inspired by my professors and my classmates to work to change these inequalities. Women's Studies has provided me with the confidence and knowledge needed to become an active member of this campus. I am now co-chair of the Student Women's Association. I finally feel connected to my campus and my community. I feel empowered and ready to make a difference in this state and this world. The Women's Studies department creates educated and dedicated leaders who go on to work on many issues facing our state and our world.

Not only have I valued the subject matter discussed in my courses, I have always felt so proud that the University of Maine makes women and the study of gender a priority. Commitment to studying society and challenging the status quo is what makes a university unique, popular, and honorable. The proposed elimination of the Women's Studies major makes me incredibly disappointed in an institution that I have recently come to value as a center of tolerance, progress, and academic excellence. I do understand that I will be able to finish my degree, but I'm concerned about the future of this university and its students. While I understand that the classes in Women's Studies may continue and that a minor may still be granted, the elimination of the major and graduate concentration would show that the University does not value an important field of study and the experiences it creates for students in Maine. University of Maine has to show the rest of the world that we value women, the study of gender in society, and the many talented students who choose to make Women's Studies the center of their education. Please consider a reorganization of the department, stay open to suggestions from faculty and students, and continue explore other options for saving money before eliminating a major that is so important to this university and the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

Mary Callaway  
Class of 2012  
Women's Studies major  
Sociology major  
Co-chair, Student Women's Association

From:  Angela Hart  
 Nikita Gagain

March 31, 2010 8:43:14 AM   

Subject: Fwd: please do not eliminate the women's studies major!

To:  Ann Schonberger  Mazie Hough

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----- Original Message -----

I am writing to voice my unwavering disapproval of the recent proposal to eliminate women's studies as a major. I am a women's studies major, and I feel my major prepares me very well for my future career. Women's studies (gender studies) is so vitally important to both the University and our society as a whole. UMaine has a wonderful women's studies program, and to devalue its contribution to campus life is ludicrous. I realize the program is smaller than many, but that does not mean it is not valuable. Over the summer, I work with high school students through the Upward Bound program. I help them gain the skills to go to college, and help them discover their passion in life. My women's studies degree has taught me to understand my students better, to be a better counselor. Additionally, for many of my students, women's studies is exactly what they find to be their passion. It helps them make sense of their own lives, and gives them the tools they need to create positive change in the world, just as it has done for me. There have been times when I was going to drop out of college, and the women's studies department has been one of the few things that kept me determined to continue. The faculty are extremely supportive and informative. The need for this subject to be valued is enormous. The Women's Studies major absolutely should be the priority in this academic prioritization evaluation. The cost to run this program is minimal, especially compared to many other areas of spending on campus. No laboratory equipment needs to be maintained, and the faculty is very small and modestly compensated. Most faculty are even ad-juncts. Grants support much of this program. The cultural and social benefits far outweigh the small economic investment for the university. I simply can't imagine what the reasoning behind this decision was, except that the program was small. But it only takes a tiny drop of food coloring to completely change the color of food. Women's studies is a powerfully concentrated major that colors the entire university as more accepting and forward thinking, as a place more students will want to call home. Thank you for considering my opinions, and please do not eliminate the Women's Studies major at the University of Maine. Earnestly, Nikita



Nikita M. Gagain  
Double Major  
Political Science  
Women's Studies  
University of Maine

From:  **Angela Hart**  
 Kathleen Lyons

Subject: Fwd: "academic reorganization"

To:  **Ann Schonberger**  **Mazie Hough**

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March 29, 2010 10:41:33 AM  

----- Original Message -----

My name is Katie Lyons and I am a fifth-year Women's Studies/Mathematics major. I am graduating in May, and my ultimate dream is to become a librarian. I am looking into graduate programs in both Library Science and Women's Studies.

Google, the oh-so-sophisticated way of searching for Women's Studies graduate programs, provided me with lists that were tiny, outdated, and ever-dwindling. Many only offered a graduate concentration; very few gave women an opportunity for a PhD. On every list I read, however, University of Maine came up. I entered the WST program here as a freshman and have not looked back. I cannot even conceive of another major that I could have enjoyed as much, or gotten as much out of. This program has truly changed my thinking. It has changed how I look at the world and the people around me. It has made me challenge my major political and religious beliefs. It has made me speak out in the face of injustice; it has made me become an activist. It has influenced every major decision I have made in my educational, professional, and personal lives. In short, being a Women's Studies major changed my life. I'm a better person for having studied it.

Because the major is so small, and because it is still a relatively new subject, I am often met with a quizzical look and confusion when I tell people what I've chosen to study. I love talking about my major and defend it passionately. I also promote the many WIC events around campus and in the community to my various social circles. I encourage people to take WST 101. When researching my capstone last semester, I blabbed about it to anyone who would listen.

As you can tell by now, I LOVE my major. As you can deduce from these last two paragraphs, I will be heartbroken if this proposal passes. One of the questions I'm most asked about the WST major is what I can "do" with it once I graduate. I tell them about my goals, and the other paths my classmates have taken, but they remain unconvinced. I think this sentiment echoes across the entire liberal/fine arts spectrum. Ever since high school-middle school, even-arts and humanities have been dismissed as not being important in The Real World(TM). By cutting these majors and graduate programs, the University is reinforcing this belief. By reducing these programs to minors and a handful of 101 classes, it is reducing them to fluffy, GPA-boosters that don't need to be taken seriously. By reducing them so drastically, the next recession-fueled cut will remove them from the school altogether.

To lose language and fine arts departments at a state flagship university is unspeakable and, frankly, embarrassing. Keeping these majors-and keeping these students in Maine-benefits the university, the community, and the state. It makes UMaine truly an institution of higher learning: how many of this year's guest speakers, lecturers, performances, demonstrations, and cultural events were put on by these programs? This University cannot live on hockey and engineering alone. Open thinking, new ways of learning, and keeping great minds in Maine should never be up for discussion. They shouldn't be given a second thought. I will be unable to attend the Forum tomorrow, but I am sending this to as many as I can so that I'm heard. The University of Maine and the Women's Studies program have done great things for me; for others to be denied these things is more upsetting than I can say.

Katie Lyons  
5th-Year WST & MAT major  
Proud Delta Zeta Sister

Say what you know. Do what you must. Come what may.  
-Sofia Kovalevskaya



Amelia Catherine R. Butman  
81 College Ave.  
Orono, ME 04473

Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010

President Kennedy,

I am writing to you with sincere concern over the decision to cut programs from our already diminishing school.

I grew up in Massachusetts, but after moving to Maine at the young age of 11 and attending the Maine Summer Youth and Music program and the Future Teachers' Academy in high school, I knew UMaine was the place for me. It is true: at UMaine, you're in a great place. UMaine is Maine's flagship school, providing students around Maine, around New England, and around the world with opportunities to research and learn about issues affecting our world. By cutting programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences from a school that promotes itself on its Liberal Arts and Sciences programs, you are essentially telling potential students that if they come to UMaine, they need to study science or mathematics. Not all students are interested in science and math, not all students want to become engineers, and not all students want to be in a lab nine hours a day. Instead, some people want to help by getting out there and fixing issues across the globe. Sitting behind lab desk obviously cannot do this.

I am third year International Affairs major, concentrating in Women's Studies and minoring Music. I come to you for several reasons, each severely intertwined with the rest because in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, each major is impacted by the next. Personally, I am affected by not only the Women's Studies department cuts, but also language cuts, merging of anthropology and sociology, and most importantly your drastic cuts to the music department.

I understand that although my major is not Women's Studies directly, it is still an important part of my life. I have gone through several other majors before finding my niche, and after three semesters and being enrolled in WST 101 (Intro to Women's Studies), I finally found a place to belong. I immediately joined the Student Women's Association, which you know has gone above and beyond on this campus to promote Women's rights. Between Take Back the Night to promote awareness of domestic violence and abuse to the Vagina Monologues performed at universities around the nation to the Beautiful Project every spring to promote well-being for women of all ages, shapes, and sizes, you would be eliminating the chance for other students to get involved on campus by going into the classroom and studying the facts behind the presentations given at our events every season. Women's Studies satisfies one of our General Education requirements, Ethics. As I'm sure you had to take an ethics course in college, you are well aware that women's studies gives each student an optimal chance to discover social justice issues everywhere and to really understand how to make changes to our drastically changing world.

Students come to UMaine for the intensive language programs offered here. By cutting and reducing the modern language classes and majors, you are inevitably hurting my major as International Affairs directly, not even Women's Studies. Each IA major needs to complete two higher-level language courses. By getting rid of upper level language classes, you are forcing students out of their desired majors and into something they do not want to pursue at all.

I know you're an avid fan of Renaissance, our campus's premier all-female a cappella group, of which I was a member. I have also been a part of the University Singers since the first day I got on this campus three years ago. The only reason I am even at UMaine is because of my desire to share with this school my talent and love for music. By eliminating music from our school, you are eliminating the chance for young men and women to become a part of organizations that make UMaine stand out among the rest. While most of the students in the Music department are Music Education majors, you are neglecting the students that have talents and desires to perform through theater, dance, and music performance, and Music Education majors also double major or minor in the other fields. Each spring break, the University Singers go on tour around New England, up to Canada, and even as far south as Philadelphia to recruit future musicians to UMaine and show them that our flagship school really does have one of the most prominent music programs in all of New England. We offer the same instruction and courses by possibly the most trained and professional teachers in our region, next to the Berklee College of Music. However, instead of paying over \$40,000 a year to attend the same classes with the same level of expertise at Berklee, students can pay less than half of that each year and get even more out of their experience because UMaine has so much more to offer.

Statistics show that UMaine's acceptance rate is 80%, and I congratulate the admissions office on accepting only the brightest and best. However, we should look at the fact that the actual percentage of accepted students attending UMaine is only 39%. Here is the website where I found all my information: <http://www.enotes.com/university-of-maine-guide>. This just goes to show that potential students see the lack of diversity on this campus and use UMaine as a safety school. If we cut our programs even further, we are essentially telling students to not come to UMaine unless they want to study engineering and science. As I explained before, not everyone wants to be stuck in a lab for the rest of his or her life. As a recent member of the All Maine Women class of 2011, it would make me ashamed to say that I attended a University that only geared toward certain student profiles, while eliminating the chance for more creative students to grow here.

Sincerely,

Amelia Catherine R. Butman  
Third Year International Affairs/Women's Studies Major, Music Minor  
Personnel Chair of Chi Omega Women's Fraternity, Xi Beta Chapter  
University Singers, Renaissance Alum  
Student Women's Association  
All Maine Women Class of 2011

I am a math and women's studies double major, and I am deeply upset by the proposal to eliminate the women's studies major and graduate concentration. As a woman planning on entering into a non-traditional field, my women's studies major has provided me with invaluable information about what I will, in all likelihood, face in the work world. Women and men in our contemporary society are not equal, and many working women (especially women in non-traditional fields such as mathematics) face glass ceilings, wage gaps, and other such obstacles in their careers. Women's studies has helped me to understand why this happens and is helping me to figure out how to address such situations.

My women's studies background is also essential to two of my main research interests. One of the branches of math that I am most interested in is the history of math. Although little research has been done thus far, there is much room for feminist analysis in the history of math. Even with my limited background (I am only a second year student), I am already seeing ways in which the history of math could be enriched by a critical feminist analysis. Since little research has been done heretofore, that leaves a lot of room for young women such as myself. However, one needs a strong women's studies background to be able to do such research.



Another of my main research areas of interest is the absence of women in math and related fields. The under-representation of women in mathematics and related fields is a major issue. STEM careers are a significant component of the modern workforce and are also very profitable industries, and women are at a disadvantage by not entering into such fields. I feel that feminist theory is essential to understanding and solving this issue, and I hope to be able to use my women's studies background to address this issue.

