NWSA Statement on Threats to the Field in Higher Education and Beyond

Dear Colleagues,

2022 has already proven to be a year of repetition and we are seeing a renewed backlash against our field. Colleagues in Wyoming have successfully parried an effort by the state legislature to end funding for their Gender and Women’s Studies program. Meanwhile, threats from within institutions continue as administrators at SUNY Brockport seek to merge the department of Women’s and Gender Studies and end its autonomy. We strongly support our colleagues’ rejection of this move and encourage you to show support by adding your name to our Google Doc.

You can also share your information and comments with the department’s chair, Milo Obourn, at mobourn@brockport.edu.

If you are experiencing similar challenges, please reach out to NWSA directly at nwsa@nwsa.org or by phone at 773-524-1807 so we can amplify your efforts and provide support.

These specific attempts to curtail our field are occurring within a broader national context that is seeking to silence critical discussions of race and ethnicity as well as the mere acknowledgement of LGBTQI+ folks in K-12 education. Our November conference is an opportunity to discuss and strategize ways to deepen our ties and ability to sustain our work as we encounter another wave of backlash. Our Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin K-12 Feminist Teacher Pre-Conference along with conference plenaries will explicitly engage with these questions. In the meantime, we intend to institutionalize our leadership approach to responding to challenges as well as set the stage for a white paper addressing threats to our field.

Please join us in rejecting efforts to silence or marginalize our work and communities.

Sincerely,
Kaye Whitehead, President
Ariella Rotramel, Vice President
Angela Clark-Taylor, Treasurer
Heidi R. Lewis, Secretary
Executive Committee
March 2022