

Women, Gender, and Sexuality

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The major and concentration in Women, Gender, and Sexuality offers an interdisciplinary approach designed for students wishing to pursue these interests systematically in their academic programs. The concentration is strongly recommended for those considering graduate work in women's, gender, and/or sexuality studies, but is intended to enrich the liberal arts experience of any student through concerted study of a significant dimensions of human experience. The program aims to include the widest possible spectrum of issues affecting women and GLBTQ individuals. Students are encouraged to select courses that will acquaint them with a variety of perspectives. Those considering the major or concentration are encouraged to consult with the director as early as possible in order to make the most of the opportunities available.

Requirements for the Major in Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Number of Units

Eight units are required

Required Courses

The following four courses are required of all Women, Gender, and Sexuality majors:

WGS 101 Women, Gender, and Sexuality

WGS/POLS 265 Feminist Political Theories

WGS 390 Feminist and Queer Inquiries

WGS 490 Seminar in Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Elective Courses

Four elective courses representing at least two divisions:

Fine Arts

ARTX 290 Art and Gender

Humanities

AFST/HIST 272 Gender Relations in Africa

CLAS/HIST 230 Women in Classical Antiquity

ENGL 224 Early Modern Women's Literature: Shakespeare's Sisters

ENGL 225 19th Century Women's Literature: The Epic Age

ENGL 226 Women's Literature 1900-Present: Modern Voices

HIST 220 American Women's History to 1870

HIST 221 American Women's History Since 1870

HIST 237 Women in Europe

HIST 238 Gender and Sexuality in Pre-Modern Europe

HIST/RELG 267 Women and Judaism

RELG 202 Same-Sex, Gender, and Religion

RELG 210 Sex and the Bible

Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures

JAPN 236 Premodern Japanese Literature in Translation

JAPN 250 Manga/Anime and Gender in Modern Japan

Social Science

ANSO 120 The Family
ANSO 225 Sex and Sexualities
PSYC 270 Feminist Psychology of Women
PSYC 465 Advanced Psychology of Sexuality
POL310 Women, States, and NGO's
POL310/SEM406 Male Violence Against Women

Requirements for the Concentration in Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Number of Units

Six units are required.

Required Courses

The following three courses are required of all Women, Gender, and Sexuality concentrators:

POLS 265 Feminist Political Theories or WGS 390 Feminist and Queer Inquiries

WGS 101 Women, Gender, and Sexuality

WGS 490 Seminar in Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Elective Courses

Three elective courses chosen from the approved list above.

In the major and concentration, required courses are designed to introduce students to fundamental concepts and issues in Women, Gender, and Sexuality through the lens of disciplines representing the arts, the humanities, and the social sciences. Through this core, students should begin to see parallels between disciplines, to develop a basic vocabulary in the field of WGS, and to become familiar with major works, thinkers, and directions in the field.

Other, one-time course offerings may be counted as a core course only with the approval of the director. Courses taken overseas and at other U.S. colleges may meet major or concentration requirements with the approval of the director.

Senior Individualized Project (SIP)

The SIP in Women, Gender, and Sexuality is encouraged but not required. Any faculty member regularly teaching in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality program may direct a SIP in Women, Gender, and Sexuality.

Juniors planning to write a SIP in WGS are required to enroll in WGS 390: Feminist and Queer Inquiries.

Various resources exist to fund SIP research. A couple to consider are Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership Fund and CIP Grants for Student Projects Abroad.

Procedure for Approval

1. Enroll in WGS 390: Feminist and Queer Inquiries in your Junior Spring term. Discuss your plans to write a SIP in WGS with your proposed SIP advisor or with the WGS program director, who may recommend an appropriate advisor.
2. Revise your SIP proposal on the basis of your advisor's recommendations and submit it for signatures by the end of Week Eight of Spring term. The SIP proposal should be signed by the student and advisor and be delivered to the WGS program director. (Remember you must also register for the SIP with the Registrar).
3. Keep in mind that this is a provisional plan, and while we expect you to stick to your outline and schedule of research, we do recognize that your hypothesis and sources are a bit tentative. If your research takes a substantially different track than that proposed in your proposal, please contact your advisor immediately to get his or her advice.

Length

A thesis or research SIP might be comprised of 2-4 parts/sections/chapters, an introduction and conclusion, or some organizational equivalent. The student may make use of Internet source materials but not exclusively. The number of required bibliographic citations will be determined by the SIP advisor in consultation with the student. Guidelines: 1 unit: 30-50 pages of writing, excluding bibliographic materials; 2 units: 51-80 pages excluding bibliographical material.

