A fierce feminist and champion of reproductive justice, Emma Donnelly heads the Huskies for Reproductive Health on campus, a Planned Parenthood Generation Action group. If you’ve ever gotten free condoms at USM, had someone advocate for your right to more easily access birth control, or found yourself more knowledgeable about Title IX than you ever were before, Emma likely had a hand in it. As president of HRH, Emma plans and organizes yearly events like Sex Trivia, the Sexpert Panel, and voter registration tables, as well as movie screenings of relevant films.

But reproductive rights are not all that Emma fights for. Emma, a Women and Gender Studies major, works in the Disability Services Center in Luther Bonney and serves on the Women and Gender Studies programming committee. She is an active member of USM’s Queer-Straight Alliance, often working alongside its president, her friend Molly Roberts, to push for queer and trans sex positivity and education on campus. And, as an advocate for social justice, Emma holds to account both friend and stranger, both student and faculty when racism rears its ugly head at USM. In short, Emma Donnelly is the intersection of feminist social justice warrior many conservatives want you to hate. But to hate Emma is to hate someone who uses her platform wisely, amplifying the voices of those both like her and unlike her, signal boosting important issues via social media, frequent emails to USM’s president, and incredible pieces in the Free Press. Fearlessness, thy name is Emma.

CONVERSATIONS WITH ALUMNI: Meaghan LaSala, class of 2015

A 2015 graduate and nontraditional student, Meaghan LaSala majored in Women & Gender Studies and minored in Environmental Studies at USM. She came to WGS with a desire for intellectual community and the space to study social movements and structural injustice, and was grateful to find all of this in through the program. While at USM, she was also active in student organizing. She organized against austerity, department closures and staff and faculty layoffs with the group #StudentsForSMUFuture. She also worked with the group Divest UMaine, which successfully pushed the UMaine System to become the first public university system in the country to divest from coal companies in response to climate change.

After graduating, Meaghan served for a year as the Assistant to the Director of Women & Gender Studies, Lisa Walker. She is currently employed as the office manager at the Portland Conservatory of Music. She is also a freelance journalist, and has been featured in such publications as Dispatch Magazine, National Radio Project and Yesi Magazine. She continues to organize and currently serves as the Chair of the Board of the Southern Maine Workers’ Center, a member-led organization committed to creating a grassroots, people-powered movement that improves the lives, working conditions, and terms of employment for working-class and poor people in Maine.

Q. What role does WGS play in your life? In your work?
A. WGS helped me cultivate feminist community in my hometown. The program fostered deep and lasting relationships—personal, professional and political. As a community organizer rooted in Southern Maine, the experience was invaluable. WGS is a hub for feminist thought and community, and community organizing is above all about building relationships. Years after graduating, that community is still central to my life.

Q. How did the knowledge you gained through your WGS education change you?
A. As an interdisciplinary program, WGS exposed me to many different ways of thinking about and studying the world, while centering on questions of justice, equity and power. I loved that I didn’t have to choose between literature, art, history, philosophy, or social science, but that I could use all of these tools to better understand gendered, classed and racialized violence in our society, and what we can do to address it.

Engaging feminist thought, especially the works of black feminists and feminists of color, sharpened my ability to analyze and responsibly participate in social movements for justice and liberation.

Q. Do you have any advice for current students thinking about majoring in WGS?
A. WGS is a great program to pair with a minor or a double major, especially because so many of the courses are cross-listed with other departments. I loved pairing my WGS major with environmental science. I was very interested in understanding the ways that structural oppression lead to disproportionate impact of pollution and climate change on communities of color.

Q. What was your favorite thing about studying WGS at USM?
A. Participating in the sacred tradition of radicals, outlaws and witches across time and space who have fought for love, justice and human dignity.

