WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

Departmental Mission and Goals

Mission Statement
The Women's and Gender Studies Program at Denison University takes its mission to be three-fold: to foster a critical awareness of, and intellectual sensitivity to, content, method and real-life implications of the field.

Our goal is to engage students in the intellectual content of the discipline: theories about power and intersecting dimensions of human difference; articulations about gendered subject formations and politicized aspects of "identities," including race, class, age, religion, sexuality; knowledge sharing of women's life experiences, histories, and visions; and significant areas of feminist thought and action, including transnationalism, post-coloniality, embodiment, technoscience, and intersectionality.

Also, guided by methods that are infused by interdisciplinarity, we aim to engage students in questioning issues of power and justice, privilege and oppression, in disciplines, such as anthropology, biology, black studies, communication, dance, education, international studies, literary studies, political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, etc., while developing an understanding of these issues from an interdisciplinary and interconnected perspective.

We aim to engage students in the quotidian implications of their academic engagement by challenging them to experience the relationship between theory and practice. We strive to expose students to concepts concerning how the academic study of race, class, and gender both locally and globally, is informed by, and has the power to, transform lives.

Curricular Goals

Denison's Women's and Gender Studies faculty are dedicated to helping students develop rigorous analyses of culture, politics, ideas and text, as well as creative leadership skills. We hope to impart to our students the history, analysis and practice of feminist scholarship, means of creative expression for their intellectual interests and concerns, and political service and activism.

Students are required to take an introductory course WGST 101 - Issues in Feminism, a feminist methods course, WGST 310 - Feminist Research Methods and a feminist theory course, WGST 311 - Feminist Theory as well as to engage in a senior practicum—a research, activist, or artistic experience that involves sustained activity in community engagement and written response WGST 451 - Senior Research-WGST 452 - Senior Research. Additionally, students are required to select additional courses, most of which are cross-listed, according to WGST guidelines and their own interests.

The required courses in the major and minor explore gender and justice issues, provide the methods and information to conduct rigorous analysis, engage our students in ways that challenge them to expand their thinking about the material they meet in the world, and give them the opportunity to embody feminist pedagogies. The elective courses will do the same in the context of their fields of study.

Students have the opportunity of participating in a variety of internships, fellowships, and research opportunities located throughout the country that acquaint them with gender issues (information available through the Knowlton Center for Career Exploration and the Lisska Center for Scholarly Engagement). Students are encouraged to develop leadership skills by taking an active part in campus life, including engaging in projects developed inside and outside the academic program and the Center for Women's and Gender Action. As examples, projects have included a national grant application, a campus-wide study on violence, and a benefit concert.

The Women's and Gender Studies Program sponsors regular symposia on gender issues that include presentations by Women's and Gender Studies faculty as well as Women's and Gender Studies scholars from abroad and the United States. With the support of the Laura C. Harris endowment, the Women's and Gender Studies Program has hosted internationally renowned scholars including Linda Alcoff, M. Jacqui Alexander, Gloria Anzaldúa, Judith Butler, Angela Davis, Cynthia Enloe, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Nancy Fraser, Jack Halberstam, bell hooks, Ericka Huggins, and Winona La Duke. Program members also participate in the Great Lakes Colleges Association, which provides conferences for Women's and Gender Studies students and faculty. The Women's and Gender Studies program has an institutional membership in the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) and has sponsored student memberships and conference participation.

