WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

Program Office: 763 Schermerhorn Extension; 212-854-3277; 212-854-7466 (fax)
http://irwgs.columbia.edu/

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Prof. Lila Abu-Lughod, 756 Schermerhorn Extension; 212 854 3693; la310@columbia.edu

Located within the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality and taught in cooperation with Barnard College's Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, the program in women's and gender studies provides students with a culturally and historically situated, theoretically diverse understanding of feminist scholarship and its contributions to the disciplines. The program introduces students to feminist discourse on the cultural and historical representation of nature, power, and the social construction of difference. It encourages students to engage in the debates regarding the ethical and political issues of equality and justice that emerge in such discussion, and links the questions of gender and sexuality to those of racial, ethnic, and other kinds of hierarchical difference.

Through sequentially organized courses in women’s, gender, and sexuality studies, as well as required discipline-based courses in the humanities and social sciences, the major provides a thoroughly interdisciplinary framework, methodological training, and substantive guidance in specialized areas of research. Small classes and mentored thesis-writing give students an education that is both comprehensive and tailored to individual needs. The major culminates in a thesis-writing class, in which students undertake original research and produce advanced scholarship.

Graduates leave the program well prepared for future scholarly work in women's, gender, and sexuality studies, as well as for careers and future training in law, public policy, social work, community organizing, journalism, and professions in which there is a need for critical and creative interdisciplinary thought.

Major in Women's and Gender Studies

The requirements for this program were modified on September 22, 2014. Students who declared this program before this date should consult with the director of undergraduate studies.

Students should plan their course of study with the undergraduate director as early in their academic careers as possible. The requirements for the major are:

- WMST UN1001 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
- or WMST UN3125 Introduction to Sexuality Studies
- WMST UN3311 Colloquium in Feminist Theory
- WMST UN3514 Historical Approaches to Feminist Questions
- WMST UN3521 Senior Seminar I
- WMST UN3915 Gender and Power in Transnational Perspective

Six approved Elective Courses on women, gender, and/or sexuality in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies.*

* Electives will be selected in coordination with the director of undergraduate studies to best suit students' specific interests and to provide them with the appropriate range of courses, whether their focus is ethnic studies, pre-med, pre-law, sociology, public health, queer studies, visual culture, literature, or another area of interest. Students are encouraged to take a broad interdisciplinary approach. The director of undergraduate studies will help students fine-tune their academic program in conjunction with IRWGS courses, cross-listed courses, and other courses offered at Columbia.

Concentration in Women's and Gender Studies

The requirements for this program were modified on September 22, 2014. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

The same requirements as for the major, with the exception of WMST UN3521 Senior Seminar I.

Special Concentration for Those Majoring in Another Department

The requirements for this program were modified on September 22, 2014. Students who declared this program before this date should contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

WMST UN1001 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies; plus four additional approved elective courses on gender.

Fall 2020

WMST BC1050 Women and Health. 3 points.

Interdisciplinary introduction emphasizing interaction of biological and sociocultural influences on women’s health, and exploring health disparities among women as well as between women and men. Current biomedical knowledge presented with empirical critiques of research and medical practice in specific areas such as occupational health, cardiology, sexuality, infectious diseases, reproduction, etc.

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<th>Fall 2020: WMST BC1050</th>
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<tr>
<td>WMST 1050</td>
<td>001/00277</td>
<td>T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm</td>
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<td>Rebecca Young</td>
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WMST BC2150 Practicing Intersectionality: The interdisciplinary study of race, gender, and ethnicity. 3 points.


This introductory course for the Interdisciplinary Concentration or Minor in Race and Ethnicity (ICORE/MORE) is open to all students. We focus on the critical study of social difference as an interdisciplinary practice, using texts with diverse modes of argumentation and evidence to analyze social differences as fundamentally entangled and co-produced. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this course, Professor Jordan-Young will frequently be joined by other faculty from the Consortium for Critical Interdisciplinary Studies (CCIS), who bring distinct disciplinary and subject matter expertise. Some keywords for this course include hybridity, diaspora, borderlands, migration, and intersectionality.

WMST 3125 Introduction to Sexuality Studies. 3 points.

This course is designed to introduce major theories sexuality, desire and identity. We will be considering the relations between the history of sexuality and the politics of gender. We will read some primary texts in gender theory, and in the study of sexuality, desire, and embodiment. This course also provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary examination of human sexual and erotic desires, orientations, and identities. We will study how desires are constructed, how they vary and remain the same in different places and times, and how they interact with other social and cultural phenomena such as government, family, popular culture, scientific inquiry, and, especially, race and class.

