

Requirements: Women's and Gender Studies

Interdisciplinary

The major and concentration in women's and gender studies offer students an opportunity to engage in two important and interrelated areas of study. Students examine aspects of experiences that have traditionally been underrepresented in academic studies. For example, the lives and works of women and the experiences of gay, lesbian and trans individuals. Students examine gender as a cultural phenomenon and as a system of ideas defining "masculinity" and "femininity" and delineating differences between "the sexes" as well as "normal" expressions of sexuality. In the process, students encounter some fundamental methodologies of women's and gender studies and work toward an increasingly rich understanding of gender as a social construction, one that intersects with class, race, age, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation and sexual identity. Students also explore the methods and concepts of women's and gender studies in a variety of academic disciplines, integrating, for instance, sociology, psychology, literature, the biological sciences and art history. Students come to understand how questions of gender are deeply embedded in the liberal arts tradition.

The Major and Concentration

The major and concentration encourage and enable students to take responsibility for their own learning. Toward this end, courses invite students to participate in a range of collaborative work. This culminates in the senior colloquium, where students determine the content and intellectual direction of the course as a whole. Ultimately, students are encouraged to acquire a sophisticated insight into the consequences of the social construction of gender for both women and men, an insight that empowers them to engage and question the pervasive role of gender in their own lives and communities. Students construct their major by choosing courses from the offerings of both the Women's and Gender Studies Program and more than 15 other departments and programs across the College.

First-year and New Students

WGS 111 (Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies) is a wide-ranging interdisciplinary course designed to help students develop a critical framework for thinking about questions relating to gender. Students examine the historical development of gendered public and private spheres, the relation of biological sex to sociological gender, and the difference between sex roles and sexual stereotypes. They attempt to understand how racism, heterosexism and homophobia intersect with the cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity, and consider ways to promote more egalitarian gender relations. Students also are encouraged to explore more specialized areas of gender studies in courses specifically designed for students at all levels, including first-year students. These include WGS 121, 221 and 232. Students completing WGS 111 can enroll in WGS 242 to explore gender studies in a more global context.

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 11 courses is required for the major:

Introductory requirement

- Any 100-level WGS course

Mid-level requirements

- WGS 330: Feminist Theory
- WGS 331: Gender, Power, and Knowledge: Research Practices

Diversity and globalization

- Two courses that focus on the social and cultural issues of U.S. and/or world peripheral communities. Consult the director for a list of courses that may be applied to this requirement.

Electives

- Four elective courses that must be drawn from at least two departments (including WGS). Students should consult the four-year [listing of all approved courses](#). A required major areas [form](#)(pdf) must be completed and submitted to the Registrar's Office, indicating these elective courses. For approval of transfer credit and study-abroad courses, students should consult the program director.

Senior Colloquium

- WGS 480 (Senior Colloquium Planning) during the fall semester, a course meeting once a week to design the colloquium.
- WGS 481 (Senior Colloquium) during the spring semester, examines a topic central to feminist thought. It includes current feminist texts and incorporates multidisciplinary analyses of race, class and sexuality, in addition to gender. The course culminates in a public presentation by colloquium members.

Senior Capstone

- Majors give a public presentation on a topic related to the senior colloquium for their Senior Capstone.

Requirements for the Concentration

Six courses in women's and gender studies:

- WGS 330: Feminist Theory or WGS 331: Gender, Power and Knowledge: Research Practices
- WGS 480: Senior Colloquium Planning
- WGS 481: Senior Colloquium

- Four approved elective courses, which must be spread over at least two divisions of the College. No more than two courses in a single department may count toward this requirement.

Honors

The major who wishes to participate in the Honors Program must have a GPA of 3.33 and of 3.5 in the WGS major. The candidate in honors completes all requirements for the major as well as the Senior Capstone. The candidate takes two semesters of independent study and designs and completes a research project. This project should integrate feminist theory and methodologies, as well as the student's chosen disciplinary or interdisciplinary cluster. Each honors student prepares an annotated bibliography on their chosen project during the fall term. After approval, the senior honors project is undertaken in consultation with a project advisor. We encourage students to think boldly and innovatively about the kinds of projects they undertake and about how those projects interact with and benefit their communities. Senior honors projects might include gender-focused sociological or historical studies undertaken locally; exhibitions, productions or installations of gender-exploratory art, music or theater; or political, social and/or environmental service-oriented or activist work. Students are closely mentored throughout their projects and, in the spring, are evaluated by an external evaluator and by faculty in the program and in relevant disciplines. The evaluators assess the strength of the students' overall work, as well as the strength of their self-designed, project-appropriate public presentations of that work.

