

# WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

The program in women's, gender, and sexuality studies program examines women's lives, literature, histories, and cultures through the lens of feminist theory and practice, establishing gender and sexuality as fundamental categories of analysis. Gender and sexuality are examined as they intersect with race, class, nationality, and ethnicity. The program strengthens a student's ability to gain knowledge of contemporary feminist theories and research methods, and provides interdisciplinary perspectives from which to study the diversity of the human experience. Classroom study is supplemented by the diverse resources of the nation's capital.

Visit the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program website (<https://wgss.columbian.gwu.edu/>) for additional information.

## UNDERGRADUATE

### Bachelor's programs

- Bachelor of Arts with a major in women's, gender, and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/ba-womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)

### Combined programs

- Dual Bachelor of Arts with a major in women's, gender, and sexuality studies and Master of Arts in the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/combined-ba-wgss-ma-wgss/>)
- Dual Bachelor of Arts with a major in women's, gender, and sexuality studies and Master of Arts in the field of public policy with a concentration in women's, gender, and sexuality studies degree programs (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/combined-ba-wgss-ma-public-policy-concentration-wgss/>)

### Minors

- Minor in LGBT and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/minor-lgbt-sexuality-studies/>)
- Minor in women's, gender, and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/womens-gender-sexuality-studies-minor/>)

### Micro-minor program

- Micro-Minor in immigration and migration studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/micro-minor-immigration-migration-studies/>)

## GRADUATE

### Master's programs

- Master of Arts in the field of public policy, women's, gender, and sexuality studies concentration (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/ma-public-policy-womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)
- Master of Arts in the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/ma-womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)

## CERTIFICATE

### Graduate certificate program

- Women's, gender, and sexuality studies (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/certificate-womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)

## FACULTY

### Faculty

Professor: R. Riedner

Associate Professors: J. Barlow, C. Deitch, I. Ken, S. Matthiesen

Assistant Professor: E. Strader

Executive Committee Members: A. Ahmad, N. Blyden, E. Chacko, E. Chapman, M. Cuellar, K. Daiya, I. Ken, S. Matthiesen, K. Pemberton, R. Riedner, E. Strader, G. Weiss, X. Kang

## COURSES

### Explanation of Course Numbers

- Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
- Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-level undergraduate courses that also may be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work assigned
- Those in the 6000s and 8000s are for master's, doctoral, and professional-level students
- The 6000s are open to advanced undergraduate students with approval of the instructor and the dean or advising office

Note: Excluding students enrolled in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, completion of WGSS 2120 and WGSS 2125 or equivalent, or permission of instructor, is prerequisite to all graduate-level women's studies courses.

### **WGSS 1000. Dean's Seminar. 3 Credits.**

The Dean's Seminars provide Columbian College first-year students focused scholarship on specific intellectual challenges. Topics vary by semester. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details.

**WGSS 1020. Approaches to Women's History. 3 Credits.**

Introduction to major methodological and conceptual debates in women's and gender history, focusing on the United States. (Same as HIST 1020)

**WGSS 1099. Variable Topics. 1-36 Credits.****WGSS 2120. Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. 3 Credits.**

Key concepts, theories, and perspectives in women's studies, placing women's experiences at the center of interpretation; historical and contemporary perspectives on women's lives, experiences, and thoughts and how gender interacts with race, class, religion, sexual orientation, culture, and politics. Same As: WGSS 2120W.

**WGSS 2120W. Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. 3 Credits.**

A multidisciplinary examination of historical conditions, cultural norms, and social institutions that define women, gender and sexuality in different cultures. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. Same As: WGSS 2120.

**WGSS 2121. The Anthropology of Gender: Cross-Cultural Perspectives. 3 Credits.**

Anthropological representations of gender relations in "other" cultures have provided important case material for feminist theorizing of sex differences and gender roles and statuses. How a cross-cultural approach can inform our understanding of gender. (Same as ANTH 2501)

**WGSS 2125. Varieties of Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.**

Classical and contemporary texts on feminist explanations of women's status. Relationships within the sex/gender system and arrangements based on class and race. Evaluation, through the lens of feminist theory, of several academic disciplines in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Prerequisites: WGSS 1020 or WGSS 2120. Same As: AMST 2125.

**WGSS 2135. A Study of Women and Media. 3 Credits.**

The role media plays in women's lives; limits and effects of a "dominant" media; representations of women in print media and television, especially advertising, and in books and film; how women have attempted to articulate a culture that serves their personal, political, and social interests.

**WGSS 2145. Space, Place, and Gender Identity. 3 Credits.**

Space and place as socially-constructed structures; politics of space and bodies from the perspective of gender and sexual minorities; analysis of gender relations through spatial practices; identity-based inequality in the use of space and place.

