

Women and Gender Studies

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Women and Gender Studies Council: Professors: Cameron, Deprez, Feiner, Gish, Long; Associate Professors: Carey, Carroll, Chapkis, Cole, Eagan, Holden, Kent, Kuenz, Laz, Lockridge, Marya, Raimon, Rosenthal, Savage, Thompson, Walker, Winger.

The women and gender studies major offers students the opportunity to study the lives, words, and ideas of women from various historical periods, as well as feminist theoretical approaches to various contemporary disciplines. Women and gender studies courses focus both on recovering women's lost or neglected pasts and on analyzing and re-thinking contemporary societies. Although women are central to the subject matter of women's studies courses, feminist analysis goes beyond specific issues of gender to challenge our traditional assumptions and histories.

The women and gender studies major introduces students to new ways of thinking about such topics as technology, gender, and oppression. Courses focus on such issues as the gender construction of science, the effect of gender-biased language, inequities in work and pay, the psycho-social development of women, the philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir, the politics of Angela Davis, and the construction of race, sexuality, and gender in contemporary films. In addition to gaining a broad, integrated vision of society and culture, women and gender studies students develop skills in analysis, critical thinking, writing, and the practical application of theoretical understanding.

The program offers a major leading to a bachelor of arts degree in women and gender studies. Students may also minor in women and gender studies. Graduates with a major in women and gender studies are prepared for graduate and professional schools in a variety of disciplines. They are also prepared for careers in the social sciences, affirmative action and equal employment programs, education, personnel or career advising, women's agencies and programs, human services agencies, and public service.

Programs and Requirements

Bachelor of Arts

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the major: 42.

The women and gender studies major consists of 24 hours of required courses and 18 hours of women and gender studies related courses as follows:

Required Courses (18 hours)

WST 135I/130I	Introduction to Women and Gender Studies
WST 280W	Women, Knowledge, and Power
WST 380	Politics of Difference
WST 390	Contemporary Feminist Theories
WST 490	Capstone Experience in Women and Gender Studies

Options

WST 485	Internship
WST 486	Thesis

One Topics Course from TWO of the following subject areas (6 hours)

WST 235/335/435	Topics in Gender and Science, Technology, and Health I/II/III
WST 245/345/445	Topics in Women, Culture, and the Arts I/II/III
WST 255/355/455	Topics in Women, History, and Resistance I/II/III
WST 265/365/465	Topics in Women, Gender, and Institutions I/II/III

Women and Gender Studies Related Courses: (at least 18 hours)

Students must take one course focusing on periods before 1800 and one course dealing with cultures not in the Western mainstream. Students may take no more than three electives from one department or program. Any WST course may be used for elective credit; courses eligible for elective credit are listed at the end of this section.

Minor in Women and Gender Studies

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the minor: 18.

The women and gender studies minor consists of a minimum of 9 hours of required courses and 9 hours of related courses as follows:

Both of the following (6 to 7 hours)

WST 135I/130I Introduction to Women and Gender Studies

WST 280W Women, Knowledge, and Power

Either of the following (3 hours)

WST 380 Politics of Difference

WST 390 Contemporary Feminist Theories

Women and Gender Studies Related Courses (at least 9 hours. Two of the courses must be at the 300-level or above)

Prerequisites and Grade Policy

There are prerequisites for many of the women and gender studies courses. See departmental course listings for specific information. A minimum grade of C or better is required in major/minor courses. Courses taken pass/fail are not acceptable.

Curriculum Summary and Guide

The women and gender studies curriculum is built upon a shared commitment to the principles of educational excellence and educational opportunity. It is structured to ensure that students are exposed to the sophisticated body of knowledge that now defines women and gender studies as a discipline, even while allowing students the opportunity to develop skills in research, writing, and analysis. Consequently, there are prerequisites for upper-division courses. The first-year student is encouraged to complete Core curriculum requirements, including Introduction to Women and Gender Studies (WST 135I/130I) and College Writing (ENG 100C). In the second year, students should take Women, Knowledge, and Power (WST 280W), followed by Contemporary Feminist Theories (WST 390) and Politics of Difference (WST 380). Students who minor in another discipline should also begin the suggested sequence in that year. Third-year schedules should include at least two women and gender studies-sponsored topics courses, drawn from two of our four subject areas. Thus a student might take WST 335 Topics in Gender & Science, Technology, & Health I, in the fall, and WST 465 Topics in Women, Gender, and Institutions III, in the spring. Fourth-year students are required to take the Capstone Experience in Women and Gender Studies (WST 490) and select either the internship or thesis option. These courses offer advanced experience in feminist theories, research, and practice, while allowing students to pursue their own interests under careful guidance. Students should be aware that while any course offered under these "topics" will address the general goal outlined in the catalog, the specific content of the topics courses will change from semester to semester. Course descriptions will therefore be published and distributed during the preregistration period.