Transfer Credit Policy

The Women's and Gender Studies Program typically accepts transfer credits from other colleges and universities for courses that meet Kenyon's requirements for transfer credit. We especially encourage students to take courses that are not regularly offered in our curriculum. We do not permit students to earn transfer credits through online evaluation or two-week special courses offered during winter breaks. All transfer credit must be pre-approved by the program director.

WGS Courses and Diversification Requirements

Any two WGS courses paired will satisfy the social sciences diversification requirement.

Additional courses that meet requirements for this major/concentration

Complete listing of courses that count toward the WGS major or concentration can be found on the [WGS department page](#).

Courses in Women's & Gender Studies

Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

WGS 111 CREDITS: 0.5

This course provides students with critical frameworks for thinking about the social construction of gender at the personal and institutional levels. Emphasis will be placed on diverse women's significant contributions to knowledge and culture; to other areas of gender studies, including men's studies, family studies and the study of sexuality; and to the intersections of various forms of oppression both within and outside of the U.S. The course will include both scholarly as well as personal texts, visual as well as written text. This counts toward the introductory requirement for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. Offered every semester.

Introduction to Queer Studies

WGS 121 CREDITS: 0.5

This course is designed to help students develop a critical framework for thinking and writing about intersectional issues related to sexuality, sex, gender identity and gender expression. The course will take a broad view of examining queer and transgender issues from sociopolitical, legal, psychological, biological, cultural, ethical, philosophical and historical frameworks. We will look at the fields of queer theory and LGBTQ+ studies out of which some of the most innovative and challenging developments in modern cultural studies are arising. Additionally, we will examine the ways in which society interacts with queer and transgender identities in a number of spheres, including politics, healthcare, the arts, the sciences and more. This counts towards the introductory and diversity and globalization requirements for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. No prerequisite.

Gender and Race in Popular Culture

WGS 150 CREDITS: 0.5 QR

This course will examine how popular culture (e.g., media) represents gender through making observations, reading background theory, examining content analysis research and conducting our own research. We will examine the extent to which popular culture depicts gender-stereotyped behavior, the content of the gender stereotypes, the possible reasons why stereotypes are portrayed and the likely effects of these stereotypes on the behavior of individuals and the structure of society. To the extent that it is possible, we will examine the intersection of stereotypes about gender with those associated with race/ethnicity, social class, age and sexuality. This course satisfies the quantitative reasoning requirement because

students will learn about descriptive statistics and put them to use by conducting their own content analysis (in a small group) and presenting and writing about the results of their research. In a service-learning component to the course students will develop a media literacy lesson for high school students based on what they learn about their topic. This course is designed for first-year students. This counts toward the introductory requirement for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. No prerequisite. Offered occasionally.

Topics in Masculinity

WGS 232 CREDITS: 0.5

Through focus on a specific topic, this course will explore how men's lives are shaped by and shape the gendered social order. Macro and micro perspectives will guide discussions focusing on how men behave in particular contexts and how they perceive themselves, other men and women in diverse situations. Specific topics investigating the production of masculinities will take into account the interplay among the cultural, interpersonal and individual layers of social life while considering how men's efforts are enabled or constrained by key socially relevant characteristics (primarily age, race/ethnicity, class and sexual orientation) through investigations, for instance, of particular sites (e.g., playgrounds, work space, home, schools, athletic venues, prisons). This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. No prerequisite. Offered occasionally.

