

Gender and Women's Studies Catalog, 2025-26

MAJOR, MINOR

- **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR:** Lindsey Breitwieser (chairperson)
- **PROFESSOR:** LeeRay Costa
- **AFFILIATED FACULTY:** Anna Bennett (history), Amy Gerber-Stroh (film), Genevieve Hendricks (art history), Pauline Kaldas (English), Nathan Lee (film), Jaeyeon Lee (global politics and societies), Wendy-Marie Martin (theatre), Rachel Nuñez (history), Julie Pfeiffer (English), Patricia Sunia (English), Jill Vogel (music)
- **VISITING FACULTY:** Charlotte Rossler (history)

Gender and Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary program that examines how systems of power and knowledge operate within and through social systems and identity formations. The department's curriculum is designed to provide students with an understanding of the importance of gender as a category of analysis that intersects with the study of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, (dis)ability, socio-economic status, and citizenship. Our students explore gender roles and expectations, as well as the ways local and global transformations in work, technology, politics, and popular culture shape our lives, bodies, and beliefs. The gender and women's studies faculty are dedicated to creating an environment that fosters critical thinking and community connection, supports student activism and civic responsibility, and emphasizes faculty-student and peer mentoring. Students are encouraged to question conventional wisdom and to participate actively in their education.

Gender and Women's Studies prepares students for a variety of careers. Students interested in law, medicine, science, education, politics, business, media production, and the arts will be well-prepared by the Gender and Women's Studies major or minor. Graduates are experts in advocacy and communications, conflict resolution, research and project management, scholarly and creative expression, cross-cultural competencies, and diversity, equity, and inclusion debates.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

8 courses (32 credits) and one 4-credit internship

Working closely with an advisor from the gender and women's studies program, each major will complete two core courses in gender and women's studies, two courses with a "theory" designation, and four additional electives from the list of gender and women's studies courses. At least two of the eight courses must be at the 300 level.

Each major must also complete at least one 4-credit internship (GWS 399) in an area connected to their coursework and interests in gender and women's studies.

CORE COURSES IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

- GWS 141: Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (4)
- GWS 470: Seminar in Gender and Women's Studies (4)

THEORY COURSES IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

- GWS 201: Mad in America: Gender, Mental Health, and Popular Culture (4)
- GWS 205: Criminal Justice Systems (4)
- GWS 206: Applied Theatre and Community Engagement (4)
- GWS 207: Material Girls in a Material World: Gender and Science
- GWS 209: Feminist Philosophies (4)
- GWS 219: Food, Culture, and Social Justice (4)
- GWS 242: Gender, Culture, and Power (4)
- GWS 250: Sex, Love, and God (4)
- GWS 250: LGBTQ Literature (4)
- GWS 250: High Politics (4)
- GWS 272: Reproductive Justice (4)
- GWS 281: Witches, Cripples, and Other Monsters: Religion and Disability (4)
- GWS 301: Gender, Beauty, and Body Modification (4)
- GWS 310: The Body and Sexuality in European History (4)
- GWS 318: Sexual Ethics (4)
- GWS 347: Girlhood Studies (4)
- GWS 350: Feminist Geographies (4)
- GWS 350: Feminisms in Performance (4)
- GWS 362: Spiritual Activism (4)
- GWS 382: Queer Ecologies in American Environmental Writing (4)

(Additional courses, including special topics courses, may be approved by the GWS Chairperson)

REQUIREMENTS FOR A MINOR IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

5 courses (20 credits) and one 4-credit internship

GWS minors will complete two core courses in gender and women's studies, one course with a "theory" designation, and two additional electives from the list of gender and women's studies courses.

Each minor must also complete at least one 4-credit internship (GWS 399) in an area connected to their coursework and interests in gender and women's studies. In designing their programs, minors should work closely with an advisor in gender and women's studies to select elective courses (8 credits) that will allow them to develop a critical perspective in one area of interest without losing the interdisciplinary focus of the program as a whole.