By eliminating the women's studies major and the graduate concentration, many bright and talented young women such as myself would be deprived of an enriching and ever-relevant field of study. I realize that the University is facing a major budget deficit and that cuts will have to be made, but I think that the current proposal is not the way to address the issue. The women's studies program is phenomenal, and it would be an incredible loss to the University and to future students if the women's studies major and graduate concentration were eliminated.


Sincerely,  
Amber Hathaway  
Class of 2012  
Math and Women's Studies double major  
Physics minor


# Alumnae who earned the Women's Studies Major


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From:  "Kati J. McCarthy" <KMCCARTHY@sprucerun.net> 3/29/10 1:47:00 PM 

Subject: Women's Studies Department

To:  CLAS-APPWG

Cc:  **Ann Schonberger**

Attachments:  Attach0.html 8K

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Kati McCarthy. I graduated from the University of Maine with a BA in Women's Studies and a minor in English in December 2006. I was a transfer student to the University of Maine in the fall of 2005. When I enrolled in the University of Maine, I had taken classes in three other institutions of higher learning across the country. Because I had gone to other schools and had taken my time getting through college, I was able to really examine myself as a person and examine my interests. A beloved history professor at the University of Tennessee recommended that I become a Women's Studies major after reading my 10+ page research paper on Prostitution in the Middle Ages for his History of the Renaissance class. I realized that I had always gravitated to examining the way whatever subject I was studying played out in the lives of women. When I came to the University of Maine, I finally knew that I wanted a degree in Women's Studies.

And my experience at the University did not disappoint me. There are some ideas that, having encountered them, change a person's world forever. Once the mind has been expanded to let in these ideas, the mind will never return to its former state. I have two profound memories of my mind being suddenly stretched in such a way. The first was when, in high-school Physics class, I grasped the theory of relativity. The second vivid memory I have took place in the computer cluster of the University of Maine student Union, while I was researching gender theory for Kristin Langellier's Women and Communication class. At its best, that is what higher education does for a person. It expands the limits of what one thought was possible in the universe. In addition to the rigorous academic challenges I encountered in the Women's Studies Department, I also was given incredible opportunities for personal growth. Through the encouragement of my WST 101 professor, I submitted papers and was accepted to present my work at three separate academic conferences throughout New England.

Just as I realized that I had always gravitated toward studying women, at the University of Maine I realized that I gravitated toward studying violence against women. In my Women and Law class and my Women and Globalization class, just to name a couple, I found myself searching for explanations for violence perpetrated against women, and searching for solutions to the unacceptable level of violence in our world. As the Public Awareness and Education Coordinator at Spruce Run Association—the domestic abuse project serving Penobscot County, Maine—I have opportunity to fully use my BA in Women's Studies, particularly the concentrated work I did around the causes of and cures for violence.

I am thankful the Women's Studies major was available to me. I had the opportunity to pursue what I was interested in and not only be personally enriched but be prepared to serve Penobscot County, Maine.

Kati McCarthy

Public Awareness and Education Coordinator

Spruce Run Association

PO Box 653

Bangor, ME 04402-0653



[kmccarthy@sprucerun.net](mailto:kmccarthy@sprucerun.net)

Phone: 207-945-5102 (ext. 19)

Fax: 207-990-4252

24-hour hotline: 1-800-863-9909


This message is confidential. If you have received it by mistake, please let us know by e-mail reply and delete it from your system; you may not copy this message or disclose its contents to anyone.

From:  **Ann Schonberger**  
 Sally Curran <sallyfishercurran@gmail.com>

Subject: Fwd: Please don't cancel WST major

To:

Cc:

Attachments:  Attach0.html

5K

Sally F. Curran, Esq.  
22 Dow Street, Apartment 3  
Portland, Maine 04102  
(207) 272-6541

March 29, 2010



To Whom It May Concern:

I write to you as an attorney that practices law in the Greater Portland area and a UMaine alumnus who graduated *summa cum laude* in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies. My Women's Studies major gave me critical skills that prepared me for and led me to my work as an attorney now. Please do not cut this important major.



I am one of those Mainers who originally thought I had to go to a private college out of state to get a top-notch education. But after a year at Smith College, I returned home in my sophomore year to study at UMaine. I found that my Women's Studies courses at UMaine were of the highest caliber, providing conversation-based instruction that exceeded the quality of courses that I had taken previously at Smith College. The Women's Studies professors were intelligent and impassioned, and taught us to connect our experiences and struggles with those of our own ancestors as well as with people around the world. My courses focusing on feminist analysis of globalization, environment, and politics drove my desire to travel and learn about other cultures. This led me to study in Spain and Chile and travel throughout Western Europe and Latin America. My Women's Studies major peaked my interest in issues such as domestic violence and LGBT rights, which later led me to decide to go to law school to become an advocate for disadvantaged persons and communities. My Women's Studies classes taught critical analysis and writing skills that prepared me to excel in law school, where I received a full scholarship and graduated with a 3.72 grade point average.


Now, as an attorney practicing in Maine, I use the information and skills I gained as a Women's Studies major every day, whether by understanding family dynamics and domestic violence working as a guardian *ad litem* or helping people in same-sex couples navigate complicated laws when forming or dissolving domestic partnerships. I am constantly grateful for the education that I received as a Women's Studies major at UMaine. The Women's Studies department, though small, is a shining gem of top-notch education that a Maine student can receive right here in their own state. It would be tragic to lose this program.

Sincerely,  
Sally F. Curran

From:  Satyam Barakoti <satyambarakoti@gmail.com> Mar 26, 2010 10:56:37 AM 

Subject: I am concerned about your proposal for the future of WST

To:  Ann Schonberger  CLAS-APPWG

Attachments:  Attach0.html 4K

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To Whom it May Concern,

I have tears in my eyes as I write this to you. You cannot and will not achieve sustainability (referring to the email address you have set up) by making cuts to the Women's Studies Major or the graduate program. Let me tell you why.

I came to UMaine in the Spring semester of 2001 as an international transfer student from Nepal. I knew what i wanted to study but i didn't know how to fit it in the way the school system was set up. I was unfamiliar with the American education system. Ann Schonberger was the first person who listened to what i wanted to do and helped me design an interdisciplinary degree that allowed me to achieve my goals in the time i wanted to. I ended up graduating with a BA Interdisciplinary Degree in Women's Studies, Political Science and Sociology. I received the Outstanding International Student Award for the year 2002.

I attended the American University in Washington, DC and I received a full tuition scholarship to attend the school. I know i would not have been able to stand out and be eligible for the award had I not had the support from amazing faculty and advisors like Ann and Mazie. I am currently applying to get a PhD in Sociology with a focus on gender and sexuality. I would not have the interest or inclination to do had it not been for the foundation in understanding gender and sexuality that I received at UMaine, through my Women's Studies and Sociology Program. I currently work as a Communications and Advocacy Coordinator for Refugee Women's Network and worked previously as coordinator at the GA Coalition Against Domestic Violence. I currently volunteer at a local community taskforce which serves domestic violence and sexual assault survivors in the LGBTQQI community in Georgia. My work touches the lives of countless women and children, especially refugee and immigrants and LGBTQQI individuals in a politically, socially and culturally unfriendly state of Georgia.

What you have to understand is that I come from a culture where the definitions of what women are, what sexuality is and what gender roles are are predetermined and non-negotiable. These definitions do not even touch the world of experience women have and can enjoy. My short year and half at UMaine and especially in interaction with the teachers and fellow students at the Women's Studies program has helped me not only widen my own views, but has given me a voice to speak out about it and make a difference in the lives of other women and girls in my life and community.

I lost my mother in an accident in Burma while i was in school at UMaine. Ann was the first person i went and spoke to. The love and support i got from her and all my fellow students kept me going. She taught me to take care of myself while grieving and while finishing my last semester, my capstone project and while I was applying for school. i had a family in UMaine, which still sustains me and it was my Women's Studies Program and the people in it.

Please know that the education I have received at UMaine has not only helped me personally and professionally



but has helped many more individuals. I urge you to not cut Women's Studies Programming and funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Satyam Barakoti  
Class of 2002  
BA in Women's Studies, Sociology and Political Science  
404-422-0623

March 28, 2010

To the Academic Program Prioritization Working Group (APPWG), President Kennedy and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,

My name is Emily Lord and in May of 2008 I graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Maine with a Bachelor's degree in Women's Studies and an additional major in Sociology. I am also an alumna of the All Maine Women Honor Society. I am currently living in Illinois, where I will be completing original research for a Master's degree in Sociology from Illinois State University this summer. I am writing to you now, in response to the Achieving Sustainability Interim Report, to express my support for the Women's Studies major and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

I would like to share my own experience of majoring in Women's Studies. During my time at the University of Maine I participated in many student organizations including the Student Women's Association, the Progressive Student Alliance, Alternative Spring Break and All Maine Women. I was most passionate about my involvement with the Student Women's Association, and as a co-chair for two years I helped lead and sustain many important campus events for women, including Take Back the Night, The Vagina Monologues V-Day Campaigns, Pay Equity and Pro-Choice Mondays. It is difficult to describe how majoring in Women's Studies informed and shaped my feminist activism, except to say that now, looking back, I believe that I would not have made the same impact on the UMaine community if not for my major in Women's Studies. In 2006 I was on a panel with three fellow WST majors at the *21st Annual Maine Women's Studies Conference* in order to share our experience of being both Women's Studies academics and public activists. One of the things we agreed upon that day was that our activism would always be informed by and in dialogue with the theoretical and global "bigger picture" from our coursework. The APPWG may assume that students can get the same experiences with only a minor in Women's Studies. Perhaps they can, since activists always come from varieties of departments and educational backgrounds, but my purpose here is to show why the major made a difference in my case.

I came to the University of Maine as an "undecided" student. Although I fervently declared my interest to explore different subjects during interviews at private liberal arts colleges, I ended up at UMaine, where my willingness to start without pretense and take in anew would be more welcomed. In my second semester I enrolled in Women's Studies 101 with Mazie Hough and Sociology 101 with Amy Blackstone, two incredible professors to meet so early on. I was immediately touched and driven by both of these courses in very similar and yet very different ways. Although each course addressed similar concepts such as inequality, socialization, and race/class/gender, Sociology could only spend a week of class addressing the subject of gender. Women's Studies, on the other hand, showcased gender as a frame of analysis that cross cuts sociology, history, anthropology, politics, science, health, and so forth, but that cannot be adequately addressed in such a fragmented way at this time. In doing this, the class fundamentally changed how I perceived the world and myself. I declared Women's Studies as my major the following semester, nearly a year before adding Sociology as a second major.



With no disrespect to Sociology, of which I am now pursuing a higher degree, I must stress the importance of declaring Women's Studies as my primary major. It had personal importance to me to have my major be a subject that I found myself most motivated by and meaningfully connected to, incidentally being a major that I had *no awareness of before selecting the University of Maine as my college of choice*. In addition, my double major in Sociology and Women's Studies made me a *more competitive, standout candidate* for graduate school programs in Sociology. Because the University of Maine does not have a graduate program in Sociology, the fact that my Women's Studies major shaped my substantive area of interest within Sociology became an invaluable advantage for me and directly lead to my offer of a prestigious research assistantship at Illinois State University.

As for the other changes proposed in the APPWG report, I can only speak to what I am familiar with. Although I acknowledge the similarities between Sociology and Anthropology and even advocate for an increase in their ties, these are both departments that should be growing, rather than shrinking. Sociology and Anthropology should be increasing their faculty and enrollment because of their relevance and importance to society, particularly in times of social difficulties and change. It is sad to imagine the Sociology Department even smaller than it is now. My own department at Illinois State University is combined Sociology & Anthropology, but not without its own set of tensions and disadvantages. Regarding the proposed cuts in language, theatre, and music, I can only add that I feel that they are important departments and that my time as a student at UMaine was greatly enriched by attendance to student music and theater productions and friendships to students majoring in all of those areas.

