WOMEN’S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

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Program Description
First established in the 1980s, Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) at UMKC is one of 650 such programs in the United States. WGSS is both an inter- and multi-disciplinary academic program devoted to the critical analysis of how gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality contribute to the diversity of women’s and men’s experiences. The program’s interdisciplinary nature and cross-cultural academic training broadens students’ understanding of gender and the experiences of women and men, girls and boys, in all cultures and societies. By placing gender at the center of scholarly inquiry, we not only examine the assumptions, methods, insights, and claims of the traditional academic curriculum but broaden it through our research interests, publications, and courses to add cutting edge feminist research, scholarship, and activism.

The WGSS program offers an undergraduate minor as well as an internship. WGSS courses are offered by numerous UMKC departments, and a full list of courses scheduled is available every semester from the WGSS office.

A minor in Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies requires 18 credits. Nine credits must be in upper division courses (that is, 300 and 400) and no more than nine credits may overlap with your major. Reading courses on selected topics may be arranged with individual faculty members.

More information is available at the program website at http://cas.umkc.edu/wgs.

Educational Goals and Student Learning Outcomes
The educational goals for students in the Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies program are:

• To explore the historical development and contemporary manifestation of gender-based inequalities.
• To generate new knowledge about women’s lives and resistances in U.S. and global contexts.
• To advance critical research, thinking and writing skills as integral to professional development and political engagement.
• To foster understandings about how to transform inequalities of race, class, gender, sexuality and nations through direct engagement with communities in service learning.

Specifically, students will have the opportunity to acquire certain knowledge, skills and experience:

Knowledge
Students studying Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies will acquire knowledge about:

• The multidisciplinary nature and interdisciplinary methods of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies scholarship.
• The historical and contemporary cultural, social, political and economic contexts of gender in the United States and globally.
• The interaction of gender with other culturally constructed categories, such as race, age, sexuality, etc., in order to foster a greater understanding of diversity.

Skills
Students studying Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies will have the skills to:

• Think across disciplines.
• Understand and utilize the theories and methods of the various disciplines that contribute to Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies.
• Apply their knowledge to a variety of careers in business, nonprofit work and the public sector, as well as be qualified for graduate studies in any social science.
• Be knowledgeable activists for the human rights of all women and men, irrespective of cultural biases and stereotypes.

Experience
Students studying Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies will be experienced in:
Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

- Academic research and analysis in a variety of academic fields and disciplines.
- Professional and respectful interactions with disagreeing others in public discussions of gender issues (students will become teachers).
- Maintaining a recognition of human diversity and analyzing each human issue from a race, class and gender perspective (at a minimum).

Undergraduate

Undergraduate Degrees:
- Minor in Women’s and Gender Studies (http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/womens-gender-studies/minor-womens-gender-studies)
- Interdisciplinary Women’s and Gender Studies Course Listing (http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/womens-gender-studies/interdisciplinary-womens-gender-studies-course-listing)

Courses

WGS 201 Introduction To Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Credits: 3
This class provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies. The focus of this course will be the many ways gender is integral to our understanding of our world and the communities in which we live.

WGS 301 Introduction to Feminist Theory Credits: 3
This course covers a wide variety of feminist theories and theoretical perspectives, primarily since the 1960s, and is devoted to understanding and evaluating this body of work and the insights and possibilities for change that it suggests.

Prerequisites: WGS 201.

WGS 314CC Weimar Culture: Gender and Modernity in Central Europe Credits: 3
A cluster course concerned with the culture of Weimar Germany (1919-1933), a period of crucial importance not only for German history but also for European and world history. Examines how film, advertising, theater set design, painting, photography and other media sought to re-imagine gender identities, foster new cultural forms, and transform economic relations during the Roaring Twenties in Germany.

Cross Listings: GERMAN 314CC.

WGS 405 Special Topics In Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Credits: 1-3
Each time this course is offered a different area of Women’s and Gender Studies will be covered. This course may be repeated for credit when the topic changes.

WGS 408 Gender, Health, and Development in Senegal Credits: 3
This course examines women’s economic empowerment, health education initiatives, philanthropy, and social entrepreneurship in West Africa and Senegal in particular. In the main city of Dakar we will visit indigenous and global nonprofits to study their policies and processes. The culture, both urban and rural, will be experienced in order to provide a unique perspective on the Senegalese and their culture.

Cross Listings: HISTORY 408, HLSG 408.

WGS 460CC CC: Queer in the City: An introduction to Lesbian and Gay Studies Credits: 3
This course introduces queer theory within the context of gender studies and urban studies. We will read, discuss, and react to classic text in queer theory, lesbian and gay studies, and sexuality and space studies. There will be an emphasis on finding "otherness" within everyday spaces, places, texts, and discourses.

WGS 484 Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Internship Credits: 1-4
The Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Internship Program is an opportunity for undergraduate students to gain on-site experience. Students will receive 1-4 hours of academic credit while learning and working in off- or on-campus placements. Students will engage in the ongoing feminist effort to integrate research with social activism as they apply academic knowledge to their work experience and consider how practical experience informs or alters theory. Internship experiences may take place on or off-campus, such as at the UMKC Women’s Center or a local battered women’s shelter. The Women's Center Director serves as coordinator for all internship experiences.

Prerequisites: WGS 201.

WGS 499 Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Senior Seminar Credits: 3
This capstone course focuses on research leading to a term paper on a Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Topic.