

# Gender & Women's Studies

Course Descriptions  
Spring 2016

**Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies**  
Wagman  
GWS 207

Alfonso

This interdisciplinary course introduces students to the field of gender and women's studies. The course will enable students to understand how gender impacts their everyday lives, social institutions, and cultural practices both locally and globally. Additionally, students will examine the significance and meaning of one's gender identity in different historical periods, the history of feminist movements, and transnational perspectives on feminism. Students will also discuss how gender intersects with other identities such as socio-economic class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, geography, and generational location. Lastly, students will examine and critique cultural representations and claims about women and gender identities. *Gen Ed.*

**Section 01: Professor Jamie Schmidt**

MW 11:00-12:15

**Section 02: Professor Ann Marie**

MWF 10:00-10:50

**Special Topics: Contemporary Issues in LGBTQ Studies**  
GWS 290

This course is an eight-week introduction to recent developments in LGBTQ studies and contemporary national and transnational events, including religious activism for and against LGBTQ civil rights, portrayals of LGBTQ people and communities in literature and the media, and continued discrimination against LGBTQ people in areas such as equal access to health care, housing, and employment.

M 4:30-6:00

**Doing Feminism: Issues in Research and Practice**  
GWS 360

This course explores how feminist scholars challenge dominant theories of knowledge and methodologies employed in the social sciences and humanities. Some issues we will discuss in the course include subjectivity, intersectionality, reflexivity, definitions of sex and gender, and the place of gender, race, class, and citizenship in feminist research. Finally, we will analyze how feminist politics shape the kinds of questions we ask, the types of methods we use, and how we engage in ethical research partnerships with our informants. Class will include lecture, group activities, guest speakers, and student presentations to assist up in exploring, understanding, and practicing feminist methods used within Gender and Women's Studies. Prerequisite: GWS 207 and 350 or permission of instructor.

**Professor Sonalini Sapra**  
TR 2:00-3:15

**Independent Study**  
GWS 497

Many faculty members are willing to direct independent study projects. Students interested should speak first to the Gender and Women's Studies faculty member who will guide the project, then contact Professor Stacy Davis to formalize the proposal and ensure proper registration.

### **Internship GWS 499**

Practical off-campus experience in a Gender and Women's Studies related field at an approved site. Jointly supervised by a faculty member and a representative from the sponsoring agency. Open to junior or senior majors or minors who have taken at least two Gender and Women's Studies courses. Must be approved by Professor Davis. Graded S/U. May be repeated for up to three hours. A reflection paper appropriate to the nature of the internship will be required.

### **Topics: Sex, Money, and Power ANTH 392**

In their personal lives, many people consider it essential to separate economics and intimacy. Sex and intimacy are viewed as belonging to the private or domestic sphere while money and economy are seen as public and impersonal relations. But, from bedroom to the boardroom, money, sex, and power have long been intertwined. This course brings these realms together, focusing on exchanges between the intimate and the economic in various cultural contexts. Together, we will analyze the risks, benefits, perils, and possibilities of new (and sometimes quite old) intimate economies and economies of intimacy. And we will ask: How do practices and bodies accrue value? When are intimacies - both sexual and social - commodified? How have transnational flows complicated relationships between sex and money? How do these intersections constrain and/or empower people? And finally, who benefits from such arrangements, and who does not?

**Professor Laura Elder**  
**TR 2:00-3:15 \*pending approval**

### **Interpersonal Communication COMM 200**

This class will be an opportunity to delve into the world of examining, understanding, and rethinking relationships through feminist/gendered communicative processes. Through applied examination and practice of concepts learned in class, you will better understand the relationships of which you are a part and have an enhanced curiosity for the complex and dynamic influences of communication in them. Interpersonal Communication will inevitably explore issues of identity, culture, maintenance processes, and social influences and span relationships of family, social circles, romantic partners, and even those relationships of which we feel we are not a part. By participating in this adventure, you will learn not only important information that will enhance your academic experience; you will learn how to apply theory and the lessons learned in the classroom to real world situations while becoming an engaged contributor and participant in the diversity that exists within our communities. Through this experience, you will learn the importance of being an active agent in the world around us, starting with your myriad relationships, and feel motivated to continue your civic engagement with those both similar and different from us.

**Professor Marne Austin**  
**TR 9:30-10:45**

### **History and Criticism of Public Address COMM 302**

This course is an introduction to rhetoric, rhetorical criticism, and public address studies. We will study, in a critical and analytical way, how public communicators (journalists, politicians, activists, celebrities and other public figures) use language and images to influence society. Every day, these communicators attempt to shape and reshape the meaning of people, events, issues, and ideas in society in order to influence our perceptions and beliefs about the world. The ability to better understand and critically analyze public communication is important because of the potential impact of such widely-distributed and widely-consumed discourse. The course pays particular attention to the rhetorical acts of women, including the speeches of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century women's rights activists and the method of feminist rhetorical criticism.