CORE COURSES IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

- GWS 141: Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (4)
- GWS 470: Seminar in Gender and Women's Studies (4)

THEORY COURSES IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

- GWS 201: Mad in America: Gender, Mental Health, and Popular Culture (4)
- GWS 205: Criminal Justice Systems (4)
- GWS 206: Applied Theatre and Community Engagement (4)
- GWS 207: Material Girls in a Material World: Gender and Science
- GWS 209: Feminist Philosophies (4)
- GWS 219: Food, Culture, and Social Justice (4)
- GWS 242: Gender, Culture, and Power (4)
- GWS 250: Sex, Love, and God (4)
- GWS 250: LGBTQ Literature (4)
- GWS 250: High Politics (4)
- GWS 272: Reproductive Justice (4)
- GWS 281: Witches, Cripples, and Other Monsters: Religion and Disability (4)
- GWS 301: Gender, Beauty, and Body Modification (4)
- GWS 310: The Body and Sexuality in European History (4)
- GWS 318: Sexual Ethics (4)
- GWS 347: Girlhood Studies (4)

- GWS 350: Feminist Geographies (4)
- GWS 350: Feminisms in Performance (4)
- GWS 362: Spiritual Activism (4)
- GWS 382: Queer Ecologies in American Environmental Writing (4)

(Additional courses, including special topics courses, may be approved by the GWS Chairperson)

COURSES IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES:

GWS 117: CHILDBIRTH AND WOMEN'S WRITING (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 117. Open to first-year students. No prerequisite. (f, w, x)

GWS 141: INTRODUCTION TO GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES (4)

This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies and to gender itself— an identity formation; a mode of self-expression; a system that humans use to categorize one another, organize daily life, and distribute resources; and a critical lens through which to understand the world. The study of gender reaches across academic disciplines; therefore, this course will draw on many fields, including history, sociology, anthropology, biology, media studies, and philosophy. We will discuss the development of the field, examine current areas of research, and consider how identity and power come to matter in our personal and public lives. We will also explore how gender is experienced, performed, and produced at the intersection of the body, politics, and culture, always considering gender's inseparability from sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, (dis)ability, creed/religion, and nation. Open to first-year students. (DIV, DJP)

GWS 150: SPECIAL TOPICS IN GENDER & WOMEN'S STUDIES

Special topics courses cover a range of subjects and may be cross-listed with other departments. Special topics courses do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses and therefore can be repeated by students for additional credit provided that the courses cover varying material. General education credits will vary. Some special topics courses may carry the GWS Theory designation. GWS 150 courses from previous catalogues also count toward GWS major and minor requirements. Open to first years.

Courses Offered in AY 2025-2026 Include:

- GWS 150: History of Women's American Pop Music: Also, cross-listed and described as MUS 155

GWS 174: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S VOICES (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 174. (f, w, x, AES, GLO)

GWS 201: MAD IN AMERICA: GENDER, MENTAL HEALTH, & POPULAR CULTURE (4)

This course explores popular culture's influence on perceptions of insanity, madness, and psychological disability. Using an intersectional, interdisciplinary approach, we frame madness as a social and biological phenomenon, and we analyze the impact of gender, sexual, and racial norms on conceptions of mental health, reason, and rationality.

Prerequisite: GWS 141, SOC 110, or permission from the instructor. (DIV, MOD)

GWS 203: RACE, CLASS, GENDER & THE LAW (4)

Also listed and described as POLS 203. Open to first-year students. (DIV)

GWS 205: CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM (4)

Also listed and described as POLS 206. Prerequisite: any 100-level POLS course or permission.

GWS 206: APPLIED THEATRE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (4)

Also listed and described as THEA 206. Open to first years. (DIV, DJP)

GWS 207: MATERIAL GIRLS IN A MATERIAL WORLD: GENDER AND SCIENCE (4)

This class examines how scientific knowledge produces and is produced by social norms and cultural imperatives. We frame western science as a social institution with a particular understanding of the material world, the body, and humanity. With special attention paid to the study of gender/sex, sexuality, and race, we place science within historical context to more ethically and objectively approach research, medical interventions, and technological innovation. Also listed and described as SOC 207.

GWS 209: FEMINIST PHILOSOPHIES (4)

Also listed and described as PHIL 208. Open to first-year students with permission.

GWS 211: MULTICULTURAL WOMEN WRITERS (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 211. (w, x, AES, DIV)

GWS 215: CONSTRUCTING GENDER (4)

Also listed and described as COMM 215. (r, DIV, MOD)

GWS 216: SILENCED? MARGINALIZED VOICES IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM (4)

Also listed and described as REL 215. Open to first-year students. (DIV, MOD)

GWS 219: FOOD, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (4)

Explores the meanings of food and food-related practices in various cultural contexts in relation to structures of power and inequality, including those shaped by race, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, and geography. All students will participate in a community partnership project with a local food organization and volunteer a minimum of 20 hours during the semester. Also listed and described as ES 219. Prerequisite: sophomore standing. (DIV)

