



ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT PROPOSAL FORM

DIRECTIONS: *Use this form when proposing a new organizational unit, center, institute, department, school, or college.*

DATE OF REQUEST: August 2016

Date of AAC Approval:

September 7, 2016

INSTITUTION: University of Nevada, Las Vegas

NAME OF PROPOSED UNIT: Department of Interdisciplinary,
Gender, and Ethnic Studies

Date of Board Approval:

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION: Upon Approval

PART 1

A. Action requested

We are requesting the creation of the Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies as a new department within the College of Liberal Arts. This request is supported by all of the faculty members who will comprise the new department as well as a strong majority of the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts. Establishing this new Department is also supported by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the UNLV Provost. This new IGES department will offer the degrees formerly offered by the unit of Interdisciplinary Programs (IDP), which has been a unit in the College of Liberal Arts since approximately 2009. These degrees include majors in Multidisciplinary Studies, Social Science Studies; Gender & Sexuality Studies; African American Studies, Latin American Studies, and Asian Studies, as well as minors in Gender & Sexuality, African American, Latin American, Asian, Latina/o, American Indian & Indigenous, or Gerontology Studies. These changes will not require any additional resources as the this unit is already funded and staffed with faculty sufficient to offer the existing courses and degrees.

B. Brief description and purpose of proposed unit

IGES provides students with the critical tool of being able to utilize a mode of inquiry (interdisciplinarity) that is generally not available from traditional academic disciplines. This includes, but is not limited to the multidisciplinary and social science studies programs. The ability of students to cross disciplinary boundaries and negotiate epistemological differences is a critical one in the new millennium. IGES and all of the majors and minors are intentionally interdisciplinary; however, students can opt to make further investigations into race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, gerontology and area studies by earning their degrees in any of these focal areas.

Within the current unit, there are 7 tenure-track faculty, 2 faculty-in-residence, 2 post-docs, and 1 administrative assistant. There are more than 250 majors/minors under the umbrella of IDP. Gender, ethnic, and area studies programs are important strengths in this unit, given the growing interests and commitment of UNLV students and faculty to study race/ethnic studies, as well as multicultural

global communities, each of which is a primary focus for these fields of study. These areas of study are crucial given UNLV's status as a Minority-Serving Institution, Hispanic-Serving Institution, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

C. Outline plans for the success of the proposed unit

Creating IGES will allow for faculty to continue to expand their cutting-edge programs of study for students throughout the university. As a department, we will be able to better meet the needs of the student body and fellow colleagues by working together to graduate students who are interested in interdisciplinary studies and research, including but not limited to work in the areas of multidisciplinary, social sciences, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, global (Latin America and Asia), and/or gerontology. Furthermore, we will be better poised to collaborate with our colleagues across the university who are interested in interdisciplinary research and teaching.

The creation of IGES will offer the unit much needed visibility and recognition for the professors already working within the unit, which will have a direct impact on student recruitment, promotion and retention. We are dedicated to meeting and collaborating with faculty throughout campus. The chair will reach out to deans of every college to inform them of the various fields and sub-units that exist within the department and encourage their students to consider an interdisciplinary major/minor, as well as gender, ethnic and area studies. Already, the director (chair) has visited faculty meetings of every department in the College of Liberal Arts. We regularly hold unit open houses and participate in the University Lecture Forum Series, hosting invited lectures, brown bag series, and numerous diversity programming events/trainings.

PART II

A. Mission statement

The programs within Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies (IGES) share a commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching, critical cultural and social analysis, intersectionality, transnational perspectives, and public engagement. The unit dedicates itself to crossing boundaries and integrating insights from a range of fields, engaging faculty in an exchange of learning and service in local communities and abroad. IGES seeks opportunities for collaborative work with partners in the university community and beyond by co-sponsoring events and projects based on a shared vision of social justice, global awareness, and the power of critical analysis linked to social action.