WMST 3225 TRANSGENDER STUDIES - THEMES AND TOPICS. 3 points.

This course introduces the interdisciplinary field of transgender studies. While we will read about gender variable bodies within a long historical arc, the categories of both "transsexual" and "transgender" are recent social constructions. How did the many different forms of gender variance resolve into these singular forms and what has been lost in the medical and legal narrowing of gender variance to only these forms? Can we make any connections between witches in the 17th century (often accused on the grounds of cross-gender identification), mollies and dandies in the 19th century (often marked as effeminate), invents in the late 19th and early 20th century and later constructions that assemble under the banner of "trans*"?

Many academic disciplines--including anthropology, history, gender studies, literary studies, and gay and lesbian/queer studies--have studied transgender identities, bodies and communities, but only very recently has the field become institutionalized in the academy as a discipline "Transgender Studies." In this course we examine the ongoing development of the concept of transgender as it is situated across social, cultural, historical, medical, and political contexts. Along the way, we will try to answer some fundamental questions: when did trans* emerge as a distinct social formation? What might be the differences between the understanding of gender variance in the second half of the 20th century and formulations of the phenomena of cross-dressing and passing and transvestism in earlier periods? Is the term "transgender" applicable to non-Western and previously occurring embodiments and practices?

WMST 3311 Colloquium in Feminist Theory. 4 points.

Prerequisites: LIMITED TO 20 BY INSTRUC PERM; ATTEND FIRST CLASS

An exploration of the relationship between new feminist theory and feminist practice, both within the academy and in the realm of political organizing.
WMST V3312 Theorizing Activism. 4 points.
Prerequisites: Critical Approaches or Feminist Theory or permission of instructor.
Helps students develop and apply useful theoretical models to feminist organizing on local and international levels. It involves reading, presentations, and seminar reports. Students use first-hand knowledge of the practices of specific women’s activist organizations for theoretical work.

Fall 2020: WMST V3312
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3312  001/00296  M 10:10am - 12:00pm Room TBA  Kimberly Springer  4  15/15

WMST UN3450 Topics in Sexuality and Gender Law. 3 points.
As society shifts in its views about sexuality and gender, so too does the law. Indeed, legal developments in this area have been among the most dynamic of the past couple of decades. Yet law does not map easily or perfectly onto lived experience, and legal arguments do not necessarily track the arguments made in public debate.

In this seminar, we will explore the evolving jurisprudence of sexuality and gender law in a variety of areas. Our goal throughout the semester will be to understand and think about these issues as lawyers do – with our primary focus on understanding and evaluating the arguments that can be made on both (or all) sides of any particular case, with some attention to the factors outside of the courtroom that might shape how courts approach their work. Related to this, we will also seek to understand how and why some of the jurisprudence has changed over time.

Fall 2020: WMST UN3450
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3450  001/10011  T Th 2:10pm - 4:00pm 744 Ext Schermerhorn Hall  Suzanne Goldberg  3  20/20

WMST BC3514 Historical Approaches to Feminist Questions. 4 points.
This course will provide students with a comparative perspective on gender, race, and sexuality by illuminating historically specific and culturally distinct conditions in which these systems of power have operated across time and space. In particular, the course seeks to show how gender has not always been a binary or primary category system. Such approach is also useful in understanding the workings of race and sexuality as mechanisms of differentiation. In making these inquiries, the course will pay attention to the intersectional nature of race, gender, and sexuality and to strategic performances of identity by marginalized groups.

Spring 2020: WMST BC3514
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3514  001/00453  T 12:10pm - 2:00pm 502 Diana Center  Alexander Pittman  4  20/20

Fall 2020: WMST BC3514
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3514  001/00297  Th 2:10pm - 4:00pm Room TBA  Neferti Tadiar  4  18/18

WMST BC3518 Studies in U.S. Imperialism. 4 points.
BC: Fulfillment of General Education Requirement: Social Analysis (SOC I).
Prerequisites: Enrollment limited to 20 students. Historical, comparative study of the cultural effects and social experiences of U.S. Imperialism, with attention to race, gender and sexuality in practices of political, economic, and cultural domination and struggle. Material includes studies of US Imperialism in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Guam, and Cuba and US foreign involvements in the developing world since World War II.

