

**WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM**  
**THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON**  
**ANNUAL REPORT, 2007-2008**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women's and Gender Studies at the College of Charleston is a vibrant, growing program with 85 minors, 33 Faculty Affiliates, and a strong connection to the Charleston community. We are one of over 700 programs nationally, programs committed to "a vision of a world in which all persons can develop to their fullest potential and be free from all the ideologies and structures that consciously and unconsciously oppress and exploit some for the advantage of others" ([National Women's Studies Association](#)).

This has been a year in which the program has achieved steady growth and has regularized many of its offerings and operations. We now offer a formalized procedure for faculty to become affiliated with the program, and we have a Curriculum Committee that assesses new course offerings. We have established a strong relationship with the Office for the Academic Experience: we worked with them this year to offer our second WGS Learning Community, and they took over leadership of residential learning communities, including the WGS House. We now routinely offer exciting learning experiences to our students, such as a fall break trip to Washington, DC, and a spring trip to present their original research at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association Conference. We offered 15 sections of WGST 200 during the academic year and one more during summer sessions, as well as two WGST 300 Special Topics classes, and they all had healthy enrollments. Our classes and our minor are popular: our enrollments have remained steadily high, and we now have nearly twice as many minors as we had in 2005. We have had an active agenda of events and programming this year, including our biggest event ever: a public lecture by internationally renowned scholar and activist Angela Davis.

Our Community Advisory Board took a more active role in helping to connect WGS to the Charleston community this year, primarily through the Third Thursdays programming that they initiated. These monthly events—billed as "informal conversational salons"—brought together College of Charleston faculty, staff, and students with community members to discuss issues related to feminism and Women's and Gender Studies. These events were well attended by all the groups we hoped to attract, and they functioned as one of the few sites in the community for those populations to come together to discuss issues related to women. In addition, the My Life as a Girl program, which the Board devised in 2006, took place over the entire academic year this year. During the fall, girls from Ashley Hall and Burke High School worked together—something which apparently had never happened before, even though the campuses of the two schools are less than a mile apart. During the 2008 Toni Morrison Conference, held in Charleston, the My Life as a Girl Program was formally recognized for its role in helping girls to achieve personal expression.

We are also making plans for the future. We have drafted a proposal for the major in WGS, which will be revised and approved during the 2008-2009 academic year. The Community Advisory Board has developed a fundraising and community awareness campaign which they will begin implementing in fall 2008.

## Community-Building

One of our major goals for the last three years has been to enhance the sense of feminist community among students and faculty members; indeed, students have identified this as being one of the most important benefits of their involvement in the Women's and Gender Studies Program. We held a number of events to help foster this sense of community.

- We worked with the office of the First Year Experience to create a second WGS Learning Community, this one called **Sex, Politics, and American Culture**. Nineteen incoming students took two linked courses: WGST 200 (taught by Alison Piepmeier) and POLS 101 (taught by Marguerite Archie-Hudson). Each incoming student was paired with an older WGS student as a big sister, and we held a number of extracurricular gatherings with the big and little sisters to help ease their transition into the College. To the right is a picture of one of the first of these gatherings, a dinner at Alison Piepmeier's house.



- On October 30, 2007, we sponsored a panel discussion for faculty on the College's procedure on **modification of duties for new parents**. The panel featured Lynne Ford (Chair of Political Science), Tom Casey (Human Resources), and Elise Jorgens (Provost), and was led by Lisa Thomson Ross (Psychology).
- Distinguished visiting faculty member Darlene Clark Hine led a faculty discussion called "**How Do We Practice What We Preach: A Conversation Across Difference.**" This discussion, held on November 8, 2007, in the Alumni Center, was by and for scholars who are engaged in interdisciplinary teaching that addresses social justice issues. 20 faculty members from various departments and schools attended.
- We offered a **student reception with visiting speaker Angela Davis**. Approximately 25 students attended.
- We offered the first full year of the very successful **My Life as a Girl**, a program in self-expression and community building for girls. The goals of the program are to provide young women at Burke High School with 1) a connection to the College of Charleston and 2) a forum to speak about what matters to them. A secondary goal is for College of Charleston female students to have the opportunity to mentor and support the academic and personal development of younger students. This year's program, coordinated by Conseula Francis and Faye Hicks-Townes, consisted of two components: the fall semester unit, in which girls from Ashley Hall and Burke High School worked together to create zines, and the spring semester unit, in which Burke students read the Toni Morrison novel *The Bluest Eye* and wrote essays

about it. The spring unit culminated in an essay contest, judged by a faculty and community committee. See the appendices for more information about the My Life as a Girl program.

### Public events

The Women's and Gender Studies Program is committed to providing undergraduates and the public with high-quality presentations by prominent feminist activists and academics. We had an incredibly active, successful year of programming, with events that brought together members of the campus and the Charleston community.

