

# WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

## Overview

The Women's and Gender Studies Program is a cross-disciplinary program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The program offers students opportunities to analyze issues concerning women, gender, and sexuality in diverse cultural contexts and to investigate a variety of disciplines from feminist perspectives. The field of women's and gender studies creates an understanding that interrelated factors—e.g., race, ethnicity, class, age, disability, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation—inform knowledge of women's history, culture, and social roles.

Women's and Gender Studies seeks to improve critical thinking and to provide students with the intellectual means to question prevailing assumptions. It encourages students to explore the contexts and ideological origins of knowledge and to examine the relationship between knowledge and power in society. By promoting social justice and inclusion, this area of study focuses on the connections between personal experience and political activity, and validates student contributions and voices.

Graduates from this program are skilled in critical thinking, research methods, and effective communication. Because they have developed a thorough understanding of gender, race, and class, graduates work effectively with employers, colleagues, and clients to analyze and solve complex social problems. Women's and Gender Studies students also acquire strong backgrounds for careers in areas such as counseling, education, human resources, international development, public policy, politics, business, and law. The program includes core and cross-listed courses in anthropology, history, economics, English, history, health and human performance, political science, psychology, religion, sociology, speech communication, and world languages and cultures.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Through student-driven discussions, based on engagement with critical and cultural texts by feminist scholars and activists, the Women's and Gender Studies Program curriculum will help students develop the necessary skills to:

- Increase awareness of women's history and experiences that affect representations of gender in contemporary society
- Explore forms of social inequality through feminist theories and concepts
- Understand how intersecting identities shape individuals and their life experiences
- Analyze gender dynamics in different types of relationships

## Degree Requirements

### Women's and Gender Studies (B.A., B.S.)

An undergraduate major requires a minimum 2.00 GPA in the 34 credits of core and cross-listed courses. Women's and Gender Studies' majors must satisfy the following requirements:

1. 16 credits selected from Women's and Gender Studies core courses (WGS).

#### A. Required core courses:

WGS 160	Gender Justice	1
WGS 201	Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies	3
WGS 301	International Perspectives on Women and Gender	3
WGS 401	Feminist Theories	3
WGS 402	Feminist Research in Action	3
WGS 491 or WGS 499	Internship Senior Thesis	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>16</b>

B. The remaining 18 credits of required coursework can be chosen from one of the following Areas of Emphasis: 1) Communication and Cultural Representation; 2) Identities and Sexualities; 3) Leadership and Social Justice; or students can work with their advisor to identify the set of courses that support their personal and professional goals.

#### 1) Communication and Cultural Representation

Courses in this field offer diverse perspectives on how media and communication represent and shape culture in the US and around the world. Students engage with feminist literature, philosophy, art, and other expressions of culture in society. These themes are used to examine how the lives and roles of women have changed throughout history.

WGS 210	Gender and Sexuality in American Pop Culture	3
WGS 308	Write Like a Woman	3
WGS 323	Gender and Communication	3
WGS 325	Portrayals of Gender and Sexualities in the Media	3
WGS 327	Gender and Sexualities in Society	3
WGS 338	Feminist Philosophy	3
WGS 345	Women and Literature: Selected Topics	3
ENGL 349	Topics in Multicultural Literatures of the United States	3
WGS 352	Queer Literature	3
WGS 370	Studies in English Translation	3
WGS 374	Sex, Gender, and Culture in the Ancient Mediterranean World	3
WGS 422	Women, Men, and the English Language	3
WGS 430	Gender and Consumer Culture	3

WGS 450	Topics in Women's and Gender Studies	3
WGS 460	Seminar in Gender and Ethnicity	3
WGS 490	Independent Study	1-3
WGS 494	Women/Gender in Art	3
WGS 545	Women's Literature	3
WGS 594	Women/Gender in Art	3

## 2) Identities and Sexualities

This area highlights the growing emphasis in Women's and Gender Studies on how experiences and societal narratives shape and are impacted by gender identities and sexualities. Courses explore power relations, oppression, privilege, and resistance as ways of understanding these social identities. Students will learn about how issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and other axes of difference intersect and enable political resistance.

WGS 203	Introduction to Lesbian Communities	3
WGS 205	Introduction to Queer Studies	3
WGS 210	Gender and Sexuality in American Pop Culture	3
WGS 308	Write Like a Woman	3
WGS 325	Portrayals of Gender and Sexualities in the Media	3
WGS 327	Gender and Sexualities in Society	3
WGS 328	Sociology of Masculinities and Manhood	3
WGS 336	Religion, Sex and Gender	3
WGS 339	Goddess Religions	3
WGS 344	Human Reproduction	3
WGS 346	Psychology of Women	3
ENGL 349	Topics in Multicultural Literatures of the United States	3
WGS 350	Women of Color in the U.S	3
WGS 352	Queer Literature	3
WGS 374	Sex, Gender, and Culture in the Ancient Mediterranean World	3
WGS 380	History of Women in Science, Technology, and Medicine	3
WGS 386	History of Women in America	3
WGS 410	Human Trafficking	3
WGS 425	Intersections of Race, Class and Gender	3
WGS 430	Gender and Consumer Culture	3
WGS 440	Gender Issues in Sports	3
WGS 450	Topics in Women's and Gender Studies	3
WGS 457	History of American Sexualities	3
WGS 490	Independent Study	1-3
WGS 494	Women/Gender in Art	3

WGS 525	Intersections of Race, Class and Gender	3
WGS 586	Readings Seminar in Women's and Gender History	3

## 3) Leadership and Social Justice

Courses in this area of specialization provide students with the tools and theories needed to become successful change agents, activists, and community organizers. These courses explore how social movements can transform communities, cultural norms, and global systems. Students will engage with critiques and the context of movements such as transnational feminism, Black Lives Matter, LGBTQIA+ Pride, and #MeToo.