Declaration of Major

To declare a major in women and gender studies, the student must have:

- completed a minimum of 30 approved University credit hours of which at least 15 credit hours must be completed at USM;
- completed WST 135I/130I or equivalent and ENG 100C or equivalent, with a grade of C or better;

To graduate from this program, the student must have:

- completed 42 hours of required coursework, as described above;
- attained a cumulative GPA of B- (2.67) in all major courses.

Students who wish to graduate with honors in this major must:

- maintain a GPA of 3.33 or better in major courses;
 - have demonstrated superior work in the thesis or internship;
 - be recommended by a faculty member who teaches courses within the program; and
 - be approved by the Women and Gender Studies Council.
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WST 100 WST Lab: Gender, Representation, and Resistance

This course complements the interdisciplinary curriculum of Introduction to Women and Gender Studies. The course will meet seventimes during the semester. Cr 1.

WST 135I/130I Introduction to Women and Gender Studies

This course explores from a variety of perspectives the following inter-related themes and topics: the economic, political, and social status of women as a group and in discrete cultural contexts; the politics of representation, or how ideas about femininity and feminism are promoted throughout the media and other vehicles of culture; the construction of “consciousness,” both through the media and through feminist tactics; women and collective action in the past, present, and future. This course is writing-intensive; students are expected to practice their writing skills through formal essays. Offered every semester. Cr 4.

WST 199 Gender, Representation, and Resistance

This course provides students an opportunity to participate in a wide array of women’s studies-related cultural, community, and educational activities. The course meets eight times per semester, and is graded pass/fail. These learning experiences foster community, permit students to earn 1 credit while exploring women’s studies, and support students seeking to develop their writing skills. Course meets September 13, 27, October 11, 25, November 1, 15, 19. Cr 1.

WST 220 Topics in Women and Gender Studies

Topic areas not already covered by regular course offerings in women and gender studies will be offered. The course may be repeated for credit when different topics are considered. Cr 3.

WST 235, 335, 435 Topics in Gender & Science, Technology, and Health I, II, III

Courses in this category will include a critique of traditional science, technology, and medicine; representation of feminist possibilities and communities at work on issues of knowledge, health, and power; reconstructions of science, technology, and health care based on new theories and practices. Each of these courses will ask similar questions: How have scientific thinking and gendered technologies affected women’s bodily experience? Is science fiction coming to pass in new reproductive technologies and genetic projects? How has science’s view of the female and feminine been problematized by reading works of fiction? Can feminists escape the difficulties of writing about or prescribing for others? Does science create racial as well as sexual subjects? How can it be used (to quote bell hooks) to “talk race and fight racism?” Prerequisite: WST 435 requires permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

WST 245, 345, 445 Topics in Women, Culture, and the Arts I, II, III

Courses in this category will examine some aspect of women’s relationships to specific vehicles of “culture,” including the plastic, literary, and performing arts. They may focus on women as producers of culture; on how women and femininity have been represented in written, visual, or oral texts; or on feminism and cultural or aesthetic theory. Possible subjects may include feminist philosophy, feminism and film theory, women and the history of music, women and popular culture. Prerequisite: WST 445 requires permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

WST 255, 355, 455 Topics in Women, History, and Resistance I, II, III

Courses in this category will explore the political worlds of women in general, and laboring women in particular, which have often been obscured by traditional histories that narrowly define politics as a set of formal institutions and practices. These courses explore forms of female activism located not only in governments, political parties, and unions but also in female collaborative activities and grassroots organization. Emphasis will be placed on the relationship between female activism and social, economic, and cultural change. Topics include women in third world struggles for national liberation; working class women in contemporary and historical movements; struggles for equal rights; the nineteenth century women’s movement; women in peasant revolts; everyday forms of female resistance; union organizing; women and the politics of identity. Prerequisite: WST 455 requires permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

