



Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

College of Liberal Studies

Gender is a society's ideas about what it means to be male or female. Gender works with other ideas (like race, class, sexual orientation, among others) to shape our lives. It influences how we think about relationships. It structures our decisions about work and determines how much money we are likely to make. It disrupts health diagnoses and treatment. It stigmatizes behaviors and actions. It even influences what we eat, wear, and buy. Studying how gender functions not only helps us reevaluate how we view ourselves and others, it helps us create more diverse, just, and satisfying workplaces, communities, families, institutions, policies, and systems.

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department enacts the Wisconsin Idea, that universities should produce knowledge and educate students in ways that serve real people, real communities, and real needs. To that end, both the major and the minor help students develop the knowledge, skills, and approaches they need to identify and solve problems, communicate well, and work collaboratively. Those highly-valued abilities make WGSS graduates desirable employees in a wide variety of fields, ranging from health and environment, to law, government, and politics, to business and the arts, to social justice and advocacy. Perhaps more importantly, WGSS graduates can identify what links all these disparate fields and use those connections to solve complex problems. Because understanding how gender functions is such an important skill, many WGSS students (both majors and minors) find it helpful to them as they go on to graduate school in areas such as law, public policy, psychology, sociology, history, social work, English, education, and business administration.

Undergraduate Program

Major:

- Women's Studies

Minor:

- Women's Studies

Department Features

Major and Minor: The Department offers a 33-credit major (both a B.A. and a B.S.) in Women's Studies. The 24-credit minor is open to students in all colleges. Courses within WGSS make connections across fields and are taught by 4 full-time faculty within WGSS. Courses with a focus on women, gender, or sexuality offered through other departments allow students to develop expertise in particular fields.

Campus Events

The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department sponsors or co-sponsors many programs about women and women's concerns, gender, and

sexuality. WGSS events are open to students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Outreach Program: The Self-Sufficiency Program (SSP)

This semester-long program concentrates on critical reading, writing, and thinking to prepare low-income people, often single parents, for successful college work. Classes meet one night per week and child care is provided. For more information, call the director of the SSP Program at (608) 785-8733.

Student Club

The mission of the Women's Studies Student Association is to provide students as well as the La Crosse community with advocacy for women's issues. WSSA also initiates activities for UW-L students and the La Crosse community in the area of Women's Studies.

Sample Courses

- Gender, Race, and Class in American Institutions

- Women's Diversity: Race, Class, and Culture
- Introduction to LGBT Studies
- Transnational Women's Issues
- Women in the Military
- Girls and Women in Sport
- Women and Friendship
- Women and Leadership
- History of Motherhood
- History of Childhood
- History of Feminist Thought
- Violence Against Women
- Masculinity, Femininity and Violence
- Globalization, Women, and Work
- Lesbian Studies
- History of Black Women's Activism
- Gender and Human Rights
- Women, Agriculture, and the Environment
- Women, Poverty, and Public Policy
- Women and Society
- History of Women in the Ancient World
- Gender Communication
- Romance in the Media
- Women in the U.S. Economy
- Women and Popular Culture
- Women Authors
- Advanced Study of Women's Literature
- Women's Health Issues
- Sexual Health Promotion

- Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Latin America
- Philosophy of Love, Sex and Friendship
- Feminism and Philosophy
- Advanced Topics in Philosophy (Topic: Sexual Ethics only)
- Women and Politics
- Human Sexuality
- Psychology of Women
- Changing the Culture: Women in Science
- Sociological Aspects of Work and Life
- Sociology of Gender
- Social Justice Research Methods
- Internship
- Seminar in Women's Studies

Career Opportunities

WGSS graduates work in many careers in the arts, business, education, law, health professions, social advocacy, and social work. Explore career possibilities through an Internship at:

- New Horizons Shelter and Women's Center
- Victim's Witness Office
- Men's Abuse Program
- Houston County Women's Resources
- Women's Health Center
- Women's Resource Center of Winona
- GALAXY (Gay Alliance of La Crosse Area Youth)
- Community Liaison Program
- CouleeCap (Community Action Program)
- First Call for Help
- Self-Sufficiency Program
- more!

Further Education

The major qualifies students to pursue advanced degrees in Women's Studies, Gender Studies, or Sexuality Studies, as well as a variety of related fields. The minor (or a double major) enhances qualifications for advanced degrees in many related fields.

Occupational Outlook

WGSS evaluates how cultural definitions of women and men have shaped most fields of study and most professions. It provides material and techniques to correct biases and to create more accurate and empowering models of people, culture and society. Because of its emphasis on communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving, WGSS courses and programs are valuable in a broad range of careers.

Business, Management, Personnel

- Learn how male/female relationships affect business and criminal justice environments
- Gain an understanding of federal and state equal opportunity legislation
- Explore differences in women's and men's managerial styles.

Psychology and Social Work

- Explore biases in therapeutic models
- Gain an understanding of the common concerns experienced by female clients, such as battering, rape, incest, body image, self-worth, and others
- Relate women's personal issues to the social construction of gender

Political Science, Law, Public Policy

- Learn how women have been excluded from the political process in the past and how they are working to achieve political empowerment
- Explore women's public policy issues

Education

- Become aware of sexist biases in curricular models
- Learn about classroom behaviors that limit students to stereotypical roles
- Explore teaching models, curriculum integration, and non-sexist teaching

Effective Living

WGSS courses and programs can help everyone understand how the roles of women and men have been constructed in the past. And they can help us imagine and create less limiting possibilities in a world of rapidly changing roles and expectations.

Professional Associations

National Women's Studies Association
www.nwsa.org

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