**Professor Michael Kramer**  
**TR 12:30-1:45**

### **Female Beauty COMM 420**

This course will examine the cultural expectations and standards of female beauty as embodied and enacted through various discourses including: cultural, media, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Through studying the ways that female beauty is communicated through these discourses, students will come to a greater understanding of their own

**Professor Terri Russ**  
**MW 3:00-4:15**

experiences of female beauty and formulate ways to move beyond and resist the dominant norms of beauty. The material will be approached from a feminist, critical perspective with theoretical readings from communication studies, feminist theory, and cultural studies, amongst other areas. Prerequisite: Jr. status or permission of instructor.  
THEORY

**Contemporary Women's Fiction**  
**ENLT 205**

This course will explore literature written by contemporary women writers since the 1960s. Readings will range broadly in the work of American, British, and Global Anglophone authors. As we engage with some of the best literature that has been produced in the recent past, we will place these works within their historical, social, and cultural contexts and query how these authors encourage us to challenge boundaries of gender, race, and class that exist within the modern world.

**Professor Sarah Noonan**  
**MWF 9:00-9:50 \* pending approval**

**History of Sexuality in the U.S.**  
**HIST 324**

A study of how race, class, and gender come together to shape the identities of American women from Colonial times to the present. THEORY.

**Professor Jamie Schmidt Wagman**  
**TR 11:00-12:15**

**Topics: Women's History**  
**HIST 410**

This course will address subjects in women's history that do not appear in other departmental offerings.

**Professor Kelly Hamilton**  
**TR 2:00-3:15**

**History of Famous Women**  
**HUST 205**

This course examines the tradition of famous women from its origins in Roman antiquity to the present, and will pay special attention to its contribution to the feminist movement and to the writing of women's history. For many centuries, these women have been used to prove women's equality with men; until at least the twentieth century, they constituted the 'history of women.' We will look at both critics and advocates of 'women's worthies at key moments in the tradition's history.

**Professor Philip Hicks**  
**MWF 10:00-10:50**

We will also read several biographies of famous women, asking such questions as: How does this woman challenge or adhere to the gender expectations of her age? How did her society reward or punish her for doing so? How did she contribute to women's achievement? What special circumstances enabled this woman to take on such a public role? Why did contemporaries or subsequent generations judge her worthy of a place in history? How did ordinary women of her time live? Should this woman be a role model for women today?

**Philosophy of Gender**  
**PHIL 233**

In this course, we will investigate questions of gender construction and how gender construction has influenced how philosophy has been done and received historically. The course will also investigate how past and present thinkers view reality, knowledge and the good through the lens of gender identity (and the intersections of gender and other identities, including race, class and sexuality). In an effort to confront these questions, we'll do several things. We'll consider key historical texts that discuss sex and gender, paying close attention to the sex and gender based assumptions these texts make. We'll consider the way in which some key philosophical concepts (reason, for instance) have been gendered in the history of thought, and ask about the effect these gendered concepts have had on philosophical thought and experience. We'll also take seriously the critiques of feminist philosophers who call for revision of the canon to include voices of more women across history, paying attention to critiques issuing from queer theory and underrepresented feminist voices.

**Professor Megan Zwart**  
**TR 9:30-10:45 \* pending approval**

**Introduction to Feminist Philosophy**  
**PHIL 243**

**Professor Adrienne Lyles**  
**MWF 11:00-11:50**

This course is an inquiry into the meaning of gender and its philosophical implications. Questions of identity, knowledge, ethics, race, and global responsibility will be considered both from historical and contemporary perspectives. Feminism is both an intellectual commitment and a social and political movement that seeks justice for women. We will be studying feminism from a theoretical background and examine the philosophical and intellectual commitments that underlie feminist projects. The first part of the course centers around what feminist theory is. The course will then move into investigating theories of gender difference and ways of conceiving female (and male) identity. We will then examine feminist critiques of moral, social, and political philosophy. Throughout the course, we will examine how feminist philosophy and inquiry is motivated by the quest for social justice. THEORY

**Becoming Women**  
**RLST 362**

**Professor Phyllis Kaminski**  
**TR 2:00-3:15**

Does "woman" exist? What does it mean when feminist theorists say "we have to become women"? What is the connection between religion, sex, and gender? This course reflects the way student interests have evolved during the past decade, especially relating to questions of gender identity in response to socio-political debates and the impact of popularized versions of the late Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* on young Catholic women. It addresses our "commitment to women in all their diversity and reflects our conviction that women must be active agents in defining themselves and creating knowledge" (Women's Studies Program Description).

Beginning with contemporary research (*Sex and The Soul, From the Pews in the Back*), and in solidarity with worldwide communities of women, we will explore how race, ethnicity, sex/gender, class, age, figure into religious understandings. In this religious studies/women's studies class, we will learn and discuss traditional theological positions, current Catholic teaching, contentious issues affecting women within, across, and beyond Christian denominations. Why do Catholics hold certain norms for sexual behavior? How and why does AIDS trouble these norms? Can someone be gay and Catholic? How do these issues affect women's being and becoming in other Christian denominations and beyond Christianity? To that end, we will discuss the *Good Sex Project*, an interfaith, interdisciplinary exploration of sexuality and justice. We will end with your hopes (statements/ vision/action plan) about what is most needed for your generation to become the kind of women you desire. THEORY

**Sexuality/Intimacy/Relationship**  
**SW 341**

**Section 01: Professor JoAnn Burke**  
**W 3:00-5:30**

**Section 02: Professor Brandyn**

**Blosser**

**W 6:00-8:30**

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to examine human sexuality and intimacy within a lifespan, relational context. Students will address these topics through knowledge of the biological, social, spiritual, and psychological aspects of relationships, sexuality, and intimacy. We will also explore populations-at-risk—namely, those who are experiencing issues with intimacy, sexuality, and relationships. Perspectives from feminist literature will be used to strengthen the analysis. Psychosocial issues are emphasized.