- Our first event of the year celebrated **Women's Equality Day**, August 27, 2007. This event, cosponsored with the Center for Women, featured a panel discussion with Niki Ross (Planned Parenthood), Jennet Robinson Alterman (the Center for Women), Lynne Ford (the Political Science Department), and Dot Scott (the NAACP) at the Avery Research Center.
- **Third Thursdays:** The WGS Community Advisory Board designed the Third Thursday events as informal conversational salons involving faculty, staff, students, and members of the community. We offered a full year of Third Thursday events during the 2007-2008 academic year, and they were a great success.
  - Feminism 101 (October 18, 2007), hosted by Alison Piepmeier, director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program
  - What's the Deal with Men? (November 15, 2007), with visiting speaker Mark Anthony Neal, Professor of African and African American Studies at Duke University
  - Well-Behaved Women Rarely Make History (January 17, 2008), hosted by Cara Delay, assistant professor of History
  - Feminist parenting (February 21, 2008), a panel discussion with feminist mothers and fathers (Stephanie Hunt, Brian McGee, Brian McCann, and Amy Hudock)
  - WGS Book Group Celebration (March 20, 2008) A local book group along with several students and faculty members read Deborah Siegel's *Sisterhood, Interrupted* in March and came together for a book discussion.
  - Seeing Straight Through *Queer Eye: Media and Sexuality* (April 17, 2008), hosted by Celeste LaCroix and Robert Westerfelhaus, associate professors of Communication
- We hosted a screening of the film ***Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes***, followed by a panel discussion with faculty members Conseula Francis, Trevor Weston, and Renard Harris. This event took place on September 27, 2007 in the auditorium of the Robert Scott Small building.
- Visiting speaker Mark Anthony Neal gave a public lecture called **What Is Black Male Feminism?** on November 15, 2007, at 7 p.m. to a crowd of approximately 100 at the Avery Research Center. Neal is the author of four books and Associate Professor of Black Popular Culture in the Program in African and African American Studies and Director of the Institute for Critical U.S. Studies (ICUSS) at Duke University.
- WGS students organized **V-Day week** (February 12 through 15) to raise awareness about violence against women and to raise money for local women's organizations. V-Day week included information tables featuring CofC NOW, People Against Rape, VOX, and the South Carolina Equality Coalition. V-Day week also included a concert at the John Rivers Museum, a screening of the film *Until the Violence Stops*, and a toiletries drive for the domestic violence shelter My Sister's House. The week culminated with the production of *The Vagina Monologues*.

- The 2008 production of *The Vagina Monologues* was performed by a student cast and directed by WGS minor Leigh Dekle. The production raised awareness about violence against women and was performed to two nearly sold-out audiences in Physician's Auditorium. The proceeds of the play, totaling nearly \$6,000, were divided between People Against Rape, the Magdalene House of Charleston, and the national V-Day fund.



- Our biggest event of the year was **An Evening with Angela Davis** on April 14, 2008, in the Silcox Gym. This event, featuring internationally renowned scholar and activist Angela Davis, drew approximately

600 people from the campus and community. It was our single most successful event ever.

Co-sponsored the following speakers, talks, and events:

- **“I Love Female Orgasm,”** a public lecture sponsored by the Cougar Activities Board on September 24, 2007. This event, held at Physician's Auditorium, drew an audience of around 400 students.
- The lecture **“Women's Studies Goes Global? Some Cautionary Notes from the Caribbean”** on October 4, 2007. This event was sponsored by the Program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.
- The History Department's lecture, **“Southern Women in a World at War 1941-1945,”** April 3, 2008, in the Robert Scott Small Building.
- **Take Back the Night March.** The march raises awareness about women's safety and fosters the healing process for women who have experience violence. The march was attended by approximately fifteen students and 5 faculty members, in addition to a large number of community members (sponsored by People Against Rape).
- The **Wanderlust Bike Tour**, a group of women biking for reproductive health, justice, and rights. They spoke on campus on June 14, 2008, at the Alumni Center.

(For more information on any of these events, visit our Past Events webpage at [http://www.cofc.edu/wgs/events\\_archive.html](http://www.cofc.edu/wgs/events_archive.html).)

## Travel



We want to provide our students with the opportunity to experience academic and cultural events outside the College of Charleston campus. This year featured two large trips.

- Alison Piepmeier and Marguerite Archie-Hudson (Political Science) took 24 students to Washington, DC, as part of their Learning Community, Sex, Politics, and American Culture. The group—consisting of first-year students enrolled in the Learning Community as well as older WGS students who had served as their big siblings and peer mentors—met with female elected officials, feminist organizations, and governmental and non-governmental organizations that deal with women’s issues.
- Seven College of Charleston Women’s and Gender Studies students and alumni, along with three faculty members, presented their original research at the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association Conference in Charlotte, NC.

## Publicity

We continue to raise our public profile.

