

WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at The College of St. Scholastica offers a minor designed to cultivate critical thinking about women, sexuality, and gender as it engages with topics of immediate social and political concern. These issues include:

- Objectification of women in media and advertising
- Wars on women's bodies and reproductive health
- Trafficking of women and girls
- Systemic sexism within institutions
- Homophobia and racism in white middle-class feminist movements.

To introduce students to the history and complexity of these political, intellectual, and cultural issues, the program stresses the critical importance of feminist theory, intersectionality, and global engagement with women's and LGBT movements and lived experiences in the United States and around the world.

Programs

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department offers these programs:

- Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Minor (<http://catalog.css.edu/programs-az/arts-sciences/women-gender-studies/womens-studies-minor/>)

Contact Information

wgs@css.edu

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Courses

WGS 1011 - Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: History and Theory (Conceptions : VCOP - Electives) - 2 cr.

Designed to invite students into the pleasures and difficulties of critical thinking about women, gender, and sexuality in global perspective. The main objective is not to initiate students into a specific point of view or feminist school of thought, but rather to invite them to learn how to analyze and think critically about issues in women's and gender studies from the first stirrings of the women's movement in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to the #MeToo movement today. Our approach will be critical and historical. We will be reading material from a wide range of interdisciplinary work in Women's and Gender Studies, but our focus will be primarily on the history of modern feminist thought, the theoretical and political imperative of intersectional analysis, the gendered nature of society and its institutions, critiques of toxic masculinity and gender-based violence, the anthropology of the body, and the collusion of feminism and empire in the colonial projects of the 19th century. In the final part of the course, we will examine the return of "colonial feminism" after 9/11 by tracing the significance of colonial debates on the veil (hijab) in places such as Egypt and Algeria for understanding contemporary Western liberal feminist calls to save Muslim women from violent native patriarchal religions and cultures.

WGS 1012 - Intro to WGS: Intersectionality and Agency (Conceptions : VCOP - Electives) - 2 cr.

Introduces the centrality of action, agency, and intersectional understandings of identity in the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies. To be human is to participate in structures and systems of privilege and oppression (unknowingly, much of the time). Oppression is interlocking and pervasive and exists in many forms: gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexuality, ability, appearance, age, etc.). We will investigate how categories of difference impede human flourishing. "Praxis" will be a central focus in this course. As bell hooks argues in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*: "Feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression directs our attention to systems of domination and the inter-relatedness of sex, race, and class oppression . . . There is no feminist movement without praxis . . . In a field of study devoted to analyzing sexist oppression, it would follow that a desire would arise to end it. Out of that desire must come action - theory must become praxis."

WGS 1777 - Topics - 0-4 cr.

Various departments offer topics courses which are applicable to women's studies. Check with the coordinator for current offerings on the schedule.

WGS 2230 - Women Writers on Writing (Conceptions : VCLI - Literature) - 4 cr.

Examines fiction and poetry by women writers paired with their nonfiction prose about the writing process and the place of art in their lives and communities. This course focuses on close reading and analysis of literature by a diverse list of women writing in English and pays particular attention to the writers' responses to the social, economic, and political contexts in which they worked.

Equivalent Course: ENG 2230

WGS 2231 - Cultural Anthropology (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

Addresses concepts, methods, and theories exploring social and cultural life across time and space, including the changing concept of culture itself. The course is an introduction to ethnographic fieldwork methods and to the practice of anthropology, with attention to the impact of contemporary social forces on the diverse societies that make up the modern world.

Equivalent Course: GSJ 2231

WGS 2243 - Women and Religion (Conceptions : VCRS - Religious Studies) - 4 cr.

Examines the historical and cultural understandings of women in religions of the world. The course emphasizes the work of contemporary women thinkers who are exploring various dimensions of the question of women's presence, exclusion and contribution to religion. Through historical and comparative study the course will provide both a critical and a constructive understanding of the contributions that women make to religions, as well as the influence of religions on the situation of women in the world. This course will acknowledge the heritage of women's strength, resistance and celebration in responding to exclusion and oppression and look at some of the ways in which women today are seeking full and authentic participation in the life of their religious traditions and their communities.

Equivalent Course: TRS 2243

WGS 2332 - Reading Ida B. Wells - 2 cr.

