

# Women's and Gender Studies

## Requirements

### *Interdisciplinary*

The major and concentration in women's and gender studies offer students an opportunity to engage in two important and interrelated areas of study. Students will examine aspects of experiences that have traditionally been underrepresented (if not invisible) in academic studies — for example, the lives and works of women, the experiences of gays and lesbians. Students also will examine gender as a cultural phenomenon: as a system of ideas defining "masculinity" and "femininity" and delineating differences between "the sexes" as well as "normal" expressions of sexuality. In the process, students will encounter some fundamental methodologies of women's and gender studies and will work toward an increasingly rich understanding of gender as a social construction, one that intersects with class, race, age, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation and sexual identity. In addition, students will explore the methods and concepts of women's and gender studies in a variety of academic disciplines, integrating, for instance, sociology, psychology, literature, the biological sciences and art history. Students will come to understand how questions of gender are deeply embedded in the liberal arts tradition.

## **THE MAJOR AND CONCENTRATION**

The major and concentration encourage and enable students to take responsibility for their own learning. Toward this end, courses will invite students to participate in a range of collaborative work. This culminates in the senior colloquium, where students determine the content and intellectual direction of the course as a whole. Ultimately, students are encouraged to acquire a sophisticated insight into the consequences of the social construction of gender for both women and men, an insight that empowers them to engage and question the pervasive role of gender in their own lives and communities. Students construct their major by choosing courses from the offerings of both the Women's and Gender Studies Program and more than 15 other departments and programs across the College.

## **FIRST-YEAR AND NEW STUDENTS**

WGS 111 "Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies" is a wide-ranging interdisciplinary course designed to help students develop a critical framework for thinking about questions relating to gender. Students will examine the historical development of gendered public and private spheres, the relation of biological sex to sociological gender, and the difference between sex roles and sexual stereotypes. They will attempt to understand how racism, heterosexism and homophobia intersect with the cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity and will consider ways to promote more egalitarian gender relations. Students also are encouraged to explore more specialized areas of gender studies in courses specifically designed for students at

all levels, including first-year students. These include WGS 121, WGS 221 and WGS 232. Students completing WGS 111 can enroll in WGS 242 to explore gender studies in a more global context.

## **WGS COURSES AND DIVERSIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Courses in the Women's and Gender Studies Program may count toward students' collegiate diversification requirements in either social sciences or humanities only as outlined below.

WGS 221 paired with any other WGS course will satisfy the humanities diversification requirement.

Any two WGS courses, not including WGS 221, paired will satisfy social sciences diversification.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR**

Credits: 5 units will be required for the major.

### **1. Introductory requirement: .5 unit**

WGS 111 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

### **2. Mid-level requirements: 1 unit**

WGS 330 Feminist Theory

WGS 331 Gender, Power and Knowledge: Research Practices

### **3. Diversity and globalization: 1 unit**

Students must take two courses that focus on the social and cultural issues of U.S. and/or world peripheral communities. Consult the director for a list of courses that may be applied to this requirement.

### **4. Cluster: 2 units**

Majors will be required to declare in writing a cluster of related courses that will form the foundation of their major. These clusters might be largely disciplinary (Spanish area studies, English literature, psychology), or they might be interdisciplinary (sexuality, international studies, American studies, biosocial sexual study of gender). Upon supplying a justification and obtaining permission of the program director, students may count .5 unit of non-WGS courses toward this cluster requirement. Some examples of clusters chosen by majors include Women, Law and Politics; Queer Theory; Women and Islam; Gender and the Environment; and Gender, Class and the State.

### **5. Senior Colloquium: .5 unit**

WGS 481 (Senior Colloquium) examines a topic central to feminist thought. It includes current feminist texts and incorporates multidisciplinary analyses of race, class and sexuality, in addition to gender. The course culminates in a public presentation by colloquium members. Senior

majors and concentrators will meet in the fall to design the colloquium, which will be offered spring semester.

## **6. Senior Exercise**

### **SENIOR EXERCISE**

The Senior Exercise for the major in women's and gender studies consists of:

1. Designing and planning the Senior Colloquium (WGS 481) in the fall.
2. Creating an annotated bibliography reflecting the specialization and cluster chosen by each student, due at the end of the fall semester. The annotated bibliography should be interdisciplinary and consist of the most relevant and current research applicable to the student's chosen interdisciplinary cluster. Accompanying the bibliography will be a five-page essay introducing the bibliography and discussing the state of the field as well as areas that warrant further research.
3. Passing the Senior Colloquium (WGS 481) in the spring.

