

Gender & Women's Studies

FALL 2015
COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS

Introduction to Gender and Women's Studies GWS 207

Professor Stacy Davis
MW 4:30-5:45
*pending approval

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.*

Feminist Theory GWS 350

Professor Jamie Schmidt Wagman
TR 12:30-1:45

This course teaches a broad range of feminist theoretical approaches, including black feminist thought and critical race feminism, intersectionality, standpoint theory, queer theory, and transnational feminist theory. Prerequisite: GWS 207.

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 SDMs or Gender and Women's Studies 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: Performance, Art, and Identity ART 371

Professor Tiffany Johnson Bidler
TR 5:00-8:30

This course examines the histories and theories of performance and performativity as they intersect specifically with issues of race and gender. The course is divided into three sections: history, theory, and practice. In the first section we will gain knowledge about the history of performance art from an art historical perspective. In the second section we will gain an understanding of the critical theories and methodologies that performance studies scholars, art historians, and artists have used to interpret and develop performance art

practice. In the third section we will apply our knowledge of performance art history and our understanding of performance theory to form our own analyses of 1) the performance practices of contemporary artists and 2) our own engagement with contemporary mass media. This course will require a semester-long engagement with the video game *The Sims 3* and Chantal Akerman's film *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975). When possible, a practicing performance artist or performance art scholar will be invited to class to speak about his or her work.

Public Communication
COMM 369

As a gender and women's studies course, we will be considering the numerous interconnections between gender and communication. We live our gender both through and within our communication. As gendered beings, when we communicate our gender influences how we communicate and how what we communicate is received. In addition to examining the role of gender in our communication, we will also consider how race, socioeconomic class, and sexuality work in connection with our gender to enable and constrain our communicative attempts. Through our work within a service agency specifically working with women, we will be able to come to a greater understanding of the ways that these social constructs play out in individual lives and impact identity.

Professor Terri Russ
TR 5:00-6:15

Women of Genius
ENLT 203

At the turn of the last century talented women of every description were fighting to have a voice – in politics, in society, in marriage; over their education, their bodies, and their economic destiny. How that struggle found its way into the fiction and the drama of the era (roughly 1880 to 1920) is the focus of this course. A recurring motif is the woman of natural abilities – the woman with a “genius” for this or that calling – who attempts, against steep odds, to win a public audience for her talents, whether from the lectern, the stage, the pulpit, or print.

Professor Thomas Bonnell
MWF 10:00-10:50

Postcolonial Women's Writing
ENLT 334

In this course we will examine examples of women's literature from Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean written after the end of British colonialism. These texts engage with the complicated histories of colonization and independence from which they emerge, reflecting the cultural, geo-political, religious, social, and economic contexts that inform the term “postcolonial.” Because we are focusing on women's writing, we will pay special attention to how these texts contribute to an understanding of feminism that challenges Western perceptions of what that term suggests. Therefore, throughout our readings we will consider the various ways in which empire and postcolonial nationalism gave rise to a non-Western understanding of feminism and sexuality studies.

Professor Ann Marie Alfonso
TR 12:30-1:45

Jane Austen
ENLT 417

This course offers an intensive study of Jane Austen's fiction in the context of her life and times. We will read all other major novels (with the exception of *Northanger Abbey*), working together toward four equally important goals: 1) to increase our understanding of the novel as a genre through study of the developing craft of a master novelist, 2) to develop experience in intensive study of a single author, 3) to analyze Jane Austen's approach to the particular problems and issues involved in pursuing a career as a woman writer, and 4) to understand Jane Austen's values and ideas as representative of Regency England, as well as to consider the reasons for her continuing popularity. Although our main emphasis will be on literature we will also look at some film versions of Austen novels and discuss how they adapt her fiction to contemporary popular culture and to film as a medium.

Professor Laura Haigwood
MW 3:00-4:15

The Quest for Human Rights
JUST/POSC 301

This course will provide the students with an overview of the historical, theoretical and practical underpinnings that have shaped and continue to shape the development of human rights in both domestic and international arenas. We will discuss the origin of the human rights concept and how this idea has been crafted into international declarations, domestic law, and policies that enforce and monitor the human rights record of global, national and local communities. The class will also explore specific human rights issues concerning women, children, immigrants, refugees, the environment, and other topics.

Professor Amy Cavender
TR 9:30-10:45

Psychology of Adult Development
PSYC 302

Professor Rebecca Stoddart
MW 4:30-5:45

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the psychological development of adulthood, with a primary focus on personality, gender roles, and social development from late adolescence through mature adulthood/aging. One goal is to explore the psychological theories of adult development as they address the stages and processes contributing to psychological growth across the life cycle. A second goal is to examine commonalities and differences in the developmental life cycle of men and women as well as cultural meanings given to them. We will explore the psychological and/or social basis for the differences, as well as the sociocultural (e.g. ethnicity/race/social class/sexual orientation) effects on men's and women's development. A third and important women's studies goal is for you to develop a more informed awareness of the personal growth issues you are experiencing now and those that you will likely experience in the years to come.

We will use Erikson's psychosocial theory as the organizing structure for this course, and include Jungian theory as we explore the psychological changes and issues that emerge in mid-life. We will also examine critiques of the "Stage and Change theories of Adult Development," particularly in the context of women's lives. Beginning with an overview of central issues in adult development, we will proceed chronologically through the major life stages. Our study of theories of adult development will be enhanced by reading the personal journeys described by the authors of the books we're reading, and by keeping a journal of your responses to and reflections on the readings and class discussions. We will also use the Ramsay and Sweet book of exercises to explore other means of self-reflection.

Stereotyping and Prejudice
PSYC 438

Professor Bettina Spencer
TR 12:30-1:45

This course will examine issues of stereotyping and prejudice from a social psychological perspective. Using a mix of quantitative journal articles, novels, and films, students will identify and explore why people stereotype, how prejudices form, the effects of prejudice, how to combat stereotyping, and how members of disadvantaged groups can psychologically protect themselves against the negative effects of stigma. Students should have an understanding of social psychology or have taken a course in research methods. Prerequisite: PSYC 337 or permission of the instructor.

Sexuality/Intimacy/Relationship
SW 341

Section 01: Professor JoAnn Burke
T 3:30-6:00
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

Sociology of Families
SOC 257

Professor Mary Ann Kanieski
TR 9:30-10:45 & 11:00-12:15

In this course, we will consider the various forms of families and their relationships to their social environments. For example, we will examine historical trends, economic pressures, and the impact of public policies. We will also consider life within families as we examine gender, childrearing, household labor, divorce, and family violence. Finally, we will always examine the ways in which family life varies because of gender, cultural differences, class position, race, and sexualities.

The Department of Gender and Women's Studies

The Saint Mary's College department of Gender and Women's Studies encourages students to analyze and analyze women's lives and constructions and performativities of genders. The program 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 minor or major 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

Beginning in 2014-15, students may choose to major in Gender and Women's Studies. 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).

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)

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.

