WOMEN'S GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES (WGSS)

* WGSS 027a / HUMS 027a / LITR 027a, Six Pretty Good Selves  Marta Figlerowicz and Ayesha Ramachandran
Through the prism of thinking about the self, this course provides first-year students with an intensive introduction to studying the humanities at Yale. The course is anchored around six trans-historical models of thinking about selfhood: the ideal self, the lover, the revolutionary, the convert, the solipsist, and the social climber. We range widely across genres, media, periods, and geographies: from Plato’s Symposium to Machado de Assis’s Epitaph for a Small Winner, from the ghazals of Hafez to the Kamasutra. We also make extensive use of Yale’s rich manuscript archive, historical object collections, and art galleries and devote sustained attention to improving students’ academic writing skills. Friday sessions will alternate between writing workshops and field trips to Yale collections. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU 1½ Course cr

* WGSS 030b, Neoliberalism and Sexuality  Evren Savci
Sexuality is often imagined as a private and intimate affair, experienced individually, marked by personal histories and preferences. This course argues otherwise. Specifically, we consider the intersections between the current dominant political economic mode, referred to as neoliberal capitalism, and sexuality as a field of power. We analyze how subjectivities are formed under this current system, how desires are produced and discourses incited, and how the particular moralization of economic behavior has implications for a range of issues including reproductive justice, definitions of kinship, sexual liberation movements, and contemporary states of war and emergency. Thinking of sexuality as a field of power that is predicated on notions of normality and abnormality enables us to see what other “undesirable” subjects are produced under conditions of neoliberal capitalist modernity with whom sexual others are always in kinship. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU 1½ Course cr

* WGSS 036b, History of Sexuality  Maria Trumpler
Exploration of scientific and medical writings on sexuality over the past century. Focus on the tension between nature and culture in shaping theories, the construction of heterosexuality and homosexuality, the role of scientific studies in moral discourse, and the rise of sexuality as a scientific discipline. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

WGSS 255a / AFAM 115a, “We Interrupt this Program: The Multidimensional Histories of Queer and Trans Politics”  Staff
In 1991, the arts organizations Visual AIDS and The Kitchen collaborated with video artist and filmmaker Charles Atlas to produce the live television broadcast "We Interrupt this Program." Part educational presentation, part performance piece, the show was aired in millions of homes across the nation. The program, in The Kitchen's words, "sought to feature voices that had often been marginalized within many discussions of AIDS, in particular people of color and women." This course builds upon and is inspired by this aspect of Atlas’s visionary presentation, an aspect that used the show to produce a critically multicultural platform that could activate cultural histories and critical traditions from various communities. In effect, the course uses this aspect as a metonym for the racial, gender, sexual, and class heterogeneity of queer art and organizing. It conducts its investigation by looking at a variety of primary materials that illustrate the heterogeneous makeup of queer and trans politics. The course also draws on more recent texts and visual works that arose from the earlier contexts that the primary texts helped to illuminate and shape. WR, HU RP 0 Course cr

WGSS 160b / ENGL 160b, Vampires, Castles, and Werewolves  Heather Klemann
Study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century gothic fiction and the persistence, resurgence, and adaptation of gothic tropes in twentieth-and twenty-first-century film, television, and prose. Readings include Frankenstein, Northanger Abbey, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Dracula. Films and TV include Inception, Black Swan, Alfred Hitchcock’s Rebecca, and episodes from Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Formerly ENGL 156. Prerequisite: First years must have taken a WR seminar course in the fall term. WR, HU 0 Course cr

* WGSS 195a / HSHM 410a / RLST 195a, Meanings of Life  Evan Goldstein
What are the meanings of life? That is, what are we talking about when we talk about life, and how did we come to talk about it in this way? Is life religious or secular? What does Christianity (still) have to do with the politics of life and death? This course takes up these questions, among others. We trace the history of life as a concept in Western thought, with a particular emphasis on the afterlife of the Christian tradition in secular modernity. Beginning with the theories of biopolitics developed by Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, we explore the implications of life’s centrality for modern formations of race, sexuality, and death. This course is not a survey of how different religious traditions define life; rather, by engaging with thinkers from Religious Studies, Black Studies, queer theory, science and technology studies, among other fields, we explore the theological and political dimension of life in modern Western societies. After spending several weeks covering some of the canonical theorists of biopolitics, we take on a series of more recent case studies and thinkers who have addressed some of our issues of our time through a critical scrutiny of the meanings of life. Topics include secularization and sovereignty, the biopolitics of race and sexuality, the precarious status of life in pandemic times, and death. Readings are primarily composed of twentieth-century theorists, including Giorgio Agamben, Donna Haraway, Lauren Berlant, and Talal Asad, as well as relevant historical precursors and examples. No prior experience is presumed, and all texts will be read in translation. HU