Transnational Feminisms

WGS 242 CREDITS: 0.5

This course examines the impact of globalization on feminist discourses that describe the cross-cultural experiences of women. Transnational feminist theories and methodologies destabilize Western feminisms, challenging notions of subjectivity and place and their connections to experiences of race, class and gender. The course builds on four key concepts: development, democratization, cultural change and colonialism. Because transnational feminisms are represented by the development of women's global movements, the course will consider examples of women's global networks and the ways in which they destabilized concepts such as citizenship and rights. We also will examine how transnational feminisms have influenced women's productions in the fields of literature and art. Key questions include: How does the history of global feminisms affect local women's movements? What specific issues have galvanized women's movements across national and regional borders? How do feminism and critiques of colonialism and imperialism intersect? What role might feminist agendas play in addressing current global concerns? How do transnational feminisms build and sustain communities and connections to further their agendas? This counts toward the diversity and globalization requirement for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. Prerequisite: Any WGS course or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Feminist Theory

WGS 330 CREDITS: 0.5

In this course, we will read both historical and contemporary feminist theory with the goal of understanding the multiplicity of feminist approaches to women's experiences, the representation of women and women's relative positions in societies. Theoretical positions that will be represented include liberal, cultural, psychoanalytic, socialist and poststructuralist feminism. We will explore the relationship of these theories to issues of race, class, sexual preference and ethnicity through an examination of the theoretical writings of women of color and non-Western women. This counts towards the concentration and the mid-level requirement for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. Prerequisite: any WGS course, approved departmental course or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Gender, Power and Knowledge: Research Practices

WGS 331 CREDITS: 0.5

This course will examine feminist critiques of dominant methodologies and theories of knowledge creation in the sciences, social sciences and humanities. It will focus on the following questions: How do we know something? Who gets to decide what counts as knowledge? Who is the knower? In answering these questions this class will explore how power is exercised in the production of knowledge, how the norms of objectivity and universalism perpetuate dominance and exclusion, why women and other minority groups are often seen as lacking epistemic authority and what it means to have knowledge produced from a feminist standpoint. Students will learn a variety of methods and use these methods in a community-based research project. This project will involve working with community partners in Knox County and may require student participation outside of the scheduled class time. In addition, we will discuss various ethical issues that feminist researchers often encounter and what responsibilities feminist researchers have to the broader political community. This course has a community-engaged learning (CEL) component. Students may be required to travel off-campus for site visits. This counts towards the mid-level requirement for the major. This course paired with any other .50 unit WGS course counts toward the social science diversification requirement. Prerequisite: any WGS course, approved departmental course or permission of instructor. Offered every other year.

Senior Colloquium Planning

WGS 480 CREDITS: 0.25

This course will provide the opportunity for those students taking WGS 481 in the spring to plan the course. Students will select a topic, order books, plan the syllabus and design a project. In addition, they will read about course design and pedagogy so that they are prepared to take

responsibility for collaboratively teaching the course in the spring. Offered only on a credit/no credit basis. This course is required for the major. This interdisciplinary course does not count toward the completion of any diversification requirement. Prerequisite: senior standing.

Senior Colloquium

WGS 481 CREDITS: 0.5

The senior colloquium is organized around a theme determined by senior majors and concentrators in consultation with the instructor during the semester prior to the beginning of the course. Previous topics include "Women and Madness," "The Politics of the Bathroom" and "Gender and Tourism." This course is required for the major. Prerequisite: WGS 480 or permission of instructor. Offered every spring.

Individual Study

WGS 493 CREDITS: 0.25 - 0.5

Individual study enables students to examine an area not typically covered by courses regularly offered in the program. The course can be arranged with a faculty member in any department but must conform to the usual requirements for credit in the program: gender is a central focus of the individual study, and the course draws on feminist theory and/or feminist methodologies. The amount of work should be similar to that in any other 400-level course. Individual Study courses may be used toward the major or concentration. To enroll, a student should first contact a faculty member and, in consultation with that professor, develop a proposal. The proposal, which must be approved by the program director, should provide: a brief description of the course/project (including any previous classes that qualify the student), a preliminary bibliography or reading list, an assessment component (what will be graded and when) and major topical areas to be covered during the semester. The student and faculty member should plan to meet approximately one hour per week or the equivalent, at the discretion of the instructor. Because students must enroll for individual studies by the end of the seventh class day of each semester, they should begin discussion of the proposed individual study preferably the semester before, so that there is time to devise the proposal and seek departmental approval before the registrar's deadline. This interdisciplinary course does not count toward the completion of any diversification requirement.