Criteria for evaluation of other kinds of SIPs should be established in advance with the SIP advisor(s) and the WGS director.

Evaluation

The SIP is read and evaluated by the SIP advisor, according to the criteria set and agreed upon by the SIP advisor and the student, and on the basis of the student's success in meeting deadlines, completing revisions, and producing a competent piece of work.

If the SIP advisor would like to recommend the SIP for Honors, another member of the WGS program or occasionally a faculty member outside the program reads it. If that faculty member agrees, then the SIP is awarded Honors. One and two unit SIPs are eligible for consideration for honors.

Submission Requirements

For all SIPs, the final copy (i.e., no more revisions) is due to the SIP advisor no later than Friday of the second week of the term following the SIP quarter. For Summer SIPs, this means the second week of Fall quarter, even though Summer SIPs appear with the Fall registration. Students are expected to be completely finished with all work associated with the SIP by the time, with the possible exception of departmental symposia in later terms.

The time lag between students turning in complete SIPs and faculty deadlines for turning in grades should not be interpreted as extra time for students to make revisions to the SIP. Work on the SIP in a quarter in which the student is not registered for the SIP credit is considered an "invisible overload" for the students and is against College Policy.

Women, Gender & Sexuality courses

WGS 101 Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality

This course offers all students, including prospective concentrators in Women, Gender, and Sexuality, an introduction to the field, with attention to fundamental issues in Women's Studies. The course will identify the forms and sites of women's subordination, as well as women's collective responses to their conditions. In introducing the concept of structural inequality as it has affected women's lives, it will also explore the intersections of gender with race, sexual orientation, and class as significant factors in the construction of women's status.

WGS/POLS 265 Feminist Political Theories

A core course in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality curriculum, Feminist Political Theories introduces students to a wide variety of feminist theoretical frameworks. We will examine what it means to do feminist theory; modern feminist theories, including liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, and anarchist feminisms, as well as intersectionality theories; postmodern feminist thought, including queer and transgender theories and third-wave feminisms; and postcolonial feminist theories from early modernity to postmodernity.

Prerequisite: Sophomore Standing

WGS/IAST 295 Women in Latin America

This seminar provides an anthropological and historical introduction to the study of gender, gender-based violence, and women's activism in Latin America, with a focus on the realities and lived experiences of women in Latin America not only as victims of violence and oppression, but also as survivors and agents of their own herstory. Emphasis is placed on the phenomenon of gender violence, gender inequality, state terror, racism and socio-economic marginalization of women, children and LGBTIQ individuals.

WGS 295 Testimonies: Women's Narratives

The course will examine the complex interplay and negotiation of trauma, memory, resistance and agency through women's writing (memoirs, oral, and written testimonies) and in opposition to official accounts, grand narratives, national histories and interpretations of the past. It will address the ways in which women have been excluded from history and public memory and how this silencing and marginalization has been reflected, negotiated, and opposed in their own narratives and life-herstories. Accordingly, these (her)stories will be discussed not only as testimonies of fear, deprivation, sexual victimization, silencing and trivialization, but also as "spaces" of political activism, resistance, and agency.

WGS 390 Feminist and Queer Inquiry

An examination of the forces that have shaped or that are currently reshaping women, gender and sexuality studies. Focusing on the ways that recent work has drawn upon and challenged disciplinary forms of knowledge, the course aims to familiarize students with the current status of feminist and queer scholarship. The class encourages students to define their own critical interests and place themselves within this larger, scholarly conversation. Course will also prepare students for the SIP.

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors. Must have taken WGS-101.

WGS/ARTX 395 Performance Art in the 20th Century

This course examines the dynamic history of performance art in the twentieth century, from the historical avant-garde to contemporary practices. A chronological exploration of performance art, the course also studies the themes inherent to live performance works, most especially gender, sexuality, and race. We will trace the alternative models of artistic-subjectivities and spectatorship produced when the body - and its vulnerabilities - is the subject of art. Such themes include: the politicization of daily life; the problem of documentation; the inherent narcissism of body art; the role(s) of the body in psychological and phenomenological experience; and the body and its modern mechanizations.

WGS 490 Seminar in Women, Gender & Sexuality

A study of a particular aspect of feminist theory, history, or practice. Emphasis upon the theory and methodology of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, collaborative learning, and alternate source material. Topics vary annually.

Prerequisite: Senior Majors & Concentrators Only

WGS 593 Senior Individualized Project

Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Individualized Projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. See the Kalamazoo Curriculum Details and Policies section of the Academic Catalog for more details.

Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.

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