* WGSS 203b / ENGL 201b, The Victorian Problem Novel  Ruth Yeazell and Colton Valentine
This seminar invites you to see the Victorian novel anew: to experience it as provocative and radical, unexpected, and disquieting. To this end, we take a deep dive into four major works of Victorian fiction that challenged readers at the time—and often continue to do so—both substantively and formally. What, we ask, justifies thinking of these novels as “problems,” and how, if at all, have those problems changed over the last hundred and fifty years? What should we make of these works’ conflicting attitudes toward gender and class? How should
we best approach their struggles with national, ethnic, and religious identity? In what ways do they challenge readers' expectations about narrative voice, the structure of the plot, or the limits of realism? To think more concretely about how readers other than ourselves have responded to these works, our principal texts are supplemented by commentaries from Victorian reviewers and modern literary critics. Prior acquaintance with some Victorian fiction, including other novels by our writers, is recommended but not required.  WR, HU

* WGSS 205b, Bodies and Pleasures, Sex and Genders  Regina Kunzel
This seminar engages cultural analyses of embodiment, its pleasures—and by extension its pains—to interrogate sex, sexuality, and gender as analytical categories. Its aim is to critically evaluate formative concepts and theories that have been subject to debates within gender studies, psychoanalysis, philosophy, anthropology, critical race studies, and history. Readings by Freud, Foucault, Berlant, Butler, Rubin, and others help explain how terms like “women” and “men,” “femininity” and “masculinity,” as well as “homosexuality” and “heterosexuality,” “gender” and “transgender” have structured people’s experiences and their perceptions of their bodies. The potential our bodies have for “hanging on to ourselves” occupies a central position within scholarly canons, revealing also how these canons are always already imbricated in racialized hierarchies.  SO

* WGSS 206a / ER&M 257a, Transnational Approaches to Gender & Sexuality  Evren Savci
Examination of transnational debates about gender and sexuality as they unfold in specific contexts. Gender as a category that can or cannot travel; feminist critiques of liberal rights paradigms; globalization of particular models of gender/queer advocacy; the role of NGOs in global debates about gender and sexuality.  WR

WGSS 207a / PLSC 298a, Gender, Justice, Power, Institutions  Staff
Examination of how inequalities based on gender, race, caste, class, sexuality as well as a host of other identities are embedded in institutions that make up our social world. From the family and the home to the workplace, from the University, and the Corporation, to the Military and Media, we track how inequalities emerge and are sustained by power and institutional structures. We also see how they are challenged and what sorts of instruments are needed to challenge them. In particular, we focus on sexual politics and sexual violence as a key issue to understanding the gendered workings of institutions, in order to examine structures that sustain inequality. Through the semester, we hope to consider many domains of life—bedrooms and boardrooms, international borders and feminist movements—to understand the stubborn and sticky forms and hierarchies of power that are challenged and contested by activists, scholars, and communities.  SO TR 0 Course cr

* WGSS 209b / CLCV 216b / LITR 239b / MGRK 216b, Dionysus in Modernity  George Syrimis
Modernity’s fascination with the myth of Dionysus. Questions of agency, identity and community, and psychological integrity and the modern constitution of the self. Manifestations of Dionysus in literature, anthropology, and music; the Apollonian-Dionysiac dichotomy; twentieth-century variations of these themes in psychoanalysis, surrealism, and magical realism.  HU

* WGSS 220a / PLSC 220a / PLSC S220a, Women & Politics  Andrea Aldrich
Exploration of theoretical and empirical work in political science to study the relationship between women and politics in the United States and around the world. Topics include women’s descriptive and substantive representation in legislative and executive branch politics in democratic regimes; the impact of gender stereotypes on elections and public opinion; conditions that impact the supply and demand of candidates across genders; and the underrepresentation of women in political institutions.  WR, SO

