Docket Item:

University Program Approval: Oregon State University (OSU), Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Summary:

OSU proposes a new program leading to a Ph.D. degree in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommends approval of the program as proposed.

Staff Recommendation:

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approve the following program: Ph.D. degree in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at OSU.
Oregon State University seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s approval to offer an instructional program leading to a Ph.D. degree in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

1. **Describe the purpose and relationship of the proposed program to the institution’s mission and strategic plan.**

   Oregon State University (OSU) is proposing a new Ph.D. degree program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies) beginning Fall term 2015. The program will be located in the School of Language, Culture, and Society within the College of Liberal Arts. Currently, OSU offers the only M.A. degree program in the discipline in Oregon. The proposed Ph.D. degree program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies will be only the second such program in the region (in addition to the University of Washington), including Alaska, Idaho, Utah, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming, and the Dakotas. While the proposed program will prepare students for academic careers, it has been designed to also have a strong applied focus and will prepare students for feminist leadership in non-profits, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector.

   The Ph.D. in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies degree program will be actively engaged in advancing OSU’s mission to promote “social, cultural and environmental progress for the people of Oregon, the nation and the world.” In addition, the proposed program is in a unique position to support OSU’s signature area of “Promoting Economic Growth and Social Progress,” by expanding the understanding of growth and progress to include economic and social justice for all.

2. **What evidence of need does the institution have for the program?**

   A student needs assessments, along with a marketing survey, have indicated the need and a desire for a Ph.D. degree in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies to be offered by OSU. Furthermore, support from the National Women’s Studies Association, the Feminist Majority Foundation, and the National Council of Women’s Organizations reiterates the national need for feminist leaders in academia and other organizations. Among targeted organizations that specialize in, or otherwise see themselves addressing women’s and gender issues, 67% expressed that such a degree would be valuable. These organizations included: banking/financial institutions; government; healthcare; hospitality; nonprofits; real estate; telecommunications; and tribal organizations. Respondents also identified the following areas they felt would enhance and lend additional value to a Ph.D. in Women,
Gender, and Sexuality Studies: business and administration; health; leadership and management; science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); and social justice.

3. Are there similar programs in the state? If so, how does the proposed program supplement, complement, or collaborate with those programs?

OSU offered the first in-state stand-alone graduate degree program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (M.A. degree). The University of Oregon and Portland State University offer Women’s Studies as an undergraduate major and as a graduate minor or certificate. Willamette University has an undergraduate major and minor. Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, Eastern Oregon University, and Lewis & Clark College offer undergraduate minors. Students from these programs represent an in-state population of potential future applicants for OSU’s existing Master’s degree program as well as the proposed Ph.D. program in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. A doctoral program would be the first of its kind in Oregon. Faculty members from Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program at Portland State University and the Women’s and Gender Studies program at the University of Oregon have both indicated their interest in serving on Ph.D. committees and in teaching courses in the Ph.D. program.

4. What new resources will be needed initially and on a recurring basis to implement the program? How will the institution provide these resources? What efficiencies or revenue enhancements are achieved with this program, including consolidation or elimination of programs over time, if any?

New Faculty Line: The Women, Gender, and Sexualities program has been strengthened and enhanced by the addition of a new faculty member bringing the total number of faculty members who will be directly involved in the program to eleven. The new tenure track position is being supported from existing funds in the budget of the School of Language, Culture, and Society.

Graduate Teaching Assistants: In support of the proposed doctoral program, initially four, four-year teaching assistantships will be offered to incoming Ph.D. students. Once the Ph.D. program begins, existing fixed term instructors who currently provide instruction to 200- and 300-level baccalaureate core courses will be phased out. Instead, these courses will be assigned to the Ph.D. students. It is anticipated that the savings from instructor salaries will allow the School to fund up to five or six graduate teaching assistants per year. And, as the Ecampus (distance education) enrollment continues to grow, it is anticipated that the additional revenue generated will cover the remaining teaching assistantships once the Ph.D. program is fully enrolled by AY 2017-2018.

All appropriate University committees, the OSU Board of Trustees, and the Statewide Provosts Council has positively reviewed the proposed program.
Recommendation to the Commission
The Statewide Provosts Council recommends that the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission authorize Oregon State University to establish an instructional program leading to a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, effective Fall 2015.
Institution: Oregon State University  
Program: Ph.D. in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Action: At the July 9, 2015 meeting, the Statewide Provosts Council approved a new program for Oregon State University, Ph.D. in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, to move forward to the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission for its review/approval. All eight university provosts approved the program. The OSU Board of Trustees approved this program at their May 29, 2015 meeting.

Eastern Oregon University  
Sarah Witte, interim provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Oregon State University  
Sabah Randhawa, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Oregon Health & Science University  
Jenny Mladenovic, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Oregon Tech  
Brad Burda, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Portland State University  
Sona Andrews, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Southern Oregon University  
Susan Walsh, interim provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

University of Oregon  
Scott Coltrane, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained

Western Oregon University  
Steve Scheck, provost  
X Approved  
__Opposed  
__Abstained