



# WOMEN'S STUDIES, MINOR

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**Associated Faculty** Mary Bohlen, Mattilou Catchpole (emerita), Sharon Chanley, Cecilia Cornell, Jan Droegkamp, Kathryn Eisenhart, Judy Everson (emerita), Nancy Ford, Denise Green, Barbara Hayler, Jennifer Haytock, Jacqueline Jackson (emerita), Sandra Mills, Karen Moranski, Rosina Neginsky, Janet Novak, Lynn Pardie, Carol Rankin, Rosamond Robbert (emerita), Hazel Rozema, Nancy Scannell, Hammed Shahidian

**Degree offered:** Undergraduate Minor only

Women's studies is an interdisciplinary program that combines the substance and methodologies of many disciplines such as history, anthropology, sociology, communications, psychology, literature, and law in the study of women and gender. Sex is the biological difference between male and female; gender is the meaning of biological difference — the stereotypes, assumptions, and expectations society attaches to difference. Since gender alone cannot explain all of experience, other factors such as race, class, culture, and sexuality must be analyzed to see how they combine with the sex/gender system to discriminate against women and gender minorities. Most women's studies courses are interdisciplinary, crosslisted with other programs. With increasingly global perspectives, the goal of women's studies is to introduce both sexes to basic approaches to the study of women and

gender in a variety of fields so that they will be prepared for the challenges of leadership in the 21st century.

In the classroom, women's studies faculty are committed to creating participatory learning environments. They emphasize student-centered and cooperative learning, critical thinking, openness to ideas and discussion, and respect for others. Students are encouraged to make connections between thought and action, the academy and the community, theory and practice. The program will provide interested students with opportunities for internships, applied study terms, community-based projects, and research.

## DEGREE OPPORTUNITIES

Students can design their own course of study focusing on sex/gender for degrees through the liberal studies program (B.A.) or the individual option program (M.A.). In the past, students have designed de-

grees emphasizing gender in such areas as media, arts, social services, law, and mental health. Students have the opportunity to select and work closely with women's studies faculty who will assist in planning students' degrees and identifying learning resources. Additionally, men and women in all programs may take women's studies courses as electives or may pursue a minor as defined below.

Graduate students enrolled in 400-level women's studies courses will be expected to demonstrate graduate-level competencies (especially in communication, research, analysis, and integrative skills) and to complete extended and advanced projects and/or readings.

## WOMEN'S STUDIES MINOR

To earn a minor in women's studies, students must complete a minimum of 16 semester hours. The program may approve the transfer of no more than two

lower-division courses, and at least 8 of the 16 hours must be upper-division course work taken at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Students may use life and work experience to gain credit through the credit for prior learning program. Students who minor in women's studies must select an adviser from among the women's studies faculty.

- 1) WMS 301 Contemporary Issues in Women's Lives (fall/spring, first year)
- 2) WMS 411 Feminist Theories (spring, first year)
- 3) WMS 403 Minority Women: Issues and Perspectives (first or second year)

or a course approved by WMS adviser on minority or international women such as:

- WMS 453 Women Across Cultures
- WMS 463 Native American Women's Literature and Culture
- WMS 466 Multicultural American Women's Literature
- WMS 481 Women in Chinese and Japanese History *or*
- PAC or LSC approved by WMS adviser *and*
- 4) WMS 412 Women, Organizations, and Social Change (spring, second year)

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### CORE COURSES

#### **WMS 301 Contemporary Issues in Women's Lives (4 Hrs.)**

*Course available online; may also be available on campus. Refer to the current course schedule for further information.*

Interdisciplinary introduction to equity issues facing women today. Topics include gender socialization, education, law, work, families, health, violence, and the women's movement. Topics and emphasis may vary with instructor. (Fall and spring semesters) Highly recommended as the first course in women's studies.

#### **WMS 403 Minority Women: Issues and Perspectives (4 Hrs.)**

The experience of American women of color is at the center of this course. Interdisciplinary consideration of the intersection of race, class, and gender in the lives of women past and present. See AAS 403, HIS 453, and SWK 462.

#### **WMS 411 Feminist Theories (4 Hrs.)**

A range of feminist political theories including liberal, radical, socialist, postmodern, and global feminisms which offer different solutions to social issues such as the division of labor in the home and beyond, reproductive rights, and sexuality (spring semester). WMS 301 is recommended but not required as a foun-

ation for WMS 411. See SOA 408, PHI 411, and POS 433.

#### **WMS 412 Women, Organizations, and Social Change (4 Hrs.)**

Examines how women make social change and identifies women who have. Attempts to empower students with skills necessary to engage in the process of change in community and individual lives. Explores feminist skills in leadership, coalition-building, consensus decision making, and diversity based on race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Should be taken as last course in the minor (spring semester).