Fall 2020: WMST BC3518
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3518  001/00298  W 11:00am - 12:50pm Room TBA  Neferti Tadiar  4  18/18

WMST UN3521 Senior Seminar I. 4 points.
The Senior Seminar in Women’s Studies offers you the opportunity to develop a capstone research paper by the end of the first semester of your senior year. Senior seminar essays take the form of a 25-page paper based on original research and characterized by an interdisciplinary approach to the study of women, sexuality, and/or gender. You must work with an individual advisor who has expertise in the area of your thesis and who can advise you on the specifics of method and content. Your grade for the semester will be determined by the instructor and the advisor. Students receiving a grade of "B+" or higher in Senior Seminar I will be invited to register for Senior Seminar II by the Instructor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Senior Seminar II students will complete a senior thesis of 40-60 pages. Please note, the seminar is restricted to Columbia College and GS senior majors.

Fall 2020: WMST UN3521
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3521  001/10045  W 12:10pm - 2:00pm 744 Ext Schermerhorn Hall  Vanessa Agard-Jones  4  3/20

WMST UN3525 Senior Seminar: Knowledge, Practice, Power. 4 points.
Prerequisites: Permission of instructor. Enrollment limited to senior majors.
The Senior Seminar in WGSS offers you the opportunity to develop a capstone research project during the first semester of your senior year. The capstone project may be freestanding, or, with permission of the instructor, may be continued during the spring semester as a Senior Thesis. The capstone project must be based on original research and involve an interdisciplinary approach to the study of women, sexuality, and/or gender. You must work with an individual advisor who has expertise in the area of your project and who can advise you on the specifics of method and content. Your grade for the semester will be determined by the Senior Seminar instructor in consultation with your advisor.

Fall 2020: WMST UN3525
Course Number  Section/Call Number  Times/Location  Instructor  Points  Enrollment
WMST 3525  001/00301  M 12:10pm - 2:00pm Room TBA  Manijeh Moradian  4  10/15
WMST UN3813 Colloquium on Feminist Inquiry. 4 points.
A survey of research methods from the social sciences and interpretive models from the humanities, inviting students to examine the tension between the production and interpretation of data. Students receive firsthand experience practicing various research methods and interpretive strategies, while considering larger questions about how we know what we know.

Fall 2020: WMST UN3813
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3813 001/00302 T 10:10am - 12:00pm Room TBA Rebecca Young 4 5/25

WMST GU4317 Advanced Topics: Bodily Disruptions. 4 points.
At once material and symbolic, our bodies exist at the intersections of multiple competing discourses, including the juridical, the technoscientific, and the biopolitical. In this course, we will draw upon a variety of critical interdisciplinary literatures—including feminist and queer studies, science and technology studies, and disability studies—to consider some of the ways in which our bodies are both constituted by such discourses, and themselves serve as the substratum for social and political life. Our point of departure will be the precariousness of embodied existence, in which precarity is understood as both an existential condition and as the socially uneven culmination of neoliberal political and economic trends. Within the context of current pandemic crises relating to both public health and to political economy, we will also consider appeals to the beneficence of science, technology, medicine, and the rational governance of disease. What can critical histories of plagues, epidemics, and quarantines teach us about emergent forms of biopolitics? We will conclude by considering the interventions of contemporary disability and social justice activists, and the alternative possibilities that they have posited for self-care and mutual aid.

Fall 2020: WMST GU4317
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 4317 001/00046 T 4:10pm - 6:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Elizabeth Bernstein 4 14/25

WMST GU4325 Embodiment and Bodily Difference. 4 points.
At once material and symbolic, our bodies exist at the intersection of multiple competing discourses, including the juridical, the technoscientific, and the biopolitical. In this course, we will draw upon a variety of critical interdisciplinary literatures—including feminist and queer studies, science and technology studies, and disability studies—to consider some of the ways in which the body is constituted by such discourses, and itself serves as the substratum for social relations. Among the key questions we will consider are the following: What is natural about the body? How are distinctions made between presumptively normal and pathological bodies, and between psychic and somatic experiences? How do historical and political-economic forces shape the perception and meaning of bodily difference? And most crucially: how do bodies that are multiply constituted by competing logics of gender, race, nation, and ability offer up resistance to these and other categorizations?