**WGSS 2225. Philosophy of Race And Gender. 3 Credits.**

Differing theoretical perspectives on how race, sexuality, gender, class, and ethnicity inform (and re-form) individual as well as group identities; consequences of being marginalized because one is associated with an allegedly inferior race, sex, and/or gender. (Same as PHIL 2125)

**WGSS 2380. Sexuality in U.S. History. 3 Credits.**

Examination of the changing social organization and meaning of sexual practices and desires in American culture, with particular attention to the relationship between sexuality and gendered racial and class identities and politics. (Same as AMST 2380, HIST 2380)

**WGSS 2385. Sex and Citizenship. 3 Credits.**

How gender and sexuality have shaped Americans' understanding of citizenship; the state regulation of marriage, reproduction, military service, immigration, and access to other government resources and benefits; the cultural representation of women, LGBTQ individuals, and other sexual and gender minorities as second-class citizens; and the efforts of women, LGBTQ groups, and others to claim full equality in American culture and politics. Same As: AMST 2385.

**WGSS 2385W. Sex and Citizenship. 3 Credits.**

How gender and sexuality have shaped Americans' understanding of citizenship; the state regulation of marriage, reproduction, military service, immigration, and access to other government resources and benefits; the cultural representation of women, LGBTQ individuals, and other sexual and gender minorities as second-class citizens; and the efforts of women, LGBTQ groups, and others to claim full equality in American culture and politics. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. Same AMST 2385W. Same As: AMST 2385W.

**WGSS 2710. Postcolonialism, Race, and Gender in Global Anglophone Literature and Film. 3 Credits.**

How race and gender shaped empire and nationalism in international Anglophone literature and cinema from 1857 to 1960. Feminist, postcolonial, and critical race theory, engaged with modern literature, graphic narratives, and film. Same As: ENGL 2710.

**WGSS 2711W. Postcolonialism and Migration in Global Anglophone Literature and Film. 3 Credits.**

Migration and politics as represented in world Anglophone literature and film; theories and histories of migration, feminist theory, and ethnic studies engaged in conversation with cultural texts. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. Same As: ENGL 2711W.

**WGSS 3099. Variable Topics. 1-12 Credits.****WGSS 3136. Chinese Women in Myth, Literature, and Film. 3 Credits.**

Women's position in Chinese cultural and political life from prehistoric myth to the present time. Conducted in English. (Same as CHIN 3136)

**WGSS 3136W. Chinese Women in Myth, Literature, and Film. 3 Credits.**

Women's position in Chinese cultural and political life from prehistoric myth to the present. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. Taught in English. (Same as CHIN 3136W, WGSS 3136)

**WGSS 3170. Special Topics in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. 1-3 Credits.**

Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. See department for more details.

**WGSS 3170W. Selected Topics. 1-3 Credits.**

Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement.

**WGSS 3195. Undergraduate Research. 1-3 Credits.**

A written proposal approved by the faculty member who supervises the research is required prior to registration.

**WGSS 3235. Women and the Law. 3 Credits.**

Contemporary legal issues that affect women in the United States; theories and documents relevant to issues such as violence against women, marriage and divorce, employment, immigration, and reproductive rights.

**WGSS 3352. U.S. Women's History to 1865. 3 Credits.**

History of women in the Americas and in the United States from trans-Atlantic encounters through the Civil War. (Same as HIST 3352, WGSS 3352)

**WGSS 3352W. U.S. Women's History to 1865. 3 Credits.**

History of women in the Americas and in the United States from trans-Atlantic encounters through the Civil War. (Same as HIST 3352, WGSS 3352) Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement.

**WGSS 3353. U.S. Women's History II. 3 Credits.**

Continuation of WGSS 3352. History of women in the Americas and in the United States from trans-Atlantic encounters from 1877 to present. (Same as AMST 3353, HIST 3353)

**WGSS 3362. African American Women's History. 3 Credits.**

The history of African American women's labor, cultural expression, institution-building, activism, and strategies to combat oppression from the antebellum period through the late 20th century; the intersection of race, gender, and class as it has shaped U.S. society, racism, the black freedom movement, and African American women's experiences. (Same as AMST 3362, AMST 3362W, HIST 3362, HIST 3362W, WGSS 3362W)

**WGSS 3362W. African American Women's History. 3 Credits.**

The history of African American women's labor, cultural expression, institution-building, activism, and strategies to combat oppression from the antebellum period through the late 20th century; the intersection of race, gender, and class as it has shaped U.S. society, racism, the black freedom movement, and African American women's experiences. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. (Same as HIST 3362W, AMST 3362W)

**WGSS 3410. Lesbian History and Culture. 3 Credits.**

Examination of lesbian identity, community, and legal rights from a scholarly feminist perspective.