#### **WMS 415 Women's Studies Practicum (2 to 4 Hrs.)**

Group or individual research or community action projects relating to women. Projects designed jointly by students and faculty. Regular participation in colloquium, practicum journal, and research paper/project report required.

#### **WMS 460 Special Topics in Women's Studies (2 to 8 Hrs.)**

Selected topics in women's studies, to be announced each time the course is offered. Variable credit; may be repeated for different topics.

#### **WMS 499 Independent Study in Women's Studies (2 to 8 Hrs.)**

Independent study, structured reading, or research in the field of women's studies. Student should make arrangements with an appropriate faculty member.



**WMS 599 Independent Study (2 to 8 Hrs.)**

Independent study, structured reading, or research in the field of women's studies. Student should make arrangements with an appropriate faculty member.

**GENERAL COURSES**

**WMS 421 Culture, Diversity, and Social Work (4 Hrs.)**

Examination of the concepts of race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, and disability in terms of causes and effects in the generation of social problems and the roles of social workers. Particular emphasis on personal and cultural attitudes towards diversity. Prerequisites: SWK 311, or permission of the instructor. See SWK 421.

**WMS 422 Violence Against Women and Children (4 Hrs.)**

Explores the two most common crimes against women and children: sexual assault and abuse, and domestic violence. Examines the nature and frequency of these assaults, legal definitions and treatment, victim and survivor experiences, criminal justice and social service responses, offender characteristics, victim services and treatment, and local community resources. See CRJ 422 and SWK 461.

**WMS 423 Counseling Women (4 Hrs.)**

Specialized biological, psychological, and social issues that affect women. Explores theoretical assumptions, counseling practices, and process variables that may

apply differently to or affect women in counseling therapy. Identifies skills facilitative to women in general and to particular subgroups of women. Prerequisite: SWK 411 or HDC 501. See SWK 423 and HDC 423.

**WMS 424 Gender Communication (4 Hrs.)**

Examines male/female communication in dating relationships, marriage, education, mass media, and the workplace. Analysis of the effects of verbal and nonverbal differences in each context. See COM 424.

**WMS 432 Sociology of Families (4 Hrs.)**

Contemporary U.S. families in historical and cross-cultural context. Emphasizes varied family forms, work/family roles, political and policy questions, and selected public issues such as heterosexuality, inequality, and abuse. See SWK 432 and SOA 432.

**WMS 434 Women and Work (4 Hrs.)**

Role of women workers participating in the American labor force, their status and roles, their satisfaction and alienation, and the part they play in the labor movement. See LAR 434.

**WMS 443 Women and Criminal Justice (4 Hrs.)**

Examines women as perpetrators and victims of crime and as criminal justice professionals. Evaluates factors that contribute to women becoming involved with the criminal justice system in each of these capacities and assesses the degree to which the criminal justice system provides women with equitable treatment. See CRJ 443.

**WMS 445 Law and Inequality (4 Hrs.)**

The role of law and the legal system in creating, maintaining, and reducing inequality, with emphasis on race, class, and gender inequality in the United States. The relationship between law and the legal system and political/economic institutions and ideologies. See LES 404, POS 421, and SOA 425.

 **WMS 446 Family Law (4 Hrs.)**

*Course available online; may also be available on campus. Refer to the current course schedule for further information.*

Law that affects the family. Topics include divorce, domestic violence, illegitimacy, adoption, child support and custody, parental control, abuse and neglect laws, issues affecting the elderly, domestic law reform, and the impact of the women's rights movement. See SOA 454, HDC 446, SWK 446, and LES 446.

**WMS 447 Women in American Law (4 Hrs.)**

Identification of sexism in American law, including constitutional standards, the ERA, employment, education, family and procreative concerns, and crime. See LES 447.

**WMS 448 Law and Literature (4 Hrs.)**

Readings and discussions of literature. Includes ideas of justice; the concept of property as influenced by class, race, gender, and sexual orientation; and individual conscience vis-à-vis the duty to obey law. See LES 456.

**WMS 449 Nondiscrimination Laws in Employment (4 Hrs.)**

Development and implementation of nondiscrimination laws in employment, including hiring, firing, promotion, terms and conditions, benefits and pay. Focus on protective labor laws, veteran preference, harassment, and due process requirements in employment. See LES 449 and PAD 452.

**WMS 452 Sociology of Gender (4 Hrs.)**

Analyzes creation, maintenance, and enforcement of female and male roles. Socialization processes, cultural definitions, major social institutions, and structured social inequality. See SOA 452.

**WMS 453 Women Across Cultures (4 Hrs.)**

Addresses the complexity of Third World women's lives including development and structural adjustment, reproductive rights and other health issues, violence against women, and political resistance and complicity. See SOA 453.

