Notes from the Chair

Dear WGSS Members,

I am so grateful to serve you as Chair of WGSS this year. WGSS is where I first found community within ALA and has continued to be my professional home over the past 15 years as I have grown in my career. Within our work, we continue to experience great change in the higher education sector and grapple with the implications for our practice on a wide range of concerns including diversity, equity, and inclusion, generative artificial intelligence, transformations and alternative approaches to scholarly publishing, and the growth of interdisciplinary approaches to research and teaching. Reflecting back on the original intention of WGSS which was, “Formed to discuss, promote, and support women and gender studies collections and services in academic and research libraries,” our backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in women’s and gender studies librarianship in concert with our diverse lived experiences have never been more needed by or valuable to our profession than they are at this moment.

WGSS committees are exploring new ways to engage our members virtually, embarking on updates to our Research Agenda for Women and Gender Studies Librarianship, and continually advancing work on collections recommendations for our work including tools and open access resources, amongst other initiatives. I would like to thank our returning volunteers, especially committee chairs, for their continued service and welcome the many volunteers who are serving on a WGSS committee or at any level of ACRL for the first time. I look forward to supporting and advancing this exceptional work in the coming year.

At the wider ACRL level, the ACRL Board has continued the pause on all ACRL section awards as they continue to contemplate the best way to implement recommendations made by a previous task force. The WGSS Awards continue to be paused until this work is completed and all WGSS Awards Committee appointees have moved to other committee appointments where desired. There have been recent
policy changes regarding honoraria for invited speakers, which applies to all ACRL sections, including WGSS. The volunteer cycle will begin earlier this year, with the volunteer form opening December 1st, 2023. This change is appreciated as it better aligns the appointments process with the academic calendar.

I want to thank Caitlin Shanley for service as last year’s Chair and welcome our new officers: ViceChair/Chair-Elect Esther Medina De Leon, Secretary Renee Kiner, and Member-at-Large Nadia Mira Orozco-Sahi. Additionally, Sara Howard has recently agreed to extend her appointment as our liaison to the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA). Our membership was also responsive to our call for individuals to stand for election for leadership positions in the 2024-25 service year and I am happy to report we have a full slate of candidates for your consideration in the coming election cycle.

Finally, I want to thank you, our members, for your continued interest, engagement, and enthusiasm for WGSS. If you have ideas for our section or would like to speak with someone about volunteer opportunities and expectations, I invite you to reach out to me directly at karidweaver@gmail.com, or the full WGSS Executive Committee at ALA-ACRLWGSSExec@connectedcommunity.org.

Dr. Kari D. Weaver (she/her/elle)
Chair, ACRL-WGSS
University of Waterloo Library

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Notes from the Chair
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Notes from the Chair

ACRL Off-RoadShows

Contribute to your newsletter
Benchmark is the newest tool for data-driven planning and advocacy in academic libraries. Launched by ACRL in late 2021, Benchmark provides enhanced access to ACRL annual survey data from 1998-2020. With Benchmark, you can illustrate ongoing activities and usage in a compelling fashion for different audiences, as well as generate key metrics for strategic planning, budget justifications, annual reports, fundraising, and more! Benchmark is also where you can contribute your library's data to national surveys to further research and advocacy. Login to your free account today to complete the 2023 Academic Library Trends and Statistics Survey, which includes trends questions on the topic of post-Covid library service and workplace trends!

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The WGSS Newsletter welcomes contributions from its members. Please send articles, items of interest, and news to the editors in electronic format. ©American Library Association, 2023 ISSN 0895-691X

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