Let me conclude by adding that I hope to move back to work Maine or New England after I finish my MS in Sociology this summer. I grew up in Maine and became more proud of my home state and UMaine since moving to Illinois. If I have the opportunity to live there again I will continue to advocate for increased public funding of the UMaine system. In the long term I anticipate earning a PhD and at one time considered the idea of returning to UMaine as a professor as an ideal situation. Unfortunately, the sacrifices to Women's Studies and Sociology proposed by the APPWG sustainability plan would greatly hurt the quality and prestige of social sciences at the University of Maine. Please consider my personal experiences as a Women's Studies and Sociology alumna when moving forward with restructuring decisions.

Sincerely,

Emily F. Lord  
Graduate Student/Research Assistant  
Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
Campus Box 4660  
Illinois State University  
Normal, IL 61790-4660  
email: eflord@ilstu.edu

From:  **Angela Hart**  
 **Rebekah Hale**

Subject: Fwd(2): WST – Proposed Cuts

To:

Cc:

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I graduated in May 2009 with my BA in Women's Studies, so needless to say, I'm relatively livid at the proposed cuts. Not only for myself, but for what this might mean for students looking to enroll in the future. And this does not just stop with the WST cuts, but every other cut within the LAS college. My BA degree is very personal for me. It's in an area of study, that although might seem frivolous and unnecessary, it is extremely important, and one of the few majors that encourages people to think outside of societal norms and promotes activism, social change, etc. The major reaches out to all aspects of humanity whether it be, gender norms, human sexuality, how the media has portrayed women and men in the media, domestic violence and those women who have been left out of history textbooks for countless years. We strive for tolerance, we strive for understanding, and this is one of the FEW majors I have come across that promotes this.



I'm wondering what exactly the proposed cut of the Women's Studies major and master's concentration will yield? Women's Studies is in itself an interdisciplinary type degree. MOST of the courses that meet WST requirements are taught within other departments. What is the benefit of eliminating the major and the graduate concentration when the courses will still be offered? Most people find that these courses are only relevant to those within the major/concentration, so course enrollment would probably fall.

Also, the elimination of the women's studies graduate concentration is more than frustrating. The MALS degree is designed for students like myself. Married with children, already established in my location, life, job, etc. I am currently working on my application to get into the MALS degree with my concentration in women's studies. I don't have the option to attend another school. So, if this concentration is eliminated, I'm basically out of options. I was hoping to attain this degree, go for my Phd, and then hopefully some day teach women's studies at a higher education level.


I understand that this is not all about me, and what I think, but I am POSITIVE that I am not the only student/prospective student who feels that these changes will screw them over with their educational goals.


Also, I can't read any of the attachments that have an x at the end of them. Could you try sending them to the conference in a format I can open on my computer?


Rebekah Hale

From:  Jenn Chiarell <jchiarell@sprucerun.net> March 29, 2010 12:14:19 PM 

Subject: Future of Women's Studies

To:  CLAS-APPWG

Cc:  **Ann Schonberger**

Attachments:  Attach0.html 8K

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March 29, 2010

To whom it may concern,

I graduated from The University of Maine in 2005. I attended classes full and part time over 8 years to earn a BA in Women's studies and a BFA in Studio Art with a minor concentration in Art History.

Beginning with my first year in higher education I took an Intro to Women's Studies class and instantly I felt like I belonged. My Women's Studies degree gave me a voice. It filled a void in me that I truly believe could not have been fulfilled with any other degree program. As I explored and acquired a deeper understanding of the oppressions and celebrations of contemporary and historical women, I gained support and confidence from not only professors and classmates, but also from the relative stories of women. My degree path changed my life and how I interact with others. I carry that confidence and support with me as I continue to question assumptions about gender and sexuality. I look at everything from *art* to *parenting* with a feminist perspective that helps to inform my decisions and relationships. I also gained a sense of pride and determination from the work of many folks before me who sought to make social, political and economical changes in the lives of women. My degree gave me HOPE, and as a Domestic Violence Advocate I continue use my training and empathy as I work with and support victims of violence.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Chiarell  
Child Protective Initiative Coordinator  
Spruce Run Association  
P O Box 653,  
Bangor, Maine 04402  
[jchiarell@sprucerun.net](mailto:jchiarell@sprucerun.net)  
Phone: 207-945-5102 (voice mail box 27)  
Cell: 944-1113  
Fax: 207-990-4252  
24-hour hotline: 1-800-863-9909

DHHS  
Phone: 207-561-4245  
[jenn.chiarell@maine.gov](mailto:jenn.chiarell@maine.gov)

# Graduate Students (in Spring 2010)

Good Day,

My name is Heather Lakey and I'm a doctoral student in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at the University of Maine. My research is rooted in three departments: Women's Studies, Communication and Journalism and Philosophy. Although all three departments make a significant contribution to my academic program, the Women's Studies department provides a focus for my degree. I was, therefore, deeply disturbed to hear of the proposed cuts to the Women's Studies major and graduate concentration. I would like to make a plea on behalf of this small but mighty department.




I transferred to the University of Maine because of the Women's Studies department. Before coming to Maine I was a Ph.D. student in Philosophy at the University of Oregon. The Philosophy department at UO offered me full funding and my own office, important benefits I do not receive at UMaine. Nevertheless, I transferred to the University of Maine because of the intellectual opportunities provided by the I.Ph.D. program and the Women's Studies department. My research concerns the intersection of feminist philosophy and popular discourse. The I.Ph.D. program permits me to move between the fields of Philosophy and Women's Studies. Because there isn't an I.Ph.D. department *per se*, the Women's Studies department has served as my home base. Dr. Ann Schonberger facilitated the interviews that secured my decision to apply to UMaine and it's difficult to imagine what my future studies will mean if the graduate concentration is no longer offered. Having studied in multiple institutions, I can testify that the graduate courses in Women's Studies represent academia at its best. I've garnered a robust understanding of feminist theory, feminist methodology and feminist pedagogy. My fluency in these fields positions me to enter the academic job market as a competitive candidate. It's disheartening to think that future graduate students at the University of Maine won't be afforded this opportunity.


In addition, I worry about the political implications of your proposed cuts to the Women's Studies department. Our society is riddled with gender, race and class inequity. Training students to recognize and to productively confront these inequities should be a fundamental goal of any major university. If a student is to be a productive member of society he or she must develop a critical consciousness regarding the mechanics of social oppression. It is my belief that Women's Studies classes provide the requisite resources for this consciousness to develop. By cutting the Women's Studies major and the graduate concentration, I worry that the institutional support necessary for these courses will disappear. I also worry that these cuts might suggest that such courses don't fundamentally matter.

Finally, I trouble over what these cuts say on a larger scale. Minority studies have struggled long and hard to find institutional traction. By making these cuts the University colludes, however inadvertently, with the larger forces of social oppression. I can't imagine this is the message the University wishes to send to our community.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,

Heather Lakey  
Graduate Student in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program

From:  Nicolle Littrell  
Subject: Urge to Reconsider Cuts to Liberal Studies Programs  
To:  Jeff Hecker  
Cc:  Ann Schonberger

April 7, 2010 3:44:39 PM 

April 7, 2010

ATTN: Jeff Hecker, Dean U Maine College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
101 Stevens Hall  
University of Maine  
Orono, Maine 04469

Dear Dean Hecker:

I am writing to urge you and the U Maine College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to not eliminate the liberal arts programs and faculty positions listed in the recent recommendation. Instead, I am urging you to not only maintain these programs but also work with U Maine students, faculty and community advisors to re-vision and re-structure these programs, which are indisputably an integral part of U Maine's original mission as a liberal arts-based institution of higher learning, maintaining an important commitment to the people of Maine.

I am a graduate student in the Master's of Liberal Studies (MALS) program with Women's Studies as my lead concentration. Not only has this concentration provided the main framework for how I approach my interdisciplinary studies and research on significant women's issues, such as women's reproductive health, but the Women's Studies concentration also lends form and credibility to my liberal studies program. My Women Studies concentration has helped me to develop key skills that have been important to my development as a scholar--and a citizen.

The Women's Studies graduate concentration is the only program of it's kind in the state of Maine. As a single parent based in the mid-coast area, this program, in conjunction with course offerings available at The Hutchinson Center in Belfast, has directly served my needs, which are centered around access to affordable education within my discipline--and within a commutable distance to my home in Belfast, as it has been prohibitive to relocate to pursue a master's degree in another location due to economic and family obligations. And though the proposed cuts will not affect me directly--I will still graduate with this concentration--it will significantly impact future students who have similar interests and needs. Cutting these programs limits student's choices to other



institutions of higher learning that may represent their discipline but do not meet the other critical needs of students—such as location, economic feasibility and family obligations. Cutting these programs may force Maine-based students to seek their education out-of-state--or for some students, eliminate the possibility of attaining a higher degree in their field altogether.

Cutting programs like Women's Studies also dangerously undercuts the diversity and cultural concerns that are tenets of liberal arts programs. As it could be well argued that diversity—and in many forms—is underrepresented and marginalized in Maine, such cuts underserve both students and Maine as a population, in general. For 30 years, Women Studies at U Maine has been recognized as a legitimate discipline that, both in theory and practice, represents the gendered histories, realities and challenges of culture and society. Women's Studies provides both the theoretical and practical tools for addressing gender equality issues that are applicable in numerous career paths and the fact that gender equality unfortunately remains a huge issue in our world. Cutting liberal arts programs like Women's Studies not only marginalizes such disciplines but also diminishes the concerns that they represent—and the imperative to adequately represent such concerns at U Maine within a formal academic discipline.

Clearly, the relationship between the recommended cuts and student's needs, as well as economic, accessibility and cultural ramifications around the right for an individual to seek a higher education—and in the discipline of their choice—are enormous. I urge you to reconsider this recommendation and commit to maintaining these liberal arts programs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should desire more information about my experience at U Maine--and my interest in participating in a conversation about re-visioning liberal arts programs at U Maine. I would be most interested and willing to participate in such a conversation.

Best,

Nicolle Littrell  
MALS  
207-323-3932  
[nicolle.littrell@umit.maine.edu](mailto:nicolle.littrell@umit.maine.edu)

March 29, 2010

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rahzell Sutton and I am a graduate student in the human development program, here at the University of Maine. I received my undergraduate dual-degree in psychology and women's studies with a concentration in biological/cognitive psychology in May of 2009. I entered the human development program this fall, with an interdisciplinary concentration in women's studies. This year I intend on applying to PhD programs in psychology that concentrate in women's studies at other institutions.

The University of Maine is known for offering a wonderful diversity of majors, minors and courses. Throughout my undergraduate career at the University of Maine, I was able to gain an education that was full of life, choice, a wide spectrum of knowledge and diversity, and feel like I am now ready to not only go on to become a scientist, but also an activist, a critical thinker, and an individual that empowers others to strive for success. I had the right to claim a well-rounded education during my time at the University of Maine and I cannot imagine taking that away from the new, incoming students.

It is understandable that the University of Maine is trying to cut costs, but is depriving the students of a well-rounded education to save money is not acceptable. I feel that cutting the women's studies program at the University of Maine will be a huge mistake, as this program is a great asset to the students and faculty. The women's studies program guided me towards many opportunities in higher education (Master's and PhD programs), gave me a much more well-rounded education, empowered me as an individual, and taught me to never give up on my goals and dreams.

