Women, Gender, and Sexuality

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 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 them 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 Introduction to 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 160 Art, Power, and Society
ARTX 290 Art and Gender
ARTX 345 Performance Art
ARTX 360 Queer Aesthetics

Humanities
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
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:
WGS 101 Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality
WGS 490 Seminar in Women, Gender, and Sexuality
WGS/POLS 265 Feminist Political Theories or WGS 390 Feminist and Queer Inquiries

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 Integrated 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 241 Princesses, Demonesses, and Warriors
The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are two ancient Sanskrit epic poems. For the past two thousand years, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been retold countless times by different poets, artists, playwrights, novelists, television producers, and filmmakers throughout South and Southeast Asia and the Diaspora. The creators of these Ramayanas and Mahabharatas include women, Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and members of low caste and indigenous groups. In this course, you will be introduced to the diverse and complex worlds of the Ramayana and Mahabharata narrative traditions through the close examination of eight different female characters in several retellings of these two epics. We will read excerpts from the Sanskrit Ramayana and the Sanskrit Mahabharata as well as a play, poems, short stories, and folk songs. We will also watch films and episodes from television shows. The Ramayanas and Mahabharatas that we will encounter in
this class were created in eight different languages.

**WGS/HIST 246 Gender and Sexuality in 19th Century 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 292 WGS in Early Latin America**
This course explores women, gender, and sexuality in Latin America from European invasion in 1492, through to Latin American independence in the 1820s. Using a range of primary sources and selected readings, we will use gender and sexuality as a category of analysis into the world(s) forged by Native Americans, Iberians, and Africans in Latin America during its “colonial” period.

**WGS 390 Feminist and Queer Inquiries**
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 Integrated Project**
Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Integrated 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 -&gt; Senior Integrated Project section of the Academic Catalog for more details.
*Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.*

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