- We produced a new version of our very popular WGS t-shirt that says “This is what a feminist looks like” and features our logo on the back. We also continue to update our website, [www.cofc.edu/wgs](http://www.cofc.edu/wgs).
- The second issue of our magazine *Cheek* was published in the spring. *Cheek* features faculty research translated for a mainstream audience, student research, art from local women artists, and articles highlighting community agencies that deal with women’s issues. We printed 1000 copies of the magazine (24 pages, full color, glossy) and distributed them for free to WGS faculty and students and our community mailing list; we also made the magazine available at our events. This issue was funded by a grant from the New Morning Foundation.
- We also received a great deal of publicity throughout the academic year from *Skirt!* magazine, which featured WGS people and events on least three full pages of the magazine.

## INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM

Our courses have continued to be popular. We've begun offering seven sections of WGST 200 each semester (five on the main campus and two on the North Campus), and we offered one during summer sessions. All the sections filled quickly, and, in fact, many were over-enrolled. We offered two WGST 300 special topics classes which also had healthy enrollments. Our enrollments are fairly steady. This year's total enrollments were 1594, as compared to 1575 in 2006-2007 and 1787 in 2005-2006 (232 of these were summer enrollments, which are down dramatically across the campus).

### **Enrollment Trends**

#### WGST 200

In Fall 2007, we offered seven sections of WGST 200, most of which were full or over-enrolled for a total of 244 students. In the Spring 2008, we offered eight sections which enrolled 246 students. Summer enrollments are down across all departments, however. We offered WGST 200 during Summer I, and 22 students enrolled. For the 2007-2008 academic year, 512 students at the College of Charleston took an Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies class (our highest number ever).

#### WGST 300

We have been working to add more regular WGST 300 (Special Topics) offerings. During spring semester we offered WGST 300: Special Topics: Gender and Violence, which was a service-learning course and enrolled 31 students. We also a May Evening WGST 300 course called Queer Looks: Homosexuality in Film, which enrolled 13 students.

#### Other Courses that Count Toward the Minor

We saw healthy enrollments in courses that count toward the minor. Departments across campus continue to offer the regular courses that count toward the minor, and WGS faculty affiliates are also developing new courses, such as Cara Delay's Irish History Since 1820 or Catherine Thomas's Shakespeare's Women.

The program had 85 declared minors by May of 2008, up from 83 the previous spring and 57 the year before that.

### **Curriculum Changes**

We continue to make progress on our long-term goal of increasing the number of roster faculty teaching the introductory course, WGST 200. Six roster faculty members—Lisa Thomson Ross, Valerie Frazier, Annette Godow, Celeste LaCroix, Alison Smith, and Alison Piepmeier—taught WGST 200 during the 2007-2008 academic year. This is the largest number of roster faculty who have ever taught WGST 200 during a single academic year. Twelve are in the rotation to teach it regularly.

## Instructional Innovation



WGS instructors enjoy keeping their courses innovative, and many of our classes exhibit best practices in pedagogy. The Learning Community fall break trip to Washington, DC—discussed in the “Travel” section above—is an example of this sort of instructional innovation. In the photo to the left, first-year student Octavia Harris meets Representative John Lewis, a key figure in the Civil Rights Movement who spoke with the students about his life experiences. In order to make this trip happen, Archie-Hudson and Piepmeier had to raise funds, organize all logistical matters (transportation

to and from the city and while in the city, lodging), and plan a full schedule for three days in Washington, DC. The group had a wonderful time and students reported it as a life-changing trip (which was entirely free to them due to Archie-Hudson and Piepmeier’s success at locating cosponsors).

In addition, several of our instructors, including Professors Lisa Thomson Ross, Celeste LaCroix, and Alison Smith and Adjunct Instructors Julie Jacobson and Jane Nielsen incorporate activism projects into their WGST 200 classes, allowing students to take things they have learned from their course out into the world to attempt to make change happen. This instructional innovation helps to support one of the objectives of WGST 200, “to make students critical thinkers, savvy consumers of media and popular culture, and change agents.”

Program Director Alison Piepmeier teaches WGST 300, Gender and Violence, as a service-learning course; students enrolled in the course work with local agencies that deal with violence against women.

## Data

See Appendices for course listings and enrollment information.

## STUDENTS

Since we have only minors, many of our students' accomplishments will be documented by the departments in which they are majoring. We do have the following to report.

### Internship Program

The WGS internship program continues to thrive. During fall 2007, four WGS minors worked as interns in the community with such agencies as the YWCA and the Center for Women. In spring 2008, six students performed internships, working with *Skirt!* magazine, the Center for Women, the Magdalene House of Charleston, and working on campus to coordinate V-Day events in conjunction with *The Vagina Monologues*. Community agencies that have worked with WGS students consistently give them high reviews and ask Alison Piepmeier to send more students.



### Scholarship Recipients

WGS now offers several scholarships: the *Skirt!* Scholarships as well as the Ketner Women's Leadership Scholarships. The 2008 *Skirt!* Scholarship recipient was WGS minor Micah Carpenter. This year's Ketner Women's Leadership scholars are incoming students Megan Alder, Sarah-Kate Magee, and Joanna Gillespie, and currently enrolled students Jenna Lyles, Leigh Dekle, and Rachel Reinke.