Sincerely,

Rahzell Sutton

April, 10 2010

To Members of the APPWG:

I am writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed cuts to the Women's Studies program. The Women's Studies program is a necessity on this campus. Cutting the major and graduate concentration is a simpleminded answer to a complex problem.

I understand that budget cuts are necessary in the current state of our state and university budget. However, cutting whole programs like Women's Studies is not an effective way to create change on this campus. I heard Dean Jeff Hecker state that he looked at the programs with the lowest enrollment and lowest number of graduates as he was deciding on who to cut, which seems sensible on the surface. However, looking at only raw data such as this poses problems for programs like Women's Studies. It is impossible to quantify what students absorb from a Women's Studies education and how it changes their perspectives on what they can accomplish. I am including my own personal story, below, to show you just how much a degree in Women's Studies can change women's lives in truly remarkable and special ways.

To say that the Women's Studies program here on campus has changed my life is an understatement. I had a very difficult undergraduate career—starting off in 2001 at Clark University in Worcester, MA on a full merit scholarship and ending up being kicked out of UMaine in 2005 on academic suspension. Soon I found myself as a poor single mother of a young child, living back with my parents. I knew my life would be really tough and I knew I was better than that. When I finally came back to school at UMaine in September of 2008, I chose Women's Studies as my major and it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened to me. I worked so hard that year balancing life as a mom and a full-time student and I was lucky enough to complete the degree in just one year and to earn a perfect 4.0 for the year.

That year I learned a lot about myself as a woman, as a mother, and as an academic. Of particular note was my Feminist Theory class, taught by Jessica Miller, in the fall 2008 semester. This course was my first introduction to feminist theory and it sparked something in me that I had never known was there. I finally had an understanding of the barriers that were in place for me as a woman and mother and of the history of women's oppression and the similarities in my own life. After my final undergraduate year was over I felt transformed--full of power, strength, and desire to continue learning and achieving my goals.

I feel very grateful for my Women's Studies education as it guides me toward a better future for both my family and the people in my community. I am now in my second year of the MSW program here at UMaine, still with a perfect 4.0, and I am also the graduate assistant in the Women's Studies/Women in the Curriculum office. When I graduate from this program I will pursue my PhD in Social Welfare with a concentration in gender and socio-economic issues. Based on my experiences as a single mother, I am committed

to researching and making changes to policies and procedures inherent in this society and institutions that hold women back.

In my opinion, cutting the Women's Studies major at UMaine would do just that. How can you, in good faith, take away something that is so imperative to the women of this state? I urge you to do three things as you make your final budget cuts. Read the letters written by other young women who have incredible stories just like mine. Take Ann Schonberger's alternate plan into careful consideration. And do what is right for the women and girls of this state.

Sincerely,

Kristina Minott  
Women's Studies undergraduate  
Current MSW student  
Graduate Assistant for WST/WIC

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From:  **Angela Hart**  
 Rebecca White0

Subject: Fwd(2): women's studies

To:

Cc:

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I am very concerned about cuts to the Women's Studies program, particularly to the graduate concentration. Continued work with Mazie Hough and others is essential to my development as a scholar. I am currently a doctoral student in Canadian-American history, and absolutely need courses such as WST520 in Women's Research Methodologies in order to proceed with my scholarly development. I will be truly devastated if this program, one of my prime reasons for attending University of Maine in the first place, is cut. The committee needs to rethink this position, for the good of all the students.

Sincerely,

Rebecca White  
PhD Candidate, History Department

Rebecca White  
Ph.D. Student  
History Department  
University of Maine

Sunday, March 28, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Peggy Solic and I am an M.A. student working towards a degree in History and Women's Studies. As this is my last semester in the graduate program, and I am moving on to a Ph.D. program at Ohio State University in the fall, I feel that I have a particularly good vantage point from which to evaluate my experiences in the Women's Studies program at the University of Maine. At Ohio State I will be pursuing a degree in History and Women's Studies as well, and my experiences in the Women's Studies program here have been the key to making my future studies possible in a variety of ways.

First of all, my graduate education in Women's Studies here has contributed greatly to my intellectual development not only as a scholar in the field of women's studies, but also as an historian. Both the classes I have taken as part of the graduate concentration and the mentoring I have received from Women's Studies faculty have helped me to develop theories on the interactions between history and feminist theory that I hope to expand on in my future studies. The work that Women's Studies has helped me develop here I hope will contribute to the advancement of both fields. Specifically, I wrote a paper as part of WST 520 that I used as a writing sample in all of my Ph.D. program applications, and that greatly contributed to my acceptance at Ohio State. Also, both Ann Schonberger and Mazie Hough both wrote recommendation letters for all of my Ph.D. applications, which we can all agree is a crucial part of the process.




Second of all, had I not been involved with the Women's Studies program, I may not have found a thesis topic. I am writing my thesis on the Spruce Run Association, using interviews that the Feminist Oral History Project compiled in 1992 and that the Women in the Curriculum program houses. Without the assistance of the Women in the Curriculum program, I might never have found these invaluable resources, and I might never have found a thesis topic that I could feel so exceedingly invested in and interested in. Also, the mentoring I have received as part of this process from the women's studies program, specifically from my co-advisor Mazie Hough, has been essential to my completion of this project.


Essentially, the Women's Studies and Women in the Curriculum programs at the University of Maine have made my graduate career complete. Without women's studies, I would not be the kind of scholar, or the kind of historian, I am today. I have only named a few ways in which the program has been important to me during my time at the University of Maine, and I know several other people who would echo my sentiments in this letter. The program also contributes to the University as a whole, providing ample opportunities for

intellectual development and ensuring that important scholarship on women is explored. I will greatly miss the support that I have received from the Women's Studies program when I move on. I had hoped that there would be a graduate program at the University of Maine that I could encourage collaboration with when I move on to Ohio State. I hope there still is.

Thank you for your time,

Peggy Solic

From:  Jennie Woodard  
Subject: E-Mail to help WST  
To:  Ann Schonberger  Mazie Hough

March 26, 2010 11:29:29 AM 

Good morning, Ann and Mazie:

Below is the e-mail I sent to the addresses that were provided in the e-mail sent by Ann. If there is anything else that I can do, please let me know and I will do my very best to help.

Jennie Woodard

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Jennie Woodard and I am a PhD candidate in history with a concentration in women's studies. In six months, I begin the process of applying for professorial positions and in one year (May 2011), I will have completed my dissertation and will be on my way to my post-doctorate career.

The concentration in women's studies has already proved to be a valuable asset in my career. During the summer of 2009, I was fortunate to be offered the opportunity to teach HTY 104 at the University of Maine Augusta. After the class ended, I kept in contact with the chair of the English Department (who also places adjunct faculty into LAS classes). Halfway through the Fall 2009, she sent me an e-mail asking if I had the qualifications to teach a WST 101 course in the spring. I sent her my CV and she saw that my background included the graduate concentration. Upon seeing my qualifications, I was offered the position and am teaching WST 101 at the UMA campus this spring semester.

My dissertation research also heavily relies on women/gender studies. As I am sure you are aware, the history department sadly lost our women's historian in the spring 2009. As I was completing my coursework and comprehensive exams at the time that her illness accelerated (2008), I was unable to work closely with her. My ability to complete my PhD in four years is due in no small part to the time and attention afforded to me in the women's studies department.

I am sending you this message to ask you to reconsider the removal of the women's studies major and concentration. The feminist pedagogy class (WST 580) is a requirement for all those in the concentration and has proven crucial to my understanding of teaching-not only in women's studies but history as well. Furthermore, my historical research has been greatly enhanced by my relationship with Mazie Hough, the director of the Women's Studies department, as she is a scholar in both women's studies and history. Both my research and my experiences as an instructor have been significantly more fruitful as a result of the graduate concentration in women's studies.

Once again, I ask you to reconsider the proposed cut to the women's studies major and




concentration. It has prepared me for my pedagogical career and has done the same for countless others whose interests in women's politics, women's health, women's education, social work, journalism, law, and nursing have been greatly enhanced by the women's studies department.

Thank you for your time and attention,







Jennie Woodard  
Department of History  
200A Stevens Hall  
University of Maine

Jennie Woodard  
Department of History  
275 Stevens Hall  
University of Maine


From:  Lisa Nielson

March 28, 2010 2:45:48 PM 

Subject: Response to Proposed Cuts

To:  achieving.sustainability@umit.maine.edu  **Robert Kennedy**  
 hunter@maine.edu  marrs@maine.edu  Board of Trustees  
 CLAS-APPWG

Cc:  Raymond Pelletier  **Ann Schonberger**  Beth Wiemann  
 Tina Passman  Mazie Hough  Liz Downing  Michael Grillo

Attachments:  Letter, Response, 032910.doc

56K

To APPWG, et. al.:

Attached please find my response to the proposed cuts to Music, Languages and Women's Studies. Regretfully, I cannot attend the meeting March 29th to voice my opposition in person, however I hope that the committee will take the time to read and consider the increasing volume of protest to these proposed cuts.

I am deeply disappointed that the committee and administration have taken this stance, as it goes against everything that I believed the University of Maine stands for, and cannot see how these changes will benefit the Maine community in any way.

In addition to this letter, I am contacting all my Maine representatives regarding my strenuous protest in this matter, as well as drafting a letter to the *Chronicle for Higher Education* and asking for support from all the academic organizations of which I am a member or affiliated. These include The Middle East Studies Association, The Middle East Women's Studies Association, the World History Association and the American Musicological Society. In addition, I will contact the honor societies of which I am a member, including Phi Kappa Phi, which was founded at the University of Maine, and Pi Kappa Lambda, the National Music Honors Society.

Thank you for your consideration in reading my submission.

Sincerely yours,

Lisa Nielson  
Doctoral Candidate, Historical Musicology  
Graduate Concentration in Women's Studies  
Division of Music  
School of Performing Arts  
Class of 1944 Hall  
University of Maine, Orono  
USA

March 29, 2010

To The Academic Program Prioritization Working Group (APPWG), Members of the Board of Trustees, Chancellor Pattenau, President Kennedy, Dr. Susan Hunter Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dr. Stuart Marrs Associate Provost & Dean for Undergraduate Education, and University of Maine Deans:

I have carefully read the Preliminary Interim Report, dated March 24, 2010, and below is my response to the proposed cuts. In preparation for this response, I have re-read all the reports related to the NCND restructuring proposal, including the original findings and draft of the final plan originally put forth in June and July, 2009, as well as the agenda for the Achieving Sustainability program. I have not only submitted a copy of this response to all of the relevant folders and individuals, I have also contacted all my local congress people in protest.

As an alumna, member of the Maine community and current graduate student, my initial reaction when I read this report was disbelief, followed by anger, bewilderment, and fear. I am not alone. I remind the administration that the alumni are among the most powerful sources of income for the university. We provide donations, bequests, referrals and volunteer our time. We are local and global. I personally have referred many students – undergraduate and graduate – to consider the University of Maine, and have provided countless hours of voluntary service to programs around campus. I am also a tuition-paying graduate student who, despite being ABD and writing my dissertation, has seriously considered transferring after reading this report.

How can we, as a land-grant university in a traditionally multi-lingual state (French, First Nations languages, English), even consider the elimination of the language department? In what way does eliminating language and Women's Studies meet our stated mandate for diversity? How can we have a School for Performing Arts if there are no actual performing arts? Even with assurances that current students can finish their programs and classes will continue to be taught in the targeted areas, students will vote with their feet. They will leave, and this will only be the beginning. The money saved will not be worth the attrition that will take place at all levels. This includes undergraduate, graduate, faculty and valuable staff. New students will look elsewhere; most likely out of state. The major honor societies will withdraw their support and designation. With this one report, our value as an institution of higher learning and place in the community has plummeted.