Faculty

Director: Barbara Fultner (Professor of Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies)

Associate Professors: Clare Jen (Biology and Women's and Gender Studies), Toni King (Black Studies and Women and Gender Studies), Isis Nusair (International Studies and Women and Gender Studies); Visiting Assistant Professors of Women and Gender Studies: Hanne Blank, Kelly Jo Fulkerson-Dikuua, Dalia Gomaa

Affiliate Appointments: Susan Diduk (Anthropology and Sociology), Rebecca Kennedy (Classics), Diana Mafe (English), Gill Wright Miller (Dance), Sandy Runzo (English), Megan Thrulkeld (History)

Academic Administrative Assistant & Coordinator of the Laura C. Harris Series: Robin Brown

View faculty profiles and contact information (https://denison.edu/academics/womens-gender-studies/contacts)

Women's and Gender Studies Major

Women's and Gender Studies majors are required to take a total of 32 credit hours. Students may sign up for a course either under the department number or under the Women's and Gender Studies number. Both numbers will count toward the Women's and Gender Studies major or minor. No more than two courses at the 100 level may count toward the major. All Women's and Gender Studies majors must take the following:

1. Required core courses:
   WGST 101 - Issues in Feminism (4 credits)
   WGST 310 - Feminist Research Methods (4 credits)
   WGST 311 - Feminist Theory (4 credits)
   WGST 451 - Senior Research or WGST 452 - Senior Research (4 credits)
2. One course on women of color in the United States (4 credits)
3. One course on transnational feminism (4 credits)
4. Three courses cross-listed with three of the four divisions of the college: Humanities, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, and Sciences. These courses may also satisfy the requirements of 2 and 3.
5. At least one of the above courses must be cross-listed with Black Studies.
6. WGST 310 - Feminist Research Methods (Only offered in Spring semester) and WGST 311 - Feminist Theory (only offered in Fall semester) should be taken before Senior year; if student is going off campus during Junior year, plan accordingly.

Women's and Gender Studies Minor

Women's and Gender Studies minors are required to take a total of 24 credit hours. No more than two courses (including WGST 101 - Issues in Feminism) will be at the 100-level. All Women's and Gender Studies minors must take the following:

1. Required core courses:
   - WGST 101 - Issues in Feminism (4 credits)
   - WGST 310 - Feminist Research Methods (4 credits)
   - WGST 311 - Feminist Theory (4 credits)
2. One course cross-listed with Black Studies (4 credits)
3. One course on transnational feminism (4 credits)
   - Requirements 2 and 3 may be satisfied by the same course.
4. One additional elective in WGST or cross listed with WGST.

Students are encouraged to consult with the Director of Women's and Gender Studies in making their choices.

Courses

WGST 101 - Issues in Feminism (4 Credit Hours)
An introduction to the field of Women's and Gender Studies, this interdisciplinary course considers the socio-political meanings and practices of gender in our lives. It examines whether gender is biological or socially constructed and how notions of femininity and masculinity are (re)produced. Students will analyze the workings of power and the social production of inequality in institutions such as the family, the workplace, and the state, taking into account the intersections between gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality. Topics will include sexual and gender violence, equal rights, reproductive technologies, body image, and transnational feminist issues. A central aim of the course is to develop critical reading and thinking about the plurality of women's experiences and about the ways in which women have resisted inequalities and engaged in local/global politics for social transformation and change. This course fulfills the Interdivisional (I), Power and Justice (P), and Oral Communication (R) GE requirement.

WGST 108 - Bible, Gender, and Sexuality (4 Credit Hours)
This course introduces students to the many conflicted attitudes and images around men, women, and sexuality found in the Bible, from the very different creations of Adam and Eve to Revelation's representation of the Roman Empire as the "whore" of Babylon; from the assertive and sexually suspicious female figures of Ruth and Rahab to Jesus' uncertain masculinity in accounts of his death. We will ask: does the Bible support heterosexuality and decry homosexuality? In addition to close, historically-oriented study of select biblical texts, students will be acquainted with core readings in contemporary gender theory. Crosslisting: REL 108 and QS 280.

