

Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies (WGS)

Note: Cross-listed courses are available in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. For more information, consult the listing in the appropriate department.

WGS 177. Independent Studies. (0-6; maximum 10)

WGS 201. Introduction to Women's Studies. (3)

Interdisciplinary introduction to the study of women which focuses on determinants and expressions of women's roles. IC, IIC, IIIB. PA-2A, PA-4B, PA-4C. CAS-C.

WGS 202. Introduction to GLBT Studies. (3)

Introduction to the scholarly field of GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender) Studies. Provides the intellectual foundation for the further study of non-normative genders and sexualities. IC, IIB. PA-3B, PA-4B. CAS-B.

WGS 203. Sociology of Gender. (3)

Description and analysis of gender in human society with special attention to constraints placed on both males and females by current socialization practices, and to issues in equality from historic as well as contemporary perspectives. IC. PA-4B. CAS-C.
Cross-listed with SOC.

WGS 211. Writing with Purpose: Interdisciplinary Inquiry and Communication. (3)

This is an intermediate level course which enables students to investigate and discuss interdisciplinary practices of knowledge creation and dissemination. Students will practice a variety of writing and other communication strategies necessary for the effective dissemination of ideas to interdisciplinary audiences and the general public, and can expect to gain experience in working with a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary research, tools and methods while engaging intellectually in interdisciplinary modes of thinking, reading, listening, and speaking. ADVW. PA-1C.
Cross-listed with AAA/AMS/CRE/LAS.

WGS 221. Sexualities. (3)

Introduction to the study of human sexual behavior with particular attention paid to the issues of gender development; premarital, marital, and post-marital sexual patterns; birth control; sexual dysfunction; cross-cultural sexual patterns; and diverse sexual lifestyles. PA-4A.
Cross-listed with FSW 221 and SOC 221.

WGS 232. Women Writers. (3)

Introduction to women's writing in English. Readings may include poetry, drama, fiction and non-fiction by women writers from various historical periods and national traditions. IC. PA-3B. PA-4B. CAS-B-LIT.
Cross-listed with ENG 232.

WGS 237. GLBTQ Literature. (3)

Study of literature by and about sexual minorities, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer identities, cultural contexts, and social movements. IIB, IC. PA-3B, PA-4B. CAS-B-LIT.
Cross-listed with ENG 237.

WGS 277. Independent Studies. (0-6; maximum 10)

WGS 278. Women and (Dis)ability: Fictions and Contaminations of Identity. (3)

Provides a critical analysis of the historical, sociological, cultural, media and educational images and representations of women with disabilities. Current research and theories from Disabilities Studies and Womens Studies will serve as the lenses for the exploration of disability as a social construct. The course will focus on exploration of oppressive social forces embedded in the re/presentations of and by women with disabilities which transform and complicate such images.

Cross-listed with DST/EDP.

WGS 301. Women and Difference: Intersections of Race, Class, and Sexuality. (3)

Investigation of the interdisciplinary theoretical approaches to the interplay of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other aspects of social identity in women's lives; analysis of the ways social difference is defined, used, and experienced. Emphasis on feminist and womanist theories that take into account the interdependence of multiple categories of social difference. Open to majors and minors or other students with permission of instructor. IC. PA-4B.
Prerequisite: WGS 201.

WGS 302. Geography and Gender. (3)

This class adopts a geographic approach to the study of gender relations. The role of space and place in shaping the diversity of gender relations throughout the world will be considered. Through case studies the importance of gender relations in understanding a variety of issues will be stressed. Overall, we will explore how geography shapes gender relations and how gender produces a variety of geographies. IC. PA-4B.
Cross-listed with GEO.

WGS 309. Native American Women. (3)

A survey of writings and film by and about Native American women. The objective of the course is to provide students with a broad overview of Native American perspectives on a variety of topics including indigenous viewpoints on research methods, environmental activism, politics and policy, and critical analysis. IC. PA-4B. CAS-C.
Cross-listed with GEO.

WGS 313. Marriage Across Cultures. (3)

This class engages feminist theory and gender studies to explore the consequences of different types of marital formations (polygamous as well as monogamous) for the lives of women and men in selected Western and non-Western cultures. IC. PA-4B. CAS-B.
Cross-listed with REL.