**WGSS 3435. Queer Politics. 3 Credits.**

The history of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) politics in the United States; influences and intersections of race and ethnicity, class, gender identity and expression, sexuality, sex, and age; contemporary policy debates relevant to queer politics.

**WGSS 3470. Sexuality and the Law. 3 Credits.**

Exploration of the ways in which the law has affected individuals' ability to express their sexuality, with a primary focus on sexual orientation and issues such as marriage, adoption, voting rights, sexual harassment, and military service.

**WGSS 3481. Women in Islam. 3 Credits.**

The ways in which Islam has articulated gender identity and male-female relationships, and conversely, how women have constructed, interpreted, and articulated Islam and their places within it. (Same as REL 3481)

**WGSS 3530. Women in Africa. 3 Credits.**

African women from prehistory to the present, focusing on culture, the role of gender, and outside influences and their impact on women's history. (Same as WGSS 3530W, HIST 3530, HIST 3530W)

**WGSS 3530W. Women in Africa. 3 Credits.**

African women from prehistory to the present, focusing on culture, the role of gender, and outside influences and their impact on women's history. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement. (Same as WGSS 3530, HIST 3530, HIST 3530W)

**WGSS 3730. Topics in Global Postcolonial Literature and Film. 3 Credits.**

Topics vary by semester. May be repeated for credit provided the topic differs. Consult the Schedule of Classes for more details. Same As: ENGL 3730.

**WGSS 3820. Global Domestic Labor. 3 Credits.**

Consideration of women's paid and unpaid domestic labor, including care work, in the context of global and globalizing political and cultural economies.

**WGSS 3845. Global Women's Prison. 3 Credits.**

Examination of women's confinement and incarceration in the context of global and globalizing political and cultural economies.

**WGSS 3881. Women, Gender, and Religion in China. 3 Credits.**

Historical introduction to women and men as gendered subjects and the construction of gender and power in Chinese religions. May be taken for graduate credit with extra work assigned. (Same as EALL 3881, REL 3881)

**WGSS 3890W. Black Women in the Twenty-First Century. 3 Credits.**

An interdisciplinary approach to critical inquiry into the scholarship on, and status of, Black women in North America, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa in the twenty-first century; historical, national, and transnational linkages between Black women; responses to intersectionality; analyses, strategies, and actions being deployed by and about Black women in action and scholarship. Includes a significant engagement in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly expression to satisfy the WID requirement.

**WGSS 3981. Women in Western Religion. 3 Credits.**

Historical, theological, and ethical investigation of the image and role of women in Judaism and Christianity. Special consideration of the Biblical experience, the sexual qualifications for religious office, use of male and female images and languages, and contemporary issues. (Same as REL 2981)

**WGSS 4183. Practicum in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. 3 Credits.**

Study of the changing status of women, gender, sexuality and social change through supervised placement in public and private agencies engaged in policymaking, education, political action, and research. Usually for seniors. Placement arrangements must be made the semester prior to registration; departmental permission is required.

**WGSS 4199. Senior Seminar. 3 Credits.**

Examination and analysis of the writings of contemporary scholars and writers whose work provides critical frameworks for feminist scholarship and research. Restricted to juniors and seniors.

**WGSS 5099. Variable Topics. 1-99 Credits.**

**WGSS 6220. Fundamentals of Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.**

Historical theories significant to feminist thought, such as liberalism, socialism, evolution, psychoanalysis, and gendered spheres of social action; how these theories were revived and revised by the second wave of feminism since the 1960s; brief examination of postmodernist and third-wave feminist theorizing.

**WGSS 6221. Research Issues in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. 3 Credits.**

The contribution of feminist or gender-relations perspectives from humanities and social science disciplines to the issues and methods of social research, policy, and practice; feminist frameworks; critique and re-evaluation of traditional academic disciplines; and analysis of current research on women, gender, and sexuality.

**WGSS 6225. Contemporary Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.**

Recent developments in feminist theory, with a primary focus on feminism in the United States and its relationship to queer theory and sexuality studies.

**WGSS 6230. Global Feminisms. 3 Credits.**

The individuals, groups, and policies that shape global agenda for women; local and international fora in which global feminisms are forged.

**WGSS 6238. Feminist Ethics and Policy Implications. 3 Credits.**

Feminist critiques of traditional ethical reasoning; alternative feminist ethical frameworks examined and applied to contemporary social problems (e.g., respecting cultural differences, dependency, disability). Prerequisites: PHIL 2125 or PHIL 2131. (Same as PHIL 6238)

**WGSS 6240. Gender and Public Policy. 3 Credits.**

Analysis of gender-related policy issues, primarily in the United States, such as domestic violence, military service, abortion rights, equal employment opportunity, child and dependent care, welfare, social security, and international development assistance.