B. Goals and objectives

i. Teaching

The teaching goals of each sub-unit within this program are guided by a common core sequence, which ensures that students conduct in-depth study, individualized research/internships, and have overall readiness for entering the career or graduate/professional school of their choice. The sequence begins with an introductory survey course to the field, introducing students to a variety of theories and areas of focus within their chosen field(s). Gender and Sexuality Studies (GSS) has two required introductory courses that fulfill this goal, Introduction to Women's Studies and Race, Class and Gender. GSS also has a required feminist theory course that delves deeper into historical and contemporary feminist perspectives and theoretical foundations. The second part of the sequence is a research methods course that introduces students to multiple methodological approaches utilized within their field. The final required course(s) in the sequence is a capstone course, where students choose a research topic that brings together all of their research interests, courses, and training. Multidisciplinary and Social Science Studies begin with a required introduction and methods course. Near the end of the program students complete two capstone courses during which the faculty guide each student to bring together their work from the 2 to 3

disciplines that they have been studying throughout campus into one integrated project. In the capstone courses students have the opportunity to conduct original research. Upon completion, they have the opportunity to present their research in a conference style setting to the campus-wide community.

ii. Research

All of the programs within IGES (Multidisciplinary Studies, Social Science Studies, Gender & Sexuality Studies, African American Studies, Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, Latina/o, American Indian & Indigenous, or Gerontology Studies) are intentionally interdisciplinary and draw on a variety of fields to bring together innovative research designs, methods, theories, and analyses. The faculty within the unit are trained in the following fields: Education, Race/Ethnic Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, American Studies, English, African American Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Folklore, Communications, Social Sciences, History and Interdisciplinary Studies. Already we are collaborating with each other and with others throughout the university on research projects, writing projects, research grants and a variety of other research initiatives. As the Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies we will be more competitive for research grants and have more visibility both on and off campus for continuing the cutting-edge work in which we are engaged.

iii. Service

Our unit serves on multiple committees at the university, college, department, and community level. At the university level, we have served on some of the following: the UNLV Faculty Senate, the bylaws committee, the Council for Equity and Opportunity, the Vice President's Committee for Diversity Initiatives, the College African-American faculty/staff group, the Mentoring Circle, and the Latina/o Faculty Alliance. Our faculty have also taught courses for the UNLV Honors College and First-Year Experience. At the College level, we have served on the Retention, Progression, and Completion Committee, the Bylaws Committee, the William Morris Scholar award committee, the Executive Committee, the Milestone and Culminating Experience faculty institute, Assessment institute, the Working Group on Race/Ethnic Studies, and a variety of other committees. As one of the most diverse (by race and gender) units on campus, whose expertise is heavily focused on race, gender, sexuality, diversity and social justice, we are often asked to serve on diversity initiatives and committees both on and off campus, as well as student mentorship and retention programs. We often organize and/or are asked to participate in lectures, forums, panels, and one-on-one efforts related to race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, etc. At a department level, we participate in all of the following: search, curriculum, assessment, online education, bylaws, personnel, programming, budget, recruitment, and communication. At the professional and community level, our involvement is wide and varied, from serving as special issue editors, to chairing professional organizations and committees, to working with students, media, businesses and/or community members with needs related to our expertise. Several of us are called upon by the media and off-campus entities as experts, community intellectuals, and guest speakers.

C. Major participants or collaborators

i. Internal to campus

Given the wide scope of disciplinary options within IGES, the range of potential stakeholders is equally wide. At the core of IGES are the seven existing members of its faculty and one administrative assistant. These IGES faculty members work closely with students in determining their academic and/or professional goals in order to help them mold their degree accordingly. Every college and every department on campus can serve as a stakeholder connected to multidisciplinary and social science studies as students can choose from any department on campus for their two or three areas of concentration. In particular, the largest stakeholders

include the following colleges: Business, Hospitality, and Liberal Arts. All of the following departments within the College of Liberal Arts are major stakeholders because we exist within the College of Liberal Arts and regularly collaborate with faculty within these units: Anthropology, English, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and World Languages and Cultures. Other stakeholders on campus include the Office of Diversity Initiatives, the Center for Social Justice, the forthcoming Multicultural Academic Center. Several of our faculty are active contributors and collaborators with these units. Furthermore, almost all of the Gender, and Sexuality Studies and ethnic studies courses meet the multicultural general education requirement, and the area studies courses meet the international education requirement. Thus we teach many students about inclusion, social justice, and multiculturalism in the US and abroad.

