APPENDIX C

Letters of Support
March 6, 2006

RE: UA Women's Studies Department Ph.D. proposal

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I want to offer my enthusiastic approval of the PhD proposal submitted by the Women's Studies Department. We have been working on this proposal since my arrival as a new faculty member in fall 2004. It has gone through various drafts and in its final form it was approved by the Arizona Board of Regents in summer 2005. During 2005-06 we have worked to flesh out the proposal and ready it for final approval. We are eager to see it approved by the campus reviewing committees, the campus central administration, and the Arizona Board of Regents. We are the only Women's Studies Department in Arizona that has offered graduate training for the past decade. Given the growth of Women's Studies discipline nationally we believe it is time to move forward with institutionalizing doctoral training.

Thank you for your consideration!

Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez
Professor & Head
Memo of Support
Proposed Ph.D. in Women’s Studies
University of Arizona

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with enthusiasm that I write this memo in support of the establishment of a Ph.D. in Women’s Studies. There are several compelling reasons for the proposal to be accepted that will further the overall mission of the University of Arizona as a research-based student-centered university, and as one where strong emphasis on interdisciplinary programs has established a deep and worthy reputation. Here are some salient points that I would particularly like to support and emphasize:

- One of the areas of excellence identified for further study in the University’s advancement of Focused Excellence, Cultural, Ethnic, Gender and Area Studies, is closely aligned with this proposal for a Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies.
- The establishment of a Ph.D. in Women’s Studies would meet one of the goals of the Focused Excellence Study Team by advancing “the institutional reputational strength by supporting more deeply the environment of research and scholarship of faculty and graduate students.”
- A Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies would strengthen the already strong national reputation of the Women’s Studies program and by training researchers and scholars increase the visibility of the program both nationally and internationally.
- The UA strategic plan calls for “building a more academically robust and diverse student body.” A Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies will attract more academically talented students, and the concentration in Chicano/Latina Studies should be as strong in attracting graduate students from diverse backgrounds.
- The proposed Ph.D. program strengthens the University’s graduate programs by virtue of its unique focus and outstanding quality.
- The proposed Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies builds on a world-class program with a nationally known faculty and renowned research center. Student productivity will be enhanced by both the experiences and training they receive if they participate in SROW research projects.
- Another initiative of the strategic plan is to “create, strengthen and support collaborations across departments and programs.” The proposed Ph.D. program is interdisciplinary by its very nature and will enhance and strengthen existing interdisciplinary, inter-departmental, and inter-college collaborations and partnerships. It is already the case that we of the faculty in our Department of German Studies are affiliates of Women’s Studies, and these ties will certainly be strengthened by the development of a Ph.D. in Women’s Studies.

Again, I want to express my most enthusiastic support for the proposal, and for the enhanced excellence a Ph.D. Program in Women’s Studies would bring to the entire university, and to our cooperative interdisciplinary ventures in particular.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Witmer-Bissett

Prof. Mary E. Witmer-Bissett
Read of the Department of German Studies
University of Arizona
111 Learning Services Building
P.O. Box 210235
Tucson, AZ 85721-0235
Email: whitmerb@u.arizona.edu

March 11, 2006
March 9, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

American Indian Studies (AIS) strongly supports the proposed doctorate for Women’s Studies (WS) at The University of Arizona. Arizona is an ideal location for a doctoral program in Women’s Studies. The program here is over ten years old, has a proven record of placing students in prestigious doctoral programs, and has strong M.A. and M.A./J.D. programs. The outstanding research component is truly one of a kind. The WS faculty members are renowned, with expertise in a variety of areas in the field.

AIS looks forward to strengthening our collaboration with WS, especially at the doctoral level. Currently, AIS has one course cross-listed with WS and several of our faculty members are affiliated with WS. Our two programs share many areas of interest, including border, gender, and cultural studies.

As the second doctoral program in Women’s Studies in the west, a degree program at UA will bring recognition to the University, address the ABOR Changing Directions initiative as well as the University’s emphasis on Focused Excellence, and meet the strategic plans priorities of the UA. The fit is right.

AIS is excited about the WS doctorate because of the possibilities it provides for partnerships and research opportunities between our programs. We sincerely hope that this Ph.D. program is approved.

Sincerely,

K. Tsianina Lomawaima
Chair & Interim Director, AIS
626-5772
March 10, 2006

Dr. Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez
Professor and Head
Women’s Studies Department
University of Arizona
CAMPUS

Dear Yolanda:

I am writing on behalf of the Department of English to express enthusiastic support for the Department of Women’s Studies to establish a Ph.D. in Women’s Studies, a new degree program at the University of Arizona.

