

Renewal and Reinvention II: Strategic Plan for the RWWP Chair (2010–2012)

Presented to the GSWS Advance May 12, 2010

Overview

The RWWP chair holder, Dana Claxton has had a highly successful year. A full annual report is pending.

Recap of the Challenge

In the 2010 budget year, the matched AP-4 from FASS was withdrawn. Under instruction from Finance, the FASS budget people transferred continuing unfilled faculty lines into the TA/TI budget in the previous year and were then instructed again to cut TA/TI budgets in the current budget shortfall.

The net impact is to reduce the operating fund for the RWWP by 30%. In response to this challenge, the Department voted at November's meeting to offer the equivalent of a post doc in the next fiscal year. In response to the ad, 15 applications were received, and a short list of 5 interviewed.

At the same time, the Chair was instructed to review the status of the Chairs across the country. The outcome of this survey is contained in Appendix II (Report on the National Women's Studies Chair Program).

Given the lack of commitment at present for any TT appointments to supply for faculty line attrition in the Department, regularizing the contribution of the RWWP Chair is of increasing importance.

External Review Advice & Response

The reviewers recommended, after reviewing Dr. Stryker's comments about possibly extending the term for the Chair, that the Department reflect on how to better integrate the RWWP into the thinking and resources of the Department by building more flexibility into the Chair's responsibilities and possibilities. They furthermore recommended appointing someone with specific skills in the area of developing Women's Studies identity to help focus our thinking and planning. In response, the Department asserted it was constrained by the current Terms of Reference for the Endowment, and rejected the idea of outside counsel on changing the Departmental identity.

The Current Context

The impact of the name change has implications on the Terms of Reference of the Endowment currently.

Recommendation 1:

That the Department work to amend the terms of reference of the Endowment to reflect the broader mandate and name change of the Department.

Rationale:

This year, it was hoped the Post Doc would help in consolidating new changes in the sexuality stream, but the terms of reference constrained the wording the in the ad.

Recommendation 2:

That the Department instate a Ruth Wynn Woodward Steering Committee.

Rationale:

Every other regional chair has a formal system of governance, and is not administering the chair by Committee of the Whole. However, all important decisions about accepting the strategic plan, or ratifying appointments remain in the hands of the Department, subject to university appointment procedures.

Re Recommendation 1: Suggested revisions in wording:

Terms of Reference for the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

1.1 The University has established an Endowment Trust Fund to finance the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Chair.

1.2 The University shall cause the activities of the Chair to be commenced no later than September 1st, 1985.

1.3 The University shall make all efforts to ensure that the Chair will be interdisciplinary.

1.4 The University shall endeavour to provide for applied research and publication activities by the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Chair in addition to teaching activities.

1.5 The University shall maintain a separate account for the Endowment Trust Fund apart from its other operations.

1.6 The University shall have full control of the manner in which the Endowment Trust Fund is invested and the sole right to select academic personnel for the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Chair under the RWWP Steering Committee.

1.7 The University agrees not to use the Endowment Trust Fund and the revenues derived from its investment for other purposes than the related activities of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Department.

1.8 The University agrees to maintain and develop links with other women's studies programs in the region and nation-wide.

1.9 The University agrees to provide a visiting lecture service to other institutions in the region as required.

Recommendation 2: Instating a Ruth Wynn Woodward Steering Committee

I propose a steering committee of four be instated: including one member from the Graduate Committee usually the Grad Chair, one Associate, one graduate representative and the Chair of the Department.

The terms of reference for the Steering Committee will include the following:

- Recommend a three year plan for the RWWP program for ratification by the Department (next in 2013)
- Review annual reports and progress towards the three year plan
- Review annual budgets for the Chair's program
- Review and recommend the ad for the Chair to the Department
- Review the applicants for *Chair*, create a short list, interview candidates and submit the recommendation for appointment to the Department for ratification subject to normal appointments policy when applicable
- Assist in orienting the incoming chair and mentoring the Chair as needed
- Meet not less than once a year
- Advise on various matters that may be submitted to the department;
- Advise and receive a copy of grant applications and research projects submitted by the staff and the researchers associated with the Chair including relevant ethics approval where appropriate.
- Ensure archival maintenance and records.

