

2015 Member Recommendations and Results

Here is a complete overview of the results:

- 35% of NWSA members voted.
- 88.4% of votes cast were in favor of the BDS recommendation, for a total of 653 votes in support.
- 97.2% of votes cast were in favor of the contingent faculty recommendation, for a total of 730 votes in support.

Membership Assembly Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The first recommendation, developed by Feminists for Justice in/for Palestine (FJP), an ad-hoc group founded in Puerto Rico at NWSA 2014, urges the Association to join the international Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and draws on transnational, intersectional feminist frameworks to emphasize an “indivisible sense of justice.” Voting on this question follows on a solidarity statement released by NWSA early in 2015, issued in response to strong member engagement with BDS at the 2014 NWSA Conference in Puerto Rico.

How does the recommendation or resolution relate to the NWSA mission, which reads, NWSA leads the field of women's studies in educational and social transformation.

As feminist activists, scholars, teachers, and public intellectuals who recognize the interconnectedness of systemic forms of oppression, we cannot overlook the injustice and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, perpetrated against Palestinians. This resolution is an act of transnational solidarity aimed at social transformation for a better world.

Who will do the work required to execute the proposed recommendation or resolution?

Feminists for Justice in/for Palestine (FJP), an ad-hoc group founded in Puerto-Rico at NWSA 2014 will lead the efforts to publicize and disseminate the resolution, including education, outreach, media and publicity.

Full text of recommendation or resolution.

Feminists for Justice in/for Palestine Support An Indivisible Sense of Justice!
Support BDS: A Resolution submitted to: National Women’s Studies Association 2015

As feminist scholars, activists, teachers, and public intellectuals we recognize the interconnectedness of systemic forms of oppression. In the spirit of this intersectional perspective, we cannot overlook the injustice and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, perpetrated against Palestinians and other Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, within Israel and in the Golan Heights, as well as the colonial displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the 1948 Nakba. The discriminatory treatment, exclusion, military siege and apartheid imposed by Israel on its own Palestinian citizens as well as those residing in the occupied territories constitute flagrant breaches of international law, UN resolutions, and fundamental human rights. In the present moment, our counterparts in Palestine face daily violations of their human rights, including their academic rights to free speech, assembly, association, and movement. At the same time, Israeli institutions of higher learning have not challenged, but instead legitimized, Israel's oppressive policies and violations. These violations, which severely impact the daily lives and working conditions of Palestinian scholars, students, and the society at large, are also enabled by U.S. tax dollars and the tacit support of western powers, thus making any taxpayer in the West complicit in perpetuating these injustices. As members of NWSA who are committed to justice, dignity, equality and peace, we affirm our opposition to the historical and current injustices in Palestine that we view as part and parcel of the multiple oppressions we study and teach about. We also affirm the commitment of NWSA to principles of human rights, justice and freedom for all, including academic freedom. At our 2014 national conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, nearly 800 participants signed a petition calling upon the organization to declare its support for the international movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel. About 2500 members of the audience at the plenary on Palestine stood in unison in support of freedom and justice for/in Palestine. Therefore, in keeping with these principles and the strong consensus of the majority of our 2014 conference participants, let be it resolved that the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) endorses the 2005 call by Palestinian civil society for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) of economic, military and cultural entities and projects sponsored by the state of Israel. In doing so, we join the growing grassroots international consensus and add our voices to other professional U.S. academic associations that adopted similar resolutions in recent years. These associations include the African Literature Association, American Studies Association, Association for Asian American Studies, Association for Humanist Sociology, Critical Ethnic Studies Association, National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Peace and Justice Studies Association, University of Hawaii at Manoa-Ethnic Studies Department, United Auto Workers Local 2865, The University of California Student Workers Union, and over 1000 members of the American Anthropological Association.

Recommendation 2

The second recommendation, developed by the Contingent Faculty Interest Group, advocates a range of supports for NWSA to take up on behalf of contingent faculty

members within the organization and in the field of Women's Studies: it emphasizes the disproportionate impact of precarious employment in higher education on women and people of color.

How does the recommendation or resolution relate to the NWSA mission, which reads, NWSA leads the field of women's studies in educational and social transformation.

The move towards precarious employment in the academy has had tremendous consequences for all who work and learn in institutions of higher education. In particular, this trend has disproportionately affected women and people of color just as they began gaining entrance into the professoriate. Silencing the scholarship of these individuals by having them shoulder the majority of instruction within institutions of higher education has limited their full entrance into the academy, creating a stratified system within the professoriate that mimics systems of oppression more broadly. Given that contingent (non-tenure track) faculty are likely the majority of the faculty in higher education, the adoption of the terms of this resolution will be directly in line with NWSA's commitment to educational and social transformation.

Who will do the work required to execute the proposed recommendation or resolution?

There are five requests in this resolution, many of which will require minimal work (placing links and information on the NWSA website) that only someone inside the association would be able to do. One of the resolutions would require more work, issuing a statement in support, which we have included a draft statement for the governing board from which they can work.

Full text of recommendation or resolution.

Recognizing that one of the goals of the National Women's Studies Association is to "promote a just world in which all persons can develop to their fullest potential free from systems of privilege or structures that oppress or exploit some for the advantage of others," we call for a resolution in support of adjunct and other contingent faculty who work on college and university campuses to be passed by the National Women's Studies Association. Herein we make five requests of the National Women's Studies Association.

- First, designate one spot for Contingent Faculty on the NWSA Governing Board.
- Second, join the Coalition on the Academic Workforce, a group of higher education associations, disciplinary associations, and faculty organizations committed to addressing issues associated with deteriorating faculty working conditions and their effect on college and university students in the United States.

- Third, partner with the New Faculty Majority on their Women and Contingency project by including a link to the organization on the NWSA website, which can be used as a resource for members.
- Fourth, issue a recommendation on minimum per-course compensation for part-time faculty members to be published on the NWSA website as has been done by the Modern Languages Association. (MLA recommends \$7,230 for a standard 3-credit-hour semester course or \$4,820 for a standard 3-credit-hour quarter or trimester course: http://www.mla.org/mla_recommendation_course).
- Fifth, issue a statement in support of contingent faculty. (Included is a draft statement of support.)

NWSA Contingent Faculty Solidarity Statement

Dear Colleagues: Recognizing that one of the goals of the National Women's Studies Association is to "promote a just world in which all persons can develop to their fullest potential free from systems of privilege or structures that oppress or exploit some for the advantage of others," we issue this statement in support of adjunct and other contingent faculty on college and university campuses around the world and demand better labor conditions for them and better learning conditions for students. The move towards precarious employment in the academy has had tremendous consequences for all who work and learn in institutions of higher education. In particular, this trend has disproportionately affected women and people of color just as they began gaining entrance into the professoriate. Silencing the scholarship of these individuals by having them shoulder the majority of instruction within institutions of higher education has limited their full entrance into the academy, creating a stratified system within the professoriate that mimics systems of oppression more broadly. NWSA stands in solidarity with adjuncts in support of more just, fair, and equitable employment in institutions of higher education. NWSA stands in solidarity with adjuncts in mourning the diversity of knowledge and experiences that have been lost in the move toward precarious employment in higher education. NWSA strongly encourages colleges and universities to realign their priorities toward better supporting and funding instruction and those who do the majority of it. As the NWSA Contingent Faculty Interest Group notes, compliance with the system as it currently exists contributes to a system of inequality that is in direct opposition to the principles for which we stand. As the top association in the field of Women's and Gender studies, we proudly stand in solidarity with contingent faculty.