



Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

wgss.richmond.edu

Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Women, gender, and sexuality studies (WGSS) is an interdisciplinary program that critically examines interconnections among gender, sexuality, race, class, knowledge, and power. Various theoretical perspectives across disciplines are incorporated into the major. The program is grounded in three main areas: analysis of gender as a social construct; theoretical and methodological frameworks of feminist analysis and critical sexuality studies across disciplines; and the history of women's and other liberation movements.

WGSS encompasses both a body of information and a framework of analysis for understanding diversity. Through courses in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences, in addition to extracurricular activities, the program examines intellectual development, culture, and history. Women, gender, and sexuality studies courses are open to all students. Any student may take any of these courses to broaden the academic program or can also elect to complete a WGSS major or minor.

WGSS works closely with the will program which is designed to connect WGSS coursework to life outside of the classroom through internships, leadership opportunities, community engagement, activism and career preparation. For more information on the will program, see will.richmond.edu.

Course Offerings

WGSS offers both dedicated courses as well as cross-listed, attributed, and special contract courses including:

- Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
- Gender and Work
- Queer Theories
- Environmental Ethics
- Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Greece and Rome
- Experimental Feminism
- Sexuality and Gender Across Cultures
- Women and Gender in African History
- Queer Literatures

- American Identities
- Leadership in a Diverse Society
- Gender and Sexuality in 19th-century France
- Songbirds and Sirens
- Sex, Power, and Politics
- Body/Sex in World Religious Literature
- Queers in Religion
- Rhetoric and Gender Violence
- Gender, Sexuality, and Law
- Social Constructions of Gender and Sexuality
- Women's Health

WGSS Research

WGSS core courses all involve projects that introduce students to a wealth of material available for research in a range of disciplines, including the humanities, the arts, the sciences, international studies, business, and law. In addition, students have undertaken independent studies and summer research in many areas.

Examples of Student Research

- "Edward Gorey's *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*"
- "Influence of Romanticism and Socialism on 19th-Century French Feminism"
- "Race in Feminist & Queer Thought"
- "Yaaaaas Kween: Rhetorics of Appropriation in White Gay Culture"
- "Understanding Discrimination/Racism in the Makeup Industry"
- "Bodies: What Do They Matter?"
- "Cultivating the Body"
- "Reproductive Justice and Bridging the Racial Divide"
- "Same-Sex Marriage in Argentina and Rights Discourse"
- "The Women's Movement within the Sandinista Revolution"
- "Rhetorics of Gender Violence"
- "Rhetoric of Womxn's Reproductive Health"

Recent Internships

- Equality Virginia
- Human Rights Campaign
- Immigration Law Offices
- Virginia Historical Society
- Women's Perspective (Boston)

- Richmond Magazine
- The Actors' Gang (Hollywood, Calif.)
- Fan Free Medical Clinic
- Richmond Organization for Sexual Minority Youth
- Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Virginia
- The White House
- EMILY's List
- Human Rights Commission
- Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women
- National Women's Law Center
- Feminist Majority Foundation
- NARAL Massachusetts
- Planned Parenthood
- Safe Harbor
- Office of the Attorney General, Virginia
- Virginia Department of Health
- Altria
- Deloitte
- Department of Defense

Career Opportunities

Students majoring or minoring in women, gender, and sexuality studies go on to pursue careers in areas as diverse as business, consulting, education, government, law, medicine, social services, and the arts. Graduates report that WGSS has taught them valuable skills in critical thinking. In addition, many WGSS majors continue on to graduate or professional school programs.

Recent Graduate Employment

- Ahlstrom Services Inc.
- AmeriCorps
- Biogen Inc.
- Capital One
- Eli Lilly and Company
- Gifts In Kind International
- Guzsalys Art Foundation
- Hamilton Beach/Proctor-Silex
- Harvard University Law School
- Johnson & Johnson HCS
- Operation Smile
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Red Spring Communications
- Showtime Networks Inc.
- T. Rowe Price
- Teach for America
- The PR Source
- U.S. Sentencing Commission
- University of Baltimore

Graduate School Acceptances

- Baylor University
- Cornell Law School
- Emory University
- Harvard University
- Jefferson Medical College
- Mayo Graduate School
- New York University
- University of Cincinnati
- University of Connecticut
- University of Memphis
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Vanderbilt University
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Washington University

Program Outcomes

Outcomes Related to Theory and History

- Explicate the concept of intersectionality including but not limited to race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and class and explain that concept's importance.
- Articulate ways in which power relations, expressed through oppression and resistance, are structural, cultural, and psychological phenomena.
- Engage trans- or multinational perspectives on gender, race, class, and sexuality to dislodge dominant Euro-American-centric perspectives.
- Apply various theoretical frameworks in analysis of information and knowledge production.
- Use gender as a tool of historical analysis through the close reading of primary sources with an understanding that knowledge is constructed.

Outcomes Related to Methodology and Inquiry

- Apply at least one type of knowledge production methodology (e.g., theoretical, hermeneutic, interpretive, genealogical/historiographic, empirical/quantitative) to source material and/or in the process of generating source material.
- Interrogate the claims and methodology of a given text (broadly construed) with a general understanding that knowledge is constructed.
- Interpret histories of liberation and histories of marginalization and oppression within different contexts and from the point of view of multiple subjects, including beneficiaries, victims, and/or some category of "other."

Outcomes Related to Praxis

- Take social and/or political action to address injustice.
- Articulate the key issues and concepts in the field of WGSS.
- Gather information/data/facts/testimony, evaluate its credibility and relevance to a given issue or question, and organize it for use in students' research.
- Articulate the roots, context, and impact of gender-based violence, take action to reduce or end it, and advocate for survivors.

Faculty Areas of Specialty

- Postcolonial Studies
- Critical Theory
- Transnational Feminist Theory and Practice
- Queer Theory
- Environmental Humanities
- Southern Cone and Brazilian women writers
- Theatre history
- Directing
- Acting
- Rhetorical Theory
- Histories and historiographies of rhetoric; Histories and historiographies of ideas
- Ancient Greek Rhetorical Theory, Texts, and Culture
- Roman Poetry of the Augustan Period
- Sexuality and Gender in Antiquity
- Roman Graffiti
- Early Modern Europe
- 18th Century France
- Christian Tradition
- Contemporary Religious Thought
- Religion and Political Theory
- Modern Narrative
- Literary Theory and Continental Philosophy
- Affect Theory and Biopolitics
- Social and Cultural Foundations of Education, Critical Pedagogy, Literacy Studies
- Theatre as Social Change
- 20th and 21st Century American Theatre and Performance
- Latina/o Cultural Productions
- Solo Performance
- Documentary Theatre
- Gender and Performance
- Hip Hop Performances
- Latin American crónica