What institution would hire a PhD graduate from a school that has no language major? What graduate program would seriously consider a prospective student who comes from a school with no language major? What student would even consider attending a public university that had no interest in diversity, the arts or different ways of looking at the world?

That is what language, the arts and, yes, Women's and Gender Studies provide. They give students a different way to experience the world. They provide a means to explore a different perspective. Put in a way that the administration can understand: they bring in tuition money, qualified scholars who want to teach at this institution, and research dollars.

As I write, I am filled with grief. I am grieving that the university that I have loved and respected for so long has decided to betray its mission, the students, and the community it serves. I find it revolting that the architects of our current fiscal crisis, the upper administration and University President, are, much like the architects of our current financial situation at AIG and the big banks, are not only keeping their jobs, but with no hint of taking a cut in pay or staff.

The University of Maine system is top-heavy, and with all the discussion of consolidation and stream-lining, the upper administration has carefully ensured that their interests will continue to be served. Rather than pursue expansion of recruiting, fund-raising and increasing the numbers of the targeted majors, we are simply going to cut them. Once cut, these majors will never be reinstated. Once cut, the University of Maine will no longer be a flagship, student attrition rates will increase as the cuts are implemented, and the graduate programs will fall shortly after.

Since I am not only personally affected by the cuts to the Humanities, but an accomplished graduate in music performance, language studies and part of Women's Studies, I will address each of these cuts below.

First, I remind the Committee of the following statement from the report on Academic Programs and Services, Arena 2, *New Directions, New Challenges*, dated June 11, 2009. On page 5, as the committee is laying out the possible guidelines for evaluating programs with small enrollments, they make this important distinction<sup>1</sup>:

The review showed that although it is possible to achieve significant cost savings through course review, having courses with enrollment of 12 or fewer each semester is necessary for a number of reasons:

- Some courses serve core requirements for majors and related fields (canceling courses will delay graduations and increase chances of student attrition)
- Some courses have been specifically designed to be small and often carry fees to offset the cost to run them (e.g., music lessons)
- Upper level seminars require close faculty attention to individual student's research and professional development
- Some professional and accrediting organizations specifically recommend or require maximum class sizes of 12 or fewer.
- Some courses must be offered because they are mandated by the state and/or accrediting agencies.

**All of these factors are relevant to music performance, language and Women's Studies.**

In addition, I submit this quote, from the same report, located on page 14:

Any restructuring of the system should ensure the continuation of its mission to enhance the vitality of the Maine economy. Actions to reach that goal should include increasing the number of graduates in essential disciplines, including (among others):

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<sup>1</sup> See Report, available at <http://www.maine.edu/chancellor/NCND.php> (accessed 3/28/10)

- Teacher certification (particularly math, sciences, *foreign languages* (my emphasis) and special education)

**Elimination of the language department is in direct contradiction to this recommendation.**

Lastly, from the final Task Force Report, Arena 3, Structure and Government, *New Directions, New Challenges*, dated July 7, 2009, on page 51, on regards to proposed methods of recruitment<sup>2</sup>:

Attracting out of state, immigrant, and foreign students, who will enrich the experience of Maine students contribute to the annual revenues, and potentially permanently relocate in Maine and benefit our economy.

All these reports, authored by a diverse range of specialists, faculty and financial professionals, though they include suggested cuts or areas where programs may be streamlined across the campuses system-wide, also include suggestions for expansion, creative pursuit of different revenue streams and fundraising, and a commitment to the Maine community.

Eliminating majors should be the last resort; consolidation and restructuring the first. It does not matter if the classes continue to be taught. Having a major lends credibility to the course offerings, and brings students to the campus. Why would a student attend a university and take a class in German or Intro to Women's studies, when for half the tuition, they could do the same at a community college? Why would any international student choose to come to a university where language study is not important enough to offer as a major?

When I was an undergraduate performance major at the University of Maine from 1989-1993, I received one of the first scholarships specifically for the performing arts. I graduated in a class of 7-10 performance majors, and of that class, the majority went on to attend graduate school and pursue careers in music. At that time, the theater and dance departments were separate, and later brought in with music under the umbrella of Performing arts in an attempt to consolidate and save money. Graduates of that program, and the current performing music performance program, are not only attending top graduate programs, but performing on Broadway in New York City, recording artists, and teachers. Many of them have returned to Maine to give back to the community either as guest artists or permanent residents.

Cutting the performance degree and BA in music will not save any money. It will eliminate two key areas of recruitment for the Music Division plus cut off revenue in the form of tuition for lessons and ensembles. Often, students who wish to continue their music studies at the college level without majoring in music opt for the BA, and the department has benefited greatly by their talent. There is only one additional class required for the BA degree, and an additional year of lessons and performance studies (an additional recital and ensembles) for the performance major; both of which fund themselves.

A number of music students from all three programs have continued into the Masters program once graduating, and there is also a pool of returning students. The need for more training has

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<sup>2</sup> See Final Report, available at <http://www.maine.edu/chancellor/NCND.php> (accessed 3/28/10)

become vital in the current economic climate, and the Masters degree is increasingly more and more important for finding a job in music education, further training in preparation for doctoral work, and music business. Eliminating the masters program effectively cuts off the options for returning and current students, and forces those who wish to advance their studies to go out of state.

The Women's Studies program is one of the oldest such programs in the country. When I began my doctoral work at the University of Maine, I wasn't intending to work in the area of Women's Studies, but was convinced to do so by Ann Schonberger and Dr. Mazie Hough. They have supported my work in more ways than I can adequately express. They have provided financial help when I have presented at conferences, given me opportunities to present and share my research, and recently given me the chance to offer a class on Women and Islam for this summer term. By having a Graduate concentration in Women's Studies, I have expanded my career options as an educator, as I have the credit hours necessary to be eligible to teach in Women's Studies, in addition to music and music history. This is in addition to the valuable training in the most current areas of methodological and theoretical thinking which have made my doctoral research possible.

Women's Studies may have a small number of majors, but many students sign up for classes in Women's Studies. Having the major and graduate concentration enable the Women's Studies program not only to offer core classes in Women's and Gender Studies, but in specialized areas not taught anywhere else. In addition, having a major in Women's Studies makes the University competitive on the hiring market. The trend in academia is moving towards interdisciplinarity and according to the extensive Task Force Report, *New Directions, New Challenges* dated July 7, 2009, the University of Maine lags in research activity across the board. Much of the cutting edge research today is happening in the areas of cultural, gender, and disability studies. Eliminating this major makes us look like a hopeless backwater, and we will not be able to attract even third-string scholars in job searches.

Of all the proposed cuts, it is the proposed elimination of the language department that will, in my opinion, destroy the university. Granted, the department has been plagued by incompetent management and pointless faculty squabbles for years; however, closing it completely is drastic and ludicrous. In the "Criteria and Indicators to Inform Academic Program Priorities for the University of Maine,"<sup>3</sup> the mandate reads:

#### **Criteria and Indicators to Inform Academic Program Priorities for the University of Maine**

It is especially important for a land grant university to have academic units contribute individually and collectively to the overall mission and to the needs of the state.

#### **Diversity**

The University of Maine prepares students to live and work in a world populated by diverse peoples and cultures. The degree to which units provide experiences that help students grow in their understanding and appreciation of diversity can be measured by

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.umaine.edu/achievingustainability/criteria-and-indicators/> (accessed 3/27/2010)

examining the curricular and extracurricular opportunities they provide as well as the diversity of the students they enroll. Examples of indicators include:

- Percentage of diverse faculty and staff
- Percentage of diverse students
- Percentage of courses in programs with significant diversity content
- Opportunities for diversity experience
- Other demonstrations of unit commitment to diversity

Language is more than learning how to speak or read a new language. It is culture, diversity and opportunity. In today's global economy, having the ability to navigate in more than one, preferably two, languages is vital for most jobs. The University of Maine language department has pioneered online teaching (Latin, Spanish), developed a Critical Languages program to enable the university to offer more languages, offered Study Abroad experiences in many countries and, recently, two language pedagogy specialists brought in more than \$1 million dollars in grant money to the university. The Critical Languages program has enabled students to study any language they choose, and has also benefited the Intensive English Institute, International Business major and Study Abroad Programs. IEI students have been able to improve their English skills by working with bi-lingual teachers, while study abroad opportunities have expanded. The Arabic program alone, through the efforts of one part-time teacher, has doubled in size, and gone from two classes to five.

Getting rid of the language major will save the university some money in the immediate future, but will cost enormously over time. Current students will leave the university out of fear that they will not be able to finish, while prospective students will go elsewhere. Graduate students will be disinclined to come to the university, as they will not be assured adequate language preparation or support for their degree programs. In addition, undergraduate students who want to attend graduate school will only receive the minimum of training, since few PhDs in language will teach at an institution with no major. All of the teaching will trend towards adjuncts. As a result, the chances of University of Maine students for getting into any graduate school will be reduced. The competition for graduate programs has increased, as more students are returning to school, and not having a solid background in language will make UMaine students uncompetitive.

**I ask the committee:** When you were considering your graduate school options, would you have attended an institution that had no language major? What R1 institution, flagship campus or even small private college would be able to maintain its standing in the academic community without a language major? Have you forgotten that without Latin, without a language department, there cannot be Phi Beta Kappa?

Elimination of the language major and Women's Studies program goes against the above statement of commitment to diversity. It also goes against the stated areas of expansion, as outlined in the Agenda Report quoted above. Cutting these majors, regardless of whether or not the classes will be taught sends the message the University of Maine is not interested in attracting a diverse and creative student body. The perception will be that we are insular, backward, and uninterested in attracting international students, students from immigrant communities and students of color.

If language signifies a connection to the global world and economy, Women's Studies implies an interest in something other than the status quo. Women's Studies is not just about women – it is about how we see ourselves in the world, how gender is formulated, taught and changed, how new ideas might be used in different and creative ways. Women's Studies **IS** diversity. Rather than eliminating it, why can't it be merged with another program? Other universities around the country have had success reconfiguring Women's Studies as Gender Studies, and linking it to interdisciplinary programs in cultural studies, history and the arts. Some of these programs began as small reorganizations, and are now training some of the top scholars and research in the country.

In closing, I wish to end with a personal statement. I will be completing my doctorate this summer, if all goes well. My fear is that elimination of the language program and Women's Studies will render my degree useless in the eyes of the greater academic community, regardless of how good or valuable my research might be.

I am one of approximately 10 scholars world-wide who are expert in my field, and demands for my expertise are increasing. I have needed the ability to read in French, German, Latin and Arabic, which I do on a daily basis. I have lived in the Middle East, and regularly present at international conferences. I continue to have an active performance career. My plan upon graduation was to return to Maine so that I could give back to my community by sharing my expertise. I had hoped to work with the Women's Studies program to introduce more courses on gender and the Middle East, as well as collaborate with colleagues on building a concentration in Middle East Studies. I've engaged in discussions with a number of colleagues over the past year as to how to go about this, and have also investigated options for funding such a program. In addition, I have been discussing creating a not-for-profit organization, in collaboration with musicians from Maine and Vermont, dedicated to increasing music education and early music performance in New England. This business would be domiciled in the state of Maine, and would provide more performance and education opportunities for Maine musicians.

With these cuts, I will not have any of these options. I will not be able to work in Maine in education, nor be able to help the community that I love. Since I am regularly asked to lecture, perform and assist students in all my areas of expertise, I know that there is interest; that the Maine community wants to learn what I have to offer. If the University chooses to eliminate language, Women's Studies, and gut the arts program with these cuts, I can see there is no room for diversity or innovation. The university will lose students, respect in the community (what little remains), and the work of people like myself.

I want to come home, but the message here is crystal clear: there is no place or interest in me, my work, or my business.