* WGSS 222b / AMST 206b / ER&M 221b, Introduction to Critical Refugee Studies  Quan Tran
Reconfiguring refugees as fluid subjects and sites of social, political, and cultural critiques. Departing from dominant understandings of refugees as victims, consideration instead of refugees as complex historical actors, made visible through processes of colonization, imperialism, war, displacement, state violence, and globalization, as well as ethical, social, legal, and political transformations. Focus on second-half of the twentieth century.  SO

* WGSS 233a / FILM 341a / MGRK 238a, Weird Greek Wave Cinema  George Syrimis
The course examines the cinematic production of Greece in the last fifteen years or so and looks critically at the popular term “weird Greek wave” applied to it. Noted for their absurd tropes, bizarre narratives, and quirky characters, the films question and disturb traditional gender and social roles, as well as international viewers’ expectations of national stereotypes of classical luminosity—the proverbial “Greek light”—Dionysian exuberance, or touristic leisure. Instead, these works frustrate not only a wholistic reading of Greece as a unified and coherent social construct, but also the physical or aesthetic pleasure of its landscape and its ‘quaint’ people with their insistence on grotesque, violent, or otherwise disturbing images or themes (incest, sexual otherness and violence, aggression, corporeality, and xenophobia). The course also pays particular attention on the economic and political climate of the Greek financial crisis during which these films are produced and consumed and to which they partake. None  HU

* WGSS 238a, Foucault and the Sexual Self  Igor De Souza
This course explores the main ideas and influence of Foucault’s History of Sexuality. Alongside the methods and conclusions of the HS, we examine the implications of the HS for feminist studies and queer theory, and the approach of the HS towards ancient Greek sexuality.  HU

* WGSS 251a / ENGL 251a, Experiments in the Novel: The Eighteenth Century  Jill Campbell
The course provides an introduction to English-language novels of the long eighteenth century (1688–1818), the period in which the novel has traditionally been understood to have “risen.” Emphasizing the experimental nature of novel-writing in this early period of its history, the course foregrounds persistent questions about the genre as well as a literary-historical survey: What is the status of fictional characters? How does narrative sequence impart political or moral implications? How do conventions of the novel form shape
our experience of gender? What kind of being is a narrator? Likely authors include Aphra Behn, Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen, Jennifer Egan, Colson Whitehead, and Richard Powers. WR, HU

* WGSS 260a, Food, Identity and Desire  Maria Trumpler Exploration of how food—ingredients, cooking practices, and appetites—can intersect with gender, ethnicity, class, and national origin to produce profound experiences of identity and desire. Sources include memoir, cookbooks, movies, and fiction.

WGSS 270b / AFAM 170b / HIST 479b / HSHM 241b, Sickness and Health in African American History  Carolyn Roberts A history of American medicine through the African American experience covering the period of slavery through #BlackLivesMatter. Oriented around the complex dynamics of medical abuse and medical resistance, key themes include medicine and slavery; gender and reproduction; medical experimentation and ethics; the rise of racial science; lynching and vigilante violence; segregation and public health; African-descended approaches to health and healing; the rise of the African American medical profession; and black health activism from slavery to #BlackLivesMatter. HU

WGSS 291a / HIST 240a / RLST 347a / SOCY 331a, Sexual Minorities from Plato to the Enlightenment  Staff This interdisciplinary course surveys the history of homosexuality from a cross-cultural, comparative perspective. Study contexts where homosexuality and sodomy were categorized, regulated, and persecuted and examine ancient and medieval constructions of same-sex desire in light of post-modern developments, challenging ideas around what is considered normal and/or natural. Ultimately, we ask: what has changed, and what has remained the same, in the history of homosexuality? What do gays and lesbians today have in common with pre-modern sodomites? Can this history help us ground or rethink our sexual selves and identities? Primary and secondary historical sources, some legal and religious sources, and texts in intellectual history are studied. Among the case studies for the course are ancient attitudes among Jews, early Christians, and Greeks; Christian theologians of the Middle Ages; Renaissance Florence; the Inquisition in Iberia; colonial Latin America; and the Enlightenment’s condemnation of sodomy by Montesquieu and Voltaire, and its defense by Bentham. HU 0 Course cr

* WGSS 293b / CLCV 319b / HIST 242jb / MGRK 300b, The Olympic Games, Ancient and Modern  George Syrimis Introduction to the history of the Olympic Games from antiquity to the present. The mythology of athletic events in ancient Greece and the ritual, political, and social ramifications of the actual competitions. The revival of the modern Olympic movement in 1896, the political investment of the Greek state at the time, and specific games as they illustrate the convergence of athletic cultures and sociopolitical transformations in the twentieth century. HU