WGS 325. Identity, Race, Gender, Class. (3)

Develops conceptual tools and critical perspectives that enable students to better understand and analyze the processes through which identities are constructed and experienced. Learning activities facilitate analysis of individual identities as experienced through the life cycle and across diverse cultural and subcultural contexts, and build a systematic understanding of the processes and dynamics through which identities and identity groups develop and interact. CAS-C.
Cross-listed with ATH/CRE/LAS.

WGS 330. Religion, Sex, & Gender. (3; maximum 6)

Do people have gender-specific ways of experiencing religious life? Learn how gender and sexuality shape a person's religious life. See how organized religion is in turn shaped by the lived experience of humans with gendered and sexualized bodies. Apply feminist and queer theory to selected case studies in order to analyze how religions respond to people and how people respond to religion. CAS-B.

Cross-listed with REL 330.

WGS 333. Religion, Dress, and Status. (3)

Displays of status through constrictive dress and gender segregation will be explored with reference to religion, gender, and class. Course will explore the topic through selected case studies, several of which involve Islamic cultures.

Cross-listed with REL.

WGS 336. Ancient Sexualities. (3)

This course examines the written and visual evidence for ancient sexual practices, as well as ancient attitudes towards these practices as found in ancient law, philosophy, love poetry, novels, and other texts. Our reading of primary sources will be informed by modern writings on gender and sexuality. We will also engage with recent debates about the ideologies reflected in ancient codes of sexual conduct. Through a close reading of a variety of ancient Greek and Roman texts and images, together with contemporary interpretive readings, we will attempt to reach not only a fuller understanding of some central features of the cultures of Greece and Rome, but also, by holding up the mirror of antiquity to our own beliefs and practices, to arrive at a more critical consideration of how we think about sex and gender today.

Cross-listed with CLS.

WGS 340. Internship. (0-20)**WGS 346. Global Gender Politics. (3)**

Examination of the role of women in political participation, political protest, and political and economic development worldwide. Explores the usefulness of gender as a conceptual tool for comparative analysis, and uses case study material from the developed and developing world to examine how women's involvement in politics both shapes and is shaped by various political contexts.

Prerequisite: POL 221.

Cross-listed with POL 346.

WGS 348. Gender Politics & Policy in the United States. (3)

Addresses the role of gender in American politics. Topics include the history of women's rights in American politics, differences between the political behavior of men and women, the role of gender in elections and in leadership, and current policies that affect women.

Prerequisite: POL 241 or WGS 201.

Cross-listed with POL.

WGS 351. Cultural Politics of Gender and Sexuality in Asian/America. (3)

Intensive interdisciplinary study of imaginative representations of the encounters between "Asia" and "America," broadly conceived, particularly the entangled relations among their diverse constituencies in the contexts of colonialism and globalization. Key topics include feminist critique of gendered violence and human rights issues; Euro-American militarism and sex tourism; the emergence of new categories of sex, gender, and kinship as lived experiences mediated by transnational consumer culture and institutional structures; masculinity and Asian diasporic nationalisms; pan-Asian movements against racism, colonialism, and neoliberalism both in Asia and the U.S.; and the emergence of new critical, artistic and aesthetic practices. IC. PA-4B.

Cross-listed with AAA/ENG.

WGS 355. Feminist Theory. (3)

Examination of major writing by contemporary feminist thinkers. Traditional philosophical questions, such as justice, freedom, nature of a person, and relationship of an individual to society, are raised in context relevant to both male and female students.

Cross-listed with PHL.

WGS 356. Women and Gender in Film. (3)

This course explores the construction of gender and representations of women in film in two contexts: in mainstream Hollywood cinema and in experimental and independent films. While not providing an extensive history of women in film, the course provides a sampling of iconic films—from early cinema to the present—to critically examine how women are portrayed throughout the twentieth century and in various genres, in films made by both men and women. Course readings engage theoretical and practical points of contact within cinema, including feminist film theory, postcolonial theory, psychoanalysis, queer theory, and critical race theory. IIB, IC. PA-3B, PA-4B. CAS-B-LIT.