Dear Women & Gender Studies community,

In the current political and social climate, Women and Gender Studies is more relevant than ever. Our interdisciplinary program at USM is the longest-standing feminist studies program in Northern New England, and continues to be one of the most vibrant. We examine the impact of gender on our thought and our everyday experiences, and study the intersections of gender with race, sexuality, class, ability, and age. We enable students to explore the theory and the practice of social justice movements, activism, and advocacy. A Women and Gender Studies degree helps graduates understand difference so that they can make a difference; it prepares them for careers in the public and private sectors in fields such as education, law, economics, and human services.

Our 36-credit hour major, which was made official with the publication of the 2016-2017 undergraduate catalog, allows students to make timely progress towards getting an undergraduate degree, and to add WGS as a second major. Registration for Fall 2018 begins April 2nd, and WGS is offering courses ranging from “Introduction to Women and Gender Studies” to “Politics of Difference” and “Gender and Health”. If you need advising, feel free to reserve an appointment with me at send me an email—I’m happy to help you with your academic planning!

I would like to invite all of our students and community members to feel welcome at the WGS house. We have quiet study spaces, coffee and tea, gender-neutral bathrooms, and comfy couches. We are open Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm all year-round. Come by and introduce yourself!

Sincerely,

Professor Lisa Walker
Director, Women & Gender Studies
lwalker@maine.edu
207-780-4311

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Fall course registration opens April 2nd!
Fulfilling your Core Courses with WGS

Entry Year Experience:

EYE 109 “Gender, Representation, and Resistance”
Drawing on many disciplines, we will explore ideas of gender roles in many cultures and throughout history, focusing on the following questions: What is gender? How is it represented historically and cross-culturally? How have people redefined its meanings and representations? Gender, students will learn definitions of gender in diverse cultures and times, the ways gender shapes daily interactions and human relationships; and the ways social institutions distribute power, resources, and status based on such meanings and on their relations with race, ethnicity, age, class, ability, sexuality, and nation. Representation, students will consider the impact of mass media, education, and political discourse on gender construction. Resistance, students will discover how people have reconsidered, resisted, and transformed traditional gender roles & representations.

Socio-Cultural Analysis:

WGS 101 “Introduction to Women and Gender Studies”
This course considers the economic, political, and social status of women and men and how ideas about femininity/masculinity and feminism are promoted through the media and other vehicles of culture. Books used by this course have included: Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls by Mary Pipher. Dude. You’re A Fag by C. J. Pascoe and Feminist Frontiers by Richardson, Taylor & Whittier.

Cultural Interpretations:

WGS 201 “Rethinking Gender & Culture”
examines the relationship between gender, assumptions about truth, and the ways both affect how we experience the world. Books from past sections of the course have included: The Creation of Feminist Consciousness by Gerda Lerner, A Room of One’s Own by Virginia Woolf, Harriet Jacobs’s autobiography Incidents of the Slave Life, and Black Feminist Thought by Patricia Hill Collins.

Ethical Inquiry, Social Responsibility & Citizenship:

WGS 380 “Politics of Difference”
explorers some of the consequences of using such identity categories as race, nationality, religion, and sex to shape culture and gender relations within it. Books assigned for this course have included: Gender Outlaw by Kate Bornstein, Do What It Feels Like by Maxine Harris, Healed for the Last Time by Barbara Krueger, and Isn’t It About Time by Sheen Salahi.

Diversity:

WGS 201: Women, Knowledge and Power AND WGS 390 “Contemporary Feminist Theorists”
introduces students to some feminist theoretical approaches as post-structuralism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, critical race theory, and postcolonialism. The focus of the course is the intimate relationships between feminist theories and feminist practices, locally and globally.
Fall 2018 Course Listings, continued

WGS 365/SOC 358: Sociology of Women’s Work
Portland 1/24 2:45pm – 4:00pm Professor Cheryl Laz this course will introduce students to theoretical and empirical literature on women’s work in the post–labour force, on their unpaid labor in the home, and on the relationship between these two kinds of “women’s work.” The course emphasizes the diversity of women’s work and the interconnections among race, ethnicity, class, and gender through a detailed examination of professional women, blue-collar women, and “pink-collar” employees. Additional topics include occupational segregation, earnings differentials, poverty, law and public policy, and labor militancy. Prerequisite: SOC 210 with C or better or permission of instructor. 3 credits.

