

Faculty of Arts and Science

THE MARK S. BONHAM CENTRE FOR SEXUAL DIVERSITY STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Proposal for Reclassification from EDU:C to EDU:B

November 2007

THE LOGIC OF RECLASSIFICATION

The Faculty of Arts and Science Council approved the creation of the Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies (SDS) in 2005. At the time, it housed a substantial undergraduate program, and had ambitions to establish a collaborative graduate program. In October 2007, FAS and the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) approved the establishments of collaborative graduate program at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels. This curricular expansion alone makes for a compelling argument for classifying the Centre as an EDU:B.

The other compelling reason for reclassification is that EDU:B status allows for shared faculty appointments. Over the course of two academic planning exercises, SDS has been formally given an instructional contribution through three tenure track appointments, one in English (*Raising Our Sights*) and one each in Sociology and WGSJ/History (*Stepping Up*). Currently, faculty members with significant interest in research and scholarship in sexuality are located across the University, with the Faculty of Arts and Science but also at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/UT, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Physical Education and Health and at the University of Toronto at Mississauga. The next logical step in securing the long-term growth of the Centre is explicitly shared appointments, something that SDS intends to propose in the next planning exercise.

With the support of University College, SDS therefore requests that it be given EDU:B status.

BACKGROUND

From its birth in 1998 until 2004, SDS focussed on building an undergraduate Minor program and offering explicitly interdisciplinary courses. Despite the laudable inclusion of sexual diversity in University equity policies, strikingly little scholarly and instructional attention was being paid to questions of sexuality. The Program's formation and development since then has begun to correct this imbalance, creating a community of scholars across departments and divisions. In September 2004, SDS launched the first undergraduate Major of its kind in Canada, along with new interdisciplinary courses offered under UC auspices.

In 2004, University College approved the creation of a Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, with a view to expanding our undergraduate programs but reaching beyond that

to establish a major hub of graduate and faculty research on sexuality. At the same time, the College approved a space plan for the Centre, providing core hub space, faculty offices, all in proximity to classrooms for which SDS would have priority.

In 2005, FAS approved the establishment of the Centre, at the time classified as an EDU 2 (later translated into EDU:C). In 2006, the Centre was officially named after long-time supporter Mark S. Bonham, and new space was officially opened. At this time there were about 150 students registered in the undergraduate program.

A collaborative graduate program at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels was approved by FAS and SGS governing bodies in 2007. This interdisciplinary program links SDS to over twenty academic partners across the university with discussions underway for further partnerships with graduate programs in the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Social Work. A first wave of admissions is anticipated in the spring of 2008.

Currently, a proposal for an undergraduate Specialist program has been approved by the Faculty of Arts and Science, the tri-campus decanal committee and is proceeding forward for approval from the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. This would be Canada's first such degree program, once again finding the U of T at the forefront of developments in this rapidly growing field.

RESEARCH STRENGTH

There are over fifty tenure-track faculty members (that we know of) at the University of Toronto with a research interest in sexuality spanning numerous departments in the Faculty of Arts and Science St. George, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Physical Education and Health, the University of Toronto at Mississauga and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/UT. This constitutes a broad and rich foundation on which the Centre's curricular strength and research profile builds. Many of these are relatively recent appointments, reflecting the surge of academic interest in fields related to sexual diversity.

To this point, the planning process has resulted in the creation of three faculty appointments with formal instructional ties to SDS. The first was Michael Cobb, now Associate Professor in English, whose full English appointment came with the understanding of an ongoing instructional contribution to SDS. Similar appointments were created in the *Stepping Up* process for Adam Green (Sociology), and Ashwini Tambe (Women's Studies/History).

The Bonham Centre has appointed as SDS Fellows a number of faculty members associated with universities other than the U of T or cultural figures. They include notable figures in the arts, and across a range of scholarly disciplines.

The University of Toronto Library system is already home to extraordinary resources in areas related to sexual diversity, unmatched in Canada and in few other places in the world. Since its inception, SDS has demonstrated its capacity to augment that resource

base, most notably through the acquisition of the Sexual Representation Collection (soon to be housed at University College). This is a donation of erotic material extending back more than a century, built by an intelligent collector interested in censorship, and now being catalogued and analyzed with the aid of a major SSHRC grant. Other donations are in the works, of audio visual material and fiction, that would not have come to the U of T without SDS.

The Program has developed a close and cooperative relationship with the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, one of the largest such archives in the world and soon to be located only a few blocks from the University. This has already provided invaluable resources to a large number of our undergraduates, through two courses in particular that have encouraged archival use, but has linked the Program as a whole to the wider community.

SDS has already sponsored or co-sponsored a great many events that have brought researchers on sexuality together, and provided opportunities for undergraduate intellectual and cultural engagement beyond the classroom. It has provided venues for major writers of fiction (Camilla Gibb, Wayson Choy, Shyam Salvadurai, Shani Mootoo), filmmakers, playwrights, and academics from across the disciplinary spectrum. It has participated in the sponsorship of over forty events, including a major public speaker series at Convocation Hall. In 2007, it also organized a major international conference on Religion, Sexuality, and Politics in Canada and the United States, on the basis of which a co-edited publication is in preparation.

DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS

Financial constraints at the time precluded base funding from the University of Toronto for several years, so that private funding had to be secured from the outset. A community-based Advisory Committee was struck, and early fundraising from faculty and staff was assisted by a double-match program then in place. The Alumni and Development Office assisted in the creation of a fundraising strategy, which has resulted in considerable success. Our first major gift, of \$200,000, came in 2003, and since then we have raised over \$1,500,000 in additional private funds. We also have over a dozen planned givers who have committed to SDS support in their wills. This has allowed us to expand our core curriculum, to create student awards, and to sponsor special events substantially beyond the capacity of similarly-aged interdisciplinary ventures.

RESOURCES

The reclassification of the Bonham Centre entails a request for no new resources. The Centre has assumed responsibility for the costs of the SDS courses being mounted for the collaborative graduate program, and has obtained sufficient support from participating departments and units to cover most of its costs on that front. SDS has also secured space at University College, and administrative support will be managed within its current framework at UC. Three offices at the College are now (or soon will be) allocated to SDS-affiliated faculty members.

Development efforts will continue to enhance the Centre's fiscal foundation, and will provide support for graduate-related programming.

SDS DIRECTION AND ADMINISTRATION

As it stands now, the Director of the Bonham Centre is formally appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, following University of Toronto policies on the appointment of academic administrators, and normally for five years. Going forward, the recommendation of the approval of the Director will be brought forward for approval to governance as per policy and guidelines for an EDU:B classification. The Dean may delegate (and has delegated) to the Principal of University College some or all of the responsibility over the Centre and its Director.

The Director of the Undergraduate Program is appointed by the Principal of University College, in consultation with the Director of the Bonham Centre. The Program Director reports both to the Vice- Principal of University College and the Bonham Centre Director.

The Centre's director and the program director are assisted by a Steering Committee comprising faculty members, students, and others, its members appointed by the Centre Director. Fundraising and profile development would continue to be assisted by a community Advisory Committee.

Undergraduate curricular decisions require the approval of the Program Committee at University College, chaired by the Vice-Principal, and College Council. Decisions relevant to undergraduate programming then go to the relevant curriculum committee at the Faculty of Arts and Science and the tri-camps decanal committee.

Decisions relevant to the collaborative graduate program are made in the first instance by the Graduate Program committee, which includes representatives of all participating graduate units, chaired by the Director of the Bonham Centre or the Graduate Program Director. After approval within University College, they are then sent to the Tri-Campus Graduate Curricular Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Science, and then forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies.