

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Visit the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies website

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSX) is a cross-disciplinary area of inquiry that investigates the social, psychological, biological, and cultural construction of gender, as well as the ways women and men locate themselves within gender systems. Because femininities and masculinities vary as a result of cultural, historical, political, and institutional forces, gender inquiry helps students understand the multiple ways gender and gender relations are socially constructed, and how these understandings of gender in turn shape virtually every aspect of our everyday lives: political institutions, law, the economy, the family, education, work, literature, the arts, media, philosophy, religion, and sexuality.

Courses in the WGSX cross-disciplinary curriculum identify gender as a fundamental category of analysis in theory and practice. The goals for the study area are to analyze the variations in gender systems that have occurred across cultures and over time; to identify the relationship between biological difference and social inequality; to explore constructions of sexuality and sexual identity; and to recognize how gender inequality is related to other social hierarchies such as race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality.

The study area is committed to the centrality of the study of women, while at the same time interrogating gender and sexuality as organizing categories. Courses will allow students to focus their study on materials that illustrate women's condition, history, and achievements; to investigate how women have been portrayed and how those representations are changing; and to examine feminist critiques of academic areas of knowledge, including the contributions of queer theory and new feminist research. In order to provide a new site for knowledge production that engages differences constructively, the WGSX study area not only locates women within traditional disciplinary categories, but also fosters interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary exploration of the conditions that have shaped women's experiences both as objects and as subjects of knowledge.

Degree Requirements for the Minor

General College Requirements

- General College requirements (see “Curriculum”)
- All requirements in a major field of study

Course Requirements

At least 20 credit hours in courses approved for the women, gender, and sexuality cross-disciplinary area, with a grade of C- or above, including:

- WGSX 220: “Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies”
16 credit hours of elective credits, at least 12 of which must be numbered 300 or above. Electives must be selected from courses originating in (or cross-listed in) at least three disciplines.

The curriculum in WGSX is founded on its core course: WGSX 220, “Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.” Each semester the study area coordinator and participating faculty will designate other courses, including new courses, topics courses, and special offerings that will satisfy elective requirements. A complete list of approved current offerings will appear in the online Schedule of Classes.

In recent years, cross-listed classes have included:

- ANTH 302: Food and Culture
- ANTH 336: The Cultured Body
- ANTH 348: African American Culture
- ARTH 382: Sexuality and Modernity
- ENGL 390: Contemporary Multicultural Voices
- ENGL 400: The Female Coming-of-Age Novel
- ENGL 430: American Literature and Music as Social Protest
- ECON 316: Economics of Race and Gender
- HIST 324: Women in Modern Western History
- HIST 461: Gender in Latin American History
- ILCS 363: Cultural Perspectives on Gender
- PHEC 167: Self-Defense Against Sexual Assault
- PHIL 325: Feminism and Philosophy

- POSC 266: Women and the Law
- POSC 462: Studies in Comparative Politics: Women in the Third World
- PSYC 356: Psychology of Women
- RELG310: Ascetics, Saints, and Sinners: Western Religious Thought
- RELG 318: Feminism and Religion
- RELG 355: Women in Islam
- SOCI 230: Sociology of Gender
- TFMS 220: Introduction to Film and Media Studies
- TFMS 275: Costumes and Clothes in History
- TFMS 325: Documentary Practices
- TFMS 420: Mediated Bodies: Gender, Race, and Class on Stage and Screen
- WGSX 150: Introductory Topics in Women, Gender, and Sexuality
- WGSX 250: Topics in Women, Gender, and Sexuality
- WGSX 350: Advanced Topics in Women, Gender, and Sexuality
- WGSX 450: Seminar in Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Declaration of Intent to Complete the WGSX Minor

Any student who wishes to minor in the WGSX cross-disciplinary area should consult with the program coordinator or any participating faculty member. Formal declaration of intent to complete the WGSX minor should be preceded by completion of WGSX 220. Students may declare their minor at any time prior to the final semester of their senior year, but are encouraged to declare their participation and seek curricular advising as soon as possible.

St. Mary's Project

Students may pursue a St. Mary's Project in WGSX with the permission of their major department and with the agreement of a faculty mentor designated by the women, gender, and sexuality faculty. Project credit (eight hours) does not apply toward fulfillment of the requirements of the minor in women, gender, and sexuality studies.