WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

Women’s and Gender Studies focuses on issues of identity and systems of power, through reflection on personal, social and historical realities.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Specifically, women’s and gender studies connects theory to self-awareness and social responsibility. Whereas historically, the voices of women and other minorities (including feminist men) have been muted, women’s and gender studies puts these voices at the center of the curriculum.

WGS Sample ELECTIVE COURSES:

Examples of Arts and Humanities that have counted towards a Women’s and Gender Studies major/minor:

- Christian Feminism
- U.S. Cultural History: Ideas of Race, Class and Gender
- Women in Early Modern Europe
- 19th and 20th Century British Women Writers
- Sexual Ethics
- 20th Century Dance History
- Women, Art and Society in 18th and 19th Century France

Examples of Social Sciences courses that have counted towards a Women’s and Gender Studies major/minor:

- Gender, Conflict and Peace
- Sociology of Gender
- Sociology of Popular Culture
- Psychology of Gender
- Human Sexuality
- Intergroup Dialogue
- Social Work and the Family
MAJORS

Women’s And Gender Studies

The women’s and gender studies major consists of 32 credits. All students must take 16 credits of core courses:

- WGS 160 – Women in a Global Society
- WGS 200 – Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies
- WGS 350 – Feminist Visions of Justice: Feminist Theory and Methodology
- WGS 494 – Keystone Seminar

The remaining 16 credits are to be a balance of electives from Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences (at least one course from each division), which must be chosen in consultation with the WGS director.

MINORS

Women’s And Gender Studies

The women’s and gender studies minor consists of 20 credits. All students take WGS 200 – Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies and choose two out of the three following core courses:

- WGS 160 – Women in a Global Society
- WGS 350 – Feminist Visions of Justice: Theory and Methodology
- WGS 494 – Keystone Seminar

The remaining 8 credits are to be a balance of electives from Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences (at least one course from each division), which must be chosen in consultation with the WGS director.
COURSES

WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

WGS 160 - Women in a Global Society
This course seeks to investigate the broad spectrum of women’s movements that thrive across the developing world. Particular emphasis is on globalization and development as well as women’s interaction with neo-liberal economics. Third World feminist and womanist theories will be examined. Students will also encounter the impact that culture and politics play on women in the developing world. Cross-listed with Pol 160.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Once a Year
Attributes: Global Learning International (GLI), Social Science 1 (SS1)

WGS 195 - Women’s & Gender Studies Topic
A course offered in response to student and instructor interest. Topics are not generally covered in the regular course listings. Course may be taken multiple times if topics are different.

Credits Awarded: 1-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

WGS 200 - Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies
In this course, students will explore and assess their own assumptions about gender, and examine the effects of sexism on all people. We will study historical and contemporary texts by diverse authors. At the heart of feminist pedagogy, students are encouraged to teach and learn from one another. Students will be challenged to grow and support communal growth in shaping a world free of power-divisions based on gender, race, class, citizenship, and country of origin.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall, Spring
Attribute: Global Learning Domestic (GLD)

WGS 295 - Special Studies
A course offered in response to student and instructor interest. Topics are not generally covered in the regular course listings. Course may be taken multiple times if topics are different.

Credits Awarded: 2-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

WGS 350 - Feminist Visions of Justice: Theory and Methodology
This course looks at feminist visions of justice, including ideas that impact students’ lives, the larger communities in which we live, as well as in the world. Students examine their own theories and study those of feminist scholars, practitioners and activists. Emphasis is placed on contemporary issues and practices.

Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Fall
Attributes: Global Learning Domestic (GLD), Social Science 2 (SS2)
WGS 395 - Special Studies
A course offered in response to student and instructor interest. Topics are not generally covered in the regular course listings. Course may be taken multiple times if topics are different.
Credits Awarded: 1-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

WGS 490 - Independent Projects
An in-depth independent study of women’s and gender issues or other topics analyzed from a feminist perspective or a project designed to bring about systemic change.
Credits Awarded: 1-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

WGS 494 - Keystone Seminar
A course designed to examine feminist perspectives in practice and support projects on women’s and gender issues.
Credits Awarded: 4
Terms Offered: Spring

WGS 496 - Internship Program in Women's and Gender Studies
An internship in women's and gender studies with the Philadelphia Center, Washington Semester, Chicago Semester, or a placement in West Michigan approved by the director of women's and gender studies. Placement is coupled with a feminist analysis of the internship site and the student’s experience.
Credits Awarded: 1-4
Terms Offered: As Needed

FACULTY & STAFF

Beard, Dr. Virginia
Associate Professor of Political Science (2007)
Ph.D., Michigan State University, 2006
MPA, Michigan State University, 2005
B.A., Calvin College, 2000