WGS 365/SBS 358: Representations of Gender Portland M 10:00am – 1:40pm Professor Rose Cleary This interdisciplinary course examines the ways in which gender is represented in various cultural forms (including film, literature, and political rhetoric) and from within different historical and cultural contexts. Contemporary psychological theories will be considered in terms of how they are used to prescribe normative demands on women and men and also how they attribute various powers to mothers that then contribute to the construction of particular social policies and practices. 3 credits.

WGS 365/CRM 317: Gender & Crime Portland T 10:10am – 12:00pm Professor Jim Messerschmidt This course is designed to provide a framework for understanding and respecting cultural diversity. The cultural aspects of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and ableness will be discussed. A central theme in organizing the course is the examination of the role of oppression in shaping the lives of members of various cultural groups. Prerequisites: WSO 201 or permission of instructor. This course satisfies the Diversity requirement of the Core. 3 credits.

WGS 365/CRM 317: Gender & Crime Portland T 10:10am – 12:00pm Professor Jim Messerschmidt This course is designed to provide a framework for understanding and respecting cultural diversity. The cultural aspects of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and ableness will be discussed. A central theme in organizing the course is the examination of the role of oppression in shaping the lives of members of various cultural groups. Prerequisites: WSO 201 or permission of instructor. This course satisfies the Diversity requirement of the Core. 3 credits.

WGS 365/SW 356: Examining Oppression & Valuing Diversity Portland M 8:45am – 11:30am Professor Hermeet Kohli This course is designed to provide a framework for understanding and respecting cultural diversity. The cultural aspects of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and ableness will be discussed. A central theme in organizing the course is the examination of the role of oppression in shaping the lives of members of various cultural groups. Prerequisites: WSO 201 or permission of instructor. This course satisfies the Diversity requirement of the Core. 3 credits.

WGS 380: The Politics of Difference Portland W 4:10pm – 6:40pm Professor Wendy Chaplin Politics of Difference explores some of the consequences of using gender, race, nationality, class, and sexuality to shape identity and culture. The course will examine how discourses of identity and difference are used to both justify inequalities and to enable solidarity. In the seminar we will look at a range of strategies that are employed in response to difference including attempts at managing, disciplining, or cleansing difference as well as efforts at redefining, reclaiming, and reconstituting the meanings of difference. Prerequisites: WGS 101 or EYE 109. WGS 201 or permission of instructor. 3 credits.

WGS 465/GE 455: Gender, Race & Class in the City Portland M 4:10pm – 6:40pm Professor Lydia Savage This course will focus on the relationships among gender, “race,” and class and urban spaces in twentieth century U.S. cities. The course will explore how urban spaces reflect and perpetuate different relations of power, inequality, and identity. First, we explore how different frameworks for urban analysis help to explain the social and spatial organization of U.S. cities. We will develop a framework for urban analysis that integrates race, class, and gender, and draws upon the geographic concepts of place and scale. Second, we will apply our integrated framework to contemporary metropolitan processes and problems. Prerequisite: one of the following: GEO 302 or permission of instructor. 3 credits.

Updates on WGS in Iceland

Women and Gender Studies has been awarded a Maine Economic Improvement Fund planning grant. The project funded, “Promoting Gender Equity in Maine by Applying Lessons from Viking Economics,” has been exploring the key policy drivers and economic practices used in Iceland to open economic opportunities for women in industries that are important to Maine and Icelandic economies.

Iceland is ranked first in the world for the status of women. The US is ranked 28th, and Maine is ranked 19th among the states. WGS, working with our community partners and Icelandic experts, will help us formulate policies in Maine to increase female participation rates in industries where women are underrepresented. In addition, the WGS program seeks to establish study abroad opportunities for Maine students concerned with gender equity.

