WOMEN’S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

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FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF WOMEN’S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

Professors Julia Adams (Sociology), Elizabeth Alexander (African American Studies), Carol Armstrong (History of Art), Seyla Benhabib (Political Science, Philosophy), Jill Campbell (English), Hazel Carby (American Studies, American Studies), Kang-i Sun Chang (East Asian Languages & Literatures), George Chauncy (History), Deborah Davis (Sociology, East Asian Studies), Kathryn Dudley (Anthropology, American Studies), Ron Eyerman (Sociology), Glenda Gilmore (History), Jacqueline Goldsby (American Studies, English), Inderpal Grewal (American Studies, Anthropology, Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Dolores Hayden (School of Architecture, American Studies), Margaret Homans (English, Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Marcia Inhorn (Anthropology, Global Affairs), Jennifer Klein (History), Marianne LaFrance (Psychology, Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Kathryn Lofton (American Studies, Religious Studies), Mary Lui (American Studies, History), Kobena Mercer (History of Art, African American Studies), Joanne Meyerowitz (American Studies, History), Priyamvada Natarajan (Astronomy), Sally Prome (American Studies, Institute of Sacred Music), Frances Rosenbluth (Political Science), Alicia Schmidt Camacho (American Studies), William Summers (Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry), Michael Warner (English, American Studies), Laura Wexler (American Studies, Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Elisabeth Wood (Political Science)

Associate Professors Jafari Allen (African American Studies, Anthropology), Crystal Feimster (African American Studies), Moira Fradinger (Comparative Literature), Zareena Grewal (American Studies, Religious Studies), Janet Henrich (School of Medicine), Deb Margolin (Adjunct (Theater Studies), Karen Nakamura (Anthropology, East Asian Studies), Naomi Rogers (History of Medicine, History)

Assistant Professors Vanessa Agard-Jones (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Rene Almeling (Sociology), Joseph Fischel (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Greta LaFleur (American Studies), Vida Maralani (Sociology), Dixa Ramirez (American Studies), Birgit Rasmussen (American Studies)

Senior Lecturers Geetanjali Singh Chanda (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Becky Conkin (History), Ron Gregg (Film & Media Studies), Rebecca Tannenbaum (History), Maria Trumpler (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies)

Lecturers Melanie Boyd (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies), Ziv Eisenberg (History), George Syrimis (Hellenic Studies)

Genders and sexualities are powerful organizing forces: they shape identities and institutions, nations and economies, cultures and political systems. Careful study of gender and sexuality thus explains crucial aspects of our everyday lives on both intimate and global scales. The scholarship in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is interdisciplinary and wide-ranging, drawing on history, literature, cultural studies, social sciences, and natural science to study genders and sexualities as they intersect with race, ethnicity, class, nationality, transnational processes, disability, and religion.

Students majoring in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies take a series of core courses, develop an individual area of concentration, and write a two-term senior essay. The program encourages work that is interdisciplinary, intersectional, international, and transnational. Individual concentrations evolve along with students’ intellectual growth and academic expertise. Recent examples of concentrations include literature and queer aesthetics; transnational feminist practices; the intellectual history of civil rights activism; AIDS health policies; gender, religion, and international NGOs; women’s health; food, sexuality, and lesbian community; and gender and sexuality in early education.

Requirements of the major Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies requires twelve term courses and may be taken either as a primary major or as one of two majors. For students in the Class of 2016 and previous classes, requirements include one gateway course and one intermediate course; for students in the Class of 2017 and subsequent classes, two intermediate courses are required. For all classes, the major also includes one transnational perspectives course, one methodology course, courses in an area of concentration, the junior sequence, and the senior sequence. The area of concentration consists of at least five courses, the majority of which should be drawn from program offerings. Courses for the area of concentration may also fulfill the requirements in transnational perspectives and methodology. Substitutions to the major requirements may be made only with the written permission of the director of undergraduate studies.

Gateway and intermediate courses for the Class of 2016 and previous classes The gateway courses (WGSS 110, 111, 115, 120, 200, and 201) offer broad introductions to the fields of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies. There are two intermediate courses: Globalizing Gender (WGSS 295) and Introduction to LGBT Studies (WGSS 296). Majors are encouraged to take both but need take only one, preferably after the gateway course and prior to the junior sequence. (WGSS 295 cannot fulfill both the transnational perspectives and the intermediate requirements.)