Sincerely,

Lisa E. Nielson

Doctoral Candidate, Historical Musicology, with a Graduate Concentration in Women's Studies  
University of Maine, Orono



Alumnae who earned the  
Women's Studies Graduate  
Concentrations

From: Regina Rooney  
Subject: Thoughts on the APPWG Interim Report  
To: achieving.sustainability@umit.maine.edu  
Cc: CLAS-APPWG Ann Schonberger

March 29, 2010 12:41:02 PM



To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my grave concerns for the plans laid out in the APPWG Interim Report. While I certainly appreciate and understand that UMaine—and the university system—has budget problems, and that we cannot continue to operate in the current fashion, I also believe that enacting the proposals contained in the report would fundamentally undermine the integrity of the University, and should not be allowed to move forward.

I am a 2008 graduate of UMaine with an M.A. in English and a concentration in Women's Studies. I have taught in both the English Department and Women's Studies Program as a graduate teaching assistant and as an adjunct. I now work full-time at Spruce Run in Bangor, and I credit my experience as a graduate student directly with the job that I have—and love—now. It may sound cliché, but Feminist Theory really opened up my world for me. I continue to teach WST 101 every other semester, and am always impressed, moved, and gratified by the students, many of whom encounter a whole new set of ideas in that class that they had never before come across in the still largely male-focused world of academia.



I worry so much about the reduction in the capacity of Women's Studies to reach students with its vital perspectives—perspectives we rarely hear in our culture. Furthermore, I worry about many of the cuts that are laid out in the plan, not just those proposed for WST. Removing so much of the diversity in the University's offerings can only hurt UMaine in the long run. Students will no longer be able to expect to come here and have their perspectives broadened in the way that a university should broaden them. *Eliminating majors while maintaining the courses is simply not good enough.* Students may still have the opportunity to take a course in French or German, but without the option of pursuing the major, they won't be able to really engage in those studies the way they otherwise would. Moreover, no one will hire someone because they "took some French classes." The outside world demands a degree program in order to feel someone is qualified for a job, and since I doubt UMaine has decided preparing students for life after college isn't a priority, it seems a terrible mistake to cripple programs in this way.

The APPWG's plan will result in students missing out on the critical thinking and the alternative perspectives that disciplines like Women's Studies or music or theater have to offer—and I argue that critical thinking and encountering alternative perspectives are two of the fundamental points of going to college. Maine students will travel elsewhere to have those experiences. They will end up at UNH or UVM, and we need them here. Please find other options. They say one should not "throw the baby out with the bathwater." Well, I say we should not gut the heart and soul of a university, however justified our quest to seek sustainability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Regina Rooney  
Instructor, UMaine Women's Studies Program  
Current Projects Coordinator, Spruce Run Association

From:  **Angela Hart**  
 Shannon Risk <srisk@niagara.edu>

Subject: Fwd(2): WST Major and Minor; graduate concentration

To:

Cc:

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Dr. Shannon M. Risk  
History Department, Timon Hall  
P.O. Box 1941  
Niagara University, NY 14109-1941  
(716) 286-8084  
[srisk@niagara.edu](mailto:srisk@niagara.edu)

March 26, 2010

Dr. Jeffrey E. Hecker, Dean  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
University of Maine  
100 Stevens Hall  
Orono, ME 04469

Dear Dr. Hecker:

I am a 2009 graduate of the University of Maine. While at the University of Maine, I studied in the History Department's Ph.D. program. Though certainly my training in the History Department was superb, I count my experiences in the **Women's Studies Program** in aiding my bid for a Canadian-U.S. Fulbright scholarship (awarded 2008-2009), as well as my ability to gain academic employment upon graduation.

In fact, at my employing institution, Niagara University, they polled the students to see what new history courses they wanted to see. ***The students overwhelmingly voted for women's history, and the students also called for a strengthened women's studies program,*** for which the former could contribute. With this goal in mind, the hiring committee at NU praised my application because I had a **graduate minor certification** in Women's Studies from the University of Maine. Without that graduate certification, I would not have been hired. Having the graduate certification is the reason my application for the position of Assistant Professor of History was considered at all. And, I was the **only history graduate student to gain a tenure-track assistant professor position in the spring of 2009.**



**Please do not cancel** the Women's Studies graduate concentration, or limit women's studies programming at the University of Maine. Now, ***more than ever***, we need such a unique and empowering program for both male and female students. And, in fact, it is what gives the University of Maine students a profound edge over their competition in this increasingly difficult job market.

I would be happy to speak to you about my very positive experiences at the University of Maine. **Ann Schonberger, Mazie Hough, and Angela Hart** are to be commended for their years of hard work, building this program.



Sincerely,

Dr. Shannon M. Risk

# UM Faculty and Staff

From:  Ann Schonberger  
 Naomi Jacobs

Subject: Naomi Jacob's response to APPWG

To:  Mazie Hough  Angela Hart

Cc:

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TO: APPWG Committee

I would like to register my deep concerns about the proposed cuts to Women's Studies. I write as the chair of a department for which the WST graduate concentration has offered a real recruiting advantage as well as an essential course in our own graduate concentration in gender and literature, as a faculty member who has taught the wonderful women's studies students, and as a scholar whose work has been substantially supported by the program.

The English Department offers several concentrations within the broader structure of the M.A. in literature; one is a concentration in Gender and Literature for which WST 510 Advanced Studies in Feminist Theory is a core course. Gender studies is a major current in our field, and the possibility of completing a concentration in this area is one of the features that makes us stand out from other similar programs. Each year, we attract some excellent students as a result. Those who choose to complete the WST concentration per se are able to gain valuable teaching experience in the Feminist Pedagogy class and to broaden their grounding in theory in the other WST graduate seminars. Those who prefer to focus more exclusively on literary topics still usually need to take WST 510 in order to complete the English Department's concentration. Several English MA students I've taught in this course have gone on to doctoral programs where they continue to pursue their interest in gender analysis. Some others have gone on to find work as professional writers in the public sector with organizations such as Spruce Run. The loss of the WST graduate concentration and curriculum would most likely also mean the end of the English Department's gender and literature concentration, because we do not have the faculty resources to offer enough graduate courses in this area. I believe this would have a significant negative impact on our recruiting efforts for the MA program.

Though small, the women's studies program is powerful. Over the years I've taught WST 101 Intro to Feminist Theory, WST 410 Feminist Theory, and WST 510 Advanced Studies in Feminist Theory. I've also taught English Department courses that are approved WST electives, such as the survey courses on British and American women writers and the upper-level course on feminist criticism (now titled "Gender Theory and Literature"). In each context it's been a wonderful experience to work with these talented, motivated and thoughtful students, both male and female. The young women in particular are often more engaged, confident and outspoken than their counterparts in other kinds of classes. In part this is, no doubt, a function of the kind of person who chooses to major in WST. But also, the WST curriculum takes women seriously, women's studies faculty encourage women students to take themselves seriously, and the results have been evident.

The women's studies program has shaped my scholarly career both directly and indirectly. A Women in the Curriculum grant led to one of my first major publications, an article on Wuthering Heights that was later anthologized in a collection of "essential criticism" which has been in print for nearly twenty years. A more recent book chapter on a contemporary novelist, termed by a major reviewer one of two "superlative" essays in the volume, was substantially informed both by a curriculum development grant in feminist theory and by lively conversations about feminist theories of agency

with WST students. A number of other publications have also been grounded in WST courses and WIC grants. Without the existence of the women's studies major and graduate concentration, I would not have had these opportunities to integrate my teaching and my scholarship in such a productive way.

What I would like to emphasize here is that the impact of the program is far-reaching. For some 27 years, faculty, staff and students from all across campus have benefited from WST programming, grant support, and course offerings. Program Director Ann Schonberger and Associate Director Mazie Hough have also played a major role in recruiting, welcoming and retaining women faculty across the disciplines.

I know that Ann has done an excellent job of making the case for all of the ways in which the program matters, including its contributions to campus diversity initiatives, and its role as a center of women's studies in the state, which would be left with no major or graduate degree in the field if the Orono programs are cut.

This is simply to add my voice to the chorus of those who hope that a way can be found to maintain this important program, which accomplishes so much with such minimal resources.

Sincerely,

Naomi Jacobs  
Chair, Department of English

DATE: March 28, 2010

TO: APPWG Committees  
FROM: Kristin M. Langellier, CMJ  
Laura Lindenfeld, CMJ and Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center  
Eric E. Peterson, CMJ and Acting Graduate Coordinator  
Nathan Stormer, CMJ, Graduate Coordinator, Mark and Marcia Bailey Professor  
RE: Proposed WST Cuts

As faculty in the Department of Communication and Journalism most involved in women and gender studies, we believe that retaining the graduate concentration and major in Women's Studies is crucial for the following reasons:

**To Attract and Recruit CMJ Graduate Students to UM**

Applicants often inquire about opportunities to examine the intersection of gender and communication. The opportunity to take courses and fulfill the concentration in WST is a critical factor in their decisions to come to UM. Kimberlee Perez, for example, enrolled in the MA program and completed the graduate concentration in WST. She is now Assistant Professor of Intercultural Communication at DePaul University.

**To Complete a Doctoral Concentration for the I.Ph.D. in Communication**

The WST graduate concentration is a crucial option of the I.Ph.D. in Communication. The loss of the WST graduate concentration would eliminate a key doctoral concentration for CMJ students. To take the first graduate of the I.Ph.D. in Communication as an example, Julie-Ann Scott, in her dissertation research on professionals with physical disabilities, used WST graduate courses to ground a gender analysis of experience and identity.

**To Enhance Non-Academic Career Options for CMJ Graduates**

Because it pointedly addresses issues of gender, racial, class, cultural and other constructions of diversity, the graduate concentration and major in WST significantly enhances career options for graduates with CMJ degrees. Jlynn Frazier, for example, drew on her MA in Communication and the WST concentration to secure her position in organization management in the non-profit health industry in the Washington DC metro area.

**To Establish Viable Research and Teaching Opportunities for CMJ Graduates**

The WST program is vital to the training of the next generation of communication researchers and teachers whom we are educating at UM. Chris Bobel, for example, laid the foundation for her academic career with an MA in Communication together with women's studies courses; and she is now Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at UMass Boston and author of two scholarly books.

We conclude by noting that the WST graduate concentration and major have been formative to our own teaching, curriculum, research, and mentoring – inspired and sustained by the intellectual center of WST at UM -- as well as to the academic programs of so many of our students. In the area of master's theses alone, we can count more than 20 students who have used the WST curriculum to develop and complete their research in diverse areas of gender, women, and communication. Indeed, every class we admit has at least one student who completes the graduate concentration or takes WST courses to fulfill elective requirements. In short, WST constitutes not only a unique, substantive, and vitally independent discipline but is also an integral and vital resource to CMJ. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support of WST.



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From:  "Mary Cathcart" <mary.r.cathcart@umit.maine.edu> 3/31/10 11:26:30 AM   
Subject: Women's Studies Major  
To:  Achieving Sustainability

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Hello:

I write to ask you to retain the Major in Women's Studies. I note that the University of Southern Maine and the three most prestigious private colleges in Maine offer both a major and a minor in the discipline, and I believe we would send the wrong message to Maine women leaders and our students if the flagship campus of UMS eliminates the major.

As Co-Director of Maine NEW Leadership, a program which seeks to inspire undergraduate women to become engaged in public service, I believe women need a consciousness of the role of gender in public life to work effectively in politics. One of the outstanding students in our inaugural leadership program last year, Melanie Rockefeller, was a UMaine women's studies major, and we have invited Melanie back this June as a paid intern for the six-day institute. She is the only student out of a class of twenty-six who will return as an intern.