WST 265, 365, 465 Topics in Women, Gender, and Institutions I, II, III

Courses in this category will focus on gender relations and the construction of the category “women” in the context of social structures and institutions. Both social structures and institutions are based on and reinforce assumptions about sex and gender, women and men, and masculinity and femininity. And both ultimately shape the experiences of women and men in society. These courses will examine the experiences of women and men as gendered beings and the way those experiences follow from, perpetuate, and/or alter institutions. The emphasis may be on industrial or non-industrial societies, and institutions for analysis will vary. Possibilities include law and legal institutions, economic institutions, subsistence strategies in non-industrial societies, systems of stratification, conceptual systems, and education. Prerequisite: WST 465 requires permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

WST 280W Women, Knowledge, and Power

This course examines the ways in which the politics of knowledge production shape our culture and its gender relations. It explores both the role of educational institutions as they function to promote

antifeminist culture, and the ways women have historically resisted, subverted, appropriated, and reformulated traditional bodies of thought. Throughout, attention will be given to how competition, intimidation, and other factors can inhibit the formation of feminist communities of scholars/learners. Students will practice and be encouraged to appreciate the benefits of different modes of interpretation and writing, including personal narrative, socio-historical work, and contemporary cultural analysis. Prerequisites: WST 1351/130I or permission of instructor. Offered spring semester. Cr 3.

WST 320 Advanced Topics in Women and Gender Studies

Advanced topic areas not already covered by regular course offerings in women's studies will be offered. The course may be repeated for credit when different topics are considered. Cr 3.

WST 380 The Politics of Difference

This course will introduce students to some of the complex relationships among the histories and goals of Western feminism and those of specific nondominant cultures, inside or outside the United States. Central to the course are the ways that "differences" are embedded and enacted in the context of power relations in the larger society. While the specific content of this course is flexible, it will treat the advantages and disadvantages of using race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality as categories of analysis. Assignments should reinforce those skills learned in WST 280. Prerequisites: WST 280 or permission of instructor. Offered fall semester. Cr 3.

WST 390 Contemporary Feminist Theories

This course will introduce students to the efforts of many academic feminists to organize, appropriate, and/or subvert what is sometimes termed "post-structuralist" thought, an enormous body of knowledge that, although generated largely in France, Italy, Great Britain, and North America, has often affected non-Western feminisms as well. The focus of this course will vary depending on the instructor, but it should be based on the intimate relationships between feminist theories and feminist practice. At least one section of this course will be devoted to focused political analysis of a single subject: pornography, free speech and censorship, reproductive technologies, sexual harassment, pay equity, domestic violence, etc. Students will be asked to write a theoretically informed research paper on a topic of their own choosing. Prerequisites: WST 280W or permission of instructor. Offered spring semester. Cr 3.

WST 420 Gender and Aging

This course is designed to inform students about aging issues that differentially affect women and men. Students will analyze the sources and manifestations of both healthy and problematic aging and apply concepts drawn from the behavioral and social sciences, and from clinical and community

practice. The course will incorporate knowledge of the biophysical-social aspects of the aging process and the interplay of interpersonal, environmental, and cultural forces that influence aging. Students are expected to acquire skills in assessing individual behavior of older persons based on application of theoretical ideas to contemporary situations and to enhance their human service practice with elders and their families. Cr 3.

WST 445 Trauma, Hysteria, and Representation

From the anguished poses of patients at 19th-century psychiatric hospitals to war neuroses to PTSD, clinical and literary accounts of hysteria both reflect and construct gendered assumptions about psychology, femininity, and manliness. In literature of WWI, in accounts of multiple personality, in such books as Robert Lifton's *The Protean Self*, these assumptions also serve to define what we consider "modern," how we address anxieties of modern life in health care and social policy, and how we imagine the modernist world of 20th- and 21st-century poetry and fiction. Readings include Janet, Freud, Morton Prince, histories of hysteria and trauma, and literary texts including *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Pat Barker's *Trilogy on WWI*, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, and individual readings in the disciplines of members of the class. Cr 3.

WST 455 American Context of Witchcraft

Beginning with a detailed study of the Salem witch trials and moving through the 19th century into the present, this course investigates the American contexts of witchcraft in several historical periods as well as contemporary representations and practices of witchcraft. The image of the witch addresses the ways in which powerful institutions criminalize, ostracize, and sometimes mobilize figures of resistance and obscurity. A focus on witches and witchcraft presents many opportunities through which to study some of the social, economic, and religious forces that shaped various discussions and practices linked to gender and sexuality; therefore the course draws on many disciplines to interrogate the cultural "work" of the witch. The first part of the course is dedicated to a study of the 1692 witchcraft "outbreak" in Salem. The last section of the course will examine popular images of the witch as they emerge in various genres and media: prose, poetry, drama, film, and television. Cr 3.

