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 contact the director of undergraduate studies for the department in order to confirm their correct course of study.

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 2019

WMST UN1001 Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies. 3 points.

An interdisciplinary introduction to key concepts and analytical categories in women’s and gender studies. This course grapples with gender in its complex intersection with other systems of power and inequality, including: sexuality, race and ethnicity, class and nation. Topics include: feminisms, feminist and queer theory, commodity culture, violence, science and technology, visual cultures, work, and family.

Fall 2019: WMST UN1001

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WMST 1001</td>
<td>001/09911</td>
<td>M W 1:10pm - 2:25pm, 304 Barnard Hall</td>
<td>Manijeh Moradian, Jack Halberstam</td>
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<td>77/120</td>
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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.

Fall 2019: WMST BC1050
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 1050   001/09909   M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm 304 Barnard Hall   Rebecca Young   3   86/120

WMST BC2140 Critical Approaches in Social and Cultural Theory. 3 points.

Introduction to key concepts from social theory as they are appropriated in critical studies of gender, race, sexuality, class and nation. We will explore how these concepts are taken up from different perspectives to address particular social problems, and the effects of these appropriations in the world.

Fall 2019: WMST BC2140
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 2140   001/09904   T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 304 Barnard Hall   Kaegan Sparks, Alexander Pittman   3   44/120

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.

Fall 2019: WMST UN3311
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 3311   001/09913   Th 4:10pm - 6:00pm L016 Milstein Center   Alexander Pittman   4   15/20

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   14/20

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 2019: WMST V3312
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 3312   001/09906   T 10:10am - 12:00pm 222 Milbank Hall   Kimberly Young   4   12/20

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 2019: WMST UN3450
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 3450   001/10573   Th 2:10pm - 4:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall   Suzanne Goldberg   3   17/25

WMST BC3513 Critical Animal Studies. 4 points.
"This course collaborates between students and professor, humans and animals, subjects and objects, to investigate the Animal Problem. What are non-human animals? How do we relate to them? How do we account for our animal nature while reconciling our cultural aspirations? What are our primary desires with respect to non-human animals?"

Fall 2019: WMST BC3513
Course Number   Section/Call Number   Times/Location   Instructor   Points   Enrollment
WMST 3513   001/09912   W 2:10pm - 4:00pm 214 Milbank Hall   Janet Jakobsen   4   16/16
**WMST UN3521 Senior Seminar I. 4 points.**
The Senior Seminar in Women's Studies offers you the opportunity to develop a capstone research project during 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.

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<th>Fall 2019: WMST UN3521 Course</th>
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<td>WMST 3521</td>
<td>001/06377</td>
<td>W 2:10pm - 4:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall</td>
<td>Saidiya Hartman</td>
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**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.

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<th>Fall 2019: WMST UN3525 Course</th>
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<td>WMST 3525</td>
<td>001/09907</td>
<td>W 10:10am - 12:00pm 501 Diana Center</td>
<td>Manijeh Moradian</td>
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**WMST UN3813 Colloquium on Feminist Inquiry. 4 points.**
Prerequisites: WMST V1001 and the instructor’s permission.
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.

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<th>Fall 2019: WMST UN3813 Course</th>
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<td>WMST 3813</td>
<td>001/09903</td>
<td>W 4:10pm - 6:00pm L016 Milstein Center</td>
<td>Janet Jakobsen</td>
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**WMST UN3915 Gender and Power in Transnational Perspective. 4 points.**
Enrollment limited to 15.
Prerequisites: Instructor approval required
Considers formations of gender, sexuality, and power as they circulate transnationally, as well as transnational feminist movements that have emerged to address contemporary gendered inequalities. Topics include political economy, global care chains, sexuality, sex work and trafficking, feminist politics, and human rights.

If it is a small world after all, how do forces of globalization shape and redefine both men's and women's positions as as workers and political subjects? And, if power swirls everywhere, how are transnational power dynamics reinscribed in gendered bodies? How is the body represented in discussions of the political economy of globalization? These questions will frame this course by highlighting how gender and power coalesce to impact the lives of individuals in various spaces including workplaces, the home, religious institutions, refugee camps, the government, and civil society, and human rights organizations. We will use specific sociological and anthropological case studies, to look at how various regimes of power operate to constrain individuals as well as give them new spaces for agency. This course will enable us to think transnationally, historically, and dynamically, using gender as a lens through which to critique relations of power and the ways that power informs our everyday lives and identities.

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<th>Fall 2019: WMST UN3915 Course</th>
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<td>WMST 3915</td>
<td>001/63378</td>
<td>Th 10:10am - 12:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall</td>
<td>Selina Makana</td>
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**WMST W4308 Sexuality and Science. 4 points.**
Not offered during 2019-20 academic year.

Examines scientific research on human sexuality, from early sexology through contemporary studies of biology and sexual orientation, surveys of sexual behavior, and the development and testing of Viagra. How does such research incorporate, reflect, and reshape cultural ideas about sexuality? How is it useful, and for whom?

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<th>Fall 2019: WMST W4308 Course</th>
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<td>WMST 4308</td>
<td>001/09910</td>
<td>T 2:10pm - 4:00pm L016 Milstein Center</td>
<td>Rebecca Young</td>
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WMST GU4325 Embodiment and Bodily Difference. 4 points.
The 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 transformative strategies used 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.

WMST GU4350 Performing feminist activisms in Contemporary Latin America. 4 points.
Not offered during 2019-20 academic year.

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 transformative strategies used 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.

Fall 2019: WMST GU4325
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 4325 001/09914 T 4:10pm - 6:00pm 404 Barnard Hall Bernstein 4 16/25

WMST GU4350 Performing feminist activisms in Contemporary Latin America. 4 points.
Not offered during 2019-20 academic year.

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 transformative strategies used 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.

Fall 2019: WMST GU4350
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 4350 001/13419 Th 12:10pm - 2:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Contreras 4 6/20

Spring 2020
WMST UN3322 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 UN3322
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3322 001/13596 T 6:10pm - 8:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Lila Abu-Lughod 4 3/20

WMST UN3311 Colloquium in Feminist Theory. 4 points.
Prerequisites: LIMITED TO 20 BY INSTRUCT 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.

Fall 2019: WMST UN3311
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3311 001/09913 Th 4:10pm - 6:00pm L016 Milstein Center Alexander 4 15/20

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 Povinelli 4 14/20

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
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
WMST 3335 001/13603 Th 10:10am - 12:00pm 754 Ext Schermerhorn Hall Pittman 3 6/20
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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<td>WMST 4506</td>
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<td>M 2:10pm - 4:00pm</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.