Cross-listed with ENG/FST.

WGS 361. Couple Relationships: Diversity and Change. (3)

Investigation of intimate couple relationships in their many diverse forms. Focuses on social and psychological factors influencing development and maintenance of such couple relationships as dating, cohabitation, and marriage. General principles are discussed as well as factors that are more specific to certain age groups, relationship types, or sociocultural settings. IC. PA-4B.

Prerequisite: three hours of social science.

Cross-listed with FSW.

WGS 369. Sexuality, Youth, Education. (3)

This interdisciplinary course utilizes insights from a variety of areas - such as literature, sociology, popular culture, law, and medicine - to analyze how contemporary discourses of sexuality are viewed from multiple perspectives. The course investigates how discourses of sexuality co-mingle with discourses of youth with special attention to the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, nationality and ability. Working from a Critical Youth Studies (CYS) framework and similar theoretical positions, the course privileges scholarship and community-based educational models which foreground issues of equity, social justice, and youth participatory activism.

WGS 370. Selected Topics in Women's Studies. (3)

Examines specific aspects of women's roles, status, and experiences.

WGS 377. Independent Studies. (0-6; maximum 10)**WGS 382. Women in American History. (3)**

Survey of the history of women's lives and roles in American society from colonial period to present. Emphasis on examining women's individual and collective roles in private and public spheres and on exploring how specific economic and political transformations have affected women's lives. IC. PA-4B. CAS-B. Cross-listed with AMS and HST.

WGS 383. Brazilian Women through Literature and Film. (3)

Addresses questions about gender, race, class and stereotype of women's bodies in 20th-century Brazil. IIB, IIIB. PA-3B, PA-4C. CAS-B-LIT.

Cross-listed with ENG/FST/POR.

WGS 392. Sex and Gender in American Culture. (3)

Examination of change over time in the construction of sexual norms, attitudes, and behaviors in American culture, as well as of gender roles. Covers the period just prior to the Indian-European encounter to the present. IC. PA-4B. CAS-B.

Cross-listed with AMS/HST.

WGS 401. The Role of Women in a Transforming Society. (3)

Review of current and historically significant feminist writings on the ways in which patriarchal structures of authority affect what students know about women's experiences. Students position themselves as creators of knowledge about women's experiences and as members of self-critical communities of activists who are transforming society and women's positions in that society. Includes readings, discussions, and individual and group projects. Students learn to celebrate similarities in experiences and perspectives, and to understand and appreciate differences. SC.

Prerequisite: WGS 201 and at least 12 semester hours in WGS courses, or permission of instructor.

WGS 402/WGS 502. Engaged Learning Practicum. (1-6; maximum 6)

This course connects feminist theory and practice, and is designed around Service-Learning at a practicum site. The readings explore leadership, feminist grassroots organizing, service learning and civic engagement, feminist activism, and difference and cultural competence. Students will have the opportunity to translate the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking they have learned in the classroom to actual practice, to observe and work with professionals who are addressing women's/gender issues in the field, and to reflect on their own roles as future leaders and professionals.

Prerequisite: WGS 201 or 202 or 301.

Cross-listed with CRE.

WGS 406. Indigenous Peoples and Their Sacred Lands. (3)

An in depth look at topics related to policy and land management practices that impact indigenous peoples nationally, as well as internationally. The major focus of the various case studies is on designated sacred lands of Native American tribes within the United States. The course provides students with interdisciplinary training about indigenous cultures and human rights.

Cross-listed with GEO.

WGS 422/WGS 522. Politics and Ethics of Theatre and Performance: Representation, Race, Gender, Class and Sexuality. (3)

An advanced course that foregrounds political and ethical questions in relation to theatre and performance in the areas of race, class, gender and sexuality.

Prerequisites: THE 291, THE 292 and Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

Cross-listed with THE.

WGS 432. Feminism and the Diaspora: U.S. Women of Color. (3)

Concerns issues of language, history, geography, social-psychology, and culture for U.S. women of color (black, Asian-American, Latina, American Indian, and others). Includes works by and about women on gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and other differences. SC. CAS-B-LIT.

Cross-listed with CRE 432 and ENG 432.