### **HONORS**

The major who wishes to participate in the Honors Program must have an overall GPA of 3.33, and 3.5 in the major. The candidate in honors will complete all requirements for the major as well as the Senior Exercise. He or she will take two semesters of independent study and will design and complete a research project. This project should integrate both feminist theory and methodologies, as well as the student's chosen disciplinary or interdisciplinary cluster. Each honors student will prepare an annotated bibliography on her or his chosen project during the fall term. After approval, the senior honors project will be undertaken in consultation with a project advisor.

We encourage students to think boldly and innovatively about the kinds of projects they undertake and about how those projects interact with and benefit their communities. Senior honors projects might include gender-focused sociological or historical studies undertaken locally; exhibitions, productions or installations of gender-exploratory art, music or theater; or political, social and/or environmental service-oriented or activist work. Students will be closely mentored throughout their projects and, in the spring, will be evaluated by an external evaluator and by faculty in the program and in relevant disciplines. The evaluators will assess the strength of the students' overall work, as well as the strength of their self-designed, project-appropriate public presentations of that work.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONCENTRATION**

Credits: 3 units of courses in women's and gender studies

1. Either WGS 330 (Feminist Theory) or WGS 331 (Gender, Power and Knowledge: Research Practices )
2. WGS 481 (Senior Colloquium). See description, above.
3. Electives: Four approved courses which must be spread over at least two divisions of the College. No more than 1 unit in a single department may count toward this requirement.

### **TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY**

The Program in Women's and Gender Studies typically accepts transfer credits from other colleges and universities for courses that meet College requirements for transfer credit. We especially encourage students to take courses that are not regularly offered in our curriculum. We do not permit students to earn transfer credits through online evaluation or two-week special courses offered during winter breaks. All transfer credit must be approved by the program director.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSES THAT MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS MAJOR/CONCENTRATION**

Below are listed the departmental courses that count toward the WGS major and concentration between Fall 2012 and Spring 2015.

\* indicates the courses that count toward the diversity and globalization requirement.

#### **FALL 2012**

\*ANTH 350: Human Sexuality and Culture  
 BIOL 103: Biology in Science Fiction  
 CLAS 471: Senior Seminar: Women in Antiquity  
 ENGL 103.09: Seductions  
 ENGL 103.13: What's Love Got to Do With It?  
 ENGL 291: Gender Benders  
 ENGL 491: Body Politics: Transgender and Disability Narrative  
 HIST 208: Women in American History  
 \*PSYC 327: Cross Cultural Psychology  
 SOCY 491: Special Topic: Gender, Family, and State

#### **SPRING 2013**

ENGL 254: Literary Women: 19th C. British Literature  
 ENGL 453: Jane Austen  
 PSCI 380: Gender and Politics  
 PSYC 346: Psychology of Women  
 RLST 329: Christian Mysticism

- \*RUSS 340: Russian Culture Through Cinema
- \*SPAN 383: Travel Narratives and Cultural Encounters in L.A.
- \*SPAN 380 Introduction to Chicano/a Cultural Studies

### **FALL 2013**

- \*ANTH 350: Human Sexuality and Culture
- ECON 378: Economics of Women and Work
- ENGL 103.13: What's Love Got to Do with It
- \*ENGL 103.15: Queer Identities
- \*ENGL 386: Toni Morrison
- ENGL 391: US Fiction in 19th Century
- ENGL 469: Atwood and Ondaatje
- \*HIST 373: Women of the Atlantic World
- PSYC 321: Abnormal Psychology
- PSYC 342: Clinical Psychology

### **SPRING 2014**

- ENGL 103.13: What's Love Got to Do with It
- \*ENGL 284: Demons, Great Whites and Aliens: Representing American Fear
- ENGL 291: Love, Sex, and Desire in Medieval Romance
- ENGL 384: Imagining America in the Novel, 1900-1952
- \*PSYC 328: Latino Psychology
- RLST 491: Blood, Power, and Gender in Christianity
- SPAN 353: The Literature of National Experience: Argentina
- SPAN 371: Gender Identity and Power in Women's Literature

### **FALL 2014**

- \*ANTH 350: Human Sexuality and Culture
- BIOL 103: Biology in Science Fiction
- BIOL 104: Biology of Female Sexuality
- \*CHNS 326: Women of the Inner Chambers
- \*ENGL 214: Gender Benders
- \*ENGL 286: Transgressive Friendships in American Literature
- ENGL 375: From Cooper to Crane
- ENGL 391.02: The Fourth Genre: Explorations in Literary Journalism
- \*HIST 341: African Women in Film and Fiction
- JAPN 391: Exploring Cultures in Japan through Gender and Sexuality
- GERM 366: Cinema & Sexuality in German Film after 1990
- \*SPAN 360: The Power of Words: Testimonial Literature In L.A.
- \*SOCY 422: Topics in Social Stratification