Undergraduate Research in Women & Gender Studies

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at USM is an excellent chance for undergraduate students to further their interests and get started on their post-graduation goals. WGS Senior Katie Muriel has been awarded funds for her research for 2017-2018.

Katie Muriel, senior Women & Gender Studies and Criminology major, has been interested in the topic of wrongful conviction for years, and always looks for opportunities to learn more or incorporate the topic into a paper or research project. So when she learned about UROP late last year, it was easy for her to create a plan for her research. Katie looked for a faculty mentor in the field, and found Criminology and WGS Professor Jim Messerschmidt.

Katie’s research looks at conscious and unconscious bias through the lenses of anti-black racism and the Cross-Race Effect, in an effort to discover their individual and joint impact on the high wrongful conviction rate of Black and African American citizens of the United States. She will be conducting surveys with both Criminology and non-Criminology majors in order to gain an understanding of the future of the social-justice system.

Both her research interests and post-graduation goals have been informed by her education in Women & Gender Studies. Katie said that WGS has helped her see the personhood of the bodies that she studies in Criminology. Because of WGS, she has become interested in looking at structures and institutions in order to understand why crimes are committed. She plans to go to grad school next year to pursue her research interests and will pursue a career in Victim Advocacy.

Her advice to students who are thinking of applying for UROP is to plan ahead. She recommends going to the Poster Symposium, which happens early in the Spring Semester and start planning your project as early as you can. Katie also encourages students who have unique or what they think may even be strange project ideas to go ahead and apply.

Katie will be presenting the results of this research at Thinking Matters in April, and also hopes to submit a manuscript based on her findings to the American Journal of Undergraduate Research.

Join the GSSO!

The Gender Studies Student Organization is a group for students who are interested in gender and international social justice politics and committed to working towards social justice. Gender Studies builds on the foundation of Women’s Studies, which was formed in order to understand the nature of women’s oppression and create significant social change. Gender Studies explores the nature of gender, and its interaction with other forms of difference and power, including class, race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality and religion. We are an anti-racist, queer-friendly, accepting of all religions, and open to all students!

PMI: wgs@maine.edu | 94 Bedford St, Portland

The WGS Program began our collaboration with scholars from the University of Iceland’s Center for Research on Diversity and Gender last May at the Maine Women’s Studies Consortium retreat, where we learned of their work on gender+ budgeting. Gender budgeting, a gender-based accounting of budgets, works to understand gender at all levels of the budgetary process in order to promote gender equality. It takes a look at the different effects that a budget might have on different genders and allocates money accordingly. The work of gender+ budgeting would incorporate the intersections of other forms of inequality.

Last July, WGS travelled to Iceland to meet with some members of the Icelandic parliament, and some Feminist Studies students and scholars at the University of Iceland. This May, WGS will work to expand our relationship to include other countries in the North Atlantic to establish a North Atlantic Feminist Studies Consortium. Look for updates from us on our website and our Facebook page.
Women & Gender Studies Fall 2018 Courses

**WGS 101: Introduction to Women & Gender**
Portland M/W 10:15am – 11:30am
Professor Lorrayne Carroll

**WGS 201: Rethinking Gender & Culture**
Portland M/W 11:45am – 1:00pm
Professor Kate Wininger

**WGS 245/PHI 220: Philosophy of Art & Visual Culture**
Portland M 6:40pm
Professor Kate Wininger

**WGS 253/185 349: Trauma & Narrative**
LAC W 4:00pm – 6:30pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 335/SOC 380: Gender & Health**
Portland M/W 11:45am – 1:00pm
Professor Kate Siegfried

How is health impacted by social constructions of gender? This class explores gender differences in health and illness, LGBTQ+ experiences of health and the health care system, the ways that gender roles can influence health seeking behavior and access to health care, and the role of health and illness can differ based on gender, culture, race and ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Students will apply an intersectional lens to the world of health, exploring issues of status and power within the health care system and how these intersecting systems interact and influence each other. This class will also examine the intersections of mental health with gender, race, and class as well as explore the ways in which different cultural constructions of gender can affect the health and illness of a community and society using both local and global examples. 3 credits.

