Women, Gender, and Sexuality

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 major is strongly recommended for those considering graduate work in women's, gender, and/or sexuality studies, but both the major and concentration are 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 GLBTQIA+ individuals and to understand how those issues intersect with other categories of identity, including race, nationality, religion, class, and ability. Students are encouraged to select courses from across different disciplines, in order to become acquainted with a variety of perspectives and methodologies. 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

In the major, 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.

Elective Courses
Four elective courses representing at least two divisions. Please note: all of the classes listed below have been pre-approved as electives, but any class that substantially includes gender and sexuality as a topic can be counted as an elective with the approval of the WGS program director. This includes classes taken during study abroad or at another college or university.

Fine Arts
ARTX 290 Art and Gender

Humanities
AFST/HIST/WGS 272 Gender Relations in Africa
CLAS/HIST 230 Women in Classical Antiquity
ENGL 323 Chicano/a Literature
ENGL 324 Early Modern Women's Literature: Shakespeare's Sisters
ENGL 325 19th Century Women's Literature: The Epic Age
ENGL 326 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
PHIL 311 Postmodern Critical Theory
RELG 202 Same-Sex, Gender, and Religion
RELG 204 Feminist Studies in Religion
RELG 210 Sex and the Bible

Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures
CHIN 260 Women in China
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
POLS 310 Women, States, and NGO's
POLS/SEMN 406 Male Violence Against Women
PSYC 270 Feminist Psychology of Women
PSYC 465 Advanced Psychology of Sexuality

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

In the 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.

Elective Courses
Three elective courses chosen from the approved list above. Please note: all of the classes listed above have been pre-approved as electives, but any class that substantially includes gender and sexuality as a topic can be counted as an elective with the approval of the WGS program director. This includes classes taken during study abroad or at another college or university.

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 immediate 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, gender, and sexuality studies. The course will identify the forms and sites of gender oppression, as well as the collective responses by women and queer people to their conditions. In introducing the concept of structural inequality as it has affected the lives of women and queer people, it will also explore how gender and sexuality are constructed alongside and through other categories of identity, including race, class, nationality, religion and ability.

WGS/HIST 246 Gender and Sexuality in 19th Cent Europe
This course is an introduction to the history of gender and sexuality in nineteenth-century Europe and its empires. It is organized roughly chronologically, but its approach is primarily thematic. We will consider how gender norms were constructed by philosophical, political, racial, and scientific thinking over the nineteenth century, and we will reflect on how individuals both conformed to and defied those norms in their individual lives. We will also examine nineteenth century beliefs about sex and sexuality and look at how those beliefs structured relationships within and across gendered lines.

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/HIST/AFST 272 Gender Relations in Africa
This course explores categories of masculinity and femininity that relate to and inform one another. It analyzes how these identity categories interact with other axes of social and political power, such as ethnic affiliation, economic status, and age in various places and at different historical times in Africa.

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 LGBTQ 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 298 Independent Study

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. Must have taken WGS-101.

WGS 490 Seminar in Women, Gender &amp; 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 &amp; 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.

The Academic Catalog contains the most accurate information available at the time of publication. Statements contained therein are not contractual obligations, and verbal or other representations that are inconsistent with or not contained within the catalogues' offerings or policies are not binding. Kalamazoo College reserves the right to change, without specific notice, offerings, policies, procedures, qualifications, fees, and other conditions.

This content was last updated on September 10 2019.