

Department of Gender, Religion, and Critical Studies
18th month Unit Review Report

16 October 2025

Under the leadership of Dr. Kevin Bond the department has made significant progress on many of the recommendations made by the external reviewers. I will address the department's efforts to complete this work.

Many of the recommendations highlighted the need to improve the promotion of the department, inclusive of both programs. To that effect the department has undertaken several steps to address this recommendation. The department has secured new display cases, which are being used to promote department course offerings, events, and related departmental activities as well as to increase visibility and awareness of the department on campus. The department website is still in progress with a plan to have a draft of program information ready to approve by the department at our Winter 2026 department retreat. New posters have been created for both programs, the Certificate in Queer, Trans, and Gender Studies as well as for numerous RLST and WGST courses.

The external review also made recommendations concerning recruitment into our Honours and graduate programs. Dr. Bond has kindly volunteered to serve as undergraduate and graduate program coordinator for the department. He has drafted recruitment letters and Dr. Carter will send them to students who received 80% or higher in RLST and WGST courses in the fall of 2025 to encourage them to major or minor in RLST and/or WGST. We have a faculty member in support attending high school recruitment initiatives and have reached out to an RLST alumni about attending recruitment events to promote our programs. Currently, we do not have student societies for either program but there are several enthusiastic students in both programs and the department has plans to reach out to students in Fall 2025 and encourage them to become active in a student society.

While the department was unsuccessful in our request for a new faculty position in Indigenous Feminisms and Spirituality, we have taken the feedback from BAC and will consult with colleagues at FNU as part of our revision and resubmission of the request for this position. We understand that there will be no new hires approved in 2025/6. We will ensure our request for a new hire is ready, when we are able to submit requests again.

We will hold a department retreat in Winter 2026 to finalize promotional materials, in particular website program information and recruitment letters. We will also review enrolment numbers for the 2024/5 and 2025/6 year at the retreat in relation to changes we have made since the unit review, specifically, the removal of requirements to register in upper year WGST courses, increased promotion of courses/programs, and increase in variety of modality options for courses.

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