**WGSS 6241. Gender, Law, and Politics. 3 Credits.**

The treatment of gender in U.S. law and its implications for public policy; factors that influence the ways in which individuals view and encounter the law; discrimination in the workplace and educational institutions, single-sex education, domestic violence, same-sex marriage, and reproductive rights and responsibilities; legal analysis, and public policy writing. Restricted to graduate students; open to upper-level undergraduates on a case-by-case basis.

**WGSS 6251. Women and Writing. 3 Credits.**

Selected topics in the traditions, theory, and texts of women's literary production and culture.

**WGSS 6257. Gender and Sexuality. 3 Credits.**

Study of new theoretical and methodological approaches developed in the anthropology of gender; postcolonialism, sexuality, and literary representations of gender. (Same as ANTH 6501)

**WGSS 6265. Gender, Welfare, and Poverty. 3 Credits.**

Introduction to the study of welfare states and the ways in which social policies mediate or institutionalize race, class and gender inequalities in the United States and other wealthy countries. Restricted to graduate students. Same As: SOC 6265.

**WGSS 6266. Gender and Criminal Justice. 3 Credits.**

How understandings, practices, and theories of gender shape the workings of criminal justice systems, including issues of criminality and responses to crime, victimization and violence, and definitions of illegal behaviors. (Same as SOC 6266)

**WGSS 6268. Race, Gender, and Class. 3 Credits.**

How social structures are constructed through race, gender, and class and how they shape experience; the intersections of race, gender, and class in education, science, politics, labor markets, and social welfare policies. (Same as SOC 6268)

**WGSS 6270. Seminar: Selected Topics. 3 Credits.**

Investigation of a current policy issue of particular concern to women, or consideration of women's status in a particular social system. Topics have included women and health; sexualities; women and Judaism; black women; gender, race, and class. May be repeated for credit. Credit cannot be earned for this course and AMST 6190, PSYC 8279.

**WGSS 6271. Gender and Society. 3 Credits.**

Current empirical and theoretical work on gender as an organizing principle of social relations; the relationship of gender to sex and sexuality. (Same as SOC 6271)

**WGSS 6280. Independent Study. 3 Credits.**

May be repeated for credit. Arrangements must be made with sponsoring faculty member prior to registration.

**WGSS 6283. Practicum in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies. 3,6 Credits.**

Study of the changing status of women, gender, sexuality, and social change through supervised placement in public and private agencies engaged in policymaking, education, political action, and research. Placement arrangements must be made the semester prior to registration; departmental permission is required. Graduate students may take the course for either 3 or 6 credits, with substantial additional research and writing of a case study required for 6 credits. (Same as WGSS 4183)

**WGSS 6295. Independent Research in Women's Studies. 1-3 Credits.**

Individual library or field research. Arrangements must be made with the sponsoring faculty member prior to registration; a written proposal is required.

**WGSS 6299. Capstone Research Seminar. 3 Credits.**

Designed primarily to ready students for their next pursuit, whether it is academic or non-academic. Assists students in making progress on theses and/or develops a case study related to practicum placement. Restricted to graduate students in the women's, gender, and sexuality studies program. Prerequisites: successful completion of all WGSS core courses and degree requirements.

**WGSS 6430. Gender, Sexuality, and American Culture I. 3 Credits.**

The changing social organization, cultural representation, and meaning of gender and sexuality in the United States, with emphasis on their relationship to race, class, region, nationality, empire, and globalization. Pre-colonial to 1877. (Same as HIST 6430, WGSS 6430)

**WGSS 6431. Gender, Sexuality, and American Culture II. 3 Credits.**

Continuation of WGSS 6430. The changing social organization, cultural representation, and meaning of gender and sexuality in the United States, with emphasis on their relationship to race, class, region, nationality, empire, and globalization. 1877 to present. Same as AMST 6431/ HIST 6431.

**WGSS 6435. Readings on Women in American History. 3 Credits.**

Important works in American women's history; evolution of the field in historiographical context. Same as AMST6435/HIST 6435.

**WGSS 6560. Postcolonialism. 3 Credits.**

Exploration of aesthetics and politics through global and postcolonial literature and cinema, primarily from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Includes legal, theoretical, literary, and film texts. Restricted to graduate students and junior and senior undergraduate students. Same As: ENGL 6560.

**WGSS 6999. Thesis Research. 3 Credits.**

Development of a thesis project and accompanying research.

**WGSS 8275. Women and Health. 3 Credits.**

Theoretical and empirical analyses of women's health: how women's health is constructed by medical, psychological, and critical theorists; how sexism, racism, and classism contribute to women's health problems; and identification of conditions that lead to optimal health and well-being. (Same as PSYC 8275)