As more women rise to positions of power, women's issues are increasingly influencing public policy decisions. Both women and men have begun to define and pay attention to policies which we were not conscious of when the majority of women worked inside their homes. An example is pay equity: Yesterday the Maine Women's Lobby sponsored a visit from Lilly Ledbetter, the Alabama woman who worked for decades for Goodyear Tire, only to learn, when she was close to retiring, that the male supervisors doing the same job as she did were paid thousands of dollars more. Another policy issue which has recently been raised in Maine and other states is paid sick leave; the fact is that more women than men are employed in positions without paid sick leave, and yet women are often the ones who have to stay home to care for a sick child or elderly parent. Preparing students to engage in debate and seek solutions to these and other policy issues, as women's studies programs do, is important to our state and nation.

Thank you very much for considering my opinion. I appreciate how difficult your task is, and wish you all the best in making these decisions for our excellent University of Maine.

Best regards,  
Mary

Mary Cathcart  
Sr. Policy Associate  
Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center  
581-1539

"Response to Achieving Sustainability: APPWG Interim Report of March 24, 2010":

As both a dissertator from another university (the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) as well as a graduate instructor of feminist theory at the University of Maine, I write in support of UMaine's Women's Studies major and graduate concentration. Nationwide women's studies majors and graduate programs are on the rise (according to MS magazine's website, there are currently 662 undergraduate programs, 46 MA programs, and 14 doctoral programs). By cutting our program, we run against this trend, and send the message to students and community members that courses in feminist theory and gender studies are not important to us. At best this affirms misinformation about Women's Studies, from what it teaches to why it exists; at worse this helps to fuel the hostility that even today is still directed against students and teachers of Women's Studies courses (one need only look to last week's response to the proposed cuts in the *Bangor Daily News*, where Women's Studies graduates were depicted as welfare mothers). Even if women's studies courses are still offered, program support is necessary for both student enrollment and faculty investment. Once the major and graduate concentrations are cut, it will be exceedingly difficult to ever bring them back.

Women's Studies is not just about women; it provides modes and methods of critical inquiry, as well as safe and diverse spaces to discuss difference. It is not a coincidence that over thirty percent of women's studies teachers, undergraduates, and graduate students nationwide are women of color (cited from [www.nwsa.org/msmag](http://www.nwsa.org/msmag)). Maintaining the graduate concentration in Women's Studies at UMaine is an important step in supporting the vitality of the graduate programs we have here at UMaine, and the diverse interests (and diversity of) our students. Many of our graduate students are pursuing interdisciplinary degrees, and courses in feminist theory and gender studies provide necessary frameworks for critical scholarship.

In the past two years in my instruction of advanced feminist theory (WST 510), I have worked with students from liberal studies, English, history, philosophy, and the social sciences. Many of these students have told me that the diverse disciplinary experiences of others not only enriched their classroom experience but also left them with new perspectives on their own disciplinary work. By reducing the Women's Studies program to a minor, we suggest that diversity does not matter to us—at least not enough. We also inadvertently support the misconceptions and downright hostility directed toward our state citizens by gleeful respondents to the proposition to cut Women's Studies, in *The Bangor Daily News*.

Elizabeth Neiman  
Graduate Faculty, University of Maine  
Dissertator at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Ann -  
FYI

April 1, 2010

Dear APPWG Committee, UMaine Administrators, and UMaine Community,

The members of the History Department agree that the proposed elimination of Modern Languages and Classics (MLC) as a degree-granting department and the similar elimination of the major and graduate concentration in Women's Studies will severely impact the intellectual and social health of our university.

We especially fear that the fundamental restructuring of MLC and Women's Studies will weaken the quality and effectiveness of our graduate program in History at both the MA and PhD level. A meaningful graduate university must support programs in a range of related disciplines in the increasingly multidisciplinary university of the 21<sup>st</sup> century—a role that Women's Studies and MLC play for our department. Graduate students in Ancient History, for example, are able to pursue this field because of MLC coursework and graduate faculty members in MLC. Similarly, the French language program and its fulltime faculty contribute to our ability to be the top graduate program in the United States in Canadian history with its essential francophone component. We suspect that MLC cuts will eventually jeopardize the major Title VI Federal grant that supports our Canadian-American Center, which, in turn, is a crucial ally of our graduate program.

The Women's Studies graduate concentration plays a similar fundamental role supporting the quality of the graduate program in History. Women's and gender history is one of the top two or three areas of historical specialization identified by recent applicants to our graduate program. Numerous graduate students in History have worked closely with Women's Studies faculty, taken graduate coursework in this program, and earned a graduate concentration in Women's Studies as part of their MA or PhD in History. The robust Women's Studies program has decisively aided our graduate students in securing tenure-track faculty positions as well as fully-funded positions as doctoral candidates in prestigious History programs outside of Maine. Moreover, the tragic early deaths last spring of two History faculty in women's and gender history, Marli Weiner and Wiebke Ipsen, have intensified the graduate program's relationship with the graduate concentration in Women's Studies.

The intellectual and economic landscape of higher education requires that research universities offer courses and have tenured faculty who contribute in varied ways in their own area of academic specialization as well as with colleagues, graduate students, and undergraduates in related fields. The crucial web that connects History, Women's Studies, MLC, Franco-American Studies, and the Canadian-American Center are seriously threatened by the proposed reductions in two of these areas. Graduate programs at UMaine outside the applied sciences are already severely limited and will suffer irreparable harm if they are reduced any further. We strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed reductions to Modern Languages and Classics and Women's Studies; these cuts will permanently damage the educational and research excellence of the flagship institution of higher education in the state of Maine.

Sincerely,

Department of History  
Nathan Godfried  
Jay Bregman

Alex Grab  
Michael Lang  
Ngo-Vinh Long  
Elizabeth McKillen  
Liam Riordan  
Scott See

March 29, 2010

Dear APPWG Committee and UMaine Administrators,

I write to ask that you reconsider the proposed termination of the Women's Studies major and graduate concentrations at our campus. I do not understand how this act can substantially address our budget crisis, and I see the Women's Studies program as one of the great intellectual and academic strengths of our university that makes major multi-disciplinary contributions with a very small staff. Since it currently makes a sizeable contribution with a very modest budget, I don't see why it should be targeted for proposed reductions. While it may be said that many of the functions of Women's Studies (and WIC) will continue in spite of such cuts, I think this misunderstands the crucial way that meaningful academic programs must connect directly with students. Continuing without the essential connection to students in the form of major and graduate concentrations will isolate a tremendously successful program that effectively and efficiently meets a number of continuously pressing needs at the University of Maine.

The elimination of the graduate program is especially alarming for the health and future of the graduate doctoral program in History in which I work. A meaningful graduate university must support programs in a range of related disciplines in the increasingly multi-disciplinary university of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. History MA and PhD students have relied upon graduate courses and committee members from Women's Studies to make the most of their graduate degrees in History, and the proposed elimination of this program will reduce what is already a skeletal graduate university outside of the technical and applied sciences to almost nothing. Two recent graduate students in History make the case especially clearly. Margaret Solic, a May 2010 MA student who will be entering a PhD program in Women's History at Ohio State University this fall, gained entrance to this prestigious graduate program in large part due to the expertise she gained as a History MA with a Women's Studies graduate concentration. Similarly, Mimi Killinger, now a fulltime faculty member in our Honors College, also benefited directly from her work in Women's Studies.

As the only graduate program in Women's Studies in all of Maine, you are proposing to eliminate a major statewide resource. Women's Studies is crucial to the landscape of all serious research universities in the United States today, by eliminating this major and graduate concentration at UMaine, we will be moving away from our goal of providing educational excellence at the flagship institution in the state of Maine.

I could write a longer letter and list many more ways that the continued health of Women's Studies is essential to the academic, intellectual, and social life of our campus, but I believe that the retention a graduate program in Women's Studies is especially pressing because its elimination will directly impact the size and quality of our graduate program in History.

Regards,

Liam Riordan  
Associate Professor  
Department of History  
581-1913 (w)  
riordan@umit.maine.edu

*Mary G. Okin, PhD*  
*PO Box 250, Winter Harbor, Maine 04693*  
*(207) 963-2355*

March 28, 2010

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
University of Maine  
Orono, ME 04469

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in reference to the proposed budget cut-backs that would affect the Women's Studies department at the University of Maine, and specifically the undergraduate women's studies major, the graduate concentrations, and the number of positions in the department. I have a unique perspective on this: I took my first women's studies class as an undergraduate student at the University of Maine in 1990, and I can truly say that that course changed the way I viewed society and my life from that point on. In 2008, I completed a PhD in history at the University of Maine with a concentration in women's studies. The concentration I completed in women's studies was an invaluable part of my doctoral program and integral to my research on women hospitalized in mental institutions in Quebec. Since completing that degree, I have been an adjunct faculty member in the WST department at the University, teaching one of the sections of WST 101.



Women's studies is an extremely important academic field and one of the most progressive, with far-reaching political implications, including the continued education and empowerment of women. The WST undergraduate major is an extremely important addition to the University. Unlike some other academic majors, women's studies entails a strong element of community and social activism and many graduates go on to actively work for gender equality and in important social programs, including at local battered women's shelters, women's health collectives, and in other positions of political and social import. This is not the type of program the University can afford to cut. Moreover, as a professor, the students I have had in WST 101 who were WST majors have been among the brightest and most articulate students I have seen. I fear that the University would lose many of these types of students were the major to be cut. The University of Maine is actually extremely fortunate to have such a strong WST department and to be able to offer both an undergraduate major and graduate concentrations.

These are programs that took years of hard work to develop and their loss would be both shortsighted and have far-reaching negative ramifications, including a backslide in the representation of progressive, socially-aware, politically-diverse, and gender-equal education at the University. If these cuts were made, it could take years to rebuild these programs. Finally, it is clear that these programs could not exist without the current staffing model. One person in the WST department would not be able to maintain the program as it is currently successfully run.

I deeply appreciate your serious consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Mary Okin, PhD

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From:  **Angela Hart**  
 "Renate Klein" <Renate\_Klein@umit.maine.edu>  
Subject: Fwd: WST major & grad. concentrations  
To:  
Cc:

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Dear committee members:

I'm writing to encourage you to save the WST major and graduate concentrations.

I'm a social psychologist by training and have taught for the WST program at UMaine for a number of years. My research focuses on violence against women; I work a lot internationally, primarily with the U.K., and other European countries, and am a volunteer translator for an NGO that supports women who have suffered sexual violence in war zones in Afghanistan, Liberia, the Congo and elsewhere.

It is crucial that UMaine saves WST as a major and continues to offer the WST graduate concentrations. WST is the only academic field that systematically and comprehensively addresses gender in all aspects of social organization, and on personal, national, and international levels.

Many of the world's intractable problems are related to inequitable gender relations and rigid interpretations of gender and sexuality. These problems include the still staggering rates of sexual violence against women and girls (and to a lesser extent against boys and men) but gender inequities and the widespread mistreatment of females are also at the heart of health disparities, sex-selective reproduction (100 million missing baby girls according to a recent Economist estimate), the spread of HIV/AIDS and associated family and social breakdown, and various issues related to economic development and inequality, including forced trafficking into sexual and domestic slavery.

Competitive well-paying jobs at the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Labor Organization (to name only a few I rely on in my work) expect from candidates an in-depth gender analysis of the kind WST teaches our students.

Closer to home, in the state of Maine, domestic violence is the single most significant category of violent crime. It is directly entwined with issues of gender, and women and children suffer the most.

By cutting the WST major and graduate concentration the University is effectively saying that these issues are not important, that our students don't need to have an in-depth understanding of these problems on local, national and international levels, and that they don't deserve to be competitive in a global marketplace. I cannot believe that the University would take such a foolish and short-sighted position.

