

# WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

<b>Graduate Program Head</b>	Melissa Wright
<b>Program Code</b>	WGSS
<b>Campus(es)</b>	University Park
<b>Degrees Conferred</b>	Dual-Title
<b>The Graduate Faculty</b>	View ( <a href="https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&amp;prog=WGSS">https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&amp;prog=WGSS</a> )

Students can earn a dual-title master's degree (M.A./ M.S.) or a dual-title Ph.D. in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. All dual-title degrees must be paired and completed simultaneously with a graduate degree in one of our partner programs: Art Education, Communication Arts and Sciences, Comparative Literature, Curriculum and Instruction, English, French and Francophone Studies, Geography, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, and Rural Sociology. For students outside of these twelve degree programs, we offer a graduate minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Our dual-title master's and Ph.D. degrees provide students conceptual, methodological and pedagogical training in the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Our graduate program embraces intersectional and transnational feminist approaches to knowledge production, pedagogy, and community engagement. Faculty and graduate students in WGSS use interdisciplinary frameworks to research questions that span the arts, humanities, and the social sciences. Because this degree is combined with a master's or Ph.D. from one of our partner departments, students are well-prepared to produce cutting-edge, interdisciplinary scholarship; to teach across both disciplines; and to excel in a career in either field.

## Admission Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-title-graduate-degree-programs/>).

Students will be considered for admission to the master's or Ph.D. dual-title programs by the WGSS graduate admissions committee. Applicants can apply to the dual-title program when they first apply for graduate study at Penn State, and those applications will be considered on the timetable of the partner department (after the partner program has admitted a student into their degree program they must forward the application to the dual-title admissions committee for consideration). This group of applicants can apply with the same application materials as provided to the partner program and Graduate School, although it is critical that their statement of purpose discusses how their research and professional goals reflect an interest in interdisciplinary feminist research. Also, to be considered for admission into a dual-title program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies these students should have a junior/senior cumulative average of at least 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) and appropriate course work in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies or related fields.

Current Penn State graduate students, who are already pursuing a graduate degree in one of our partner programs but have not yet taken their qualifying exams, can also apply for admission into the dual-title

Ph.D. degree in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. The deadlines for current graduate students to be considered for admission are October 15<sup>th</sup> or February 15<sup>th</sup> each academic year. These internal applicants will provide additional material beyond their original application for graduate study at Penn State; they will include Penn State graduate transcripts, a statement of purpose that addresses the ways in which their research and professional goals reflect an interest in interdisciplinary and feminist research, and a letter of recommendation from a member of the WGSS graduate faculty.

Doctoral students must be admitted into the dual-title degree program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies prior to taking the qualifying examination in their primary graduate program.

## Degree Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-title-graduate-degree-programs/>).

To qualify for a dual-title degree, students must satisfy the requirements of the primary graduate program in which they are enrolled. In addition, they must satisfy the degree requirements for the dual-title in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies listed below.

Candidates for the dual-title M.A./M.S. degree must complete twelve credits of graduate coursework and write a thesis or scholarly paper that centrally engages the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies.

### Degree Requirements for the Dual-Title Master's Degree

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b>		
WMNST 502	Global Perspectives on Feminism	3
WMNST 507	Feminist Theory	3
WMNST 509	Feminist Pedagogies	3
	or WMNST 508 Feminist Methodology	
3 additional credits of graduate coursework will be completed with prior consultation and approval of the Director of Graduate Studies in WGSS		3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>12</b>

Candidates for dual-title M.A./M.S. degree in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies must have at least one member of the WGSS Graduate Faculty on their master's advising committee.

### Degree Requirements for the Dual-Title Ph.D.

To qualify for a dual-title degree, students must satisfy the requirements of the primary graduate program in which they are enrolled. In addition, they must satisfy the degree requirements for the dual-title in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies listed below.

The dual-title Ph.D. requires eighteen credits of graduate coursework and a dissertation that centrally engages the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Courses</b>		
WMNST 502	Global Perspectives on Feminism	3
WMNST 507	Feminist Theory	3
WMNST 508	Feminist Methodology	3

### or WMNST 509 Feminist Pedagogies

9 additional credits of elective graduate coursework will be completed with prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies in WGSS. No more than three credits counting toward elective coursework can be completed at the 400-level, and at least one of the elective courses will be taken in a department other than the student's major degree program.

