

B.A. in Women's Studies

The Women's Studies major offers students a coherent but flexible program of study examining scholarship and theory on the history, status, contributions, and experiences of women in diverse cultural communities, and on the significance of gender as a social construct and as an analytical category. The B.A. degree prepares students for positions in a wide range of fields, for example in government and in policy, research and service organizations that focus on women's issues

Students will earn a total of 39-42 credits, distributed as indicated below. Drawing from approximately fifty courses, many of which are cross-listed with other academic units, students will have the opportunity to design an emphasis within the major relevant to their special interests. A number of courses may count in more than one category. At least 30 credits must be at or above the 300 level. No course with a grade less than "C-" may be used to satisfy the major. An overall GPA of 2.0 in the major is required for graduation. Students will design their programs in consultation with a Women's Studies advisor.

I. FOUNDATION COURSES (18 credits)

WMST 200 Introduction to Women's Studies: Women and Society (3 credits)

An interdisciplinary study of the status, roles, and experiences of women in society. Sources are drawn from a variety of fields, such as literature, psychology, history, and anthropology, focusing on the writings of women. (Fulfills CORE: SB, D; GenEd: DSHS, DVUP)

OR

WMST 250 Introduction to Women's Studies: Women, Art, and Culture (3 credits)

An examination of women's creative powers as expressed in selected examples of music, film, art, drama, poetry, fiction, and other literature. Explores women's creativity in relation to families, religion, education, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and within a cultural tradition shaped by women. (Fulfills CORE: HA, D; GenEd DSHU, DVUP)

WMST 300 Feminist Reconceptualizations of Knowledge (3 credits)

An examination of how the interdisciplinary study of women and gender has generated new questions, challenged traditional methodologies, and offered insights on the ways we come to learn, know, and teach; and an exploration of the impact of feminist thinking on various disciplines. Prerequisite: WMST 200 or WMST 250; permission of the academic advisor.

WMST 350 Feminist Pedagogy (6 credits)

General application of feminist methodology to teaching and communication skills, teaching strategies, motivation, classroom dynamics, and knowledge of students' development and learning styles. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor is required.

OR

WMST 380 Feminist Analysis of the Workplace (6 credits)

An examination of the world of work from a feminist perspective through theory and experience. Designed to provide students with experiences in work situations that have social, economic, educational, and/or political impact on women's lives. Students will develop the skill to theoretically analyze their experience and practically implement feminist models in the workplace. Prerequisite: WMST 200 or WMST 250; permission of the academic advisor.

FOUNDATION COURSES (cont.)

WMST 400 Theories of Feminism (3 credits)

A study of the multiplicity of feminist theories which have been developed to explain women's positions in the family, the workplace, and society. Major feminist writings are considered in the context of their historical moment and in the context of the intellectual traditions to which they relate. Prerequisite: WMST 200 or WMST 250 or one WMST cross-listed course.

WMST 488 Senior Seminar (3 credits)

Seminar for advanced majors in women's studies or other students with appropriate preparation. Repeatable to 9 units when course content differs. Prerequisite: Permission of the academic advisor.

II. DISTRIBUTIVE COURSES (9 credits)

Students must take three credits in each of the three topical areas listed below. Courses in this category may overlap with other requirements. Some of the courses listed below have prerequisites.

AREA I: ARTS AND LITERATURE

WMST 241 Women Writers of French Expression in Translation (also FREN 241). Taught in English.

Works and ideas of 20th-century women writers of French in Canada, Africa, the Caribbean, and France.

WMST 250 Introduction to Women's Studies: Women, Art, and Culture

An examination of women's creative powers as expressed in selected examples of music, film, art, drama, poetry, fiction, and other literature. Explores women's creativity in relation to families, religion, education, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and within a cultural tradition shaped by women.

WMST 255 Reading Women Writing (also ENGL 250)

Images of women in literature by and about women.

*WMST 275 World Literature by Women (also CMLT 275)

Comparative study of selected works by women writers of several countries, exploring points of intersection and divergence in women's literary representations.

WMST 281 Women in German Literature and Society (also GERM 281)

A study of changing literary images and social roles of women from the beginning of the 19th-century to the present.

WMST 348 Literary Works by Women (ENGL 348)

The context, form, style, and meaning of literary works by women. Content for this class will vary based on selected topics for the semester (e.g., science fiction). Check current schedule of classes for current topics.

WMST 408 Literature by Women before 1800 (also ENGL 408)

WMST 444 Feminist Critical Theory (also ENGL 444)

Issues in contemporary feminist thought that have particular relevance to textual studies, such as theories of language, literature, culture, interpretation, and identity.

*WMST 448 Literature by Women of Color (also ENGL 448)

Literature by women of color in the United States, Britain, and in colonial and post-colonial countries.