WGST 110 - Biology & the Politics of Women's Health (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines critical conversations in the biology, politics, culture, and history of women's health. The nation's greatest health issues include, but are not limited to, unmanaged chronic conditions (including cardiovascular health), environmental health risks and cancer, racial and ethnic health disparities, women's reproductive and sexual health, and the epidemic of obesity. Evaluating the complexities of these "women's health" issues involves both scientific literacy and sociocultural literacy. This course provides a fundamental understanding of how biological system structures and functions are related, specific to the female human body. The laboratory component of this course familiarizes students with the scientific method, feminist theory in science, and methods in women's health research. This course promotes proficiency in oral communication through practice in a variety of formats that typically occur in biology and women's and gender studies. Crosslisting: BIOL 110.

WGST 150 - Introductory Topics in Women's and Gender Studies (4 Credit Hours)
This course may satisfy one of the distribution requirements for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

WGST 162 - Self-Defense for Women (1 Credit Hour)
This course is for women to learn basic self-defense techniques to prevent sexual assault. We will discuss and practice strategies that can be used in a variety of self-defense situations, including street and job harassment, date-rape, and stranger assault, fighting from the ground, defending yourself with or against a weapon, and defense against multiple attackers. Students will learn to combine mental, verbal and physical self-defense techniques in their personal lives. Crosslisting: PHED 162.

WGST 180 - Special Topics in Women's and Gender Studies (4 Credit Hours)

WGST 199 - Introductory Topics in WGST (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

WGST 210 - Sex and Gender in Society (4 Credit Hours)
This course compares and evaluates a variety of theories which attempt to explain the origins, persistence and effects of gender in American society. In particular, it explores a number of settings that may include: the family, the work place, the political arena, religious activity, violence against women, and face-to-face interactional contexts. Special attention is given to the ways in which race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation shape gender experiences. Although its primary focus is American society, the course compares problems of sexual inequality in American society with other, quite different, societies in order to gain a comparative understanding of how discrimination, prejudice, and structural inequality, wherever they are found, create special problems for women. Throughout, the focus is on learning to use structural, historical, and theoretical information as guides to understanding social change and the choices facing women and men. Crosslisting: ANSO 210.

WGST 220 - Women in Music (4 Credit Hours)
Historically, women have played an integral role in musical traditions around the world, although the extent of their contributions has only recently been recognized and studied in an academic context. This course traces the development and current state of women's roles in music, including Western art music composers, performers, critics, and teachers: performers of popular American genres such as jazz, country, and rock; and performers of popular "World Beat" and traditional world musics. Crosslisting: MUS 220.
WGST 223 - Women in United States History (4 Credit Hours)
This course surveys the history of women in the United States from 1848 to the present. We will explore the lived experiences of many different kinds of women and analyze the ways in which other categories of identity – race, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexual orientation, age, etc – affect those experiences. We will also explore the development of feminist consciousness among U.S. women, and analyze attempts to expand that consciousness both nationally and globally.
Crosslisting: HIST 192.

WGST 225 - Women in Literature (4 Credit Hours)
Selected poetry and prose by women guide inquiries into writing and gender and into related issues, such as sexuality, history, race, class, identity and power.
Crosslisting: ENGL 225.

WGST 227 - Women's Spiritual Activism (4 Credit Hours)
What is women's spiritual activism in our contemporary society? What can we learn from those who have struggled to bring gender equality and peace in human society? Is religion anti-feminist or feminism anti-religious? In spite of cultural, racial and religious diversity among women across the globe, women often share the similar stories of physical and psychological suffering caused by their institutionalized religions and societies. Many of these women also testify that their religions enabled them to resist injustice and to build up solidarity with others including men. This course invites the students to explore the spiritual journeys of the feminist activists—their struggles for justice for all humanity.
Crosslisting: REL 227.

WGST 229 - Mediating Gender and Sexuality (4 Credit Hours)
We will critically examine and evaluate the cultural construction and representation of gender and sexuality in contemporary American mass media, and trace their development throughout the 20th century. We will focus on a variety of mass-produced commercial media texts, surveying television, magazines, advertising, and popular music. Although gender is the primary identity construction examined in this course, we will pay close attention to other aspects of identity that define American women, such as ethnicity, class, and sexuality. We will investigate representational issues in relation to their political repercussions, and draw from a broad range of academic literature, including feminist television criticism, film theory, cultural studies, communication theory, and popular music criticism.
Crosslisting: COMM 229 and QS 229.