### Plans after graduation

Because our program is currently only a minor, many of our students' post-graduation plans are not available to us and are instead kept by their major departments. However, post-graduation plans of the following students offer a sense of the options available for students who graduate with a Women's and Gender Studies minor.

- Jamie Huff, who graduated in spring 2007, will be attending graduate school at the University of Connecticut, working toward a Ph.D. in Political Theory with a graduate certificate in Women's Studies.
- Christen Richbourg, who graduated in spring 2007, is Community Outreach Organizer with People Against Rape in Charleston.
- Taylor Livingston will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Anthropology, with a graduate certificate in Women's Studies, at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.
- Beth Wooten, who graduated in spring 2007, will be attending law school at the University of Oregon.

- Natalie Coffin, who graduated in spring 2007, will be beginning graduate studies in psychology at DePaul University in Chicago.
- Gervase Caycedo, who did an WGS independent study based on her work at a childcare center in Peru, will be returning to South America to work with a nonprofit agency.
- Sara Little, who graduated in spring 2006, is now working with the National Organization for Women in Washington, DC.

### **Student research, publications, and presentations**

- Alison Piepmeier and WGS minor Rachel Reinke received a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship from the Office of Undergraduate Research for summer 2008 for the project “Revolution Grrrl Style.”
- Two Women’s and Gender Studies minors—Sarah Morris and Taylor Livingston—were awarded grants by the Undergraduate Research Program to present their original research at the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association conference in Charlotte, NC, in March.
- WGS minor Taylor Livingston worked with Alison Piepmeier on her Bachelor’s Essay on the third wave feminist movement Riot Grrrl. Although this Bachelor’s Essay was part of Taylor’s Anthropology major, it did count for credit toward her WGS minor.
- The South Carolina Emergency Contraceptive Initiative presented a grant to the Women’s and Gender Studies Program to have two student liaisons educate the College of Charleston campus about emergency contraception for a full year. The student liaisons were Grace Davis and Leigh Dekle. The education consisted of the students, with the support of CofC NOW, making an interactive six-foot tall “72” which they placed around campus with information cards attached for students to take (the “72” is meant to signify the number of hours a person has after unprotected sex to take emergency contraception). The students also created an emergency contraception video, which is now being displayed on The Morning After website, and they offered an information session training students to correct the myths about emergency contraceptive and be equipped with the correct information. Up coming events include a secret shopper survey, a training session and continuation of appearances of the interactive 72.

### **Women’s and Gender Studies Student Organization**

The Women’s and Gender Studies Program sponsors a student organization, the College of Charleston chapter of the National Organization for Women (CofC NOW), advised by Alison Piepmeier. For the 2007-2009 academic year CofC NOW promoted awareness of emergency contraception in conjunction with the South Carolina Emergency Contraceptive Initiative. Their campaign included creating a six foot tall interactive 72 which they placed on campus as well as hosting an educational meeting about the scientific facts about emergency contraception.

CofC NOW also had several other projects during the 2007-2008 year. They provided funding for 10 Women's and Gender Studies students to attend this year's Southeastern Women's Studies Association Conference to present original research. To promote healthy life styles among women and men alike on campus, CofC NOW sponsored a Love Your Body Week which consisted of selling “This is what Barbie should look like” t-shirts, “Riot! Don't Diet!” buttons, baked goods, and screening the film *Slim Hopes*. Finally, CofC NOW was successful in booking the author of *Pink Think* and *College Girls*, Lynn Peril, as a guest speaker for spring 2009. The executive officers for 2007-2008 were Taylor Livingston, President, Grace Davis, Vice-President, Tristan Evans, Secretary, Ruth Nun, Treasurer, and Allison Hall, Public Relations.

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### Roster Faculty

Although Alison Piepmeier is the only roster faculty member assigned to the Women's and Gender Studies Program, a number of roster faculty regularly teach courses for the program, including:

#### Fall 2007

Dr. Alison Piepmeier taught WGST 200

Dr. Lisa Thomson Ross of Psychology taught WGST 200

Dr. Celeste LaCroix of Communication taught WGST 200

Dr. Valerie Frazier of English taught WGST 200

#### Spring 2008

Dr. Annette Godow of PEHD taught WGST 200

Dr. Alison Smith of French taught WGST 200

Dr. Alison Piepmeier taught WGST 300

#### Summer 2008

Dr. Richard Nunan of Philosophy taught WGST 300 in May Evening

Our faculty offered a wide variety of courses in their home departments that count toward the Women's and Gender Studies minor. A full list of courses taught during the 2007-2008 academic year is included in the appendices.