WGS 435/WGS 535. Queer Theory. (3)

Analysis of how gender and sexuality have informed our understandings of cultural texts and contexts. Emphasizes how discourses of gender and sexuality function within a variety of historical, cultural, and/or aesthetic traditions.

Cross-listed with ENG.

WGS 436/WGS 536. Women, Gender, and the Environment. (3)

Seminar discussing literature on the role of women in their relationships with natural resources as advocates, practitioners, and scholars. Ideas on ecofeminism will be introduced from more-developed "north" and developing "south" perspectives, and then directed toward the study of gender and development, and participatory tools in gender analysis. CAS-C.

Cross-listed with GEO 436/GEO 536.

WGS 437/WGS 537. Black Feminist Theory. (3)

Examines critical and theoretical issues in black feminism from slavery to the present. One of the central goals of the course is to interrogate race, gender, class, and sexuality in the context of black women's thoughts and experiences. The class will read, discuss and analyze a wide variety of texts including critical essays, films, selected fiction, print and visual media.

Cross-listed with CRE/ENG.

WGS 450/WGS 550. Topics in Women's History. (3; maximum 12)

In-depth study of a selected topic in the history of women, focusing on either a specific period and place, or a theme.

Cross-listed with HST.

WGS 451/WGS 551. Interpersonal Violence. (3)

This course examines and evaluates how interpersonal violence impacts individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Using ecological/feminist framework, emphasis is placed on the examination of violence within varied contexts. Topics and class discussions will focus heavily on concepts related to prevention and intervention. Student will use critical thinking, engage with other learners, and complete personal reflections. SC.

Cross-listed with SOC 451 and FSW 451/FSW 551/551.

WGS 461. Gender, Sexuality and Media. (3)

Examines how media help to shape notions of gender in society, how gender ideologies influence mass media perspectives and practices, and how mediated representations may reinforce or challenge social hierarchies based in differences of gender, race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation.

Cross-listed with MAC.

WGS 470. Senior Thesis in Women's Studies. (3-4)

Focuses on the production of the senior thesis. Senior theses may report the results of original research, critical analysis, activist work and/or creation of art, music, performance, fiction, or other forms. Periodic meetings provide a forum to discuss progress and problems, share with peers the process of framing and implementing a project, research, and writing, and practice presenting results. The course culminates in a public presentation of results.

Prerequisite: Senior capstone in WGS (WGS 401 or WGS 370E).

WGS 475. Women, Gender Relations, and Sport. (3)

Explores the meanings of women's participation in sport and physical activity using sociological, feminist, and cultural studies perspectives. Special consideration given to the ideological significance of sport in U.S. culture and ways in which sporting women accept and challenge contemporary gender relations.

Prerequisite: junior or graduate standing.

Cross-listed with SLM 475/SLM 575/575.

WGS 477. Independent Studies. (0-6)

WGS 601. Introduction To Women's Studies. (3)

A seminar that focuses on Women's Studies as an academic project and a force for social change in the U.S., tracing its historical development and identifying some of its central issues. Readings, discussion, and assignments help students understand the impact of Women's Studies upon academia and upon their own lives.

WGS 602. Feminist Theory & Methodology. (3)

A seminar that investigates major research methods (empirical studies, case studies, ethnographies, rhetorical analyses, textual and historical studies) as they are theorized and practiced within contemporary feminism. As an interdisciplinary project, feminist academic research includes work from psychology, sociology, literary studies, languages, the arts, anthropology, philosophy, education, mathematics, political science and law, and the sciences. This seminar highlights the ways in which research methodology and theorizing are informed by feminist analyses of institutional power, social difference, and position of the researcher.

WGS 677. Independent Studies. (0-6; maximum 10)

WGS 785. Theory Gender, Sex, Ed. (3)

This course examines the multiple, changing meanings and political effects of gender and sexuality in various socio-cultural and educational contexts. It foregrounds analysis of how social institutions, such as education, the law, family and economy, and cultural representations, such as literary and popular media, shape competing concepts of gender and sexuality. The course readings and collective dialogue place particular attention on feminist scholarship on women, girls and sexual minorities.

Cross-listed with EDL 785.