WGST 250 - Intermediate Topics in Women's and Gender Studies (4 Credit Hours)
This course may satisfy one of the distribution requirements for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

WGST 251 - Intermediate Topics Seminar (Humanities) (4 Credit Hours)
This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Humanities and satisfies the humanities distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major. Topics for 2018-2019 include: 'pain, Healing and the Body in Early Christianity and Contemporary Worlds,' 'Women Voices of Francophone Africa,' 'Women Writing in America'.

WGST 252 - Intermediate Topics Seminar (Fine Arts) (4 Credit Hours)
This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Fine Arts and satisfies the fine arts distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major. Topics for 2018-19 include: 'Dancing GenderOnStage/OffStage: Dancing Gender and Sexuality', 'Photograph as performative Gesture'.

WGST 253 - Intermediate Topics Seminar (Social Science) (4 Credit Hours)
This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Social Sciences and satisfies the social science distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major. Topics for 2018-19 include: 'Gender and Globalization', 'Becoming a Bad Student: Identity, Inequity, and Intersectionality in Schooling'.

WGST 254 - Intermediate Topics Seminar (Sciences) (4 Credit Hours)
This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Sciences and satisfies the science distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

WGST 255 - Philosophy of Feminism (4 Credit Hours)
Feminism can radically challenge traditional ways of doing philosophy. In asking why women and women's experience seem to be missing from the tradition of philosophy, it implicitly questions philosophy's claim to objectivity, universality, and truth. Thus, feminist criticism probes some of the most fundamental philosophical assumptions about our knowledge of and interaction with the world and other people. Are there philosophically significant differences between men and women? If so, what are their implications? What, if any, are the differences among women and what is their significance? This course focuses on the problem of violence against women, in its many manifestations, in order to examine these and other questions in the context of contemporary feminist discussions of epistemology, ethics, and science.
Prerequisite(s): One previous course in Philosophy or Women's and Gender Studies or consent.
Crosslisting: PHIL 275.
WGST 276 - Gender, War and Conflict (4 Credit Hours)
This course aims to make feminist sense of contemporary wars and conflicts. It analyzes the intersections between gender, race, class, and ethnicity in national conflicts. The class traces the gendered processes of defining citizenship, national identity and security, and examines the role of institutions like the military in the construction of femininity and masculinity. The course focuses on the gendered impact of war and conflict through examining torture, mass rape, genocide, and refugee displacement. It analyzes the strategies used by women’s and feminist movements, to oppose war and conflict, and the gendered impact of war prevention, peacekeeping, and post-war reconstruction. The class draws on cases from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The class is interdisciplinary and gives equal weight to theory and practice while drawing on writings by local and global activists and theorists.
Prerequisite(s): INTL 100 or WGST 101.

WGST 299 - Intermediate Topics in Women’s and Gender Studies (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

WGST 301 - Psychology of Women (4 Credit Hours)
This course reviews psychological research and theories on women. Topics include sex bias in psychological research, gender differences and similarities in personality and abilities, lifespan development, problems of adjustment and psychotherapy, language and communication, women’s health, female sexuality, and violence against women (rape and wife battering).
Prerequisite(s): WGST major, or PSYC 100, PSYC 200, and junior or senior status, or consent.
Crosslisting: PSYC 301 and QS 301.

WGST 302 - Women and the Arts (4 Credit Hours)
This topics course considers works created by artists who self-identify as “female.” The course will include engaging in, looking at, and reading about art making, focusing on historical examples and on the art of everyday life. Questions about creativity, expectations, limitations, releasing into the unknown will be considered alongside socio-cultural environments, surveillance, and judgment about who can and who cannot easily identify, and be read, as art makers in various cultures.