Faculty members in the Department of English (including myself and Professor Emerita Billie Jo Inman, to cite two examples) were instrumental in the founding of the Women’s Studies Program at the University of Arizona. As the program has developed, we have continued to profit from the close and mutually beneficial collaborative relationships that link our programs. Several Women’s Studies professors (Jennifer Croissant, Miranda Joseph, Kari McBride, Sandra Sco, and Judy Temple) hold affiliate faculty status in our department. These collaborative relationships include work with teaching at all levels, work with ambitious collaborative research projects, and work on behalf of the community.

From our position as a continuing collaborator in these key domains, we can appreciate and admire the growing, distinctive, and distinguished profile that Women’s Studies has achieved nationally and internationally. We agree that the time is right for the program and the university to capitalize on the very strong national and international reputation by instituting a Ph.D. program. Such a graduate program will certainly enhance our on-going work with individual faculty and students. It will provide new opportunities for attracting and training top tier graduate students to the university.

Sincerely,

Susan H. Aiken
University Distinguished Professor and Acting Head
March 9, 2006

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to give the enthusiastic support of my department, Geography and Regional Development (GRD), for the proposed Ph.D. in Women’s Studies.

As is noted in the application, Women’s Studies is an interdisciplinary field that has truly “come of age”. Women’s Studies departments across the country are now home of some of the most innovative and creative thinkers and teachers in U.S. universities. Their work brings a uniquely gendered perspective to nearly all subfields of academic study, from the humanities and the social sciences and on through business and the life sciences. Through the commitments of these scholars and through programs like Women in Science and Engineering, thousands of young women are also encouraged and trained to become leaders in fields such as mathematics, engineering, and the bench sciences.

Geography, as a humanistic endeavor, a social science, and a physical science, is well positioned to provide support for and collaborate with the aspiring Ph.D.s this exciting program will attract to the University. The larger discipline of Geography has for some 25 years produced important work on what has been variously called the ‘geography of women’ and ‘gender and geography’—both of which remain growing subfields. A remarkable literature has been produced over this period, affecting virtually every other subfield, including economic, transportation, population, urban, political, social, and environmental geography. Among the many application areas, I would point to the following:

- The unique challenges women face in urban transportation resulting from the separation of home and work
- The geographic aspects of gendered divisions of labor and the feminization of poverty
- The role of women’s labor in the maquiladoras along the US-Mexico border
- The rise of ‘pink collar’ employment and the threats to it posed by international outsourcing
- The significance of women’s local organizing in shaping the quality of life in urban neighborhoods
- The importance of women’s labor in food production in Third World households
- The increasing importance of women’s spatial decision-making in short and long term migration
- The rise of women’s networks around community projects devoted to environmental sustainability

As you can see from these examples, there are very important and exciting overlaps between the issues addressed by scholars of Women’s Studies and Geography.
The work of students and faculty in this department would be greatly enhanced by the presence of Ph.D. students in the Department of Women’s Studies. Such students improve graduate seminars by raising the “bar” of discussion; they can more actively contribute to the ongoing research projects supported in the Department; and they will generally uplift the overall quality of academic life on campus.

It should be noted, finally, that there are a number of faculty in the Department of Geography and Regional Development who could both contribute to and benefit from this new and enhanced program in Women’s Studies. I for one have written on the feminization of poverty and have co-edited a book on gender and geography (Thresholds in Feminist Geography, 1997). Other key faculty who could contribute to this new program include:

- Keiros Bailey, Assistant Professor of Geography. His dissertation examined Japanese women’s use of English language courses as a strategy to escape the often-male centered business culture of that country.
- Sarah Elwood, Assistant Professor of Geography. Her work is on community organizing and the use of Geographic Information Systems in finding innovative solutions to neighborhood problems, with a focus on those affecting disadvantaged women.
- Sallie Marston, Professor of Geography and the former acting director of Women’s Studies. Her work is on political geography and social reproduction.
- Beth Mitcheim, Associate Professor of Geography. She studies globalization, urban governance, and migration, with a particular emphasis on Russia and in ways that often rely on the disaggregation of women’s and men’s migration patterns.
- Jan Most, Professor of Geography and former director (for 20 years) of the Southwest Institute for Research on Women. She is a founder and leading figure internationally in the study of feminist Geography.
- Paul Robbins, Associate Professor of Geography. His work is on the institutional, economic, and gendered dimensions of forest degradation in Rajasthan, India.