Intermediate courses for the Class of 2017 and subsequent classes There are two intermediate courses: Bodies and Pleasures, Sex and Genders (WGSS 205) and Globalizing Gender and Sexuality (WGSS 206). Majors are required to take both, preferably prior to the junior sequence.

Transnational perspectives course Ideally, each student’s course work engages a broad diversity of cultural contexts, ethnicities, and global locations. Such study illuminates the links among nations, states, cultures, regions, and global locations. Most students take several classes that focus on genders and sexualities outside the U.S. context; majors are required to take at least one (not including WGSS 205).
Methodology course  Given its interdisciplinary nature, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies necessarily relies on a wide range of methodologies: literary criticism, ethnography, visual analysis, historiography, and quantitative data analysis, among others. Each student is expected to acquire competence in at least one methodology relevant to his or her own concentration and planned senior essay. In preparation for the senior essay, students are advised to complete the methods requirement in the junior year.

Junior sequence  The two-term junior sequence consists of Feminist and Queer Theory (WGSS 340) and Junior Seminar: Theory and Method (WGSS 398). All students in the major must take both courses. (Individualized alternatives are found for students who study abroad during the junior year.)

Senior sequence and senior essay  The two-term senior sequence consists of the Senior Colloquium (WGSS 490), in which students begin researching and writing a senior essay, followed by the Senior Essay (WGSS 491), in which students complete the essay. The senior essay is developed and written under the guidance and supervision of a WGSS-affiliated faculty member with expertise in the area of concentration. Students are expected to meet with their essay advisers on a regular basis.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisites  None

Number of courses  12 term courses (incl senior req)

Specific courses required  All classes—WGSS 340, 398; Class of 2017 and subsequent classes—WGSS 205, 206

Distribution of courses  All classes—1 transnational perspectives course; 1 methodology course; 5 electives in area of concentration; Class of 2016 and previous classes—1 gateway course and 1 intermediate course, as specified

Senior requirement  Senior colloq and senior essay (WGSS 490, 491)

* WGSS 239b / ENGL 239b, Women Writers from the Restoration to Romanticism  Jill Campbell
Readings of poems, plays, novels, essays, and letters by English women from the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth, with attention to historical context and change. Writers include Aphra Behn, Mary Astell, Anne Finch, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Sarah Scott, Maria Edgeworth, Phyllis Wheatley, Dorothy Wordsworth, Jane Austen, and Mary Shelley. Topics include the reputation and reception of female authors; women's appropriation of male literary forms; the implications of generic choice; accounts of female utopian communities; and treatments of love, marriage, female friendship, and homoerotic desire. Advanced courses are open to students normally after two terms of English or the equivalent, or with the permission of the instructor. Starred courses may be used to fulfill the two-seminar requirement for English majors.  WR, HU

WGSS 429b / PLSC 427b, Sex, Markets, and Power  Frances Rosenbluth
Consideration of how women’s socioeconomic status and political power have varied across time and place. Three analytical lenses are used: biology, markets, and power.  SO

Gateway Courses

WGSS 110b / AMST 110b, RLST 110b, Sexuality and Religion  Kathryn Lofton
The relationship between ideas about sex and ideas about religion; the interrelations of sexual and religious practices. Case studies from religious cultures in the United States. Examination of presumptive norms about sexuality, religion, and American culture.  HU

WGSS 115a / AMST 115a / ANTH 115a, Gender in a Transnational World  Graeme Reid
Gender and sex as constituted in modern nation-states through the divisions between domestic and foreign spheres. Ways in which the interactions between international and national issues shape gender and sexuality in everyday life. Topics include science, race, and empire; nation and identity formation; media, representation, and art practices; and migration, displacement, and globalization.  SO

WGSS 120a, Women, Food, and Culture  Maria Trumpler
Interdisciplinary exploration of the gendering of food production, preparation, and consumption in cross-cultural perspective. Topics include agricultural practices, cooking, pasteurization, kitchen technology, food storage, home economics, hunger, anorexia, breastfeeding, meals, and ethnic identity.  WR, SO

