

# WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

Karnoutsos Hall, Room 505  
201-200-3251

<http://web.njcu.edu/programs/wgstudies>

While women's lives and experiences are the central focus of the Women's and Gender Studies Program, all courses incorporate analyses of masculinity and femininity, as well as perspectives informed by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Studies, queer theory, and feminist practice.

Our bachelor of arts program prepares students for an array of career opportunities. Students develop a complex understanding of social, political, economic and cultural issues, making them highly valuable members of their communities and workplaces. Those who chose to pursue graduate work in this discipline or related field another are prepared for the rigors of intellectual inquiry and analysis.

A minor in women's and gender studies adds depth and perspective that enhances any program of study. Students hoping to pursue careers in health care, business, or education will become better health care workers, managers, and teachers with a deeper understanding of how gender influences organizations and people. Women's and gender studies is also an approved co-major for the early childhood education and elementary education programs.

**Antoinette Ellis-Williams, Chairperson** ([aellis@njcu.edu](mailto:aellis@njcu.edu))

*Professor of Women's and Gender Studies*

Seton Hall University, B.A.; University of Pittsburgh, M.P.A.; Cornell University, Ph.D.

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*Assistant Professor of Women's & Gender Studies*

Trent University, B.A.; Bowling Green State University, M.A.; York University, Ph.D.

Various discipline-specific concentrations that will prepare students for multiple fields of employment or areas of additional undergraduate/graduate study are noted below. Course requirements for each concentration are explained in detail. The requirements for graduation, in addition to completion of the major area, are listed on "Undergraduate Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.njcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-degree-requirements>)."

- Women's and Gender Studies, B.A. (<https://catalog.njcu.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/womens-gender-studies/womens-gender-studies-ba>)
- Women's and Gender Studies, Minor (<https://catalog.njcu.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/womens-gender-studies/womens-gender-studies-minor>)

## Women's & Gender Studies (WGST)

**WGST 1XX Women & Gender Studies Transfer Credit (0 Credits)**

**WGST 2XX Women & Gender Studies Transfer Credit (0 Credits)**

**WGST 100 Women's Lives (3 Credits)**

This course is an introduction to the field of women's studies. It explores the different experiences of womanhood in the United States and around the world, with an emphasis on roles throughout the life cycle and the importance of race, class, sexuality, in shaping gender roles.

**WGST 101 Telling Women's Lives (3 Credits)**

In this course, students will use feminist analysis to examine the cultural processes of telling and hearing women's stories and to consider how these narratives create knowledge within multiple disciplines. Students will hear, read and re-tell the life experiences of women using oral and written texts drawn from various genres.

**WGST 102 Female Sex & Psych II (3 Credits)**

**WGST 103 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies (3 Credits)**

This course examines the disparity between traditional roles and the organization of an advanced industrial society; considers changing notions of roles and new patterns of relationships.

**WGST 108 Race, Class and Gender Activism (3 Credits)**

This course examines women's movements and activism in the United States and around the world. Through primary source documents and monographs, we will look at a wide spectrum of feminist political interventions that focus on the intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and sexual identity both in the analysis they propose and the solutions they generate.

**WGST 109 Gender, Sexuality and Culture (3 Credits)**

This course explores key concepts in gender studies, including our understanding of the social construction of gender, by examining assumptions about gender roles and relations in contemporary society. Drawing primarily from literature, art, music, and sociology, the course focuses on questions regarding gendered experiences in political, social, and cultural contexts.

**WGST 110 Diversity and Difference: Identities, Communities, and Cultures (3 Credits)**

This course is designed to explore how culture shapes individual and community identities. It provides students with social, political, cultural, psychological, and historical frameworks for understanding differences and resolving conflicts. Students will build a repertoire of skills for identifying, researching, analyzing, navigating, and valuing diversity.