Senior Honors

WGS 497 CREDITS: 0.5

The major who wishes to participate in the honors program must have an overall GPA of 3.33 and a GPA of 3.5 in the major. The candidate in honors will complete all requirements for the major, the Senior Capstone, two semesters of independent study and will design and complete a research project. This project should integrate feminist theory and methodologies as well as

the student’s chosen disciplinary or interdisciplinary cluster. Each honors student will prepare an annotated bibliography on her or his chosen project midway through the fall semester. After approval, the senior honors project will be undertaken in consultation with a project advisor. Students are encouraged to think boldly and innovatively about the kinds of projects they undertake and about how those projects interact with and benefit their communities. Senior honors projects might include gender-focused sociological or historical studies undertaken locally; exhibitions, productions or installations of gender-exploratory art, music or theater; or political, social and/or environmental service-oriented or activist work. Students will be closely mentored throughout their projects and, in the spring, will be evaluated by an external evaluator and by faculty in the program and in relevant disciplines. The evaluators will assess the strength of the students’ overall work, as well as the strength of their self-designed, project-appropriate public presentations of that work. Permission of instructor and department chair required.

Senior Honors

WGS 498 CREDITS: 0.5

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Concentration

Courses that meet the requirement for this concentration:

AFDS 410	Between Womanist and Feminist Theories
ANTH 350	Human Sexuality and Culture
ARHS 375	Topics in Renaissance and Baroque Art
CHNS 222	Women of the Inner Chambers

ECON 378	Economics of Women and Work
ECON 478	Economics of Women and Work
ENGL 210	Proper Ladies and Women Writers
ENGL 214	Reading and Writing Gender and Sexuality
ENGL 223	Writing Medieval Women
ENGL 227	Love, Sex and Desire in Medieval Romance
ENGL 266	Decolonization and Violence
ENGL 269	Introduction to Caribbean Literature
ENGL 286	Transgressive Friendships in American Literature
ENGL 359	Middlemarch
ENGL 361	Pacific Literature
ENGL 362	20th-Century Irish Literature
ENGL 371	Whitman and Dickinson
ENGL 381	Another America: Narratives of the Hemisphere
ENGL 384	Imagining America in the Novel
ENGL 386	Toni Morrison
ENGL 388	Studies in 20th-Century African American Literature
ENGL 389	Gender Sexuality in Native American Literature
ENGL 390	Black Women Writers
ENGL 453	Jane Austen
ENGL 461	Virginia Woolf
FREN 340	Identity in the Francophone Novel
GERM 250	Politics and Gender in German Cinema after 1990
GERM 361	Images of the German Family
HIST 208	U.S. Women's History
HIST 232	Modern European Women's History
HIST 236	Modern Germany: Gender, Race, and Class

HIST 341	African Women in Film and Fiction
HIST 352	Family and State in East Asia
HIST 370	Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East
HIST 373	Women of the Atlantic World
HIST 407	Manhood/Masculinity in U.S. History
PHIL 209	Feminist Philosophy
PSCI 315	Gender and Politics in the U.S.
PSYC 221	Abnormal Psychology
PSYC 227	Cross-Cultural Psychology
PSYC 228	Latino Psychology
PSYC 246	Psychology of Women & Gender
RLST 103	Encountering Religion: Gender and Sexuality
RLST 219	Christian Mysticism
RLST 345	Religion for Robots: Cyborgs, Sci-Fi and Posthumanism
SOCY 225	Notions of Family
SOCY 231	Issues of Gender and Power
SOCY 232	Sexual Harassment: Normative Expectations and Legal Questions
SOCY 241	Sociology of Gender
SOCY 250	Systems of Stratification
SOCY 255	Women, Crime and the Law
SOCY 277	Sociology of Sexualities
SOCY 421	Gender Stratification
SOCY 422	Topics in Social Stratification
SOCY 463	Intersectional Theory
SPAN 347	Sex, Science and the Realist Novel in Spain
SPAN 353	The Literature of National Experience in Argentina
SPAN 355	The Literature of National Experience in Mexico

SPAN 371	Gender, Identity and Power in Women's Literature
SPAN 380	Cultural Productions of the Borderlands
SPAN 381	Resisting Borders: Contemporary Latino(a) Literature and Film