WGSS 200a / AMST 135a / HIST 127a, U.S. Lesbian and Gay History  George Chauncey
Introduction to the social, cultural, and political history of lesbians, gay men, and other socially constituted sexual minorities. Focus on understanding categories of sexuality in relation to shifting normative regimes, primarily in the twentieth century. The emergence of homosexuality and heterosexuality as categories of experience and identity; the changing relationship between homosexuality and transgenderism; the development of diverse lesbian and gay subcultures and their representation in popular culture; religion and sexual science; generational change and everyday life; AIDS; and gay, antigay, feminist, and queer movements.  HU

Intermediate Courses

* WGSS 205a, Bodies and Pleasures, Sex and Genders  Anusha Alles
Sexuality explored as an embodied, historical production. Focus on the dynamic, contested relationship between the concepts of gender and sexuality. Investigation of sexuality at the sites of racial difference, psychoanalysis, AIDS, transnationality, U.S. law, publicity, and politics. Ways in which pleasure, power, and inequality are unevenly imbricated. Includes occasional evening screenings.  SO
* WGSS 206b, Globalizing Gender and Sexuality  Vanessa Agard-Jones
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

Junior Seminars

* WGSS 340a / ENGL 357a, Feminist and Queer Theory  Margaret Homans
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 398b, Junior Seminar: Theory and Method  Vanessa Agard-Jones
An interdisciplinary approach to studying gender and sexuality. Exploration of a range of relevant theoretical frameworks and methodologies. Prepares students for the senior essay. WR, HU, SO

Senior Course

* WGSS 490a, The Senior Colloquium  Inderpal Grewal
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 491a or b, The Senior Essay  Inderpal Grewal
Independent research on, and writing of, the senior essay.

Electives

* WGSS 032b, History of Sexuality  Staff
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 sexology as a scientific discipline. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. WR, HU

* WGSS 033b / HIST 033b, Fashion in London and Paris, 1750 to the Present  Becky Conekin
Introduction to the history of Western fashion from the mid-eighteenth century to the present, with a focus on Paris and London. Approaches, methods, and theories scholars have historically employed to study fashion and dress. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. WR, HU

WGSS 168b / NELC 167b, Women in the Ancient World  Karen Foster
Introduction to the roles of women in ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Aegean society, as reflected in painting, sculpture, decorative arts, and literature, as well as in the earliest women's writings known. HU

WGSS 169a / ANTH 169a, Anthropological Approaches to Sex  Karen Nakamura
The analytical concept of sex explored using theories and methods from archaeology and from biological, sociocultural, and linguistic anthropology. Sexual morphology and behavior; constructions of sex and gender; gendered violence, power, and language; kinship and mating. SO

WGSS 211b / AFAM 140b / AMST 211b / ENGL 293b / ER&M 210b, Race and Gender in American Literature  Birgit Rasmussen
The role of literature in constructing representations of America as an idea, a nation, a colonial settlement, and a participant in world affairs. What kind of place America is and who belongs there; the consequences of America's history for its national literature. Emphasis on the ways texts represent and contest social concepts of race and gender difference. WR, HU

* WGSS 220b / PLSC 220b, Women and U.S. Politics  Rachel Silbermann
The role of women in current U.S. political processes and institutions. Whether American women and men differ in their political opinions and behavior. Differences in leadership between women and men as legislators, executives, and judges. Why women continue to be underrepresented as officeholders despite their voting at a rate equal to or higher than men's. SO

* WGSS 230a / ANTH 230a, Evolutionary Biology of Women's Reproductive Lives  Claudia Valeggia
Evolutionary and biosocial perspectives on female reproductive lives. Physiological, ecological, and social aspects of women's development from puberty through menopause and aging, with special attention to reproductive processes such as pregnancy, birth, and lactation. Variation in female life histories in a variety of cultural and ecological settings. Examples from both traditional and modern societies. SC

* WGSS 234b / ANTH 234b, Disability and Culture  Karen Nakamura
Exploration of disability from a cross-cultural perspective, using examples from around the globe. Disability as it relates to identity, culture, law, and politics. Case studies may include deafness in Japan, wheelchair mobility in the United States, and mental illness in the former Soviet republics. SO RP
WGSS 272a / AMST 272a / ER&M 282a / HIST 183a, Asian American History, 1800 to the Present Mary Lui
An introduction to the history of East, South, and Southeast Asian migrations and settlement to the United States from the late eighteenth century to the present. Major themes include labor migration, community formation, U.S. imperialism, legal exclusion, racial segregation, gender and sexuality, cultural representations, and political resistance. 