**Social Stratification**  
**SOC 360**

**Professor Henry Borne**  
**TR 12:30-1:45**

Our studies together will focus on the question of social inequality. Together, we will be developing a deeper understanding about a few general questions: What are the most important scarce resources found in our society today? How are these scarce resources distributed? Why are these resources distributed the way they are in our society? How does the United States compare to other societies in terms of the distribution of scarce resources?

Given the globalization of the nations and peoples of the earth, it will be important for us to focus some of our attention on social inequality as it exists in other parts of the world. Examination of the basic dimensions of cultural, social, and economic inequality found in our society today, particularly in regard to women and racial and ethnic minorities, will however be our primary concern. We will give consideration to the nature, causes, and consequences

of social inequality, as well as to an examination and critique of social policies and programs impacting social inequality.

To help guide us through the many and complicated issues involved, we will be applying the basic principles of the *sociological perspective*. We will be using both qualitative and quantitative research data on social stratification to investigate the relationships among social inequalities, class, race, gender. We will be analyzing social stratification as both a *condition* and a *process*.



### The Gender and Women's Studies Department

The Saint Mary's College Gender and Women's Studies department encourages students to analyze and analyze women's lives and constructions and performativities of genders. The department applies an inclusive and interdisciplinary approach to the study of women, gender identities, and sexualities. It is guided by feminist activism and feminist theoretical insight into different forms of power, inequality, and privilege. Students investigate the intersectionalities of gender, race, class, sexualities, and other identity categories from historical and contemporary transnational perspectives. The Gender and Women's Studies department embodies a commitment to women in all their diversities and reflects our conviction that women must actively define themselves and create knowledge.

Students who major or minor in Gender and Women's Studies enroll both in courses housed in the program and in courses offered in other disciplines. A major or a minor supports career choices in human services, activism and advocacy, education, law and public policy, business, and other fields calling for social and historical awareness, critical thinking, and engagement with social and cultural diversity.

Faculty who teach in Gender and Women's Studies represent the departments throughout the College. They share a commitment to helping students in our women's college develop the skills to interpret and to analyze systems of oppression and ultimately to work toward a more just society.

### The Gender and Women's Studies Major

As an interdisciplinary field, Gender and Women's Studies gives students a framework within which to analyze different academic areas, subjects, and interests. The major consists of 25-28 hours, including:

Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (GWS 207)

GWS 350: Feminist Theory

GWS 360: Feminist Methods

5-6 additional courses in the following content areas: The Gendered Body; Intersectionalities of Gender, Race, Class, Sexuality; and, Transnational Perspectives on Gender

For more information, or to discuss the possibilities, feel free to approach any Gender and Women's Studies faculty member or contact Prof. Stacy Davis (ext. 4700, 164 Spes Unica, [sdavis@saintmarys.edu](mailto:sdavis@saintmarys.edu)).

### Requirements for the Gender and Women's Studies Minor

The minor consists of a minimum of 14 hours (5 courses), including:

Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (GWS 207)

One course in feminist theory (such courses are noted on this brochure with "THEORY" after the description)

Three additional courses, no more than one in any one department with the exception of Gender and Women's Studies (GWS)

For the class of 2018, the minor consists of a minimum of 14 hours (5 courses), including:

Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies (GWS 207)

Feminist Theory (GWS 207)

One course in each of the following content areas: The Gendered Body; Intersectionalities of Gender, Race, Class, Sexuality; and, Transnational Perspectives on Gender

### Why Minor or Major in Gender and Women's Studies?

Gender and Women's Studies students gain awareness of their own abilities, a keen sense of justice, and a self assurance that enables them to act reflectively in the world. Gender and Women's Studies leads students to raise questions about equity and fairness and to develop the self assurance which leads them to act constructively to improve community life. Because Gender and Women's Studies students have learned to see what is invisible to many others, they have unusually positive impacts on the societies in which they live.

### If I focus on Gender and Women's Studies in college, what can I do after college?

Gender and Women's Studies students apply their knowledge and understanding in a diversity of fields. A minor or major in Gender and Women's Studies supports career choices in human services, education, public policy, business, and other fields calling for social and historical awareness, critical thinking, and engagement with human diversity. Many graduates work for justice within society in service-oriented fields; still others apply their knowledge in the corporate world. Gender and Women's Studies minors have also entered graduate school in Law, Cultural Studies, English, Sociology, French, Philosophy, Psychology, and Theology.

