

**Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies**  
**University of Massachusetts**  
**Amherst, Massachusetts 01003**  
**(413) 545-1922**  
**womens-studies@wost.umass.edu**  
**www.umass.edu/wgss**

**MINOR  
REQUIREMENTS, AND  
APPLICATION**

Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies is an interdisciplinary department. The field uses an intersectional analysis which embeds gender within a complex web of interlocking social formations including gender, race/nationality/ethnicity, class and sexuality. If you are interested in a minor, make an appointment with the academic advisor. The advisor can help you find an appropriate faculty sponsor. A signed application form is required for admission to the minor. Minors appear on Spire when all coursework is complete.

**MINOR REQUIREMENTS**

1. Completed application signed by student and faculty sponsor submitted to the WGSS office.
2. 18 credits in Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies *including* these required courses: WGSS 201, and at least **one class (total)** from one of the following three categories (see next page for description of these requirements):  
*critical race feminisms*  
*transnational feminisms*  
*sexuality studies*

A list of eligible courses is published in the WGSS Course Guide each semester.

The elective credits can be earned in any of the following ways:

- Courses offered through Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at the University.
  - Courses offered in other departments or at the other colleges listed as Departmental Courses in the Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Course guide.
  - Courses listed as Component Courses in the guide count towards the minor if at least 1/3-1/2 of the work for the course is on women, gender or sexuality studies AND the student focuses their work on WGSS topics. If the paper topics offered are not adaptable to one of these topics, the student is encouraged to meet with the faculty member to devise a related paper topic. In the case of a component course, the student is responsible for documenting that the work done for the course is sufficient to grant Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies credit. *Note: If the course has exams only, it cannot be a component.*
  - Independent Work: Independent study, field work, and practicum credits related to women, gender or sexuality issues may count towards the Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies minor. A limit of 6 credits of independent study or field work may count towards the minor.
2. A cumulative average of 2.0 in the minor.
  3. We strongly suggest that there be at least one meeting between student and sponsor each semester. Be certain to keep in touch with an academic advisor to check your minor requirements.

## **Student Involvement in the Department**

The Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies Department is always open to student suggestions. The Executive Committee, the decision-making body of the program, has student representatives on it. Students are always welcome to come into the office and discuss ideas. To find out more ways to give input, contact the office.

## **WGSS Distribution Requirement Details**

The major and minor in Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at UMass approach key issues in the field of WGSS from an intersectional perspective, emphasizing the interconnections of gender, race, class, sexuality, nation, and other power relations. The following requirements are intended to ensure that WGSS majors and minors are substantively exposed to the rubrics of transnationalism, critical race studies, and sexuality studies crucial for full engagement with the field. Within WGSS at UMass, all three of these rubrics are taught intersectionally, such that race, class, gender, sexuality and other forms of difference are meaningfully included in all courses taught within these three frames.

Students may count each course toward only one distribution requirement. All distribution requirement classes are above an introductory level and focus on topics in Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies.

Courses meeting the distribution requirement are selected based on the following criteria:

### **Sexuality Studies**

Courses on LGBTQ studies, sex work, reproductive politics and the formation of sexuality as a category are available in numerous departments at UMass, and are now offered each semester in WGSS. Courses that count toward the Sexuality Studies distribution requirement include those that emphasize the areas above, as well as those that emphasize “sexuality studies” more broadly, and those that focus on queer studies, trans\* studies, and intersex studies. There is no specific geographic focus attached to this requirement.

### **Critical Race Feminisms**

Critical Race Studies initially emerged as an intervention in critical legal studies, and, as such, has had a focus on the law, liberal framings of rights, and legal reform. Critical Race Studies has also developed and promoted theories of intersectionality, which have been central to recent feminist discourse. Courses that count toward the Critical Race Feminisms requirement include those that emphasize the study of race and gender in the U.S., either by focusing on the experiences of people of color as gendered and racialized subjects, or by emphasizing questions of racialization and racial formation from a feminist perspective. Eligible courses include those that focus on historical, political, economic, literary and sociological inquiries that emphasize race and gender within the U.S.

### **Transnational Feminisms**

Courses in Transnational Feminisms destabilize “Western”- and U.S.-centric perspectives on feminist thought and politics, and emphasize non-“Western” places, people, concerns, and scholarship relevant to WGSS discourses. While courses may include topics and concerns linked to U.S. geographical sites, their theoretical and critical approaches should critique or provide an alternative to “Western”- and U.S.-centric analyses. Courses that count toward the Transnational Feminisms requirement include: courses in postcolonial feminism, diaspora studies courses that focus on gender or sexuality, or courses with either non-U.S. or non-“Western” scope that focus on gender or sexuality. These courses do not take the U.S. as their exclusive referents; they may either focus on content outside of the U.S. (i.e. by focusing on people, events, histories, literatures, politics, etc. outside of the U.S.) or on content that is diasporic (i.e. including subjects inside the U.S. positioned as part of a diaspora).

A fill-in PDF of this application is available on the WGSS website.



**WOMEN, GENDER, SEXUALITY STUDIES**  
**OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been involved with any political groups, on or off campus?

What job(s) do you have or have you had?

What career possibilities are you considering?

Additional comments:

Return to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies office.