**WGST 130 Rebel Girls (3 Credits)**

Young women and girls continue to make history in the United States and throughout the world. Students will explore the social, political, and cultural rebellions of young women and girls, make connections between rebellions in the past and those in the present, and compare girls' activism nationally, transnationally, and globally.

**WGST 141 Masculinities (3 Credits)**

What does it mean to be a man in any given context? Why are some forms of masculinity more valued than others? What do feminist masculinity look like? The course explores the social and cultural construction of masculinity by surveying interdisciplinary texts that analyze, question, and transform the ways in which masculinity is understood and performed in a variety of settings. The course pays special attention to the intersections between gender, race, class and sexual orientation in the formation of various forms of masculinity.

**WGST 190 Introduction to Gay and Lesbian Studies (3 Credits)**

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender studies. It explores the history of same sex desire in Western and non-Western cultures and examines the political, psychological and artistic cultures of contemporary lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

**WGST 202 Women and Work (3 Credits)**

This course explores the condition of women as paid and unpaid workers in the United States and around the world. It considers the history of women's work and the effect of the global economy on traditional and non-traditional occupations for women.

**WGST 203 Women and Aging (3 Credits)**

This course examines significant events in the lives of mature and aging women by exploring shifting situations, self-images, aspirations, anxieties, and values.

**WGST 204 Theorizing Bodies: Gendered Perspectives (3 Credits)**

This course is an introduction to various theoretical accounts of the body. How are human bodies and bodily experience shaped by gender relations? How do bodies (and the way we perceive them) vary historically and across cultures? How different bodies are perceived, valued and treated? In this course, we will examine the body as the product of complex social arrangements and processes. We will study the body as a part of our identity, as the object of social control, and as the repository of shifting race, gender and sexual categories.

**WGST 208 Sex: Power, Pleasure, Politics (3 Credits)**

Beginning with some basic work on the history of sexuality, this course explores a variety of topics; heterosexuality as an historical institution; pornography; prostitution; date rape and sexual harassment; rape; race, sex, and miscegenation; sex and disease; and sex and pleasure. The course analyzes each of these topics by placing them in their political, economic, social, and ideological contexts.

**WGST 210 Black Womanhood (3 Credits)**

This course examines the impact of racism and sexism on Black women and explores various representations of Black womanhood and their implications for feminist thought. Perspectives from sociology, history and literary criticism are included.

**WGST 215 Men of Color in Urban America (3 Credits)**

This course helps students understand the cultural, social, political, economical, and historical trends/traditions of Black and Latino men in urban America. Students will deconstruct the cultural underpinnings of manhood, masculinity and identity politics. Additionally, students will explore sexism and violence; the role of the media; employment, drug culture and man as provider (i.e. father); politics, liberation, revolution and activism; leadership models; relationships with men and women; sex and sexuality.

**WGST 220 Women and Leadership: Work and Community (3 Credits)**

Students will explore the experiences, strategies, and gendered dynamics affecting women in leadership roles. Beginning with historical examples of political leaders, social activists, and business entrepreneurs, students will examine contemporary issues facing women leaders in workplace and community settings and create toolkits for exploring and enacting their own leadership potential.

**WGST 225 Women, Hip Hop Spoken Word and Social Change (3 Credits)**

This course will examine the socio-political and cultural role Hip Hop and spoken word plays in social activism in a global context. Students will examine the intersection of race, class, gender and sexuality within the genre of spoken word and Hip Hop in social transformation.

**WGST 226 LGBTQ Social Change (3 Credits)**

In this course, students learn about labels, identities, and histories associated with LGBTQ peoples. Then, students evaluate LGBTQ activist organizing strategies before working on projects that benefit a community agency in the Hudson County/Essex County area. The course requires group work outside the classroom with the community partner.