WMST GU4350 Performing feminist activisms in Contemporary Latin America. 4 points.
This course explores different ways in which feminist artists and activists use performance to spark social change in Latin America. Using feminism and performance studies as critical lenses, this course addresses how performative actions can challenge patriarchal systems in neoliberal times. We begin the course by reviewing key texts to discuss the key terms “feminisms”, “performance” and “activisms” Then, the course turns to an examination of contemporary feminist activists in Latin America, including the #niunamenos movement in Argentina, the 2018 feminist tsunami in Chile and the work of Mujeres Creando in Bolivia. In each session, we will discuss the performative strategies activists use to denounce, protest and resist dominant discourses of power, neoliberalism and gender violence, searching to trace connectivities and fractures among different contemporary feminist activist movements across Latin America.

Spring 2020
WMST UN3522 Senior Seminar II. 4 points.
Individual research in Women’s Studies conducted in consultation with the instructor. The result of each research project is submitted in the form of the senior essay and presented to the seminar.

Spring 2020: WMST UN3522
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3522 001/13596 T 6:10pm - 8:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Lila Abu-Lughod 4 2/20

WMST UN3311 Colloquium in Feminist Theory. 4 points.
Prerequisites: LIMITED TO 20 BY INSTRUC PERM; ATTEND FIRST CLASS. An exploration of the relationship between new feminist theory and feminist practice, both within the academy and in the realm of political organizing.

Spring 2020: WMST UN3311
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3311 001/11825 T 2:10pm - 4:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Elizabeth Povinelli 4 12/20

Fall 2020: WMST UN3311
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3311 001/00293 W 4:10pm - 6:00pm Room TBA 4 18/18
**WMST UN3335 Gender and Wars: Perspectives from the Global South. 3 points.**

Wars are salient features of globalization. But, how can we understand the relationship between gender and war? How do notions of masculinities and femininities operate in the organizing, waging, protesting, and commemorating war? Starting from the premise that gender is crucial to explaining what happens in national revolutionary wars, postcolonial conflicts and civil wars, peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions, and the social and personal aspects when wars come to an end; this course considers a transnational feminist analysis to reflect on the relationship between gender and militarism. It pulls together literature from different disciplinary fields to explore the gendered dimensions of wars of national liberation, armed conflicts, wartime gender based/sexual violence, politics of victimhood, anti-war activism, resistance and agency. We will pay particular attention to case studies from the global South.

The gendered analyses of war will be explored from a multi-disciplinary framework including history, anthropology, sociology, political science, international relations, philosophy, literature and film. We will utilize film, journalistic accounts, ethnographic narratives and other resources to explore the complex ways in which people, especially men and women experience and respond to wars differently.

**Spring 2020: WMST UN3335**

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<td>WMST 3335</td>
<td>001/13503</td>
<td>Th 10:10am - 12:00pm 784 Ext Schermerhorn Hall</td>
<td>Selina Makana</td>
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**WMST GU4506 Gender Justice. 3 points.**

This course will provide an introduction to the concrete legal contexts in which issues of gender and justice have been articulated, disputed and hesitatingly, if not provisionally, resolved. Readings will cover issues such as Workplace Equality, Sexual Harassment, Sex Role Stereotyping, Work/Family Conflict, Marriage and Alternatives to Marriage, Compulsory Masculinity, Parenting, Domestic Violence, Reproduction and Pregnancy, Rape, Sex Work & Trafficking. Through these readings we will explore the multiple ways in which the law has contended with sexual difference, gender-based stereotypes, and the meaning of equality in domestic, transnational and international contexts. So too, we will discuss how feminist theorists have thought about sex, gender and sexuality in understanding and critiquing our legal system and its norms.

**Spring 2020: WMST GU4506**

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<tr>
<td>WMST 4506</td>
<td>001/13508</td>
<td>M 2:10pm - 4:00pm 546 Jerome L Greene Hall</td>
<td>Katherine Franke</td>
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**WMST GR6001 Theoretical Paradigms. 4 points.**

This advanced seminar examines materialist conceptions of labor and life as approached through feminist, black, anti-racist, indigenous, queer, postcolonial, and Marxist perspectives. We will trace the ways that labor and life as well as their constitutive relations have been understood in historical and contemporary radical critiques of capitalism, with a focus on gender, race and sexuality as analytical categories for understanding their shifting roles in structures and practices of social reproduction, the production and expropriation of value, the logic and exercise of violence, the organization of sociality and culture, and the practice and imagination of freedom, justice, and new forms and potentials of collective existence. Finally we will consider the limits and possibilities of different conceptions of “material life” for understanding politics today.