### Faculty Affiliation

WGS now has official criteria by which faculty may become affiliated with the WGS Program. Most faculty teaching WGS courses are now official affiliates. We now have 33 WGS Faculty Affiliates, up from 18 last spring. The following faculty members are WGS Faculty Affiliates:

Brian McGee, Communication  
Deborah Boyle, Philosophy  
Conseula Francis, English  
Idee Winfield, Sociology  
Claire Curtis, Political Science  
Susan Farrell, English  
Cara Delay, History  
Catherine Thomas, English  
Lynne Ford, Political Science  
Celeste Lacroix, Communication  
Von Bakanic, Sociology  
Simon Lewis, English



Jason Coy, History  
Lisa Thomson Ross, Psychology  
Alison Smith, French  
Moore Quinn, Anthropology  
Valerie Frazier, English  
Jess Miner, Classics  
Richard Nunan, Philosophy  
Marian Mazzone, Art History  
Louise Doire, Religious Studies  
Doryjane Birrer, English  
Annette Godow, Physical Education and Health

Hollis France, Political Science  
John Bruns, English  
Alison Piepmeier, WGS and English  
Myra Seaman, English  
Christian Coseru, Philosophy

Deb Bidwell, Biology  
Sheridan Hough, Philosophy  
David Moskowitz, Communication  
Leigh Mosckowitz, Communication  
Anna Andes, Theatre

The criteria for faculty affiliation are included in the appendices.

### **Faculty Participation in the Administration of WGS**

WGS faculty members have been instrumental to the functioning of the program. The faculty participated in the following WGS committees this year:

Steering Committee: This committee, made up of any interested affiliated faculty, is responsible for the basic operations of the WGS Program and meets monthly. Usually 7-20 faculty members participate.

Philanthropy Committee: This year's members were Doryjane Birrer, Cara Delay, and Susan Farrell. The committee identifies service projects that any interested member of the WGS community can participate in. During the spring semester, they organized a WGS day as part of Habitat for Humanity's Women Build.

Scholarship Committee: The Scholarship Committee decides the winners of the *Skirt!* Scholarship and the Ketner Women's Leadership Scholarships. This year's committee was made up of Alison Piepmeier, Jess Miner, Cassie Thomas, and Lisa Thompson Ross.

Curriculum Committee: This committee vets course proposals and applications for faculty affiliation. This year's members were Cara Delay, Cassie Thomas, Doryjane Birrer, and Alison Piepmeier.

### **Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct faculty members Julie Jacobson, Amy Leaphart, Renee Greenan, and Jane Nielsen taught sections of our WGST 200 course. Our two regular adjuncts, Julie Jacobson and Jane Nielsen, both have terminal degrees and have received strong evaluations for their teaching.

### **Adjuncts—trends and issues**

Though we have been quite successful in attaining roster faculty to teach our courses (currently twelve faculty members are in the rotation to teach WGST 200), other departments are sometimes reluctant to allow this, and the logistical details can be difficult to work out, so we do regularly use adjuncts. While our adjuncts do a great job of teaching and receive high evaluations and positive feedback, there are a number of problems associated with our heavy reliance on adjuncts. The most pressing is space—many of our adjuncts have no campus offices, mailboxes, telephones. Thus, it can be difficult for the program director as well as for students to contact them. It's also a problem that these adjuncts are simply not on campus as often as roster faculty—many have other jobs and obligations.

### **Advising**

Because we're a minor, students are not required to meet with the director of WGS; however, many students do, and the director did a great deal of formal and informal advising this year. The director worked with one student on a bachelor's essay in the fall and seven students on internships and independent studies during the spring. All new minors are interviewed by the director when they declare their minor. All new minors and all students taking WGST 200 receive a copy of our magazine *Cheek* and a WGS sticker with our web address. These same students also receive lists of upcoming courses that count toward the minor.

**Research and Development:** See appendices.

## COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

The WGS Program has a Community Advisory Board made up of women leaders from the Charleston community. The Board's mission statement is, "We are ambassadors of feminism and the Women's and Gender Studies Program in the community." Board members are

Jennet Robinson Alterman, Executive Director, Center for Women

Aasha Foster, student member

Nikki Hardin, publisher, *Skirt!* magazine

Judy Holz, Board Chair

Stephanie Hunt, freelance writer

Carolyn Morales, College of Charleston Association Vice President, Office of Institutional Diversity

Alice Paylor, Rosen, Rosen, and Hagood LLC

Margaret Pilarski, editorial assistant, *Skirt!* magazine and alumni Board member

McLean Shepherd, physician and artist

Susan Hull Walker, artist

The Board has had a very active year. They formalized a fundraising program called "Be a Girlfriend" which was launched at the Angela Davis public lecture and will be promoted heavily during the 2008-2009 academic year. Stephanie Hunt wrote the description of the program and the giving levels, and Nikki Hardin had the *Skirt!* magazine graphic designer create a brochure about the program. The Board was also active in supporting the "WGS Third Thursdays" events which they designed. Thanks to Board member Nikki Hardin, WGS received extensive coverage in *Skirt!* magazine, and the Board is also responsible for providing WGS with the *Skirt!* and Ketner Women's Leadership Scholarships.

