

WOMEN'S STUDIES, MINOR

Requirements for a minor may be completed at any campus location offering the specified courses for the minor. Students may not change from a campus that offers their major to a campus that does not offer their major for the purpose of completing a minor.

Program Description

This interdisciplinary minor is designed to develop a broad understanding of the study of women and women's perspectives in all areas of academic scholarship. The primary focus is on feminist analyses of women's lives, women's social, cultural, and scientific contributions, and the structure of sex/gender systems. The interdisciplinary and inclusive nature of the field is reflected in a curriculum that includes courses cross-listed with a wide variety of departments, courses that deal with aspects of women's lives throughout history, and courses that recognize the diversities of culture, race, religion, ethnicity, age, disability, and sexual orientation. The Women's Studies minor emphasizes the development of critical and analytical skills, creative approaches to problem solving, and the ability to articulate productive alternatives.

Women's Studies minors have a definite career advantage, and can be successful in a wide variety of career paths. Some of these include:

- legal advocacy
- counseling
- journalism
- public relations
- management
- nonprofit administration
- teaching
- medicine
- politics
- art

In addition, many alumnae/i are currently studying in professional, law, or graduate schools.

What is Women's Studies?

Women's Studies explores the intersection of identity, social power, and privilege. Concerned with how societies "construct" inequality and social bias, Women's Studies analyzes every aspect of our lives through a critical lens, without filtering out impacts of socio-political inequalities, and lived experiences of women and their families. With cross-listed courses in Anthropology, Communications, Government, History, Psychology, Sociology, Women's Health and more fields, students can approach Women's Studies from almost any direction. Alongside the U.S. history of women and feminist movement, "transnational" feminism offers a wider comparative study of: constructions of gender across cultures; the legal and political standing of women and marginalized populations; the nature and impacts of gender-based violence, mass migration, militarization, climate change, food insecurity and other contemporary challenges on the physical, social and political wellbeing of women around the globe.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You want to translate your curiosities, experiences, passions and interests into actionable and meaningful work.

- You seek out inclusive environments, with persons of different backgrounds, cultures, and races to understand their points of view.
- You are passionate about gender equity, human rights, and social justice.
- You want to explore how gender and sexuality play a role in culture, the arts, literature, health, politics, the sciences, law, and education.
- You see yourself as a change agent in this world!

Program Requirements

Requirement	Credits
Requirements for the Minor	18

Requirements for the Minor

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the minor, as specified by Senate Policy 59-10 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/59-00-minors-and-certificates/#59-10>). In addition, at least six credits of the minor must be unique from the prescribed courses required by a student's major(s).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
WMNST 301		3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
WMNST 100	Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies	3
	or WMNST 106 Representing Women and Gender in Literature, Art and Popular Cultures	
Supporting Courses and Related Areas		
<i>Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 12 credits in Women's Studies or from the program-approved list; at least 6 credits must be at the 400-level and 3 credits from each of the following categories:		12
Arts or humanities		
Natural or social sciences		
Focusing on non-Western women or on women of color in the United States		

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

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Career Paths

Employers today value effective communication, analytical thinking, and teamwork. With its emphasis on how gender, sexuality, race and other forms of diversity impact the experiences of every individual, this curriculum trains its minors to recognize the impacts of bias and unequal social power in the social, cultural and political arenas. Graduates enter their post-graduate world sensitive to diverse perspectives that can either facilitate or impede team building, problem solving, and negotiation. Women's Studies graduates—no matter where their career paths lead—are committed to the kind of institutional and social change that values all voices, and supports social justice.

Careers

Women's Studies graduates from Penn State work in a wide variety of professions and industries. You will find us in the legal profession (one alumna runs her own legal firm, serving lower-income clients and gender-based discrimination cases). Others work in communications, marketing and advertising, business, banking and human resources. Activist students find their way into non-profits, advocacy groups, government, human development, journalism and communications. Women's health is a dynamic field—medical care, nursing and research positions are out there, as well as health administration. Teaching attracts many of our graduates.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

The scholarly field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies prepares students to study some of the most complex challenges in a world where gender, race, class, sexuality and power are always intertwined. As an interdisciplinary field, WGSS spans the arts and sciences, the humanities, and policy fields and provides applicable training for students seeking to continue their studies. Our scholars gain experience as researchers and teachers with the innovative tools to prepare them as leaders across the public, private and educational sectors.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://wgss.la.psu.edu/graduate/>)

Contact

University Park

DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES
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<https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/womens-gender-sexuality-studies>
(<https://altoona.psu.edu/academics/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)

Berks

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<https://www.brandywine.psu.edu/academics/minors/womens-gender-sexuality-studies> (<https://www.brandywine.psu.edu/academics/minors/womens-gender-sexuality-studies/>)

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