WMST 458 Literature by Women after 1800 (also ENGL 458)

WMST 466 Feminist Perspectives on Women in Art (also ARTH 466)

Principal focus on European and American women artists of the 19th- and 20th-centuries, in the context of the new scholarship on women.

WMST 468 Feminist Cultural Studies

*WMST 496: African American Women Filmmakers (also THET 496)

The cinematic artistry of African American women filmmakers and the ways in which these films address the dual and inseparable roles of race and gender.

FREN 481 Femmes Fatales and the Representation of Violence in Literature, Opera, and Film. Taught in English.

The problem of violence in art with respect to women and marginal populations.

FREN 482 Gender and Ethnicity in Modern French Literature. Taught in English.

Literature by women writers of France and other French speaking areas with a focus on the relationship between gender, ethnicity, and writing.

AREA II: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

WMST 210 Women in America to 1880 (also HIST 210)

An examination of the economic, family, and political roles of colonial, slave, immigrant, and frontier women in America from the pre-industrial colonial period through the early stages of 19th-century industrialization and urbanization.

WMST 211 Women in America since 1880 (also HIST 211)

An examination of women's changing roles in working-class and middle-class families, the effects of industrialization on women's economic activities and status, and women's involvement in political and social struggles including those for women's rights, birth control, and civil rights.

WMST 212 Women in Western Europe 1750-Present (also HIST 212)

An analysis of the economic, family, and political roles of European women from 1750 to the present. The effects of industrialization on women's work and status, the demographic parameters of women's lives, and women's participation in political events from market riots to suffrage struggles.

WMST 320 Women in Classical Antiquity (also CLAS 320)

A study of women's images and realities in ancient Greek and Roman societies through an examination of literary, linguistic, historical, legal, and artistic evidence; special emphasis on women's roles in the family, views of female sexuality, and the place of women in creative art.

Readings in primary sources in translation and modern critical writings.

WMST 453 Victorian Women in England, France, & the United States (also HIST 493)

Examines the lives of middle- and upper-class women in England, France, and the United States during the Victorian era. Topics include gender roles, work, domesticity, marriage, sexuality, double standards, and women's rights.

***WMST 454 Women in Africa (also HIST 494) The place of women in African societies: the role and function of families; institutions such as marriage, birthing, and child-rearing; ritual markers in women's lives; women in the work place; women's associations; women's health issues; measures designed to control women's behavior; women and development.**

WMST 455 Women in Medieval Culture and Society (also HIST 495)

Examines medieval women's identity and cultural roles; the condition, rank, and rights of medieval women; their access to power; a study of women's writings and the constraints of social constructs upon the female authorial voice; contemporary assumptions about women.

WMST 456 Special Topics in History: Women in the Middle East* (also HIST 492)

Examines the historical and legal background of the current position and circumstances of women in a select number of Middle Eastern countries. Particular emphasis on Islamic revolutionary movements.

WMST457 Changing Perceptions of Gender Identities in the U.S., 1880-1935 (also HIST 433)

Exploring changing perceptions of gender in the U.S., 1880-1935, and the impact of those changes on the day to day lives of men and women.

***AASP 498W Black Women in United States History**

Examines the past and contemporary lives of Black women in the United States. The emphasis will be on how the intersection of gender and race influenced the experiences and attitudes of Afro-American women since the ante-bellum period, based on a critical reading of both primary and secondary sources. This course will provide students with the tools and data to more accurately examine black women's lives and to begin to separate fact from fiction.

AMST 418 Cultural Themes in America: Women and Family in American Life (Special Topic)

Historical analysis of the intersection of women and the family and developing patterns of changing structures in American society from the 17th century to the present. Examines the particular context and uniquely American characteristics of these changes.

HIST 309 Proseminar in Historical Writing: Women's History (Special topic)

Examination and discussion of major approaches to women's history, topics in women's history, and the sources for writing women's history, followed by the selection of a research topic and the writing of a major research paper by each student. Papers will be critiqued by all.

AREA III: SOCIAL AND NATURAL SCIENCES

WMST 200 Introduction to Women's Studies: Women and Society

An interdisciplinary study of the status, roles, and experiences of women in society. Sources from a variety of fields such as literature, psychology, history, and anthropology, focusing on the writings of women.

WMST 313 Women and Science (also BSCI 302))

Participation in and contribution of women to the sciences. Influence of self-images and societal expectations on women's participation; intersection of scholarship with science.

