

## Annual Department/Program Antiracism Work Report

### Feminist and Gender Studies Department\*

Submitted by Dr. Naomi Pueo Wood, Associate Professor and Co-Director

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*Describe department/program antiracism work goals focused on for the academic year*

\*First a note on the change of the title: Feminist and Gender Studies Program to Department. Per the recommendation of the external reviewers and in anticipation of our search for a senior-level hire, we requested that the Dean's Office consider this change. In Block 8, the official announcement was included in the consent agenda and the Program has officially been re-branded. For the remainder of this report, I will refer to the "FGS Department" following this change.

This year was focused on maintaining the program as thriving and successful through some significant leadership changes. Dr. Heidi Lewis stepped down as Program director and worked full time in the Crown Center and as Director of the Mentoring Alliance Program that she founded. Dr. Naomi Wood ("I") stepped in as Director for Fall, 2022 and co-director with Dr. Nadia Guessous for Spring, 2023. In addition, we transitioned to a new administrative assistant, Tiffany Moore, at the beginning of the academic year.

During this academic year we were able to accomplish many goals, despite having only one full-time tenure-track faculty teaching in the Fall (Dr. Kumar) and a rotation of six separate Block visitors throughout the year. We are proud to have been able to maintain our proposed course schedule and curricular integrity through hiring Block visitors who contributed in meaningful ways. All visitors were faculty of color and/or LGBTQ-identified and, in the case of "Black Feminist Theory" we were able to negotiate with the Dean to offer a fully remote course as we faced the possibility of class cancellation.

In addition, we were able to advocate, with the support of Directors in the other ID House ID Programs to retain our new administrative assistant through increasing her contract hours to a full-time, 12-month position. We had previously hired and lost our former assistant in less than a year due to the low wages and inconsistent work hours. Given the growth of the three programs, we were able to make a case on our behalf and transition this staff position. This change will make a huge difference in continuity for the three programs sharing the ID House and administrative assistance.

The FGS Department continues to evaluate its curriculum and course offerings to fit the Vision and Mission and consistently contribute to the ADEI initiatives on campus. New this year, Dr. Kumar taught an Equity and Power-designated course "Sex Cultures, Sexual Politics" and we revised the Capstone Project model to make the process more transparent to students and more sustainable for faculty project directors. Finally, we

continued the FemStem series with leadership from Dr. Kumar in collaboration with Dr. Natalie Gosnell, Assistant Professor of Physics. The symposium, “Matter and Meaning: Transdisciplinary Collaboration as a Feminist Practice” highlighted a five-years-long collaboration between visiting artist Janani Balasubramanian and Dr. Gosnell to demonstrate the benefits of sustaining a long-term and rigorous practice of co-creation across disciplines and speak to how their work activates many of the strategies advocated by scholars in feminist science and technology studies.

- *Provide a brief explanation of how the department/program annual goals and subsequent work to accomplish those goals supports the Antiracism Implementation Plan*

The majority of the work we accomplished this year responds to the Antiracism Implementation’s Goal 5: “Make Antiracism a Central Value in CC’s Academic and Co-Curricular Programs” and, in the intentional outreach and hiring of our Black visitor faculty Goal 6: “Increase Compositional Diversity of CC Community.” The programming, course development, hiring practices and equity-oriented revisions to staffing and curriculum detailed above all reflect the Department’s commitment to changing systems, organizational structures, practices and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

- *Provide a brief description of department/program steps taken to accomplish your goals including who in the department/program did what in terms of the work.*

This year, Dr. Kumar took on increased leadership and initiative in this area as his two senior colleagues either took on leadership work in other College initiatives or took a half-year tenure sabbatical. More details included above in the description of work goals completed this year.

- *Discuss the successes and challenges with accomplishing department/program DEI and antiracism work goals*

We are proud of the alumna in the Department as well as the capstone work of current students. The faculty continue to work well collectively to support the mission of the Department and are uniquely positioned as a unit staffed only by faculty of color. However, the added burden felt by FGS faculty to respond to student concerns regarding racism, homophobia, islamophobia, and transphobia on campus continues to be a challenge in accomplishing the collective goal of equitable work and workplace health. When Departmental faculty ask for support from the College for time release to do work, we need those requests to be considered through the frame of equity, not equality. When issue arise on campus, we expect to be consulted as experts in the area of Critical Race Studies and/or LGBTQ Studies and Transnational Feminisms. When executing the components of Goal 5, we expect our work and expertise to be respected—as indicated in External Review report (2022).

- ***Outline preliminary plans for ADEI and antiracism work for the next academic year including which areas of functioning and/or structures you will focus on, goals for accomplishing change, transformation, or augmentation, and what support and/or resources you will need. If the goals from the previous year need to be further worked on, then include them in the preliminary plan for the upcoming academic year.***

One suggestion from earlier feedback from the Dean Fhagen included working on a statement articulating what competencies students will develop within the FGS major. While the learning outcomes are all listed on the website for the courses in the major, we will be working with our new administrative assistant to uplift the work of our alumna and current student voices to make clearer why students choose to pursue the major/minor and what they are getting out of it.

In the coming year, the Feminist and Gender Studies Department has several goals and initiatives. First, we will be conducting the search for a senior scholar. This line was approved two years ago and, now that the three full-time FGS faculty are available to participate in the search, we will launch the search in summer 2023. Not only will this hire contribute by diversifying our curriculum and course offerings, but they will also offer an advanced-level scholar perspective both for the Department and the broader campus community.

Another addition to our program will be the introduction of the Queer Studies minor. Dr. Rushaan Kumar has been working with a group of faculty across departments to determine the structure of the minor and the possible regularly taught core and cross-listed courses that might be included. The end of this 2023-2024 academic year should see the completion and approval of this proposal.

In Summer 2023, Dr. Heidi Lewis will be teaching “Critical Media Studies” in the pilot virtual Block C program and Dr. Rushaan Kumar will be teaching “Dragging Hate: A Critical Examination of Anti-Trans Legislation” with Dr. Guanyi Yang for the first time in the Bridge Scholar’s Program. These two courses contribute to initiatives by the College to increase access and further antiracist and interdisciplinary pedagogies.

Moreover, this upcoming year Dr. Rushaan Kumar will be submitting his file for promotion to Associate Professor and Dr. Heidi Lewis will be submitting her file for promotion to Full Professor. These two promotions will be significant additions to the Feminist and Gender Studies Department which would then count on three tenured faculty.

Finally, though suggested in earlier reports, the Department will not revise the Vision and Mission statements until after the successful hire of the new colleague.