

WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The undergraduate program in the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the Pennsylvania State University offers a broad, interdisciplinary exploration of gender and sexuality as critical to understanding the human experience. We are committed to examining how the categories of sex, gender, and sexuality are historically informed by intersecting differences such as race, class, disability, ethnicity, and global positioning. We promote feminist engagement and research at all stages of the undergraduate curriculum and challenge the stability of categories such as "woman," "man," "female," or "male," providing students with the tools to assess identity otherwise. The interdisciplinary and expansive nature of the field is reflected in a curricular structure that includes courses cross-listed with a wide variety of departments, courses in which students develop critical, analytical, and creative skills by studying topics including women's health, queer and trans histories and theories, gender and race, and global feminisms, among others. Our teaching strategies are student-centered, politically contextualized, and oriented towards social change.

Most Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies faculty hold joint appointments in various departments across Penn State, including African American Studies, African Studies, Applied Linguistics, Asian Studies, Communication Arts and Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction, English, French and Francophone Studies, Geography, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, and Telecommunications. Our graduates receive a true, interdisciplinary liberal arts education and are well-equipped for various types of positions. Recent graduates have entered the non-profit sector, worked for large-scale corporations, attended graduate, law, or medical school, worked as teachers and principals, and become writers, poets, and artists.

What is Women's, Gender, and sexuality Studies?

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies explores the intersection of identity, social power, and privilege. Concerned with how societies "construct" inequality and social bias, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality 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, Gender, and Sexuality 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!