## **BUDGET AND FUNDRAISING**

The Women's and Gender Studies Program has operated on a roughly \$5000 budget for several years. Before Alison Piepmeier was hired as the program's director, this budget was used for modest programming and events as well as the publication of a newsletter. Since 2005, however, the program has undertaken a more ambitious agenda, one that we hope will bring the program and the College broader recognition locally as well as putting us on a par with programs at our aspirational peer institutions nationally. Due to successful fundraising and the solicitation of cosponsorships, we've been able to provide events and programming that far surpass the limits of our budget. For instance, Angela Davis's visit to the College cost nearly \$10,000, but generous cosponsorships along with a grant from the Alliance for Full Acceptance made this event financially feasible for WGS.

Our larger fundraising agenda has been slow this year, because we've been designing the "Be a Girlfriend" fundraising program which will go into full effect with a WGS Community Advisory Board event in fall 2008.

## FACILITIES

### **Administrative Space:**

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the WGS Program was moved from our (very small) office in the Jewish Studies Building to Maybank 119, a much larger space which had been a Humanities and Social Sciences conference room. We outfitted the room with furniture from Central Storage and found it to be a vast improvement over our previous office. We had room for a desk for director Alison Piepmeier and office assistant Grace Davis, two couches, and a small conference table. We also had adequate space to store our files, t-shirts, books, and other supplies. In fact, during the 2007-2008 year, the director was able to hold a graduate English seminar in her office as well as hosting regular meetings of WGS committees and the faculty teaching WGST 200 courses.

Due to the advocacy of HSS Associate Dean Kathy DeHaan, WGS was moved at the end of the academic year into a new office suite in 7 College Way, rooms 100 and 101. We had long been requesting a separate academic office for the director, space for administrative staff, a small conference area for meetings with students, faculty, and community members, and storage space, and the new offices provide all these things. In addition, due to the outstanding renovations of the building and a budget for new furniture, the office is outfitted in such a way that it will enhance rather than deter the growth of the program. It is a space we will be proud to show our Community Advisory Board members and other community members who take part in WGS.

Early in fall 2008 we plan to have an open house to inform the campus and community about our new location.

### **Co-Curricular Space:**

This was the first year for the WGS House at 4 Bull Street. The house was a living-learning community for seven WGS students. It functioned as a gathering site for WGS students and events, a space for academic and social integration. For the 2008-2009 academic year, the house has been moved to 2 Bull Street. All residential learning communities are now under the jurisdiction of the Office for the Academic Experience.

## APPENDICES

WGS MAJOR PROPOSAL (attached as separate document.)

### COURSES AND ENROLLMENTS

#### Fall 2007 Courses and Enrollment

Course	Course Title	Professor	Enrollment
COMM370	Gender and Communication	Brian McGee	61
HEAL 217-001	Human Sexuality	E. Ellis	28
HEAL 217-002	Human Sexuality	E. Ellis	29
HEAL 217-003	Human Sexuality	E. Ellis	28
HEAL 217-006	Human Sexuality	L. Lindroth	33
HEAL317-001	Sexual Behavior and Relationships	M. Vinson	21
HEAL 323-001	Women's Health Issues	D. Miller	28
PHIL 165-001	Philosophy and Feminism	D. Boyle	38
RELS 265-001	Women and Religion	L. Doire	27
RELS 265-002	Women and Religion	L. Doire	25
SOCY 103-001	Sociology of the Family	V. Bakanic	27
SOCY 103-002	Sociology of the Family	V. Bakanic	27
SOCY 103-003	Sociology of the Family	J. Nielsen	28
SOCY 103-004	Sociology of the Family	J. Nielsen	28
WGST 200-001	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	L. Thomson Ross	34
WGST 200-002	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	A. Piepmeier	19
WGST 200-003	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	C. LaCroix	36
WGST 200-004	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	J. Nielsen	35
WGST 200-005	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	J. Nielsen	35
WGST 200-006	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	J. Jacobson	34
WGST 200-N80	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	L. Robinson	16

WGST 200-N85	Intro to Women's and Gender Studies	L. Robinson	35
WGST 381	Internship	A. Piepmeier	2
WGST400	Independent Study	A. Piepmeier	2

**Total**                      **676**

**Spring 2008 Courses and Enrollment**

Course	Course Title	Professor	Enrollment
ENGL 302-001	Shakespeare's Women	C. Thomas	34
ENGL 395-090	19 <sup>th</sup> c. American Women's Writing	A. Piepmeier	27
HEAL 217-001	Human Sexuality	A. Godow	34
HEAL 217-002	Human Sexuality	A. Godow	33
HEAL 217-005	Human Sexuality	A. Godow	32
HEAL 217-006	Human Sexuality	E. Ellis	29
HEAL 217-007	Human Sexuality	E. Ellis	29
HEAL 317-001	Sexual Behavior and Relationship	D. Miller	28
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## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ALISON PIEPMEIER

### Works in Progress:

*Revolution Grrrl Style: Zines and the Future of Feminism* (under contract with NYU Press)

### Academic Articles:

“Why Zines Matter: Materiality and the Creation of Embodied Community.” *American Periodicals* (forthcoming).