WGST 306 - Transnational Feminism (4 Credit Hours)
This class provides students with the ability to understand, critique, and comparatively analyze the politics of gender in transnational contexts. The course traces the development of feminist thinking and practice within national, regional and transnational contexts, and maps the political agendas of women’s and feminist movements in various countries around the world. The course focuses on how feminism emerges in a particular context and the specific issues that galvanize women to act for change. The course explores the connections between feminism, colonization, nationalism, militarization, imperialism, and globalization, and analyzes the processes by which the agendas of women from the global north and south come together or clash. The course examines through specific examples from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa the concerns and challenges facing transnational women’s and feminist movements today. The class is interdisciplinary and draws on writings by local and global activists and theorists.
Prerequisite(s): WGST 101 or permission of instructor.

WGST 310 - Feminist Research Methods (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines both scientific methods and social analysis based on empirical research and the interpretive strategies that have developed out of the humanities for understanding societies. It provides experience in the design and implementation of social and cultural research with a focus on women’s studies. The course will examine the epistemological issues that underlie research in women’s and gender studies, the ethical and political questions involved, and the assumptions that shape various methods. Students will apply the methods learned to their own research projects.
Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 311 - Feminist Theory (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines various ways of understanding gender by looking at a variety of feminist theories. Theories studied may include psychoanalytic, feminist theory, cultural materialist feminist theory, etc. Particular consideration will be given to issues raised by multiculturalism, women of color, womanist perspectives, queer theory, class concerns, international and transnational movements. The course will introduce students to a variety of theories to enable them both to recognize and use those theories in their research and social practice. Students will be encouraged to become reflective about their own theoretical stances and to consider how societies can move closer to justice for both women and men.
Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 320 - Women in Sport (4 Credit Hours)
This course is designed to give students a comprehensive look at women in sport: past, present and future. This course will examine, analyze and synthesize the issues surrounding women. Each topic will be studied through readings, films, class discussions and reflect sport from historical, psychological, sociological, physiological, political and philosophical perspectives.
Crosslisting: HESS 101.

WGST 323 - Transgender Studies/Transgender Issues (4 Credit Hours)
This course offers an introduction to the growing interdisciplinary field of Transgender Studies, focusing on key figures and writings that contributed to its development. Transgender Studies is primarily concerned with directing critical concentration on the diversity and politics of gender, the embodied experience of transgender people, as well as the material conditions and representational strategies that surround, enable, and constrain trans* lives. We will consider relevant selections of scholarship in feminist, queer, and transgender studies; first-person and autobiographical writings by transgender people; and media representations of transgender people and politics that are shaping perspectives of gender within our contemporary cultural moment. Transgender scholarship and perspectives made available by transgender lives provide opportunities to consider and critique the range of apparatuses and systems of regulations that produce the limits and frontiers of embodying sex and gender.

WGST 325 - African-American Women's Literature (4 Credit Hours)
Historical and contemporary African-American women's literature grounds an inquiry into black women’s literary and intellectual traditions within the matrix of race, gender, class and sexual relations in the United States.
Crosslisting: ENGL 325.
WGST 327 - Women and Social Ethics in the Global Context (4 Credit Hours)

"The personal is internationally political!" Whether we are aware or not, we live in the globalized world and our actions here and now affect the lives of millions of people whom we may never meet face to face. Through the religious concept of "interdependence" with the secular understanding of "women's rights as human rights," this course will analyze and explore globalized issues of poverty, war, sex-trafficking, migration, reproductive rights, and religious conflict as well as ethically consider how diverse social groups are interconnected to each other beyond national and religious boundaries; and how we study, analyze, and practice transnational feminist activism for all humanity.

Crosslisting: REL 327.

WGST 329 - Gender and Communications (4 Credit Hours)

This course focuses on (1) the role of interpersonal, social and political communication in the construction of gender expectations in American culture, and (2) how those expectations get communicated/performed, and thus reified, in our daily lives. We will explore the complex interplay between self expectations and social expectations of gender that get expressed, challenged, and ultimately influenced by and within a variety of social and interpersonal contexts: education, the body, organizations, friends and family, romantic relationships, the media, and politics.