* WGSS 297b / HIST 418jb, Gender Expression Before Modernity  Igor De Souza What are the historical forms of gender non-conformity? This course investigates expressions of gender that were considered non-conforming within their historical contexts. Our point of departure is the idea that gender constitutes a “useful category of historical analysis” (Joan Scott). In this course we ask how deviant gender expression can be a category of historical analysis. How do we write history from the perspective of gender fluidity, non-binaryism, and gender transgression? How can this history give us the tools to critique regnant norms of gender expression, then and now? How does this historical approach relate to trans* and non-binary people & movements today? The course is historically wide-ranging, from Antiquity to the Early Modern period, and geographically diverse, including Europe, the Middle East, and the colonial Americas. The breath of contexts enables us to consider broad patterns, continuities, and discontinuities. At the same time, we discuss the specificities of particular contexts, emphasizing the connection between gender fluidity/non-conformity, on the one hand, and local cultural norms around gender and sex, on the other. We investigate intellectual and cultural trends, as well as the lives of gender fluid/non-conforming individuals. We analyze sources drawn from law, medicine, religion, philosophy, visual arts & literature, biographies, and memoirs. All readings are in English translation. No prior background is required. However, it will be helpful to have taken either WGSS 291/HIST 287 or WGSS 306 before or in concurrence with this course. HU

* WGSS 298b / AFAM 326b / AMST 312b / ER&M 310b, Postcolonial Cities of the West  Fatima Habchi Examination of various texts and films pertaining to the representation of postcolonial cities in the global north and a range of social, political, and cultural issues that concern those who inhabit these spaces. HU

* WGSS 312a / AMST 302a / ER&M 312a / HSHM 403a, Technology, Race and Gender  Kalindi Vora In this course, we discuss technology and the politics of difference through a survey of topics including artificial intelligence, digital labor (crowdsourcing), and robotics and computer science. Materials for study include humanistic and social scientific critique, ethnographies of technology, technical writing and scientific papers, as well as speculative art practices including design, visual art and fiction. What assumptions and politics of imagination govern the design and development of new technologies? What alternative imaginaries, politics, or even speculations, can be identified with a feminist analytic lens? The seminar also includes a practicum component where we practice the politics of speculation through writing and design projects. To do this we study everything from active STEM projects at Yale to speculative fiction and film to think about how structures of race, gender, sexuality, ability, nation, and religious difference inform how we “speculate” or imagine the future through the ways we design and build technological worlds in practice and in fiction. HU, SO

* WGSS 318a / AFAM 390a / ER&M 318a, Race as Spectacle  Fatima El-Tayeb In this course, we analyze how race is both naturalized and deconstructed through visual media. We center one aspect: race as spectacle—the multiple ways in which race is produced as a visual mass culture commodity. This happens in political campaigns, music videos, local news reports, fashion, kids’ cartoons, mug shots, and countless other sites. We explore the modes of production of these racialized images as well as the conditions of their reception and political and philosophical analyses of this process—particularly those relating to questions of gender, class, sexuality, religion, and nation. We also explore counterstrategies, which rather than rejecting visual mass culture attempt to use it to undermine dominant images. HU, SO
* WGSS 340b / ENGL 291b, Feminist and Queer Theory  Craig Canfield
Historical survey of feminist and queer theory from the Enlightenment to the present, with readings from key British, French, and American works. Focus on the foundations and development of contemporary theory. Shared intellectual origins and concepts, as well as divergences and conflicts, among different ways of approaching gender and sexuality.  WR, HU

* WGSS 343a / AFAM 352a / AMST 438a / ER&M 201a / LITR 205a, Caribbean Diasporic Literature  Fadila Halchi
An examination of contemporary literature written by Caribbean writers who have migrated to, or who journey between, different countries around the Atlantic rim. Focus on literature written in English in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, both fiction and nonfiction. Writers include Caryl Phillips, Nalo Hopkinson, and Jamaica Kincaid.  HU