“Besiegement.” *Key Terms and Narrative Contexts in Women’s Studies*, edited by Ann Braithwaite, Diane Lichtenstein, and Catherine Orr (under consideration).

### Trade Articles:

“Choosing Us” in *Skirt!* magazine, November 2007.

### Book Reviews:

Review of *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850-1910* by Daphne A. Brooks. *Legacy* 22 (2007), 340-342.

### Academic and Professional Honors:

Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (with Rachel Reinke) to fund research for *Revolution Grrrl Style*, 2008

### Invited Lectures:

“Don’t Fear the ‘F’ Word: Why Feminism Still Matters.” Invited lecture at Auburn University, November 2007

### Conference Papers Presented:

“What IS the ‘Intro’ Course?” Roundtable discussion at the Program Administrators and Directors Pre-Conference and the National Women’s Studies Association Conference, Cincinnati, OH, June 2008.

“Slash, Academia, and What Happens When Straight Women Start Flirting with Each Other.” Presentation with Conseula Francis at Console-ing Passions: An International Conference on Television, Audio, Video, New Media, and Feminism, Santa Barbara, CA, April 2008.

### Memberships in professional societies:

National Women’s Studies Association  
Southeast Women’s Studies Association  
Society for the Study of American Women Writers  
American Studies Association  
Modern Language Association

### Offices held in professional societies:

Regional Representative and member of the Governing Council (the Board of Directors of the NWSA), National Women's Studies Association  
President, Southeastern Women's Studies Association (until April 2008)  
Past-president, Southeastern Women's Studies Association (April 2008-April 2010)

Departmental committee work and other service to the department:

Chair of Steering Committee  
Scholarship Committee  
Curriculum Committee  
English Department Library Committee  
English Department Curriculum Committee

Service to the community:

Board of Directors, Magdalene Program, Charleston, SC, 2006-2008  
Board of Directors, Center for Women, Charleston, SC, 2005-2008  
Lowcountry Women's Coalition  
Volunteer as clinic escort at the West Ashley Women's Medical Center, Charleston's only abortion clinic

Related Professional Experience:

Editorial board, The Feminist Press, 2008-

## **CRITERIA FOR WGS FACULTY AFFILIATION:**

Women's and Gender Studies faculty include all faculty under current contract with the College of Charleston whose teaching, research, and/or service is substantially and appropriately connected to Women's and Gender Studies, as determined by the Women's and Gender Studies Steering Committee.

To become a faculty affiliate of Women's and Gender Studies, supply the following materials to the Steering Committee (c/o the program director):

- a cover letter describing your experience in women's and gender studies, including a statement about how your work is compatible with the mission and goals of WGS;
- a current CV;
- a description of any courses you currently teach or hope to teach that you would like to count toward the Women's and Gender Studies minor.

Please also indicate if you have an interest in teaching WGST 200, the Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, and if you are interested in serving on the Steering Committee (which involves regularly attending Steering Committee meetings).

Pending approval by the Steering Committee, the Director of Women's and Gender Studies will notify you and your department head of the decision.

Faculty affiliation will be renewed every four years.

Benefits of being an affiliated faculty member of WGS:

- Only courses taught by affiliated faculty members will count toward the WGS minor (and major).
- Only affiliated faculty may vote on decisions affecting WGS.
- Affiliated faculty are eligible for WGS R&D funds.
- Affiliated faculty can request class visits from other WGS affiliated faculty members.

**MY LIFE AS A GIRL: A PROGRAM IN SELF-EXPRESSION AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING**  
Sponsored by the Women's and Gender Studies Program at the College of Charleston



**The Origins of My Life as a Girl**

In the fall of 2006, a group of Women's and Gender Studies faculty and Community Advisory Board members gathered to address the fact that Charleston is such a deeply divided city: divided racially and in terms of class, in particular. We were struck by the fact that girls on the peninsula—at Burke High School, Ashley Hall, and the College of Charleston—may live

and attend school within a mile of each other but have absolutely no contact with each other. Further, we were concerned that girls at Burke may not be given the opportunity to reflect on their lives, a crucial element of positive and successful personal and academic development. My Life as a Girl was the program that emerged from this conversation. Conseula Francis, an assistant professor of English and faculty affiliate of Women's and Gender Studies, was part of this initial meeting. She shared that when she was in high school, a program that brought her onto a college campus was essential to convincing her that she could attend college, and she agreed to spearhead the pilot program of My Life as a Girl.

**The Pilot Program**

The pilot program was coordinated by Professors Conseula Francis and Faye Hicks-Townes. Professor Francis and Professor Hicks-Townes are uniquely qualified to coordinate this program because of their combined skills. Professor Francis is an English faculty member with expertise in the teaching of composition as well as feminist pedagogy, pedagogy designed to support and empower disenfranchised students. Professor Hicks-Townes is a faculty member in the School of Education's Center for Partnerships to Improve Education and is the School's official liaison with Burke High School. We kept this program deliberately small (11 students during our pilot program, with a plan to serve 30 in 2008) so that the students could have intensive support and attention.