ii. External to campus

A variety of employers and other institutions of higher education are stakeholders, as our students are trained to enter so many different careers and areas of study. Students graduating with a BA in the degrees to be offered by IGES have obtained employment in some of the following businesses/organizations:

Clark County School District
Mission Advancement at Zawadisha
MGM Resorts Foundation
Wynn Design and Development
Wildtree Natural Foods
Jean Niedetch Women's Center
Women's Research Institute of Nevada
Center for Women's Policy Studies
State Policy & Partnerships
SAGE Consulting: Change Makers
Best Buddies Nevada
Foundation for Positively Kids
Royal Kona Resort
Caesar's Entertainment
Dominican Volunteers USA
True Hospitality Firm
Patina Restaurant Group
City of Long Beach
Advocates for Youth
California State University, Stanislaus
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Graduates of our program have been admitted to the following graduate/professional schools and programs:

Berkeley School of Law, University of California
Feminist Studies, University of Minnesota
School of Social Work, University of Minnesota
School of Social Work, University of Texas, Austin
Gender Studies, Indiana University
Gender Studies, Arizona State University
School of Public Health, Indiana University, Bloomington
Public Administration, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service
Columbia University
Community and Administrative Leadership, The University of Texas at Austin

Thomas M. Cooley Law School
Public Policy/Women's Studies, George Washington University
Sustainable Public Administration and Policy, Presidio Graduate School
Graduate College, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Boyd Law School, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
School of Social Work, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

D. Evidence of contact within and between affected academic units

The director/chair presented the plans for the proposed department to all of her colleagues in the College of Liberal Arts (COLA) by speaking at multiple department faculty meetings, speaking to the COLA executive committee, and addressing all of the faculty at two college-wide COLA faculty meetings. The director also communicated with the director of Wilson Advising to discuss the proposed changes.

Colleagues in the College of Liberal Arts have been supportive, excited, and can see how IGES programs will be a benefit to them and the students.

Presentations took place at the following meetings:

COLA executive committee meeting (including COLA deans, director of Wilson Advising, and all department chairs)

Department of Sociology faculty meeting

Department of History faculty meeting

Department of Political Science faculty meeting

Department of Philosophy faculty meeting

Department of English faculty meeting

Department of Psychology faculty meeting

Department of Anthropology faculty meeting

2 college-wide faculty meetings

(Presentation attached)

E. Proposed physical location

No new space is needed. The program will exist in already allocated space in the Carol C. Harter Classroom Building Complex Building B.

F. Proposed organizational structure (include organizational structure within the campus)

See attached.

G. Activities to be sponsored (e.g. courses, seminars, research, and outreach) – indicate if courses or seminars will be offered through the proposed unit. Please specify if they will be offered for academic credit and applicable to a degree program. Give estimated enrollment.

IGES will continue to offer the six existing degree programs listed earlier. The same courses and seminars will be offered. Establishing IGES as a department will allow us visibility, credibility and stability for growth, expanded outreach opportunities, and new research collaborations throughout campus. Already, all of us have rigorous research agendas. Establishing IGES will position us to continue expand these opportunities, will help coalesce the faculty and our academic vision, and will better reflect the work that is currently being done by faculty and students.

These are the numbers of majors within each sub-unit: African-American Studies - 1; Asian Studies - 18; Gender and Sexuality Studies - 17; Latin-American Studies - 7; Multidisciplinary Studies - 216; and Social Science Studies - 57. It is difficult to estimate the number of minors as they are not

typically identified or tracked until graduation. Also, double majors do not always show up in system counts and thus the actual number of majors may be slightly higher. All of the ethnic studies and area studies programs are new, in progress, or recently revived and thus we expect these programs to grow somewhat in the coming years. In the spring 2016, we offered 50 courses with an enrollment of 1,232 (students).

