

1982

Rationale for Women's Studies Major 1982

Women's Studies

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.denison.edu/lookingback>

Recommended Citation

Women's Studies, "Rationale for Women's Studies Major 1982" (1982). *Looking Back, Looking Forward*. 81.
<http://digitalcommons.denison.edu/lookingback/81>

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Women's and Gender Studies at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Looking Back, Looking Forward by an authorized administrator of Denison Digital Commons.

#628 A Major in Women's Studies

Background:

Denison offered its first Women's Studies course, ID 246, on a one-semester basis, in the Spring of 1973. In the Spring of 1974, this course was made a part of the regular curriculum. In the ensuing years, several courses focusing on women were established by a range of departments. Presently offered are:

English 225--Women in Literature (several sections each semester, including 225W)

Soc/Anthro 310--Sexual Inequality

Soc/Anthro 321--Women in Developing Societies

Political Science 352 (formerly 354a)--Sex Discrimination and the Law

History 360r--History of Women in Modern Europe and America

Economics 322--Women in the Labor Force

Religion 229--Women and Western Religion

Psych 300c--Psychology of Women

In addition, Psych 269 (Human Sexuality) and Speech Communication 229 (Minorities and the Mass Media) include a major emphasis on women.

In 1978 the University recognized the need for courses on minorities and women in the liberal arts curriculum by establishing the general education requirement in Minority/Women's Studies. This pioneering step brought Denison acclaim nationally and has prompted other institutions to move in a similar direction. Denison's curricular development can be understood as part of a national and even international scholarly movement to create a special focus on women and to reconstruct the traditional disciplines.

In 1981 Denison established a minor in Women's Studies, and we now believe that there should be a separate major for the program. The proposal results from several months' deliberation by the Women's Studies Committee. The task involved faculty from 13 departments, the Women's Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer, several professional staff, a consultant from Wellesley College's Center for Research on Women, and Denison's two IDM Women's Studies majors.

Rationale:

Currently the Individually Designed Major Committee serves the student who wants to create a major not formally represented in the curriculum. But since we have a vital and active Women's Studies program on this campus--encompassing a number of courses and faculty as well as a minor--it seems a much more efficient use of time and resources to establish a formal major.

More important, establishing a major makes apparent to students and faculty that Women's Studies courses, as a group, comprise a coherent intellectual field.

#628 A Major in Women's Studies
Rationale continued

The major requires 21 credit hours of core courses to give students

- (a) A preliminary exposure to the field, including subject matter, theoretical perspectives, and research methodologies;

COURSES: Women's Studies 101--Introduction to Women's Studies (3 cr.)
Philosophy 275--Philosophy of Feminism (4 cr.)

- (b) An awareness of minority experience as an important component of an inclusive feminist theory;

COURSES: Two courses in minority studies to be determined by the student in consultation with the advisor, and with the approval of the Director of Women's Studies. These two courses need not focus specifically on women nor need they be ones that fulfill the Minority and Women's Studies General Education Requirement (8 cr.)

- (c) An opportunity to work with other women's studies majors in developing an understanding of the field on an advanced level;

COURSE: Women's Studies 400--Advanced Seminar in Women's Studies (2 cr.)
(pre-requisites: W.S. 101 and junior or senior standing;
pre-requisite or co-requisite: Phil. 275)

- (d) An experience of sustained research over the period of at least a semester in the senior year.

COURSE: Women's Studies 451-452--Senior Research (4 cr. min.)