



Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

Gonzaga's Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department is an inter- and multi-disciplinary program that employs critical feminist theories and methodologies to foster transformative understanding of the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class among other socially defined identities. Using gender as a central analytic, we examine and question systems of power, inequality, and injustice and their role in shaping lived experiences of persons, locally, nationally, and globally. The Department fosters an ethical and intellectual commitment to dismantle sexism, heterosexism, and other dimensions of intersecting oppressions such as racism and classism. Faculty empower students to imagine a more just future and equip them with the tools to collectively enact it.

THE PROGRAM

Students completing a major or minor in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGST) learn about a host of gender-based social inequalities as well as the history of feminist movements for justice. In particular, students will develop their ability to think critically, intersectionally, and transnationally about gender and power in relation to both theory and practice.

The program currently offers stand-alone and cross-listed courses in many different disciplines (Sociology, English, Philosophy, History, and many others). Faculty members trained in feminist scholarship and pedagogy teach WGST courses, and they seek to create a community of learners in which both professors and students take responsibility for the educational experience. Many courses use projects that invite students to put their knowledge to practical use solving problems, promoting social justice, lifting up the poor and vulnerable, or otherwise serving the common good.

THE MAJOR

To complete the 33-credit major or 21-credit minor, students may enroll in courses like:

- Intro to WGST
- Gender and Pop Culture
- Gender, Difference, and Power
- Feminism and Intersectionality
- Feminism and Science
- Transnational Feminisms
- Feminist Genealogies
- Feminist Political Thought
- U.S. Women's History
- Psychology of Gender
- Gender, Sexuality, and Politics



SKILLS TO BUILD A MORE JUST WORLD

WGST students learn to think critically about the most pressing social justice issues of our time. Our program prepares students to put what they learn into practice in order to become people for and with others. The skills developed in WGST courses are applicable to many careers. Gonzaga WGST graduates work in business, education, journalism, government, international development, law, public relations, social services, and research. WGST graduates have also entered graduate programs in art history, counseling, critical race and ethnic studies, literature, media studies, political science, social work, sociology, theology, and, of course, women, gender, and sexuality studies.

CAREER PATHS

Recent graduates are pursuing a multitude of interesting experiences:

- Studying overseas as a Fulbright Scholar
- Serving in the Peace Corps
- Pursuing a law degree at Georgetown University
- Working in community outreach for women's health education
- Serving on the staff of a U.S. Senator
- Volunteering with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps
- Coordinating volunteers in programs for troubled teens in the Pacific Northwest

Overall, the shared educational journey found in the WGST curriculum has inspired its graduates to fight for gender justice in a global society.

WHAT IS WGST?

At GU, WGST was founded in 1991; however, the field is 50 years old. It began as an extracurricular resistance to the lack of critical inquiry about gender, and women in particular, across the liberal arts. In those early days, faculty met with students on their own time in small reading groups, which were eventually formalized as minors, majors, and graduate degrees. Though grounded in the liberal arts disciplines, WGST has its own theories, methods, and scholarly canon. What makes WGST courses unique is their deep engagement with gender as the central analytic of the curriculum. Students in WGST courses engage directly with academic feminist theories, such as intersectionality.



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