* WGSS 297b / ENGL 292b, Imagining Sexual Politics, 1960s to the Present Staff
Historical survey of works of fiction, poetry, drama, and creative nonfiction that have shaped and responded to feminist, queer, and transgender thought since the start of second-wave feminism. Authors include Wittig, Rich, Broumas, Brown, Russ, Walker, Lorde, Morrison, Kingston, Atwood, Cisneros, Bechdel, and Rankine. WR, HU

* WGSS 300b / 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 302a / PHIL 312a / PLSC 311a, How We Choose, and Choose Well Hélène Landemore
The study of choice approached through a broad and multifaceted lens, borrowing from disciplines and sources as varied as metaphysics, moral philosophy, political theory, literature, and film, as well as psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, and economics. Recommended preparation: introductory courses in moral philosophy and economics. SO

* WGSS 304b, Men, Manhood, and Masculinity Graeme Reid
Cultural and historic constructions of masculinity explored through an investigation of male bodies, sexualities, and social interactions. Multiple masculinities; the relationship between hegemonic, nonhegemonic, and subordinate masculinities. SO

* WGSS 308a / ANTH 308a, Queer Ethnographies Karen Nakamura
Exploration of both classic and contemporary ethnographies of gender and sexuality. Emphasis on understanding anthropology’s contribution to and relationship with gay and lesbian studies and queer theory. SO RP

* WGSS 314b / EP&E 267b / SOCY 216b, Social Movements Ron Eyerman
An introduction to sociological perspectives on social movements and collective action, exploring civil rights, student movements, global justice, nationalism, and radical fundamentalism. SO

* WGSS 316a / AFAM 273a / EP&E 244a / SOCY 314a, Inequality in America Vida Maralani
Introduction to the current landscape of socioeconomic inequality in the U.S. Empirical, theoretical, and methodological facets of inequalities in education, occupation, income, wealth, health, neighborhoods, and intergenerational mobility; how these intersect with race and gender. Core questions include how different social groups fare and why, and what types of policies might address existing inequalities. WR, SO

* WGSS 321b / ANTH 321b / MMES 321b, Middle East Gender Studies Marcia Inhorn
The lives of women and men in the contemporary Middle East explored through a series of anthropological studies and documentary films. Competing discourses surrounding gender and politics, and the relation of such discourse to actual practices of everyday life. Feminism, Islamism, activism, and human rights; fertility, family, marriage, and sexuality. SO

* WGSS 327b / ER&M 327b / MMES 321b, Constructing the Self: From Autobiography to Facebook Geetanjali Chanda
Autobiography in its evolving form as literary genre, historical archive, and individual and community narrative in a changing geographical context. Women’s life stories from Afghanistan, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, and Vietnam illustrate the dialectic relationship between the global and the local. What the reading and writing of autobiographies reveal about oneself and one’s place in society; autobiography as a horizontal community formation. WR, HU

* WGSS 328b / ER&M 328b / SAST 458b, Popular Culture and Postcolonial India Geetanjali Chanda
A study of films and literature of South Asians living, working, and directing in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Questions of commercial populism, authenticity, and postcolonial identity. WR

* WGSS 354a / HIST 191Ja, Women, Gender, and Grassroots Politics in the United States after World War II Jennifer Klein
American politics and grassroots social movements from 1945 to the present explored through women’s activism and through gender politics more broadly. Ideas about gender identities, gender roles, and family in the shaping of social movements; strategies used on the local, regional, national, and international levels. Connections between organizing and policy, public and private, state and family, and migration, immigration, and empire. WR, HU

* WGSS 380a / AMST 402a / ANTH 302a / FILM 324a, Gender and Sexuality in Media and Popular Culture Vanessa Agard-Jones and Laura Wexler
Investigation of visual media and popular culture in the United States and transnationally. Gender, race, class, and sexuality in relation to the production, circulation, consumption, and reception of media culture. Focus on theories of media and the visual. Significant lab component in which students use media technologies to make and illustrate theoretical arguments. HU