The RWWP Steering Committee must also be enumerated in the Constitution.

The role of the Steering will be to ensure on-going accountability of the funds and to promote the visibility of the RWWP program in GSWS. The Committee will be responsible for the review of this three-year proposal and the development of the next three-year plan.

This description will be inserted in the Constitution on page 4 after the description of the Graduate Committee.

Subject to Section 1 of the WS Constitution (February 2009), Amendment of the Department Constitution shall require written notice of four weeks prior to a regular meeting of the Department at which discussion of the proposed amendment is undertaken.

Alteration of the Constitution shall require an affirmative vote of two thirds present including referendum votes of absent faculty with continuing appointments.

Notice of motion of the amended terms of reference will be circulated after May 12, and voted on at the next meeting.

Recommendation Three: that the Budget for the RWWP be stabilized at the operating income of \$75,000 for the next three years to allow for some “renewal”.

The operating budget (income for expenditure) for the RWWP has dropped from \$90,871 in 2006/7 to \$75,271 in 2009/2010. Since then there has been a slight recovery in endowment interest rates.

The FASS Dean, while recognizing some obligation to restore the AP-4 matched funding (usually around some additional \$60,000), has no money, and is unlikely to be able to persuade her Interim replacement.

The case must be made directly to the VPA under the renewal envelope over the summer of 2010, for a Fall decision.

In view of the unlikelihood of a sudden restoration of budget flexibility, it is prudent to manage the Endowment conservatively.

We therefore should expect the RWWP budget to stabilize at not more than \$75,000 per annum over 2010-2013.

To assist in allocation, I recommend the following principles which, if ratified, will come into effect in the 2011-2012 year:

3.1. Administration costs be allocated at not more than 5% of the endowment, and must be paid from the endowment. This earmarks a stipend for administration of \$3,750 per annum for an administrative assistant (150 hours or 21 days, grouped at the start and end of the fall and winter semesters).¹

3.2. Ten per cent of the endowment be reserved for the visiting lecture series (\$7,500 per annum).

3.3. Search costs be capped at \$2,500.00 per annum.

3.4. A research stipend of \$5,000 be set aside for the chair.

3.5. The salary for the RWWP Chair is not to exceed \$50,000² including salary & benefits.

¹ Unfortunately, this may mean a termination of the existing RWWP Assistant position in the next fiscal year.

² This returns to the level of earlier in the decade: In 2006 the Department paid \$42,000 to the Chair, including benefits.

3.6. Surplus/carry forwards accrue to visiting speakers or sessional releases for graduate teaching/other service to the Department.

This budget ceiling suggests the following options: a) we stay with the Jr. Chair model if it is deemed successful at a mid-term review by January 2011 b) we seek a two year appointment or a renewal for the incumbent or c) we seek a one term residency for a senior scholar, reducing the course teaching and other expectations concomitantly. While I certainly see the logic of most of the other Departments consolidating their affiliated “associate” departments via access to the RWWP type appointment (using it to buy releases for faculty in residency with them) most of our associates, when polled on this spring did not find it attractive. The money has sunk to a level where it cannot provide much more than a semester research release, and the teaching requirement would be a deterrent unless we uncoupled it.

Recommendation Four: The RWWP steering committee review this three -year plan and set out its terms of reference for the next RWWP search.

Rationale: in light of the thin core, we need to consolidate teaching and community outreach in the gender but especially sexuality thematics. What kinds of courses/research capability do we need? The ad (contingent on the reframing of the terms of reference) ought to send a stronger signal about the kind of presence we want and where we want the next major international/national conference to be over the next three years.

Recommendation Five: An RAship of \$5,000 be set aside from the carry forward this year within the endowment to collect and write up the history of the Chairs. This should include interviews and an invitation to the RWWP Chair alumni possibly to return for a joint conference in 2011, costs shared between Benston and RWWP funds.

Recommendation Six: The Chair work with Mauro Vescara to develop a fundraising strategy to top up the endowment in 2011-2012.

Summary of Recommendations Agenda Item 6 (RWWP).

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Recommendation Two :

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Recommendation Six:

The Chair work with Mauro Vescara and the RWWP steering committee to develop a fundraising strategy to top up the endowment in 2011-2012.