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Total Credits 18

### Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination committee for the dual-title Ph.D. degree must include two Graduate Faculty members from the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. There will be a single qualifying examination, containing elements of both the primary graduate degree program and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

### Doctoral Committee Composition

In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for doctoral committees (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/doctoral-dissertation-committee-formation/>), all candidates for the Dual-title Ph.D. in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies must have at least two members of the Graduate Faculty of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies on their advising committee. One of these members must serve as chair or co-chair of the doctoral committee, as reflected in Graduate Council requirements for all dual-title Ph.D. programs. In addition, we strongly encourage that at least one of these WGSS-affiliated members have their tenure home outside of the student's partner discipline.

### Comprehensive Exams

Dual-title Ph.D. students take a combined comprehensive exam that integrates questions from both disciplines. The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies-affiliated faculty members on the student's doctoral committee are responsible for administering the portion of the student's comprehensive exam designed to evaluate the following areas: feminist theory, feminist methodology, global feminism, and feminist studies in the student's partner discipline.

### Doctoral Dissertation And Defense

A dissertation on a women's, gender, and sexuality studies topic is required of students in the dual-title degree program. The women's, gender, and sexuality studies-related topic of the dissertation will be approved by the student's committee. Upon researching, writing, and completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense). The dissertation must be accepted by the doctoral committee, the head of both graduate programs, and the Graduate School.

### Formal Meetings

Once appointed, students must include their WGSS-affiliated advisers in all formal meetings required by their partner program, such as annual evaluation meetings, qualifying exams, proposal defense, etc. The nature and timing of these meetings vary according to the partner discipline's graduate requirements and program practices.

## Minor

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements for minors in Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>) and GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>).

An interdisciplinary graduate minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is available. A student seeking a minor does not have to pass through an admissions process, and a minor can be completed by any student who is simultaneously completing any graduate degree at Penn State.

### Master's Minor

Master's Minor Requirements: To earn a master's-level graduate minor students are required to take 9 credits of course work in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Six of these credits include WMNST 502 Global Perspectives on Feminism (3 cr.) and WMNST 507 Feminist Theory (3 cr.). The additional three credits must be chosen in consultation with and pre-approval from the Director of Graduate Studies in WGSS.

### Doctoral Minor

To earn a doctoral-level minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies students are required to complete 15 credits of graduate course work. Nine of these credits must include core theory: WMNST 502 Global Perspectives on Feminism (3 cr.), WMNST 507 Feminist Theory (3 cr.), and either WMNST 509 Feminist Pedagogies (3 cr.) or WMNST 508 Feminist Methodology (3 cr.). Students also must complete 6 additional credits of Women's Studies course work (at least 3 of which must be at the 500 level); these courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies of WGSS.

Official requests to add the minor to a doctoral student's academic record must be submitted to Graduate Enrollment Services prior to establishment of the doctoral committee and prior to scheduling the comprehensive examination. At least one Graduate Faculty member from the minor field must serve on the candidate's doctoral committee.

## Student Aid

Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding/>) section of The Graduate School's website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-901-graduate-assistants/>) set by The Graduate School.

Dual-title students in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies receive most of their funding through their partner discipline. The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department offers a limited number of one-year teaching assistantships that dual-title students can apply for in January for the following academic year. These assistantships provide a mechanism of funding and critical professional experience for students training for positions in the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies.

The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies provides several awards to dual-title students to support their research efforts and recognize their accomplishments in teaching and research. These include: the Sara Woods Outstanding Graduate Student Award, the Sara Woods Outstanding Student Teaching Award, and the Laura Richardson Whitaker Memorial Graduate Award.

## Courses

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Women's Studies (WMNST) Course List (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/wmnst/>)

## Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate deep conceptual and historical understanding of intersectional feminist theory and methods.
2. Apply current feminist literature from their partner discipline to their own research agenda.
3. Comprehend the conceptual and practical dimensions of feminist pedagogy.
4. Formulate and execute an independent research project that significantly furthers knowledge and theory within interdisciplinary feminist scholarship.
5. Communicate effectively conceptual and methodological arguments in both written and oral formats to interdisciplinary audiences.
6. Exhibit a commitment to professional standards and ethics in teaching, research, and service.

## Contact

<b>Campus</b>	University Park
<b>Graduate Program Head</b>	Melissa Wright
<b>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)</b>	Jennifer Ann Wagner Lawlor
<b>Program Contact</b>	Jamie Lynne Whitehead 133 Willard Building University Park PA 16802 jle1@psu.edu (814) 867-3549
<b>Program Website</b>	View ( <a href="http://womenstudies.psu.edu/">http://womenstudies.psu.edu/</a> )