GWS 220: LIFE HISTORIES/SELF-NARRATIVES (4)

This course acquaints students with the theory and method of life histories and self-narratives. Students critically examine these concepts, while exploring epistemology, difference, and feminist interpretations of narrative theory. Readings are drawn from diverse cultural and historical contexts. Methodologically, students learn to organize and conduct life history interviews, transcribe, and present them in written form. Prerequisite: GWS 141 or SOC 110. (r, DIV)

GWS 222: WOMEN IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL EUROPE (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 222. (w, x, PRE)

GWS 223: WOMEN IN BUDDHISM (4)

Also listed and described as REL 223. (r, GLO)

GWS 225: WOMEN IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE - WITCHES, QUEENS, AND COURTESANS (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 225. Open to first-year students. (w, x, PRE)

GWS 226: WOMEN AND GENDER IN MODERN EUROPE (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 226. Open to first-year students. (w, x, r, MOD)

GWS 227: HISTORY OF WITCHCRAFT IN EUROPE & ATLANTIC WORLD (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 227

GWS 244: WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS: BREAKING BOUNDARIES (4)

Also listed and described as THEA 226.

GWS 230: INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP (4)

Effective leaders seek to genuinely engage everyone in their organizations. They see the diverse experiences and characteristics of community members as assets, thereby fostering belonging and contributing to organizational success. This course explores research on inclusive leadership, cultural humility, and psychological safety; introduces practices that create more inclusive teams and organizations; and emphasizes the development of skills that support inclusive leadership in a variety of settings. Activities will include self-assessments, case study analysis, role plays, and personal reflection. Also listed and described as BLI 230. Open to first-year students.

GWS 242: GENDER, CULTURE, AND POWER (4)

This course surveys anthropological approaches toward gender and sexuality from the 1920s to the present. We consider how gender and sexuality are constructed in specific historical and cultural contexts, including Pacific Island societies, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Key issues to examine include essentialism/constructivism, non-normative sexualities, genital cutting, intersex, and transgenderism. Prerequisite: GWS 141 or SOC 110. (DIV)

GWS 250: SPECIAL TOPICS IN GENDER & WOMEN'S STUDIES (4)

Special topics courses cover a range of subjects and may be cross-listed with other departments. Special topics courses do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses and therefore can be repeated by students for additional credit provided that the courses cover varying material. Prerequisites and general education credits will vary. Some special topics courses may carry the GWS Theory designation. GWS 250 courses from previous catalogues also count toward GWS major and minor requirements.

GWS 260: RACE, CLASS, GENDER: A REFLEXIVE APPROACH (4)

Also listed and described as SOC 260. AP Credit for African American History accepted (DIV, MOD)

GWS 272: REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE (4)

This course examines the politics of reproduction within and outside of the United States, including the various actors and social institutions that shape reproductive legislation. Using an intersectional approach, students will explore topics such as forced sterilization, the policing of women of color's reproduction, and the connection between reproductive justice and other important issues, such as immigration and mass incarceration. Also listed and described as SOC 272. (DJP)

GWS 281: WITCHES, CRIPPLES, & OTHER MONSTERS: RELIGION & DISABILITY (4)

Also listed and described as REL 281. (w, x, MOD, DIV)

GWS 290: INDEPENDENT STUDY (2 OR 4)

Independent study conducted below the advanced level. Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. Offered any term, including Short Term.

GWS 301: GENDER, BEAUTY, AND BODY MODIFICATION (4)

Through body modification, we express our deepest feelings about who we are and engage gendered, raced, classed, and dis/abled bodily discourses. This class assesses the ways body mods are understood and experienced, as well as complicates the distinctions between modification and mutilation, enhancement and enfreakment, the modern and primitive, and the Self and Other. Also listed and described as SOC 301.

GWS 310: THE BODY AND SEXUALITY IN EUROPEAN HISTORY (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 310. (w, x, MOD)

GWS 318: SEXUAL ETHICS (4)

Also listed and described as REL 318. (o, DIV)

GWS 324: FEMINISM AND CONTEMPORARY ART (4)

Also listed and described as ART 324. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. (DIV, MOD)

GWS 328: 19TH-CENTURY WOMEN WRITERS (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 328. Prerequisite: sophomore standing; English majors must have completed at least one 100-level or 200-level literature course in English. (w, x, AES)

GWS 334: SEX AND RACE IN THE AGE OF EMPIRE (4)

Also listed and described as HIST 334. Prerequisite: sophomore standing. (w, x, GLO, MOD)