The goals of the pilot program were modest, though we believe we achieved significant results. Initially we wanted to

1. Bring female students from Burke High School and students and faculty from the College of Charleston together;
2. Introduce and familiarize the Burke students with the College of Charleston's campus;
3. Have each Burke student complete an essay about her experience of the world—about her life as a girl.

During this pilot phase, one thing that struck Professor Francis was how astonished the girls were that someone *wanted* to know about their lives. She said, “Once they trusted that we were really interested in what they had to say, the girls jumped at the chance to talk about themselves and the world around them.”

And what powerful and touching stories they had to tell! Eleven girls participated in the pilot program and wrote essays on “My Life as a Girl.” A team of College of Charleston Women’s and Gender Studies Program faculty members and Community Advisory Board members judged the essays, and they were so impressed that they awarded two first place awards and a runner-up. One girl wrote about the difficulty of living in “male-dominated society” and reminded women that they “speak for young women like me when you vote or take any steps to make the world equal for us.” Another assured her readers that she would “become a successful person no matter what comes my way.” And still another wrote about her love of comic books and anime. The three winning girls received financial awards cosponsored by *Skirt!* magazine, and the first-place winners were featured in the “Girl Power” section of *Skirt!*.

### **Expanding the Program**

In fall 2007, we expanded the program to include girls from Ashley Hall. During this semester, 15 ninth-grade girls from Burke and 15 from Ashley Hall came together four times on the College of Charleston campus to create zines (informal, expressive magazines) together. All the students stepped outside their comfort zones by working in groups with girls from both high schools, so all were exposed to girls they might not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet or work with. Although this may seem like an obvious move, to bring girls from these two high schools together, we have been told by many people that this fall’s program was the first time any such collaboration had taken place. Each team of girls was assigned two College of Charleston students who helped break the ice, guide their work, and talk to them about college life.

Our goals for the fall program were

1. To allow female students from Burke High School and Ashley Hall to work collaboratively on a project;
2. To introduce students to the College of Charleston campus and familiarize them with at least one college student;
3. To have each group of students create a zine about their lives as girls.

The fall program went very well. The zines the students created were exactly what we’d hoped: funny, thoughtful, and expressive of their varied life experiences. Professor Francis noted that, while the girls were initially shy around girls from the other high school, they quickly grew comfortable with each other and laughed and talked as they worked on their zines. The girls reported that it was fun getting to know girls they otherwise would never have met. Their college mentors were equally impressed with the experience, many them volunteering for the program again. Indeed, the parents of the girls were also strong supporters of the My Life as a Girl program. At the fall’s closing reception, parents of Ashley Hall and Burke students told Professor Francis that such a program was long overdue, freely acknowledging that the different groups who lived on the peninsula were too separated.

## **Program Components**

Each part of the program has been chosen intentionally. During each semester, girls from Burke, and then from Burke and Ashley Hall, came to the College of Charleston campus several times, not only working on campus but eating in the cafeteria and going on a campus-wide “scavenger hunt” with their College of Charleston mentors. They met with their mentors and the program coordinators Professors Francis and Hicks-Townes for several hours of in-depth discussion and writing workshops. The meetings on campus—working and eating with female college students—helped the Burke students feel comfortable at the College of Charleston and also helped to establish real connections between Burke and Ashley Hall students. Even the closing receptions are important components for several reasons. First of all, they provide closure for the participants in the program. More importantly, they are a way to show the girls and their families how significant their participation in this program has been, to show them that we are proud of them and that they have reason to be proud of themselves. For Burke students this is especially important, because their high school receives so much negative publicity that a celebration of this sort is very meaningful (and the girls in the spring pilot program wept openly during the ceremony). The bound copies of all the essays and the zines are also important components of the program for similar reasons: they are mementos that the students can take away with them, and they’re also a designation to the girls that their creations, their self-expressions, matter.

## **My Life as a Girl’s Future**

We have a number of ideas for how the program can be expanded. One of our long term goals is for the girls participating in the program to attend college, and we will assess this by keeping track of the girls who participate. The College of Charleston library already provides full library access to Ashley Hall students and is willing to begin doing the same for the Burke participants in My Life as a Girl, starting in their tenth grade year, so it might be that in future years the My Life as a Girl program is multi-year, starting when the girls are in ninth grade and then progressing through their high school career with different on-campus components. Professors Francis and Hicks-Townes have met with administrators from Burke High School as well as Ashley Hall, and both schools are excited about continuing to work with My Life as a Girl.

My Life as a Girl fits within the mission of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program to make life better for girls and women at the College of Charleston and in the Charleston community. To that end, we promote the creation of a feminist community, a community in which we work to eradicate all forms of oppression that keep people from achieving their full humanity. My Life as a Girl is such a community, where girls and young women are valued for what they have to say and are given the venue and the tools to speak out.