"There's good news in the mail!"

Women's studies by external mode of delivery

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Introduction

Women's Studies subjects have been offered in tertiary institutions in Australia and overseas for a larger number of women, and a wider range of students, to a wider group of students than was previously possible. The group of students who have been able to study women's studies through the external mode of delivery include those who are employed full-time, those who live in remote areas, and those who are unable to study on a full-time basis for personal or economic reasons.

The Programmes

The Programmes themselves cater to a broad spectrum of student interests. They include both interdisciplinary subjects with a focus on women's studies, such as feminist literature, feminist theory, feminist criticism, feminist research strategies, discourse analysis, sexualities and gender, and women's studies in the disciplines of social science, gender and modernity, personal and professional development and the like, and discipline-based studios which adapt feminist perspectives within a particular field of study (for example, education, the law, sociology, anthropology, psychology, English literature, history, politics, family studies, management, health sciences, and the like). The range of offerings provides the opportunity for women to access feminist knowledge and understand and of feminist approaches across a range of disciplines to consider feminist theorists and research methodologies relevant to their personal and professional needs.

What follows is a brief description of a selection of the courses which are presently available at pre-tertiary, undergraduate and postgraduate level followed by a discussion of perceived problems and opportunities for the future.

TAFE: "Women Returning to Study" module

TAFE is a national network of colleges which offer vocational education and training. The TAFE "Women Returning to Study" module is specifically designed for women who have been out of full-time education for a period of time and who wish to return to study. The module is offered at various TAFE institutions across Australia, and is aimed at providing women with the opportunity to return to education and develop new skills and knowledge.

Postgraduate Programmes

The Women's Studies module allows students to pursue postgraduate studies in women's studies, and is offered at several universities in Australia. The module provides an opportunity for students to undertake advanced study in women's studies and to develop a critical understanding of gender and sexuality issues. The module is designed to provide a broad and comprehensive overview of women's studies and to enable students to develop a range of research and critical thinking skills.

Individual subjects in women's studies are available in the external mode as part of other degree courses. For example, students at the University of New South Wales can undertake courses in women's studies as part of their Bachelor of Arts degree. This allows students to undertake a major in women's studies while also completing other courses in areas such as political science, sociology, psychology, and history.

Structure

The Women's Studies module is designed to provide students with a broad understanding of the field of women's studies. It covers topics such as gender theory, feminist theory, and women's history, and examines the social, economic, and political factors that have shaped women's experiences. The module also provides students with the opportunity to undertake research projects and to engage in critical thinking and analysis.

The module offers a variety of assessment options, including written assignments, presentations, and short answer questions. These assessments are designed to test students' understanding of the material and to encourage critical thinking and analysis. The module also includes a range of resources, such as readings and online materials, to support students' learning.

Conclusion

The Women's Studies module is an excellent opportunity for students who are interested in women's studies. It provides a comprehensive introduction to the field and offers a range of assessments that will challenge and engage students. The module is designed to be accessible to a wide range of students, and is an excellent way for students to develop their understanding of gender and sexuality issues.

University of New England

The University of New England offers a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in women's studies. This degree allows students to undertake courses in women's studies as part of their degree program, and also provides them with the opportunity to undertake research projects and to engage in critical thinking and analysis.

Graduate Diploma in Arts

The Graduate Diploma in Arts is designed for students who wish to undertake advanced study in women's studies. This course is available at the University of New England, and includes a range of courses in women's studies, gender theory, and feminist theory.

Master of Arts

The Master of Arts program at the University of New England allows students to undertake advanced study in women's studies, and to develop a critical understanding of gender and sexuality issues. The program includes a range of courses in women's studies, gender theory, and feminist theory, and allows students to undertake research projects and to engage in critical thinking and analysis.

E-mail: August 1981, discussion of staff at each institution indicated considerable enthusiasm for the project. All participating institutions agreed to coordinate their efforts with those of other institutions to develop a national women's studies network. The network was established in 1982 and has continued to grow and evolve over the years.

In summary, the Women's Studies network has been successful in providing a range of opportunities for women to study women's studies, and has helped to increase the visibility and understanding of gender and sexuality issues. The network continues to provide a valuable resource for students and educators, and is an important part of the broader effort to promote women's studies and gender equality.
Postgraduate Degree Programmes: Adelaide University and the University of New England

A Graduate Diploma in Women's Studies is presently available through the University of Adelaide. The courses presented here are for students in the Commonwealth of Australia (City Campus) which merged with the University in 1991. These courses are described in a booklet, "Women's Studies, professional identity and effectiveness," distributed by the University's Women's Studies Unit.

The University of New England offers a Master of Arts degree in Women's Studies. The degree is available to students who have completed an undergraduate degree in Women's Studies or a related field. The program is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, and political issues affecting women in various societies.

Structure

In 1979 the SAWU (a group of women who studied at the University of Adelaide) introduced a part-time study program using the assessment by internal method. External delivery was introduced in 1985. Two core subjects were introduced in the first two years, each consisting of two units, with the third year devoted to an advanced program of study.

Course evaluation: why do students do Women's Studies?

In the mid-1980s, a survey of students who had completed the Graduate Diploma in Women's Studies both internally and externally. A total of 280 surveys were mailed out, 118 were returned, representing a response rate of 42%. The survey results indicated that a primary reason for enrolling in Women's Studies was to gain knowledge and skills in the area of gender and social issues. Other reasons included developing critical thinking skills, gaining a broader perspective of women's issues, and understanding the contributions of women to society.

Problems and future

In Australia there is the threat of higher degree institutions having insufficient funding. There is no guarantee of the advertising of extra programs on Women's Studies at the University of New England. However, the Australian Council of Learned Societies is currently offering funding for the development of additional Women's Studies courses. There is also a possibility that the University of New England will be offering a new PhD program in Women's Studies in the near future.

References

1. The New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Program is widely available throughout the TAFE system in Australia. Several states are taking initiatives to make the program available to all students, including those in Women's Studies.

2. Subsequently, Murdoch has reorganized its philosophy courses to offer new courses in philosophy and women's studies. The program is currently under review at Murdoch University in light of recent developments in the field of Women's Studies.

3. Women's Studies courses are currently offered at Murdoch University, and as of 1993, over 90% of all students attending Murdoch University are enrolled in Women's Studies courses. The program is currently under review at Murdoch University in light of recent developments in the field of Women's Studies.