**Prerequisite(s):** WGST 109 or WGST 190 or Permission by Instructor

**WGST 300 Women & Health (3 Credits)**

In this course students will examine the role of women as both consumers and providers of health care. The effect of race, class and gender on the health status of women will be analyzed. The biologic basis for sex differences will be discussed. Major health issues will be addressed including reproductive health, sexually transmitted disease, eating disorders, addiction, occupational and environmental health, menopause, and chronic disease. Students will evaluate women's health programs and compare models of health delivery for women.

**WGST 310 Girls, Girl Culture, and Girlhood Studies (3 Credits)**

This course explores girlhood in the United States and globally. Students will examine individual experiences, socially constructed definitions, and cultural representations of girlhood from interdisciplinary perspectives and will consider how education, media, politics, families, and friendships shape girls' identities.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** Must have taken one of the following: WGST 101, WGST 109, WGST 110, WGST 220, or WGST 225 and 8 Gen Ed Courses across Tier 1 and Tier 2.

**WGST 320 Feminist Practices (3 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the history and development of women's and gender studies as an academic field. Students will explore feminist theory and offer a critical examination of various research techniques used in women's and gender studies with a particular emphasis on interdisciplinary work.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 100 or WGST 103, and two additional courses toward the major.

**WGST 322 Reproductive Justice (3 Credits)**

This course explores historical and contemporary reproductive politics through a social justice lens that is attentive to the intersections of patriarchy, racism, poverty, and colonialism. Students learn how ethics, economic, social, and political power shapes our intimate and procreative lives.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** one 100 level WGST and one 200 WGST or Permission

**WGST 330 Gender and Popular Culture (3 Credits)**

This course focuses on constructions of femininity and masculinity in various popular cultural forms including: television, movies, music, advertising, fashion, and the Internet. Analyses center on the production and consumption of popular culture and its role in shaping perceptions and experiences of gender in individual, national, and global contexts.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 100 or WGST 103

**WGST 370 Transgender, Gender Variant, and Gender Queer History, Identities, and Politics (3 Credits)**

This course explores transgender and gender non-conforming lives in the U.S. and globally. Students examine historical and contemporary assumptions and definitions of gender identities using interdisciplinary frameworks. Disjunction's and overlaps of trans, intersex, or gender-variant identities, issues, and theories with feminist and queer theories are also interrogated.

**Prerequisites:** 8 Gen Ed Courses across Tier 1 and Tier 2 and one of the following: WGST 101, WGST 109, WGST 110, WGST 220, or WGST 225.

**WGST 380 Internship in Women's and Gender Studies (3 Credits)**

The WGST internship combines experiential learning in a pre-approved agency or organization with academic analysis of applicable feminist concepts and theories. Supervised by a WGST faculty member, students will reflect on their internship experiences through regular reading and writing assignments and in a final paper.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 100 or WGST 103, and two 200 level additional courses toward the major.

**WGST 405 US Latina Feminisms (3 Credits)**

This course examines the historical development, theoretical positions, and political, social, and artistic contributions of Latinas in the United States. Through the study of film, literature, and other cultural products and practices, students will explore how Latina scholars, writers, and artists engage constructions of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, cultural nationalism, and colonialism to articulate a distinct feminist vision.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 100 or WGST 103 or Permission of the Instructor

**WGST 410 Gender, Migration, and Citizenship (3 Credits)**

This course will explore how population movements worldwide are intricately connected to existing gender, labor, sexual, and family relations. Analyses address the complex connections between mobility patterns, economic trends, gender relations, discursive formations (including citizenship and nationality laws), and new forms of subjectivity, communities, and political engagement.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 100 or WGST 103 or ETHN 221

**WGST 490 Senior Seminar in Women's and Gender Studies (3 Credits)**

Advanced course on selected topics in women's and gender studies. Topics may include Gender and Globalization; Women and Spirituality; Feminism, Policy and the poor; Gender and Human Rights, etc. Students will be expected to pursue an original research project making use of primary sources, scholarly journals, and other research materials.

**Pre-Requisite(s):** WGST 101 or WGST 103; WGST 320, and two additional courses toward the major.