**SPRING 2015**

ANTH 291: Gender Archaeology

\*BIOL 102: HIV/AIDS in a Global Context

\*ENGL 104: Queer Tales, Queer Texts: Reading GLBT Literature

ENGL 210: Proper Ladies and Women Writers

\*ENGL 381: Narratives of the Hemisphere

ENGL 384: Imagining America in the Novel, 1900-1952

\*ENGL 388: Black Women Writers

ENGL 453: Jane Austen

\*HIST 236: Modern Germany: Gender, Race, and Class

JAPN 391: Women, Natives, and Others: Japanese Literature as World Literature

PSYC 346: Psychology of Women

SOCY 225: Notions of the Family

## Courses

### **WGS 111 INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES**

*Credit: 0.5*

This course will introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of women's and gender studies, out of which some of the most innovative and challenging developments in recent scholarship are arising. It will provide students with critical frameworks for thinking about the social construction of gender at the personal and institutional levels. Emphasis will be placed on diverse women's significant contributions to knowledge and culture; to other areas of gender studies, including men's studies, family studies and the study of sexuality; and to the intersections of various forms of oppression both within and outside of the U.S. The course will include both scholarly as well as personal texts, visual as well as written text. Offered every semester.

### **WGS 121 HUMAN SEXUALITIES**

*Credit: 0.5*

This course is designed to help students develop a critical framework for thinking and writing about issues related to sexual orientation. The course will take a broad view, examining sexuality from legal, psychological, biological, cultural, ethical, philosophical and phenomenological frameworks. We will look at the emerging fields of the history of sexuality and queer theory, out of which some of the most innovative and challenging developments in modern cultural studies are arising. No prerequisite. Offered every other year.

### **WGS 150 GENDER AND POPULAR CULTURE**

*Credit: 0.5 QR*

In this class we will examine how popular culture (e.g., media) represents gender through making observations, reading background theory, examining content analysis research and conducting our own research. We will examine the extent to which popular culture depicts gender-stereotyped behavior, the content of the gender stereotypes, the possible reasons why stereotypes are portrayed and the likely effects of these stereotypes on the behavior of individuals and the structure of society. To the extent that it is possible, we will examine the intersection of stereotypes about gender with those associated with race/ethnicity, social class, age and sexuality. This course satisfies the quantitative reasoning requirement because students will learn about descriptive statistics and put them to use by conducting their own content analysis (in a small group) and presenting and writing about the results of their research. There also is a service-learning component to the course in that students will develop a media literacy lesson for high school students based on what they learn about their topic. The lesson could potentially be used by the DELTA Project of Mount Vernon in their efforts to prevent intimate partner violence and sexual violence. This course satisfies a requirement in the women's and gender studies major and concentration. This course is designed for first-year students. No prerequisite.

Instructor: Murnen

## **WGS 221 GENDER AND FILM**

*Credit: 0.5*

This course explores the representation and construction of gender in and through film. Adopting both a historical and theoretical approach, we will focus on how masculinity and femininity, in their various forms and combinations, are signified, how the gender of both the character and the spectator is implicated in the cinematic gaze, and how gender characterizations inform and reflect the larger culture/society surrounding the film. A wide variety of cinematic traditions will be discussed, and although Hollywood films will form the base of the course, other national and regional cinemas will be explored, through both the screening of full-length films and numerous excerpts of others. No prerequisite. Note: This course requires attendance at weekly film showings in addition to regular class meetings. Offered every other year.

## **WGS 232 TOPICS IN MASCULINITY**

*Credit: 0.5*

Through focus on a specific topic, this course will explore how men's lives are shaped by and shape the gendered social order. Macro and micro perspectives will guide discussions focusing on how men behave in particular contexts and how they perceive themselves, other men, and women in diverse situations. Specific topics investigating the production of masculinities will take into account the interplay among the cultural, interpersonal and individual layers of social life while considering how men's efforts are enabled or constrained by key socially relevant characteristics (primarily age, race/ethnicity, class and sexual orientation) through investigations, for instance, of particular sites (e.g., playgrounds, work space, home, schools, athletic venues, prisons). No prerequisite.

## **WGS 242 TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISMS**

*Credit: 0.5*

This course examines the impact of globalization on feminist discourses that describe the cross-cultural experiences of women. Transnational feminist theories and methodologies destabilize Western feminisms, challenging notions of subjectivity and place and their connections to experiences of race, class, and gender. The course builds on four key concepts: development, democratization, cultural change and colonialism. Because transnational feminisms are represented by the development of women's global movements, the course will consider examples of women's global networks and the ways in which they destabilized concepts such as citizenship and rights. We also will examine how transnational feminisms have influenced women's productions in the fields of literature and art. Key questions include: How does the history of global feminisms affect local women's movements? What specific issues have



galvanized women's movements across national and regional borders? How do feminism and critiques of colonialism and imperialism intersect? What role might feminist agendas play in addressing current global concerns? How do transnational feminisms build and sustain communities and connections to further their agendas? Prerequisite: WGS 111 or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