**WGS 345/CSM 310: Women and Cinema**
Portland M 4:10pm – 6:40pm
Professor Rebecca Lockridge

In this course we will analyze representations of women in cinema from several countries from the 1960s to the present. The thematic focus of this course is the relationships between and mothers and daughters in differing geographic locations as they negotiate issues of race, class, age, and sexuality. The class will focus on feminist film criticism and will examine the silences, essentializations, and collisions of gender, class, age, and sexuality in cinema. 3 credits.

**WGS 345/ENG 466: Witchcraft**
Portland M 4:10pm – 6:40pm
Professor Lorrayne Carroll

In English and American Studies, the 18th century is usually considered “long”—as in beginning in the late 17th century and continuing through the early 19th. Many of the ideas, practices, and concerns associated with 18th-C. studies overlap with the earlier or later periods. For this course, we will be looking primarily at the last decade of the 17th-C. and focusing on the notorious events of the Salem Witchcraft Trials. Because the name “Salem” conjures so many beliefs and opinions about sex and gender, our study of the witchcraft trials is an opportunity to reflect on the evolution of gender. This vital question of how and why our cultural figure of the witch has persisted in American cultural production and interpretation. In many cases, “Salem” was an aberration, so why this particular trial? The course will examine a range of arguments about “Salem” and consider the cultural influence of the witch as a key factor contemporary debates. These debates emerged in the contexts of colonial power struggles, particularly those that developed the increasing diversity of colonizers, the effects of settler colonialism on Indigenous peoples (land violence), the relationship of colony to metropole, struggles over foreign land and land use, and the attendant fears arising from political, religious, and social dissent. 3 credits.

**WGS 345/ENG 385: 19th Century American Women Writers Across the Color Line**
Portland M 4:10pm – 6:40pm
Professor Eve Ralston

Noted for Hawthorne famously cultivated popular women authors in the 1800s “a mob of scribbling women.” What’s the literary and cultural context for his remark? How should we assess popular fiction of the 19th-C. as in beginning in the late 17th century and continuing through the early 19th? Many of the ideas, practices, and concerns associated with 18th-C. studies overlap with the earlier or later periods. For this course, we will be looking primarily at the last decade of the 17th-C. and focusing on the notorious events of the Salem Witchcraft Trials. Because the name “Salem” conjures so many beliefs and opinions about sex and gender, our study of the witchcraft trials is an opportunity to reflect on the evolution of gender. This vital question of how and why our cultural figure of the witch has persisted in American cultural production and interpretation. In many cases, “Salem” was an aberration, so why this particular trial? The course will examine a range of arguments about “Salem” and consider the cultural influence of the witch as a key factor contemporary debates. These debates emerged in the contexts of colonial power struggles, particularly those that developed the increasing diversity of colonizers, the effects of settler colonialism on Indigenous peoples (land violence), the relationship of colony to metropole, struggles over foreign land and land use, and the attendant fears arising from political, religious, and social dissent. 3 credits.

**WGS 345/ENG 100: 19th and 20th Century American Women Writers Across the Color Line**
Portland M 4:10pm – 6:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 353/HTY 364: History of Women in the Americas**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

The course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 320/321/ANT 301: Applied LGBTIQ History**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Marcia-Ann Bowers

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 322/ANT 301: Applied LGBTIQ History**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 325/ANT 301: Applied LGBTIQ History**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 326/ANT 301: Comparative Women’s Studies**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 329/ANT 301: Comparative Women’s Studies**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

**WGS 330/ANT 301: Comparative Women’s Studies**
Portland F 6:40pm – 8:40pm
Professor Rose Cleary

This course examines the history and politics of the increasing recognition that trauma and PTSD are not only of concern in clinical psychology and a term used to describe collective, cultural phenomena. We consider the social, psychological and cultural dimensions of trauma and how responses to trauma have come to be treated as medical problems in recent years. Areas of controversy within the field of trauma studies will also be explored. 3 credits.

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