Examines the life and work of Ida B. Wells-Barnett, with emphasis on close study of her autobiography. The course places the life and work of this major figure in the historical and cultural context of the Civil Rights Movement and the history of social movements in the United States.

WGS 2525 - The Media, Race, Gender and Sexuality (Conceptions : VCSS - Social Science) - 4 cr.

This course introduces students to mass-mediated representations of race, class, gender, and sexuality. We survey historically and/or culturally significant artifacts in this course in order to interpret evolving representations.

Equivalent Course: CME 2525

WGS 2777 - Topics in Women's Studies - 2-4 cr.

Various departments offer topics courses which are applicable to women's studies. Check with the coordinator for current offerings on the schedule.

WGS 2999 - Women's Studies - 0-4 cr.

Independent Study.

WGS 3101 - Advanced Social and Cultural Theory - 4 cr.

Focuses specifically on the investigation of culture at a level of depth suited to juniors and seniors. Participants investigate language, culture, media, representation, and power through a variety of disciplinary and theoretical lenses. Frameworks to be analyzed include subaltern, transcultural, and dependency theory alongside Western theories and tools such as postcolonial, poststructuralist, Marxist, and feminist theory.

Equivalent Course: GSJ 3101

WGS 3324 - African American History I - 4 cr.

Examines significant topics in African American history from the period of forced migration to the Americas through Reconstruction. Analyzes the roles African Americans of different classes and genders have played in shaping U.S. history.

Equivalent Course: HIS 3324

WGS 3325 - African American History II (Integrations : VIHI - History) - 4 cr.

Examines significant topics in African American history from Reconstruction through the current experience of diverse members of the African Diaspora living in the U.S. Analyzes the roles African Americans of different classes and genders have played in shaping U.S. history.

Equivalent Course: HIS 3325

WGS 3340 - Psychology of Gender - 2 cr.

Introduces students to the research methods, findings, and theories of psychology of gender. Students examine evidence for gender differences and similarities in cognitive abilities, personality, social behavior and mental health, and explore nature and nurture explanations. Gender stereotypes and their impact are discussed. Women's and men's experiences in the workplace, in relationships, and in parenting are major focuses.

Prerequisite Courses: one psychology course or consent of instructor.

Equivalent Course: PSY 3340

WGS 3350 - Feminism & Globalization: Women, Religion and the Body - 4 cr.

Explores how European imperialist accounts of experiences by non-European women have been crucial to the formation of culturally dominant ideas about feminism, globalization and the legacy of the colonial state throughout the so-called "Third World." Beginning with a critical and historical overview of feminist theory and practice, the course will trace recent studies, both historical and ethnographic, of how terms such as "women," "religion" and "the body" were radically changed by the colonial projects of the 19th century (e.g. in South Asia and Africa)-projects that are intimately related to contemporary debates on transnational women's movements and globalization.

Equivalent Course: HIS 3350

WGS 3355 - Islam and the Modern World (Integrations : VIHI - History) - 4 cr.

Introduces the history of Islam and the modern world from Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 to the present day. The course traces the history of Islam as one of the Abrahamic religions and explores the theological tensions within the many Islamic traditions (in theology and philosophy, mysticism and law). We will focus on the impact of WWI on the Middle East as well as the legacy of colonialism in the Islamic world, including the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the rise of Arab nationalism, and the origins of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. In the concluding section, we will also take a critical and historical look at sex and gender in Islam, focusing on the widespread belief in Europe and the United States that Muslim women are in need of rescue by the West.

Equivalent Course: HIS 3355

WGS 3777 - Topics in Women's Studies - 0-8 cr.

Various departments offer topics courses which are applicable to women's studies. Check with the coordinator for current offerings on the schedule.

WGS 3999 - Independent Study in Women's and Gender Studies - 1-8 cr.

Independent study.

WGS 4555 - Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Fieldwork/Scholarship Capstone - 0-8 cr.

Provides students with an opportunity to work in an agency/organization as a women's studies intern and to explore areas of interest, such as feminist scholarship, in a seminar format. This course is the capstone course for minors.

Prerequisite Courses: WGS 1011

WGS 4777 - Independent Study - 0-4 cr.

Various departments offer topics courses which are applicable to women's studies. Check with the coordinator for current offerings on the schedule.

WGS 4999 - Independent Study - 0-8 cr.

Independent Study.