WGS Welcomes New Faculty Members

UVA’s interdisciplinary Women, Gender, and Sexuality (WGS) Program is delighted to welcome two new faculty members for Fall 2014, Dr. Miranda Waggoner and Dr. Doug Meyer.

Dr. Waggoner earned her Ph.D. in Sociology from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University, and has just completed a postdoctoral appointment in the Office of Population Research at Princeton University. Her research and teaching focus is on cultural factors in the public understanding of medical science, specifically how motherhood and reproduction function as sites of inequality. A joint appointment with WGS and Sociology, Dr. Waggoner will be teaching courses in Feminist Theory, Health and Society, and Gender and the Body in Society this year.

Also a sociologist, Dr. Meyer focuses his professional work on LGBTQ issues. He has studied race, class, and gender dynamics of anti-queer violence, and his work in this area has emphasized the importance of intersections among these variables. Meyer has also studied programs intended to support and encourage LGBTQ youth, such as the well-known It Gets Better project. He earned the Ph.D. from City University of New York, with certificates in Women & Gender and also in LGBTQ Studies from CUNY’s renowned Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies.

Thanks to a generous donation from College alumna Susan Sarnoff Bram, CLAS ’85, and her husband, Jonathan D. Bram, Dr. Meyer becomes UVA’s first faculty member to teach 100% in LGBTQ Studies. In the coming year, he will be teaching Queer Theory, Introduction to LGBTQ Studies, and LGBTQ Communities, among other courses. In short, UVA students who want to explore the new scholarship in LGBTQ Studies will have many new chances to do so.
WGS Grows, Adds Courses in LGBTQ Studies

WGS course enrollments are higher than ever, and still growing. For 2013-2014, more than 850 students were enrolled in 37 WGS classes, an all-time high. Students also give excellent reviews to WGS classes. On an anonymous assessment last year, students majoring and minoring in WGS expressed tremendous satisfaction with their major, more than almost any other students in the College of Arts & Sciences.

In response to student demand, and thanks to resources provided by the Dean and by generous donors, the WGS Program will offer more courses in LGBTQ Studies this year. WGS 2105, Introduction to LGBTQ Studies, will be offered both semesters (instead of only once) this year. WGS 3800, Queer Theory, will also be offered both semesters. WGS will also add courses on LGBTQ Communities, and on Sociology of Sexuality, both taught by Doug Meyer. In addition to longstanding courses in LGBTQ Studies, Andre Cavalcante will offer courses on LGBTQ Issues in the Media and also on Gender Nonconformity in the Media. These expanded course offerings will allow students to explore their interests in this dynamic area of scholarship.

Spring Alumni Panel and WGS Dinner

WGS held the annual Alumni Panel in March 2014. Designed for 4th year WGS students, this event brings WGS alumni back to Grounds to speak about “life after UVA for WGS students.” This year’s panelists, pictured above, holding the WGS mugs that they were given after the panel, were (from left to right) Elizabeth Vandenburg, CLAS ’82, Holiday Simmons, CLAS ’00, and Katrin Shulz, CLAS ’10. Thanks to gifts from the UVA Parents Committee, and the Inaugural Committee of Virginia Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam, WGS was able to sponsor a WGS dinner following the Alumni Panel, in the Garden Room of the West Range. This event allowed for extended conversations that were sparked by the panel presentations. Many thanks to our sponsors, who made this event possible.
Denise Walsh Wins Teaching Award

Denise Walsh, Associate Professor of WGS and Politics, has been awarded an All-University Teaching Award for 2014. Well-known for her extraordinary teaching skills, Walsh was praised by her students for her warmth, energy, and her ability to create an intellectual environment in which students are challenged to engage with controversial ideas. Congratulations to Professor Walsh on this well-deserved award.

Z Society Honors WGS Alumna Nicole Eramo

The Z society presented the Pale Z, its highest honor, to Association Dean Nicole Eramo for her advocacy on behalf of students affected by sexual violence on Grounds this past spring. Sexual violence on college campuses has become a national issue, and Dean Eramo has been working hard in her role as a UVA administrator to help students navigate the various and often murky legal and academic systems in place. WGS is proud to claim Nicole Eramo as a 1997 alumna of our program. When Eramo was an undergraduate, she minored in the predecessor to the WGS Program, which was then known as Women’s Studies.

Faculty and Staff Transitions at WGS

This past summer was a time of transition for some WGS staff and faculty members. Laura Mellusi, who served for six years as WGS Administrator, moved this summer to a new position in the UVA Art Department; WGS misses her greatly but wishes her well. Melissa Wender has taken over as the new WGS Administrator, and the WGS Program is pleased to welcome her.