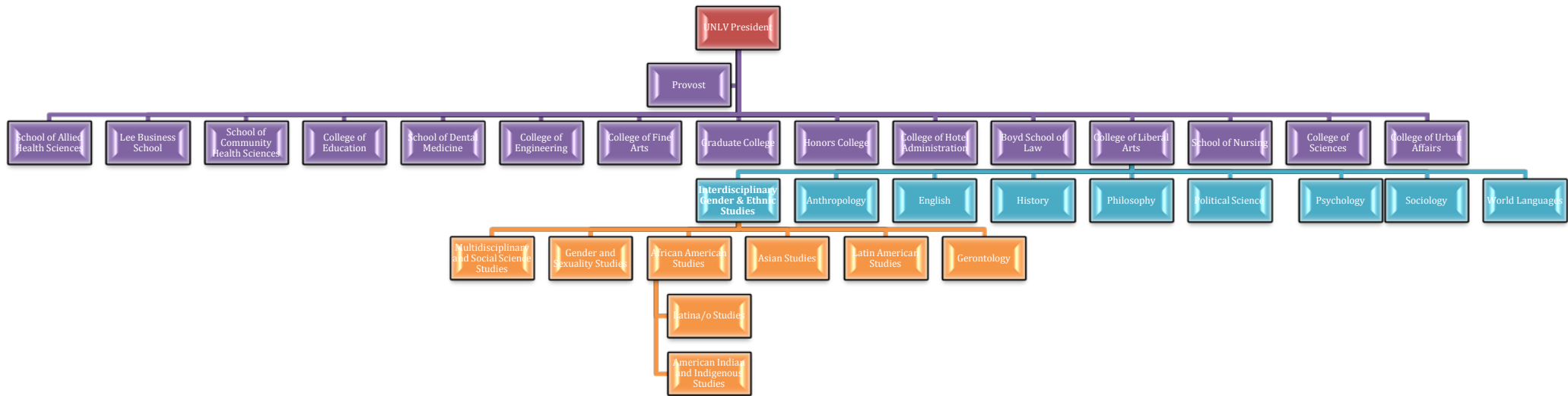
H. Resource Analysis – source of funds necessary for the proposed change (enrollment-generated state funds, reallocation of existing funds, grants, other state funds)

The budget for the proposed unit will remain the same. Our budget is currently allocated by the Provost through the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts under the umbrella of Interdisciplinary Degree Programs. This budget will be transferred to the new department of Interdisciplinary, Gender and Ethnic Studies.

I. Projected Budget – identify portions of costs which will require state resources, grants, gifts and/or contracts

See attached.

Please attach any supporting documentation (i.e. support letters from community, industry).



August 1, 2016

To: NSHE Board of Regents

From: Chris Heavey, Dean 

Re: Creation of Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

I am delighted to write in enthusiastic support of establishing the *Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies* (IGES). The programs and faculty that will comprise IGES have functioned in the past under the umbrella of *Interdisciplinary Degree Programs* since approximately 2009. As it has evolved and grown over the years, the unit has been an integral part of the College of Liberal Arts. The unit now offers six different undergraduate degrees as well as a number of minors. The undergraduate degrees are central to the mission of our college, with their emphasis on interdisciplinarity and issues related to diversity, inclusion, and social justice across all of their majors and minors. Together they serve hundreds of majors and more than a thousand students each semester across all of their course offerings, particularly through their courses that meet the General Education requirements. Their faculty are productive scholars with varied research foci, many collaborating actively with faculty outside of their unit.

Given their growth in enrollment, the quality of their faculty, and the alignment of their mission with that of the College of Liberal Arts, and after extensive consultation with the other departments and a strong favorable vote by the College faculty, the faculty comprising the unit and the Director have requested that we create the *Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies*. Given all of these factors, I believe this is the appropriate time to establish IGES as a new department.

Although all of the departments in the College would benefit from additional resources, with IGES being no exception, they will be able to carry out their mission within the existing resources that have already been allocated by the Provost. Thus I can see only gains by establishing the IGES department, particularly in terms of recognizing its important place within the College now and in the future.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information in support of the request to establish the *Department of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies*.