WST 470 Independent Study

This course provides junior and senior students with the opportunity to pursue a project independently, concentrate on a particular subject of concern, or conduct individually arranged reading or research studies under the advice and direction of a faculty member. Prerequisites: advanced standing and permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

WST 485 Internship

The internship requires students to work closely

with a group, business, or organization for one semester. Students will write a 20-page paper on their experience and report to the Women and Gender Studies Council in the spring semester. Prerequisites: senior standing and women and gender studies major or minor. Cr 4-6.

WST 486 Thesis

The thesis allows students to pursue guided research on a topic of their choosing. Thesis students should choose three readers, including an advisor whose interests and scholarship are in line with their own. The minimum length for a thesis is 30 pages, and should include a substantial bibliography. Students

will report to the Women and Gender Studies Council in the spring semester. Prerequisites: senior standing and women and gender studies major or minor. Cr 4.

WST 490 Capstone Experience in Women's Studies

All majors are required to select a capstone experience, with the guidance of their advisor, from the following two options: WST 485 or WST 486. Students enrolled in either option are required to participate in a bi-weekly seminar. Students are expected to co-enroll in WST 490 and WST 485 or 486. Offered in the spring semester only. Cr 2.

Related Courses

ANT	232I	Anthropology of Sex and Gender
ARH	311	Gender Identity and Modern Art
COM	486	Women in Film
COR	358H	Motherhood: Political Institution, Cultural Icon, Defining Experience
CRM	317	Gender and Crime
ECO	322	Economics of Women and Work
ECO	399	Gender and the Economy
ENG	150H	Topics in Literature: Representing Race in Literature
ENG	342	Topics in Contemporary Theory
ENG	344	Sex/Gender and Sexuality
ENG	345	Racial Formations
ENG	347	Topics in Cultural Studies: American Contexts of Witchcraft
ENG	353	Medieval Women Writers
ENG	370	Literature of Discovery, Exploration, and Colonialism
ENG	379	Earlier Women Writers: American
ENG	383	African-American Literature since 1900: Novels by African-American Women
ENG	387	Women Writers since 1900
ENG	451	Medieval Women Writers
ENG	492	Seminar in Modern American Literature
GEO	302	Gender, Work, and Space
HRDX	545	Gender and Learning
HTY	339	European Women's History
HTY	341	Black Women in the Americas
HTY	364	History of Women in the United States
HTY	394	Modern China: Women, Culture, and Revolution
HTY	394	Homosexuals and Heterosexuals in History
HTY	394	History of Women in 20th Century America
HTY	394	History of Women in Maine
HTY	394	History of Women in Latin America
HTY	394	Pioneer Women in America West: Myth and Reality
HTY	394	Sexuality, Disease, Difference: 17th-20th Century
HTY	394	American Women's Lives: 20th Century
HTY	394	European Women's History
HTY	399	Russian Women's History
HTY	399	Caribbean Women: Barbados and Jamaica
HUM	251H	Masculinities in U.S. Literature and Culture
HUM	342	Contemporary Women of Color in Fiction
HUM	358H	Motherhood: Political Institution, Cultural Icon, Defining Experience
	/SBS	
HUM	389	Sexuality in Literature and Film
PHI	110E	Sex, Gender, and Society
PHI	112E	Introduction to Philosophy: Feminist Perspectives
PHI	265	Philosophy and Gender
PHI	312I	Women Philosophers from Africa and the Diaspora

RUS	281H	Russian Literature in Translation: Women Writers
SBS	341	The Family
SBS	361	Psychology and Sociology of Women
SOC	316	Sociology of Gender
SOC	330	Sociology of the Family
SOC	358	Sociology of Women's Work
SOC	365	Sociology of the Body
SOC	380	Sociology of Sexuality
SWO	399	Sexual Harrassment
SWO	456	Women, Welfare, and the State
THE	451	Women and Theater
THE	451	20th Century U.S. Women Playwrights
THE	451	Special Topics in Dramatic Literature and Theatre History
ANES	650	Shopping: The Gender and Politics of Consumption
ANES	665	Sex and Gender in New England