Again, I urge you to keep the WST major and graduate concentrations!

Sincerely,

Renate Klein

Renate Klein, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Human Development & Family Studies  
University of Maine, College of Education and Human Development



Peg Cruikshank  
Lecturer III in WST

## Support Letter for Women's Studies

The program at the University of Maine is a very strong one, compared to others I am familiar with. Cutting the major will undermine it, decrease enrollment, and send many talented students to other universities. Short-term savings do not justify long-term damage to a program, especially when the future revenue potential of a program is suppressed by cuts.

Women's studies at Maine has strengths that outsiders are not aware of. When majors take classes across the curriculum, they ask questions that may not be asked by other students and thus enrich the classroom experience for all students. Our students have an interdisciplinary perspective, thanks to our courses, and this perspective also makes them valuable classroom participants. Their influence cannot be measured in numbers.

Gender equity is far from being accomplished and one step in that direction is a women's studies major. The proposed budget cuts are not sexist in their origin or intention but rather in their *impact*. They push back the goal of equality and make the University of Maine complicit in preserving the status quo, the unjust and harmful status quo.

Graduates of women's studies at Maine have improved the quality of life for many Mainers by their leadership and contributions to the community, in domestic violence programs, for example. Without a major, our program will be less likely to train these future leaders.

Women's studies graduates have gone on to law school and to graduate school in several fields. Without a major, this record of success, and this good advertising for our university, will disappear.

The M.A. program has allowed students to stay in Maine while continuing their work in women's studies. Without this possibility, they must leave the state. The impact of closing this door cannot easily be measured in dollars but it is nevertheless real; the result is a university with visible weaknesses.

A university that cuts women's studies (and many other programs essential to the very idea of a university) invites mediocrity. It may call itself a "flagship" and keep its logo, but many people in Maine and potential students in other states will see the difference between a strong university and a stumbling one.

In the thirteen years in which I have taught women's studies at this university, I have been impressed by the dedicated leadership of Ann Schonberger and by the outstanding teaching and scholarship of Mazie Hough. Their work should be celebrated, along with the quality of our majors, instead of subjected to drastic cuts.

Women's studies began as a marginal enterprise at many colleges and universities and slowly moved beyond barriers to offer some of the most dynamic courses on college campuses. Programs need a major to be taken seriously and to have a high profile on campus. At the University of Maine, women's studies is well regarded, but if only the minor remains, it will be shuttled back to the margins.

Finally, women's studies at Maine has empowered countless students, men as well as women, to develop themselves intellectually and emotionally. They are leading examined lives and making significant contributions to their communities. Dropping the major will undermine this accomplishment.

# Off-campus support

To: Academic Program Priorities Working Group  
General email: [achieving.sustainability@umit.maine.edu](mailto:achieving.sustainability@umit.maine.edu)  
College of LAS email: [clas-appwg@umit.maine.edu](mailto:clas-appwg@umit.maine.edu)

Fr: Women's and Gender Studies Program at University of Maine at Farmington

Date: 2 April 2010

Re: University of Maine Women's Studies Program

To whom it may concern,

As faculty members of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at the University of Maine at Farmington, we urge you to re-consider the elimination of the University of Maine's Women's Studies major and graduate concentration. This program serves an important position on your campus and around the state. Speaking from a campus where the Women's and Gender Studies program was suspended last year, we have come to acutely appreciate the consequences of the loss of an interdisciplinary program devoted to diversity and intellectual development, which your campus can ill afford to lose.

As a small campus in western Maine, we have come to rely on the resources and intellectual support from UM's historically strong program in women's studies. Many of us have developed and maintained a close collaborative relationship with Women in the Curriculum and with the UM Women's Studies Faculty. We have worked to bring issues of women and gender to each campus as well as to the public – through our collaboration in the Maine Women's Studies Consortium, in state-wide conferences, and in research endeavors. There is an energy in the UM program that sustains programs throughout the University of Maine System.

If your proposal becomes policy, the University of Southern Maine would be the only campus with an undergraduate major in Women's Studies. This limits us as a university system, in part because women's and gender studies programs are genuinely and inherently interdisciplinary, promoting intellectual breadth as well as depth, challenging students to reconfigure themselves and their place in the world. Such a program is also committed to public service, providing internships and programming in the community. With respect to UM's Women's Studies graduate concentration, as you know, UM is the only campus with such a program. Given the NCND priority of efficiency across the UMS, to eliminate this concentration seems counter to that goal.

While we appreciate the economic crisis within the University of Maine System, we urge you to take into consideration the system's institutional and intellectual commitment to the challenges of the new millennium. The UM Women's Studies program graduates students who can meet these challenges of diversity as well as commonality.

Sincerely,

Allison Hepler  
Women's and Gender Studies Program Coordinator and Professor of History

Women's and Gender Studies Council:

Julianna Acheson, Associate Professor of Anthropology  
Linda Beck, Associate Professor of Political Science  
Mellisa Clawson, Honors Director and Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education  
Courtney Church, Women's and Gender Studies student representative  
Tanya Ann Kennedy, Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Composition  
Gretchen Legler, Professor of Creative Writing  
Karol Maybury, Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Cathleen McAnneny, Professor of Geography

From:  Ann Schonberger  
 "Rabbi Darah R. Lerner" <ravlerner@me.acadia.net>

Subject: Fwd: Women's Studies at the University

To:

Cc:

Attachments:  Attach0.html

6K

----- Original Message -----

APPWG Members,

I am writing to express my concerns about the changes proposed in the Women's Studies Department.

As someone who teaches regularly at the University of Maine I find the climate for my classroom teaching and specialized presentations a good one. My course "350 years of Jews in America" incorporates a great deal about the role and importance of women in Judaism and on the American landscape. I feel the high visibility of Women's Studies on campus has been beneficial to my teaching and having both the major and the graduate concentrations elevate this impact. If the program were cut back to only an undergraduate minor, I think there would be less receptiveness to my gender-balanced perspective.

In addition to teaching a class through the Political Science Department, I am called upon regularly to speak or teach in other settings. I teach in the Honors program where the receptivity to a woman in a non-traditional career speaking with authority is re-enforced by the University's commitment to Women's Studies. This is true as well for the teaching I do as part of the Sexuality course and the many others I have taught at U. Maine.

Not only as a woman is this crucial, but a strong undergraduate and graduate program helps with talks I give on GLBT issues as well both formally and informally at the University.

Lastly, women rabbis are still a challenge or an unknown for many people and the strong presence of Women's Studies at the University makes the surrounding community a more female-friendly place for me to do my work. This is especially true since many in my congregation are connected with the University of Maine.

As you try to balance budgets and the values of the University do not under estimate the importance of Women's Studies both on the campus and off. Keep the graduate and undergraduate programs strong and vital.

Thank you,  
Rabbi Darah R. Lerner  
Congregation Beth El  
183 French Street  
Bangor, Maine 04401  
207-945-4578



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTHERN MAINE**

Women and Gender  
Studies Program

March 29, 2010

As faculty members of the Women and Gender Studies Council/ Program at the University of Southern Maine, we write in support of the University of Maine's Women's Studies major and graduate concentration. While we appreciate the APPWG's recommendation to retain the minor and women's studies courses, we urge you to maintain the current structure and degrees because they serve an important purpose on your campus and in the state (especially in the central and northern area). The major and the graduate courses represent a significant academic center for studies of diversity, policy, and intellectual inquiry. Many faculty at USM have long-standing and highly productive collaborations with Women in the Curriculum and with the UM Women's Studies faculty, and we can testify to the intellectual quality and vitality of the program. USM and UM have collaborated--along with other campuses--in the Maine Women's Studies Consortium, on conferences, on research presentations, in curriculum development and other activities and we are familiar with the energy and scholarship that our colleagues at UM bring to Women's Studies as an academic discipline as well as to broader public service. In our view, a reduction in the Program's offerings, and in particular the elimination of the major and graduate concentration, would have a substantial negative impact on the intellectual and cultural life at the University of Maine and elsewhere in the state.

Since USM's Program also offers an undergraduate major, we know that a curriculum is more than a collection of courses: a major provides students with a basis both for graduate studies and for a wide variety of careers. Maintaining Women's Studies as a major also signals what UMaine values--in this case, a thriving academic field along with a commitment to equity and diversity. Both nationally and internationally, Women's Studies programs play an important part in intellectual life, as a place for the development of knowledge, and the transformation of knowledge. Women's Studies programs and majors provide learning

communities for students, help develop an awareness of the field and opportunities for its use, and provide spaces for students, staff, and faculty to come together to discuss issues that are both academic and personal.

At USM, we also understand the constraints that the economic crisis in Maine, and in the nation, generates, and we are well aware of the need for changes in the University of Maine System and on individual campuses. In the current climate, we seek to preserve all the valuable bases on which higher education and the university rest. This includes academic inquiry into the concepts of difference and commonality, as well as the analysis of the ways in which ideas about difference and commonality shape our lives. Such inquiry is at the heart of Women's Studies. We will, of course, continue to work with our Women's Studies colleagues at the University of Maine and we urge you to continue to support your existing programs and degrees in Women's Studies.

Sincerely,

Lorrayne Carroll, Associate Professor of English

Luisa Deprez, Professor of Sociology

Eileen Eagan, Associate Professor of History

Susan Feiner, Professor of Economics & Women and Gender Studies

Susan Fineran, Associate Professor of Social Work

Nancy Gish, Professor of English

Christine Holden, Associate Professor of History

Rebecca Lockridge, Associate Professor of Communications

Deepika Marya, Associate Professor of English

Lydia Savage, Professor of Geography & Anthropology

Charlotte Rosenthal, Professor of Russian



Jeffrey E. Hecker  
Dean  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Dear Dean Hecker,

I hope you will add my name to the many who support the Women's Studies major at UM. The Women's Studies major serves the community in somewhat the same way theater and music do. These programs enrich the life of the region and help create a quality of life that is important in bringing business and industry to the Greater Bangor area. They matter far beyond mere numbers of students. In a strange way, perhaps, they enhance our self-esteem as a community, even when we aren't taking advantage of concerts or WIC speakers. These programs say that we are people who *care* about the arts, who *care* about women's issues. If UM becomes a technology-focused institution that relies purely on bottom line numbers for its priorities, something infinitely precious will be lost.

Women's Studies has far-reaching importance as an agent of social change. Social mores and thinking do not alter readily. Change begins with small adjustments of attitude which ripple outward. Women's Studies majors affect a few other students around them, who then carry new thinking further. Individuals can rarely accomplish this in isolation or from taking one class. Solidarity with others in shared classes, activities, and dorm-room discussions, however, can make a surprising difference. In addition, having a Women's Studies major at UM sends a clear, strong message: not only does UM care about women and women's equality, but in the rights and equality of all people. The discipline of Women's Studies has never limited itself to a narrow focus on women, but has understood that injustice and rigid hierarchical systems harm everyone.

UM's Women's Studies program has been rippling outward since its inception, as an important supporter of undertakings across the state. My campus, University College of Bangor, has had a Women in the Curriculum program for well over twenty years, but we are a very small group. We have always drawn strength from our proximity to Orono and cherished our connections with the program. Endless help has come our way, thus enriching our students and staff. Just this month, a generous donation of books arrived at our library. We will be able to host the Maine Women's Studies Consortium annual conference next fall, a day-long gathering of well over 100, with few resources, in part because we know we can count on our friends up the road.

I was glad to learn that the most recent recommendation was to suspend the majors in question rather than cancel them. I encourage you to support Ann Schonberger's proposals for restructuring and find a way for the Women's Studies major to continue. Its presence is important not just for UM students, but for the community.

Sincerely,

Anita Kurth  
Professor of English  
University of Maine at Augusta