GWS 338: SURVEY OF FEMINIST THOUGHT (4)

This course provides an intensive study of the various theories which form the conceptual base for feminism (among these are liberal, radical, Marxist, and postmodern—to name a few). It provides a critique of traditional intellectual and research frameworks that have omitted women's perspectives and experiences and looks in detail at the intersections of

gender with race, class, sexuality, and culture. Prerequisite: GWS 141 and one other 200-level gender and women's studies course. (o, DIV)

GWS 342: ADVANCED STUDIES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: AMERICAN GIRLS' FICTION (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 342. Prerequisite: junior standing or permission; English majors must have completed both a 100-level and a 200-level literature course in English. (w, x, AES, MOD)

GWS 345: ARAB WOMEN WRITERS (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 345. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. (AES, GLO)

GWS 347: GIRLHOOD STUDIES (4)

This course will explore the interdisciplinary field of girlhood studies. We will consider the cultural representations and productions of girls and girl cultures, both academic and popular. Themes of investigation may include gender socialization, racialization, sexuality, self-esteem, identity formation, media, consumption, international development, empowerment, agency & activism. Discussions will be grounded in feminist intersectional approaches that investigate the diversities and commonalities of girls' experiences as well as the larger structures of power that shape girls' experiences. Students will have the opportunity to learn about girls' experiences and organizations at the local, national, and global levels.

GWS 350: SPECIAL TOPICS IN GENDER & WOMEN'S STUDIES

Special topics courses cover a range of subjects and may be cross-listed with other departments. Special topics courses do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses and, therefore, can be repeated by students for additional credit, provided that the courses cover varying material. Prerequisites and general education credits will vary. Some special topics courses may carry the GWS Theory Designation.

GWS 341: QUEER CINEMA

Also listed and described as FILM 3341.

GWS 360: DOING, UNDOING, RE-DOING GENDER (4)

Also listed and described as SOC 360. Prerequisite: SOC 110.

GWS 362: SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM (4)

This course explores the role of spirituality for individuals and collectivities engaged in transformative social justice work. In particular, we focus on the work of contemporary feminist, womanist, and women of color scholars and activists such as Gloria Anzaldúa, Audre Lorde, Layli Maparyan, Jaqui Alexander, and AnaLouise Keating. We also explore the writings and practices of contemplatives from a range of spiritual traditions. Students in this seminar will be expected to engage in experiential learning, leading class discussion, sustained personal reflection, cultural analysis and critique, and rethinking epistemology and social change. Also listed and described as REL 362. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or permission. (DIV)

GWS 372: IMAGES OF WOMEN IN FILM (4)

Also listed and described as FILM 372. Prerequisite: prior film course or permission. (AES, MOD)

GWS 382: ADVANCED STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE - QUEER ECOLOGIES IN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING (4)

Also listed and described as ENG 382. (w, x, AES, DIV)

GWS 390: INDEPENDENT STUDY (2 OR 4)

Independent study conducted at the advanced level. Application must be made with faculty prior to registration. Offered any term, including Short Term.

GWS 399: INTERNSHIP (4)

An experiential component is required for all GWS majors and minors. This consists of an internship or service project carried out while a student in the program. Students will work under the sponsorship of a faculty member in the gender and women's studies department to design an experience that will complement their coursework and provide valuable experience that may lead to further career or educational opportunities. Interns may also be expected to participate in a biweekly discussion group with other gender and women's studies interns. At the end of the placement, the student will submit an activity log, a reflective paper analyzing their field experience, and a RATE via the Career and Life Design website. This internship may be completed at any time during the calendar year, including during the Short Term. Applications must be made with faculty prior to registration.

GWS 470: SEMINAR IN GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES (4)

"Feminist journeys" is the theme of this capstone course. Students examine feminism as a journey, both historically and politically, and in their own lives as feminists and gender and

women's studies majors/minors through the method of autoethnography. The course goal is to integrate the personal and political in innovative and creative ways. Students play a significant role in shaping the class and complete a major final creative project in the medium of their choice. Prerequisites: GWS 141 and senior standing.

GWS 480: SENIOR THESIS (4)

A research paper based upon inquiry into a specific issue within gender and women's studies. Students must consult with GWS advisor in the spring semester of junior year. Research begins during Fall Term and ends Short Term.

GWS 490: SENIOR HONORS THESIS (4, 4)

Offered to qualified gender and women's studies majors. Students must consult with their GWS advisor in the spring semester of junior year. Research is completed over Fall, Short, and Spring Terms.