* WGSS 351a / CLCV 353a / HUMS 375a / LITR 353a, Greek Tragedy and Psychoanalysis  Nebojsa Todorovic
What do ancient fifth-century Athens and turn-of-the-(twentieth-)century Vienna have in common? In fact, psychoanalysis’ development was intertwined with Freud’s interpretations of classical Greek tragedy, and Greek tragedies in turn can shed light on psychoanalytic concepts in excess of Freud’s readings. The juxtaposition of these two worlds allows us to understand each with a fresh perspective. And this is what we study in this class: we read and interpret the best-known tragic plays by ancient playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in dialogue with key concepts of psychoanalytic criticism. Well-established questions that Greek tragedy raises about gender politics, the evolution of democracy, the progressive disintegration of the Athenian polis, the construction of citizenship and foreignness, the influence of rhetoric and sophistry is reframed in dialogue with Freud’s (and his followers’) redefinitions of language, the unconscious, the self, trauma, violence, and gender. The goal of this course is to provide students with a clear understanding of the historical evolutions of these two forms of cultural production while also engaging in more theoretical and comparative work of literary interpretation and critical theorization. Considering the pivotal role that both psychoanalysis and Greek tragedy held in the development of later currents of thought (including postcolonial studies, Black Studies, feminist theory, queer theory, and Black studies), particular attention is paid the afterlives of the Freudian method and classical tragedy.  WR, HU

* WGSS 372b / AMST 382b, Theory and Politics of Sexual Consent  Joseph Fischel
Political, legal, and feminist theory and critiques of the concept of sexual consent. Topics such as sex work, nonnormative sex, and sex across age differences explored through film, autobiography, literature, queer commentary, and legal theory. U.S. and Connecticut legal cases regarding sexual violence and assault.  SO  RP

* WGSS 378a / ANTH 381a, Sex and Global Politics  Graeme Reid
Global perspectives on the sexual politics of gender identity, sexual orientation, and human rights. Examination of historical, cultural, and political aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity in the context of globalization.  SO

* WGSS 381b / AFAM 397b / ER&M 380b, New Developments in Global African Diaspora Studies  Fatima El-Tayeb
This course traces recent developments in African Diaspora Theory, among them Afropessimism, Queer of Color Critique, Black Trans Studies and Afropolitanism. We pay particular attention to interactions between theory, art, and activism. The scope is transnational with a focus on, but not restricted to, the Anglophone Diaspora Texts. Each session roughly follows this structure: One theoretical text representing a recent development in African diaspora studies, one earlier key text that the reading builds on, one theoretical text that does not necessarily fall under the category of diaspora studies but speaks to our topic and one text that relates to the topic but uses a non-theoretical format. Students are expected to develop their own thematically related project over the course of the semester. Preference give to juniors and seniors. Email instructor for more information.  HU, SO

* WGSS 383a / ENGL 386a, Queer Writing Before Stonewall  Michael Warner
The focus of this course is gay, lesbian, and queer writing from the period between Whitman and Stonewall. How did queer writers find an audience in the years before the emergence of a gay/lesbian public? What languages of identity and sexuality did they develop? The course begins with Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson, writing before the idea of sexual minorities took hold. We read some late 19C writers in their wake, including Charles Warren Stoddard, and the literary culture of the “Boston marriage,” before turning to the conjunction of sexual culture and modernism. Queer modernism has been much studied in recent years, including such figures as Wilde, Freud, Joyce, Woolf, Stein, Barnes, Firbank, Cranc, Thurman, Hughes, and Proust; in the same years, a language of homosexual rights began to develop with such works as Inme, by Edward Prime Stevenson. Many of the writers in the period explored unsettled sexualities and worlds of abjection, in ways that can still disturb readers. They influenced one another across the Atlantic and across genres. We touch on the British and Irish writers who came of age after WWI (Isherwood, Auden, Spender, Ackerley, Barnes), as well as the paradigmatically queer writing of those for whom queerness was linked to a language of criminality—notably Jean Genet, Patricia Highsmith, and William Burroughs. Students are encouraged to pursue research projects in each of these moments, reaching up to the Beats (Burroughs, Ginsberg, Kerouac), the New York poets (O’Hara, Ashbery, Schuyler) the San Francisco Renaissance (Spicer, Duncan, Broughton), Southern queer writers (McCullers, Capote, Williams), black queer writing after the Harlem Renaissance (Baldwin, Hansberry), and other figures of the 60s from both high literary and underground backgrounds (Nabokov, Elizabeth Bishop, Joe Orton, and Vidal, but also Jack Smith, Jane Rule, and Iceberg Slim). Along the way we talk about the various ways that these writers charted a queer take on the world, including their engagements with criminality and psychopathology—the main connotations of queerness in the period—as well as the development of a queer language of abjection and its advantages for life. Students are encouraged to delve into the rich holdings of the Beinecke for research projects not limited to the writers on the syllabus, including the lesbian pulp fiction collection and holdings in the related fields of photography, film, and other arts.  WR, HU
The dynamic relationship between the civil rights movement and the women’s liberation movement from 1940 to the present. When and how the two movements overlapped, intersected, and diverged. The variety of ways in which African Americans and women campaigned for equal rights. Topics include World War II, freedom summer, black power, the Equal Rights Amendment, feminism, abortion, affirmative action, and gay rights. HU