### **WGS 330 FEMINIST THEORY**

*Credit: 0.5*

In this course, we will read both historical and contemporary feminist theory with the goal of understanding the multiplicity of feminist approaches to women's experiences, the representation of women, and women's relative positions in societies. Theoretical positions that will be represented include liberal, cultural, psychoanalytic, socialist, and poststructuralist feminism. In addition, we will explore the relationship of these theories to issues of race, class, sexual preference and ethnicity through an examination of the theoretical writings of women of color and non-Western women. Prerequisite: any WGS course, any approved departmental course or permission of instructor. Offered every year.

### **WGS 331 GENDER, POWER, AND KNOWLEDGE: RESEARCH PRACTICES**

*Credit: 0.5*

This class will examine feminist critiques of dominant methodologies and theories of knowledge creation in the sciences, social sciences and humanities. It will focus on the following questions: How do we know something? Who gets to decide what counts as knowledge? Who is the knower? In answering these questions this class will explore how power is exercised in the production of knowledge, how the norms of objectivity and universalism perpetuate dominance and exclusion, why women and other minority groups are often seen as lacking epistemic authority and what it means to have knowledge produced from a feminist standpoint. Participants in the class will learn a variety of methods and use these methods in a group research project. In addition, we will discuss various ethical issues that feminist researchers often encounter and what responsibilities feminist researchers have to the broader political community. Prerequisite: any WGS course, any approved departmental course, or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

### **WGS 481 SENIOR COLLOQUIUM**

*Credit: 0.5*

The senior colloquium is organized around a theme determined by senior majors and concentrators in consultation with the instructor during the semester prior to the beginning of the course. Previous topics include "Women and Madness," "The Politics of the Bathroom" and

"Gender and Tourism." Prerequisite: WGS 330 or 331 or permission of instructor. Offered every spring.

### **WGS 493 INDIVIDUAL STUDY**

*Credit: 0.25-0.5*

Individual study enables students to examine an area not typically covered by courses regularly offered in the program. Typically, such students are juniors or seniors who have sufficient research and writing skills to work very independently. The course can be arranged with a faculty member in any department but must conform to the usual requirements for credit in the program: gender is a central focus, and the course draws on feminist theory and/or feminist methodologies. The amount of work should be similar to that in any other 400-level course. To enroll, a student should first contact a faculty member and, in consultation with that professor, develop a proposal. The proposal, which must be approved by the program director, should provide: a brief description of the course/project (including any previous classes that qualify the student), a preliminary bibliography or reading list, an assessment component (what will be graded and when), and major topical areas to be covered during the semester. The student and faculty member should plan to meet approximately one hour per week or the equivalent, at the discretion of the instructor. Proposals should be planned well in advance, preferably the semester before the proposed project.

### **WGS 497 SENIOR HONORS**

*Credit: 0.5*

The major who wishes to participate in the honors program must have an overall GPA of 3.33 and a GPA of 3.5 in the major. The candidate in honors will complete all requirements for the major, the Senior Exercise, and two semesters of independent study, and will design and complete a research project. This project should integrate feminist theory and methodologies as well as the student's chosen disciplinary or interdisciplinary cluster. Each honors student will prepare an annotated bibliography on her or his chosen project midway through the fall semester. After approval, the senior honors project will be undertaken in consultation with a project advisor. Students are encouraged to think boldly and innovatively about the kinds of projects they undertake and about how those projects interact with and benefit their communities. Senior honors projects might include gender-focused sociological or historical studies undertaken locally; exhibitions, productions or installations of gender-exploratory art, music or theater; or political, social and/or environmental service-oriented or activist work. Students will be closely mentored throughout their projects and, in the spring, will be evaluated by an external evaluator and by faculty in the program and in relevant disciplines. The evaluators will assess the strength of the students' overall work, as well as the strength of their self-designed, project-appropriate public presentations of that work.

## **WGS 498 SENIOR HONORS**

*Credit: 0.5*

See the course description for WGS 497.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSES THAT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS CONCENTRATION:**

ARHS 375: Topics in Renaissance and Baroque Art

BIOL 102: HIV/AIDS in Global Context

ENGL 254: Literary Women: 19th-Century British Literature

HIST 208: U.S. Women's History

HIST 341: African Women in Film and Fiction

HIST 370: Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East

HIST 373: Women of the Atlantic World

HIST 452: Women, Gender, and State in East Asia

MUSC 303: Music and Gender

PSCI 380: Gender and Politics

PSYC 346: Psychology of Women

PSYC 425: Research Methods to Study Gender

RLST 328: Women in Christianity

RLST 329: Christian Mysticism