* WGSS 390b / ER&M 360b / HLTH 370b / HSHM 432b / SOCY 390b, Politics of Reproduction Rene Almeling
Reproduction as a process that is simultaneously biological and social, involving male and female bodies, family formation, and powerful social institutions such as medicine, law, and the marketplace. Sociological research on reproductive topics such as pregnancy, birth,
abortion, contraception, infertility, reproductive technology, and aging. Core sociological concepts used to examine how the politics of reproduction are shaped by the intersecting inequalities of gender, race, class, and sexuality. WR, SO

**WGSS 405a / EALL 211a, Women and Literature in Traditional China**  Kang-i Sun Chang
A study of major women writers in traditional China, as well as representations of women by male authors. The power of women’s writing; women and material culture; women in exile; courtesans; Taoist and Buddhist nuns; widow poets; cross-dressing women; the female body and its metaphors; footbinding; notions of love and death; the aesthetics of illness; women and revolution; poetry clubs; the function of memory in women’s literature; problems of gender and genre. All readings in translation; no knowledge of Chinese required. Some Chinese texts provided for students who read Chinese. Formerly CHNS 201. HU TR

* **WGSS 410b / AFAM 410b / AMST 310b, Interdisciplinary Approaches to African American Studies**  Staff
An interdisciplinary, thematic approach to the study of race, nation, and ethnicity in the African diaspora. Topics include class, gender, color, and sexuality; the dynamics of reform, Pan-Africanism, neocolonialism, and contemporary black nationalism. Use of a broad range of methodologies. WR, HU, SO

* **WGSS 413a / THST 441a, Feminist Theater and Performance**  Elise Morrison
Introduction to a range of works by feminist scholars, activists, playwrights, and performers who have used theatrical performance as a means by which to critique and reimagine cultural representations of gender and sexuality. Mapping out of significant theories, debates, and performance strategies that emerged out of the feminist movement(s) of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Students research, perform, and critically engage with historical and contemporary examples of feminist performance work. HU

* **WGSS 426b / ENGL 446b, Virginia Woolf**  Margaret Homans
A study of the major novels and other writings by Virginia Woolf, with additional readings in historical contexts and in Woolf biography and criticism. Focus on Woolf’s modernist formal experimentation and on her responses and contributions to political movements of her day, principally feminism and pacifism; attention also to the critical reception of her work, with emphasis on feminist and queer literary criticism and theory. WR, HU

* **WGSS 428a / ANTH 451a, Intersectionality and Women’s Health**  Marcia Inhorn
The intersections of race, class, gender, and other axes of “difference” and their effects on women’s health, primarily in the contemporary United States. Recent feminist approaches to intersectionality and multiplicity of oppressions theory. Ways in which anthropologists studying women’s health issues have contributed to social and feminist theory at the intersections of race, class, and gender. SO

* **WGSS 441a / THE 441a, History of the Body**  Laura Wexler
The role of photographic representation in archives of public and private memory. The social and expressive functions of photography under the aegis of museums, libraries, art galleries, government, police, and personal albums. Critical theory on gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and nation as they help construct remembering. HU

* **WGSS 453a / HIST 142Ja / HSHM 445a, Women and Medicine in America from the Colonial Era to the Present**  Naomi Rogers
American women from the colonial era to the present as midwives, patients, healers, reformers, revolutionaries, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Ways that women have shaped American health care and medical research. WR, HU

* **WGSS 454a / AMST 387a / FILM 377a, Postwar Queer Avant-Garde Film**  Ronald Gregg
Production, exhibition, and aesthetic practices in postwar queer underground cinema in the United States as it developed from the 1930s to the early 1970s. The films of gay or bisexual filmmakers such as Willard Maas, Andy Warhol, Jack Smith, Kenneth Anger, and José Rodríguez-Soltero; the work of antiheteronormative female filmmakers such as Barbara Rubin and Marie Menken; the links between avant-garde cinema, theater, and other arts, as well as the political context. HU

* **WGSS 459a / ANTH 455a, 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. SO RP

* **WGSS 460a / HIST 183Ja / HSHM 455a, History of the Body**  Courtney Thompson
Body images that surround us: slender models, well-built athletes, attractive actors, and pop stars. Discussion of visual images that embody normative ideals of beauty and health. A historical perspective on ways of looking at bodies in the past and present. WR, HU

* **WGSS 471a or b, Independent Directed Study**  Inderpal Grewal
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.