WGS 210	Gender and Sexuality in American Pop Culture	3
WGS 307	Women in Science and Engineering	3
WGS 320	Ecofeminism	3
WGS 321	Economics of Discrimination	3
WGS 333	Women, Gender, and Leadership	3
WGS 344	Human Reproduction	3
WGS 350	Women of Color in the U.S	3
WGS 380	History of Women in Science, Technology, and Medicine	3
WGS 385	Women in Politics	3
WGS 386	History of Women in America	3
WGS 387	First Ladies in U.S. History	3
WGS 410	Human Trafficking	3
WGS 425	Intersections of Race, Class and Gender	3
WGS 435	Gender, Globalization and Development	3
WGS 440	Gender Issues in Sports	3
WGS 450	Topics in Women's and Gender Studies	3
WGS 488	Research on Gender and Leadership	3
WGS 490	Independent Study	1-3
WGS 586	Readings Seminar in Women's and Gender History	3

A minor or additional major is recommended. The typical degree awarded is a Bachelor of Arts; students interested in a Bachelor of Science degree in Women's and Gender Studies need to complete 12 credits in addition to the general education requirements across the areas of natural science, mathematics, and social science.

## Communication Proficiency requirement:

The Women's and Gender Studies major requires credit for ENGL 150; ENGL 250 (or ENGL 250H) (with a grade of C or better, per the university-wide Communication Proficiency Grade Requirement (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2023-2024/academics/#communicationproficiencypolicytext>)); and WGS 301 or WGS 401 or WGS 402 (with a grade of C or better).

Students in all ISU majors must complete a three-credit course in U.S. diversity and a three-credit course in international perspectives. Check (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/courses/div-ip-guide.html>) for a list of approved courses. Discuss with your advisor how the two courses that you select can be applied to your graduation plan.

LAS majors require a minimum of 120 credits, **including a minimum of 45 credits at the 300/400 level**. You must also complete the LAS General Education requirements as well as the world language and career proficiency requirements.

As majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Women's and Gender Studies students must meet College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2023-2024/collegeofliberalartsandsciences/#lascollegerequirementstext>) and University-wide requirements (<http://catalog.iastate.edu/previouscatalogs/2023-2024/collegescurricula/>) for graduation in addition to those stated above for the major.

## Four Year Plan Women's and Gender Studies, B.A., B.S. (1)

### Freshman

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 150	3 WGS 201	3
LIB 160	1 Math Choice	3
World Language/Elective <sup>1</sup>	3-4 World Language/Elective	3-4
Humanities Choice	3 Humanities Choice	3
Natural Science Choice	3 Social Science Choice	3
Social Science Choice	3	
<b>16-17</b>		<b>15-16</b>

### Sophomore

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
U.S. Diversity Choice	3 Women's and Gender Studies Choices - 200/300 Level	6
WGS 301	3 Int'l Perspectives Choice	3
WGS 160	1 Humanities Choice	3
Humanities Choice	3 Social Science Choice	3
ENGL 250	3 LAS 203	1
Natural Science Choice	3	
<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

### Junior

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Women's and Gender Studies Choice - 300/400 Level	3 Electives - 300/400 Level	9

Electives	7 WGS 402	3
Natural Science Choice	2 Women's and Gender Studies Choice - 300/400 Level	3
WGS 401	3	

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### Senior

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Women's and Gender Studies Choice - 300/400 Level	6 Electives	5
Elective - 300/400 Level	6 Electives - 300/400 Level	6
WGS 491 or 499	1-3 Women's and Gender Studies Choice - 300/400 Level	3

**13-15 14**

**Total Credits: 120-124**

## Minor

Undergraduate students may minor in Women's and Gender Studies by taking 15 semester hours of Women's and Gender Studies classes, including the following:

WGS 201	Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies	3
WGS 301	International Perspectives on Women and Gender	3

One 400-level WGS course and 6 additional credits in WGS; at least 3 of the additional credits must be at the 300-400 level.

University policy requires that at least 9 credits used for the minor stand alone and are not used to meet any other requirement. All WGS courses for the minor require a grade of C (not C-) or higher.

Any student can declare a major or minor in Women's and Gender Studies or choose to co-major in another program. Students interested in a minor or major in Women's and Gender Studies should contact the director or the undergraduate advisor in the program.

## Graduate Study

The graduate minor in Women's and Gender Studies is designed to provide students with knowledge of theories and methods within a variety of approaches in feminist scholarship. The program seeks to integrate and synthesize knowledge from many disciplines and to offer students opportunities for systematic study of gender and women's experiences and perspectives in all knowledge fields. Students will be prepared to take a leadership role in supporting gender equity and diversity in their careers in education, social service work, business, law, public policy, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and research.

The graduate minor requires 12 credits for students enrolled in a master's or a doctoral degree program. Students are required to take either WGS 501 Contemporary Feminist Theories or WGS 502 Advanced Seminar in Feminist Research Methods; taking both is strongly recommended. Students will also take two or three electives selected from the list of core and cross-listed Women's and Gender Studies courses approved for graduate study. At least one member of the Women's and Gender Studies faculty will serve on the program of study for doctoral students. A list of eligible faculty members may be obtained from the Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program.