- WMST 324 Communication and Gender (also COMM 324)
- WMST 325 The Sociology of Gender (also SOCY 325)
Institutional bases of gender roles and gender inequality, cultural perspectives on gender, gender socialization, feminism, and gender-role change. Emphasis on contemporary American society.
- WMST 326 Biology of Reproduction (also BSCI 342)
The biology of the reproductive system with emphasis on mammals and, in particular, on human reproduction. Hormone actions, sperm production, ovulation, sexual differentiation, sexual behavior, contraception, pregnancy, lactation, maternal behavior, and menopause.
- WMST 336 Psychology of Women (also PSYC 336)
A study of the biology, life-span development, socialization, personality, mental health, and special issues of women.
- *WMST 360 Caribbean Women
An interdisciplinary analysis of the lives and experiences of women across the Caribbean region, through an examination of their roles in individual, national, social, and cultural formations. Special emphasis on contemporary women's issues and organizations.
- *WMST 410 Women of the African Diaspora
Explores the lives, experiences, and cultures of women of Africa and the African Diaspora: African-American, the Caribbean, and Afro-Latin American. A variety of resources and materials will be used providing a distinctive interdisciplinary perspective.
- *WMST 420 Asian American Women: The Social Construction of Gender
The intersection of gender, race, and class as it relates to Asian American women in the United States; how institutionalized cultural and social statuses of gender, race, ethnicity, and social class produce and reproduce inequality within the lives of Asian American women.
- WMST 425 Gender Roles and Social Institutions
- WMST 430 Gender Issues in Families (also FMST 430)
The development of historical, cultural, developmental, and psychosocial aspects of masculinity and femininity within the context of contemporary families, and the implications for interpersonal relations.
- WMST 436 The Legal Status of Women (also GVPT 436)
An examination of judicial interpretation and application of common, statutory, and constitutional law as these affect the status of women in American society.
- WMST 452 Women in the Media (also JOUR 452)
Participation and portrayal of women in the mass media from colonial to contemporary times.
- WMST 471 Women's Health (also HLTH 471)
The women's health movement from the perspective of consumerism and feminism. The physician-patient relationship in the gynecological and other medical settings. The gynecological exam, gynecological problems, contraception, abortion, pregnancy, breast and cervical cancer, and surgical procedures. Psychological aspects of gynecological concerns.
- *WMST 493 Jewish Women in International Perspective
Using memoirs, essays, poetry, short stories, films, music, and the visual arts, this course will interrogate what it means/has meant to define oneself as a Jewish woman across lines of difference. Focus is largely on the secular dimensions of Jewish women's lives but will also explore the implications of Jewish law and religious practices for Jewish women. Our perspective will be international, including Ashkenazi and Sephardi women.
- *WMST 494 Lesbian Communities and Differences
The meanings of lesbian communities across many lines of difference. Using lesbian communities as a starting point, we will look both back and forward in history, tracing changes and exploring the meanings of these in their social and historical contexts.
- *AASP 498 Special Topics in Black Culture: Women and Work
Examines the forces influencing the level and extent of women's labor force activities. By comparing Black women workers with other groups of working women, this course will study the effects of race and gender on the paid and unpaid work of women.
- CCJS 498 Special Topics in Criminology and Criminal Justice: Women and Crime
This course will examine the criminal justice system from the female experience and will focus on women as offenders, as victims, and as professionals who work in the criminal justice system.
- SOCY 425 Gender Roles and Social Institutions
Relationship between gender roles and the structure of one or more social institutions (e.g., the economy, the family, the political system, religion, education). The incorporation of gender roles into social institutions; perpetuation or transformation of sex roles by social institutions; how changing gender roles affect social institutions.
- SOCY 498 Special Topics in Sociology: Women in the Military

This course will analyze past, present, and future trends in women's roles in the military using relevant theory and empirical research from the fields of sociology, psychology, history, political science, and demography. A cross-national perspective is employed.

* Fulfills Women's Studies Cultural Diversity Requirement.

III. COURSES IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Students will select two courses for a minimum of 6 credits. Approved courses are noted with an * in section II, above. Courses in this category may overlap with other requirements.

IV. STUDENT-DEVELOPED EMPHASIS

Each student, with the help of the Women's Studies advisor, will design an emphasis consisting of at least three courses or nine credits. Courses in this category may overlap with other requirements. Courses will ordinarily be drawn from those approved for the major. In some instances students may secure permission from the Women's Studies advisor to include other courses.

V. ELECTIVES

Students should select their electives from the full list of courses for the major. The number of credits will vary depending on the individual student's program, but should bring the total number of credits to at least 39, with at least 30 of those at or above the 300 level.

For further information, or to sign up as a Women's Studies major, contact:

**Department of Women's Studies
2101 Woods Hall
4302 Chapel Lane
College Park, MD 20742
301.405.6877
womensstudies@umd.edu
www.wmst.umd.edu**