Prerequisite(s): COMM 280 and COMM 290, or WGST major.

Crosslisting: COMM 329.

WGST 340 - In the Company of Educated Women (4 Credit Hours)

This is a course on women's educational history in the United States. The scope encompasses some general patterns in women's educational experiences—as students, teachers, school administrators, and in higher education at particular points in U.S. history. Examining gender issues in historical context allows us to get a handle on how education, ideology, and political economy influence the contours of societies, and limit or extend possibilities for individuals.

Crosslisting: EDUC 340.

WGST 350 - Advanced Topics in Women's and Gender Studies (4 Credit Hours)

This course may satisfy one of the distribution requirements within the major, as appropriate.

Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 351 - Advanced Topics Seminar (Humanities) (4 Credit Hours)

This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Humanities and satisfies the humanities distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major. Topics for 2018-19 include: 'Women, Bodies, and the Making of Medical Knowledge'.

Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 352 - Advanced Topics Seminar (Arts) (4 Credit Hours)

This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Fine Arts and satisfies the fine arts distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 353 - Advanced Topics Seminar (Social Sciences) (4 Credit Hours)

This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in Social Sciences and satisfies the social science distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 354 - Advanced Topics Seminar (Sciences) (4 Credit Hours)

This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Sciences and satisfies the science distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major.

Prerequisite(s): WGST 101.

WGST 356 - Advanced Topics Seminar (Humanities) (4 Credit Hours)

This topics seminar is cross-listed with a course in the Humanities and satisfies the humanities distribution requirement for the Women's and Gender Studies major. Topics for 2018-19 include: 'The Making of Medical Knowledge'.

Prerequisite(s): COMM 280 and COMM 290, or WGST major.

Crosslisting: COMM 329.

WGST 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

WGST 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

WGST 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

WGST 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

WGST 383 - Sex and Sexuality in Latin America (4 Credit Hours)

This course critically examines gender and sexuality in Latin America. Particularly it will explore the various attempts by the ruling elite to define acceptable and deviant gender roles and sexual identities, how the non-elite resisted the imposition of those elite notions of propriety to create their own codes of conduct, and how those conflicts have changed over time.

Crosslisting: HIST 243.

WGST 391 - Critical Pedagogy: Gender, Race and Class in U.S. Education (4 Credit Hours)

In its examination of current critical issues in U.S. education, the central concern throughout this course is the relationship between teachers and students; schools and society; and people and the world. Particular attention is given to critical and feminist pedagogies informed by critical theory. The course includes a 25-30-hour service-learning commitment in an area school or community organization. Course is a Curricular Service Learning course.

Prerequisite(s): EDUC 213.

Crosslisting: EDUC 390.

WGST 396 - Women, Sex, and Power in the Modern World. (4 Credit Hours)

This course focuses on histories of women around the world since the eighteenth century in order to examine the various ways in which women have struggled first to claim and then to maintain power over their bodies and experiences. The course analyzes sources that speak to women's efforts to assert political, economic, cultural, and personal power in society and in their own lives. Topics include a study of the development of organized women's movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and an examination of the extent to which women have been successful in building coalitions to achieve power. The course also examines the role of other categories of identity in these struggles for power, including race, class, nationality, sexual orientation, and religion.

Crosslisting: HIST 266.

WGST 399 - Intermediate Topics in Women's and Gender Studies (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

WGST 416 - Women in the U.S. Economy. (4 Credit Hours)

This course will focus on the market and nonmarket contributions of women to the U.S. economy. A historical framework provides the backdrop for examining the economic, political and social institutions that affect women's contributions to the nation's economic well-being.

Prerequisite(s): ECON 301.

Crosslisting: ECON 416.

WGST 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

WGST 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)