All of these scholars will benefit from an advanced Women’s Studies degree on this campus. What is more, they are all enthusiastic about contributing to the program – by sharing ideas, time, and students.

This proposal has GRD’s full support. Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

John Paul Jones III
Professor and Head
February 8, 2006

March 9, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of support for the application by the Department of Women's Studies for a doctoral program in Women's Studies at the University of Arizona (UA). I am pleased that the Women's Studies program is moving forward given their commitment to higher education, women's issues, and filling a gap in academia within the southwestern United States.

The mission of the UA National Center of Excellence in Women's Health (CoE) is to improve the health and promote wellness of all women throughout the lifecycle, especially those that are underserved. The Department of Women's Studies and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW) share this focus on the well-being of women, particularly low income and minority women living in the Southwest along the US-Mexican border. Tucson, like all of Arizona, faces tremendous challenges in health disparities in the Latina and American Indian populations and especially in the border area with Mexico. Individuals most affected are women and children (Arizona Department of Economic Security 2000).

A doctoral program in women's studies would enhance the collaborative work of the UA CoE and the Department of Women's Studies. Joint seminars, education and training, and research would benefit faculty, researchers and students of each unit and provide support and experience for researchers and students with SIROW projects.

I am highly supportive of the Department of Women's Studies efforts. If you have any questions, please contact me at 520-626-0219.

Sincerely,

Marietta Anthony, PhD
Director, UA National Center of Excellence in Women's Health
March 10, 2006

Yolanda Broyles-Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
Department of Women's Studies
1443 E. 1st Street
The University of Arizona

Dear Dr. Broyles-Gonzalez:

I enthusiastically support your department's goal to establish a doctoral degree in Women's Studies. As a discipline with an extensive track record of scholarly work in the academy, and with almost 25 years since the initiation of the Women's Movement, it is about time that a Ph.D. in Women's Studies be implemented at the University of Arizona.

The establishment of a doctoral degree in Women's Studies is consistent with the Focused Excellence theme at the University. There is no other University in the state of Arizona that is as well positioned to go forward with this degree. As the leading research institution in Arizona, coupled with a student-focused orientation, the University of Arizona would be in the forefront of providing research training, and to graduate doctorates that could further contribute to the field of Women's Studies.

The faculty of the Mexican American Studies & Research Center is eager to participate in the development of your doctoral degree, especially in regard to the Chicana Studies component. We believe that the doctoral degree in Women's Studies serves our interests and the interests of the Hispanic community. I welcome the opportunity to work with your group to establish this concentration.

In summary, I fully endorse your application for a doctoral degree in Women's Studies. It will enhance the scholarship at the University of Arizona and contribute to other Universities and Colleges that teach and/or conduct research on women. We look forward to assisting you in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Antonio L. Estrada, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
Mexican American Studies & Research Center
The University of Arizona
March 10, 2006

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for the Department of Women’s Studies application for a doctoral program in Women’s Studies. I am pleased that the Department of Women’s Studies is moving forward with their application given the department’s commitment to higher education, women’s issues, and filling a gap in academia within the southwestern United States.

Women’s Studies and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women have interest in common with the various departments with which I’m affiliated and with the Interdisciplinary program in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching, especially our commitment to interdisciplinary studies. With a Ph.D. program in Women’s Studies, the Department of Women’s Studies and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women could enhance our collaborative work, with benefit to faculty, researchers and students of each unit. For example, the Units could host joint seminars and other various training and events along with providing support and experience for researchers and students within SIROW projects.

I have read their proposal and am supportive of their efforts. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at lwauh@u.arizona.edu.

Sincerely,

Linda R. Waugh, Chair
Professor of French, English, Anthropology, Linguistics
And Language, Reading, and Culture
March 10, 2006

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of the Department of Women’s Studies to create a new Ph.D. degree in Women’s Studies at the University of Arizona.

My own Department has had strong collaborative ties with most of the Women’s Studies faculty going back to its inception and its faculty provides Anthropology with ongoing yeoman service in teaching and student collaboration.

As a stand-alone discipline Women’s Studies (and its affiliated unit, SIROW) interact synergistically rather than competitively with the other social and behavioral sciences. I know as fact that doctoral-seeking students in Anthropology would be better served by having a post-MA track in Women’s Studies available at UA as an option.

I regard the intellectual ties that bind my Department to Women’s Studies to be varied, strong, and much-valued. My view is that optimizing the study of women’s issues on this campus through the creation and strategic support of a doctoral program in Women’s Studies would be a wise investment at this juncture.

Sincerely,

John W. Olsen, Ph.D.
Regents’ Professor and Head

JWO/taf