This seminar explores the gendered and ethnic-based social processes and forms of power that citizenship, statelessness, and migration crises fuel, and are fueled by, in the Middle East and North Africa. The history of gender and citizenship in the region is imbricated in ethnosexual and orientalist colonial legacies that articulate a racialized problematic of “modernity.” Part of these legacies involve obscuring the role that women, sexual minorities, and gender, more broadly, have played in framing citizenship and statehood in the Middle East in global, regional, and local imaginations not only as border policing and legal doctrine, but as signifier—and reifier—of culture, race, and ethnicity. By examining the gendered and sexual dimensions of war, conflict, and partition, and the formation of modern citizenship...
in the Middle East, the seminar presents ethnographic, historical, literary and visual scholarship that theorizes the role of kinship and citizenship in gendered and racialized narratives of the nation and political sovereignty.  

* WGSS 432a / PHIL 444a, Social Ontology  
Robin Dembroff  
Study of conceptual and methodological foundations of social ontology, as well as particular topics within social ontology, such as the nature of gender and race. Prerequisites: at least one, but preferably two philosophy courses.  

* WGSS 433b / PHIL 432b, Reproductive Ethics  
Max DuBoff  
Whether, how, when, and why we do or do not reproduce are some of the most important questions we face in life. This applied ethics course examines how we should act in relation to reproduction and associated issues. Readings are drawn mainly from feminist bioethics and contemporary procreative ethics, with supplementary material on reproductive history. Topics include: major arguments for and against the morality of reproducing; parental responsibility; whether biological relationships to children are important; and reproductive technology, esp. surrogacy and contraception. Prerequisite: 1 PHIL course, or other relevant coursework, with instructor permission.  

* WGSS 448a / HIST 177Ja / HSHM 448a, American Medicine and the Cold War  
Naomi Rogers  
The social, cultural, and political history of American medicine from 1945 to 1960. The defeat of national health insurance; racism in health care; patient activism; the role of gender in defining medical professionalism and family health; the rise of atomic medicine; McCarthyism in medicine; and the polio vaccine trials and the making of science journalism.  

* WGSS 459b / ANTH 455b, Masculinity and Men's Health  
Marcia Inhorn  
Ethnographic approaches to masculinity and men's health around the globe. Issues of ethnographic research design and methodology; interdisciplinary theories of masculinity; contributions of men's health studies from Western and non-Western sites to social theory, ethnographic scholarship, and health policy.  

* WGSS 463b / AMST 462b / ER&M 462b, The Study of Privilege in the Americas  
Ana Ramos-Zayas  
Examination of inequality, not only through experiences of the poor and marginal, but also through institutions, beliefs, social norms, and everyday practices of the privileged. Topics include: critical examination of key concepts like "studying up," "elite," and "privilege," as well as variations in forms of capital; institutional sites of privilege (elite prep schools, Wall Street); living spaces and social networks (gated communities, private clubs); privilege in intersectional contexts (privilege and race, class, and gender); and everyday practices of intimacy and affect that characterize, solidify, and promote privilege.  

* WGSS 471a or b, Independent Directed Study  
Staff  
For students who wish to explore an aspect of women's, gender, and sexuality studies not covered by existing courses. The course may be used for research or directed readings and should include one lengthy or several short essays. Students meet with their adviser regularly. To apply for admission, students present a prospectus to the director of undergraduate studies along with a letter of support from the adviser. The prospectus must include a description of the research area, a core bibliography, and the expected sequence and scope of written assignments.  

* WGSS 490a, The Senior Colloquium  
Dara Strolovitch  
A research seminar taken during the senior year. Students with diverse research interests and experience discuss common problems and tactics in doing independent research.  

* WGSS 491b, The Senior Essay  
Staff  
Independent research on, and writing of, the senior essay.