Along with the addition of new faculty members mentioned above, WGS saw some departures this summer. Kath Weston’s appointment has been shifted from 50% in WGS and 50% in Anthropology to 100% in Anthropology. WGS hopes to be able to search for a new faculty member in this position in the near future. In addition, two part-time instructors departed to assume full-time positions. Kendra Hamilton moved to Presbyterian College and Jacqueline Taylor went to Tulane University.
Many Thanks to Our Generous Donors
[includes gifts received January-August 2014; please send any corrections to WGS]

**Principal Underwriters [$15,000 and up]**
Susan Sarnoff Bram, CLAS ’85, and Jonathan D. Bram
Todd Yancey, MD, CLAS ’81 & David Denniston

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Thanks to Cooperating Units at UVA
[Units with which WGS has cosponsored events, January-August 2014]

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Bernard Mayes LGBTQ Lecture Fund

A generous gift of $10,000 was received by the WGS Program in 2012 from Bernard Mayes, a retired UVA faculty member, to support lectures in LGBTQ Studies.

Professor Mayes’ gift has supported many outstanding lectures and other events, which have drawn large audiences as well as co-sponsorships from other units (a list of some recent co-sponsorships appears in this Update). Events have included a well-attended panel discussion on the future of same-sex marriage in Virginia, held in the Newcomb Hall Ballroom; a visit by Professor Anthony R. D’Augelli of Penn State University, who lectured on his work with gay youth; a visit to the UVA Grounds by Professor Henny Bos of the University of Amsterdam, who spoke about her work with lesbian and gay parents, and developed collaborations with UVA faculty and students; and many others. Upcoming events include visits by historians and philosophers, as well as other outstanding scholars.

To continue to offer these events, WGS welcomes contributions in any amount to the Bernard Mayes LGBTQ Lecture Fund. Write a check to “Bernard Mayes LGBTQ Lecture Fund at WGS” and send it to: WGS Program, 227 Minor Hall, University of Virginia, P. O. Box 400172, Charlottesville VA 22904. Or visit our website at wgs.virginia.edu, and click the “Give Online” button to make a contribution online, noting that it is intended for the Bernard Mayes LGBTQ Lecture Fund.

Cori Field Publishes New Book

Corinne (Cori) Field, faculty member in WGS and in History, and WGS Director of Undergraduate Programs, has published a new book entitled, The Struggle for Equal Adulthood: Gender, Race, Age, and the Fight for Citizenship in Antebellum America (University of North Carolina Press, 2014). In the book, Field argues that “to better understand the complicated question of what it means to be grown up and why maturity can be so difficult to achieve, we need to better appreciate the long history of political struggles for equal adulthood”. A reviewer called the book, “a pleasure to read and an important contribution to the history of women, race, and citizenship in the United States”. The WGS Program congratulates Cori Field upon the publication of this book.
Congratulations to WGS Majors and Minors who graduated in May 2014. Twenty-five students graduated this year with a Major or a Minor in WGS. Many students have a second major, so some attended diploma ceremonies elsewhere, but 13 WGS students attended the 2014 WGS Diploma Ceremony (see photo above). WGS is grateful that many graduating students have made donations to the Program. The complete list of this year’s WGS Majors & Minors follows:

Alexa J. Allmann  Taylor H. Gillan  Kelly E. Myers  
Jasmine W. Amanin  Jessica L. Hendrick  Simay Okyay  
Ayla R. Benge  Emily A. Herget  Eva J. Plaxe  
Karina Z. Carlson  Jacqueline E. Jemison  Breeonna A. Reed  
Lydia J. Chu  Emily S. Kianka  Marissa L. Robinson  
Megan C. Clemency  Emily F. Lloyd  Julie D. Shreck  
Ashley F. Ferraro  Bethany A. Martin  Jerrod S. Travelee  
Alison C. Filler  Alexandra G. McCargo  Preethi N. Varma  
  Mary H. Whitesell

Contact WGS, Make a Donation

WGS welcomes your comments, questions, and ideas.

Contact the WGS office at 434 982-2961, visit our website at wgs.virginia.edu, or send email to Charlotte J. Patterson, WGS Director, at cjp@virginia.edu.

To make a donation, visit our website at wgs.virginia.edu, and click on the button that says “Donate”, or write a check to “WGS Program at UVA” and send it to WGS Program, 227 Minor Hall, University of Virginia, P. O. Box 400172, Charlottesville VA 22904 [attention: Charlotte J. Patterson, WGS Director].