**WMS 454 The History of the Family (4 Hrs.)**

The modern family in comparative and historical perspective. Selected themes – changing patterns of household, intimacy, gender – explored historically to understand their present importance. See SWK 454 and HIS 454.

**WMS 455 Women in American History (2 to 4 Hrs.)**

Explores the history of U.S. women beginning with

American Indians. Examines themes of women in colonial society, domesticity, suffrage, reproduction, and work. See HIS 445.

**WMS 458 Women, Health, and Healing (4 Hrs.)**

Traces women's past as healers and medical practitioners, as well as issues of women's health and medicine. Includes a multicultural emphasis and focuses primarily on the United States. See HIS 458.

**WMS 459 The Women's Movement: Past and Present (4 Hrs.)**

Examines the history and politics of the women's rights movement in the U.S. Includes the women, issues, allies and foes, and triumphs and struggles of the three waves of feminism: the first wave's 1848 "Declaration and Sentiments" at Seneca Falls, the second wave's re-emergence in the 1960s, and the contemporary third wave's global and multicultural approaches. Speculates about feminism in the 21st century.

**WMS 461 Major Women Writers (4 Hrs.)**

Novels by such major female authors as Austen, the Brontes, Eliot, Woolf, Wharton, Lessing, and Cather. See ENG 461.

 **WMS 462 Images of Women in Literature (4 Hrs.)**

*Course available online; may also be available on campus. Refer to the current course schedule for further information.*

Literary works created by women through the ages. See ENG 462.

**WMS 463 Native American Women's Literature and Culture (4 Hrs.)**

Novels, short stories, poetry, and literary and cultural criticism by Native American women writers, such as Paula Gunn Allen, Leslie Marmon Silko, Joy Harjo, and Louise Erdrich. See ENG 463.

**WMS 464 Women's Spirituality (4 Hrs.)**

Exploration of women's spirituality through novels, poetry, autobiographies, and essays by such authors as Gloria Naylor, Starhawk, Mary Daly, Audre Lorde, Judith Plaskow, and Carol Christ. Emphasis on students developing their own spiritual autobiographies. See ENG 464.

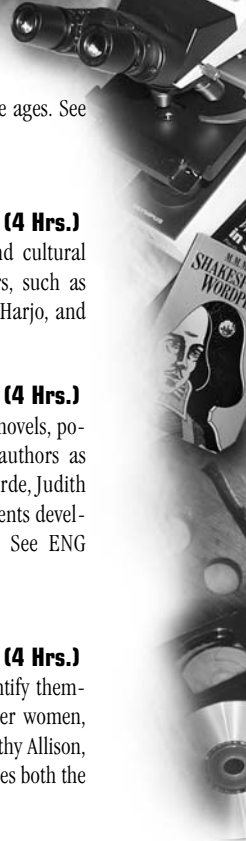
**WMS 465 Woman-centered Literature (4 Hrs.)**

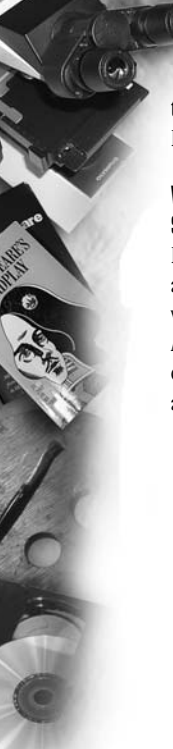
Examines works by women authors who identify themselves emotionally and/or erotically with other women, such as Radclyffe Hall, Rita Mae Brown, Dorothy Allison, Audre Lorde, and Jane Rule. Course emphasizes both the literature and its social history. See ENG 460.

 **WMS 466 Multicultural American Women's Literature (4 Hrs.)**

*Course available online; may also be available on campus. Refer to the current course schedule for further information.*

Explores the writings of women from such American cul-





tures as Asian, American Indian, Latina, and African. See ENG 466.

**WMS 471 The Politics of Women's Sexuality: Loving Women (4 Hrs.)**

Examines the nature, history, and politics of lesbianism as a sexual orientation with attention to the ways in which race, class, and age intersect with heterosexism. Areas include coming out, families, love and sexuality, community and culture, homophobia, and legal rights and politics.

**WMS 481 Women in Chinese and Japanese History (4 Hrs.)**

Exploration of the histories of women in China and Japan over the last several centuries, with special attention to their changing roles and status in the 20th century. See HIS 481.

**WMS 540 Seminar: Major Figures in American Literature (4 Hrs.)**

One or two major authors, including significant research. Students may earn credit in more than one section of

540, but they must study different figures in each section. See ENG 540.

**WMS 555 Women and Media (4 Hrs.)**

Seminar exploring the role of women in media today. Examines women as participants in the media business and as subjects of the media and the impact of both on society. See COM 555.