

WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES (MA)

The MA in Women's and Gender Studies offers a cutting edge curriculum that focuses on the interconnectedness of local, global, and transnational feminist theories, methodologies, research, public policies, and social movements; attends to interlocking systems of oppression and privilege—gender, race, sexuality, class, nation—to address issues of power, resistance, and social transformation; connects feminist theories to activism and social justice; and engages communities through research, advocacy, and service.

Women's Studies and Gender Studies are complementary interdisciplinary fields whose research, scholarship, and creative activities examine women's lives, conditions, and contributions within their historical, social, cultural, national, and transnational contexts and explore how gender is constructed and negotiated within and across societies. Women's and men's identities and experiences are examined through the constructs of gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ability, culture, religion, nation etc. within broader historical, social, and global contexts, such as colonialism and globalization, among others.

Through feminist and gender-based theories and methodologies, the Department of Women's and Gender Studies offers critical analyses, reflections, and contributions to knowledge regarding interlocking systems of oppression and privilege, thereby addressing issues of power, resistance and social transformation. In addition, the emphasis on critical theory and analysis allows for work that interrogates feminist discourses as well as those of other disciplines in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. By crossing the boundaries of traditional fields of study, the department seeks to create new, coherent understandings of human experiences. For more information, contact Dr. Laila Farah, Graduate Director.

The MA in Women's and Gender Studies requires completion of 48 credit hours. All Core, and many Elective courses, will be offered during the evening. The program requires six Core courses, five Elective courses organized around a focus tailored to the individual student's needs, and a Capstone consisting of one course Thesis Option, a one course Practical or Creative Project Option, or a one-course Portfolio option.

Course offerings are scheduled so that students will ordinarily complete the program in two years.

The MA in Women's and Gender Studies may also be expanded to include select graduate certificate programs covering particular areas of interest. Students participating in a combined MA/certificate program should consult with their academic advisor to determine what coursework might count toward both programs. A separate application process for the certificate is required. Students who are interested in any of the following combination programs should contact the Graduate Student Services Office for additional information.

- Women's and Gender Studies + Digital Humanities Certificate
- Women's and Gender Studies + Global Health Certificate
- Women's and Gender Studies + Public Health Certificate
- Women's and Gender Studies + Social Research Certificate
- Women's and Gender Studies + Critical Ethnic Studies

Program requirements differ based on the type of final project.

For the Thesis, Practical Project, and Creative Project options:

Program Requirements	Quarter Hours
Core Requirements	20
Capstone Requirements	12
Elective Requirements	16
Total hours required	48

For the Portfolio Option:

Program Requirements	Quarter Hours
Core Requirements	20
Capstone Requirements	8
Elective Requirements	20
Total hours required	48

Learning Outcomes

- Students can identify the experiences of women within multiple local, national, and transnational contexts.
- Students can compare various historically situated theoretical frameworks central to the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies.
- Students can articulate the relationship between social and historical constructions of gender and various theoretical frameworks central to the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies.
- Students can analyze gender issues and/or women's experiences in terms of intersectional identities and interlocking systems of power, privilege, and/or oppression.
- Students can utilize appropriate interdisciplinary methodologies which inform their own scholarship and/or creative work in the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies.
- Students can analyze issues informed by the integral relationship of scholarship and activism, paying particular attention to issues of social justice and/or social transformation.
- Students can construct knowledge informed by socially responsible ethical frameworks relevant to the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies.

Degree Requirements

Course Requirements

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
CORE REQUIREMENTS		
WGS 415	FEMINIST GENEALOGIES IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES (Offered Autumn quarter, Take year one)	4
WGS 465	GLOBALIZATION, TRANSNATIONALISM, AND GENDER (Offered Winter quarter, Take year one)	4
WGS 485	WOMEN, GENDER, AGENCY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE (Offered Spring quarter, Take year one)	4
WGS 491	INTERDISCIPLINARY METHODS AND FEMINIST INQUIRY (Offered Autumn quarter, Take year two)	4

WGS 493	FINAL PROJECT INDEPENDENT RESEARCH (Offered Spring quarter, Take year two)	4
Select ONE of the following Theories courses from this list: WGS 400, WGS 414, WGS 472, WGS 475, WGS 488, WGS 490.		4
Select 6 additional WGS electives or a course offered by another department that has been approved for credit toward the MA in Women's and Gender Studies for a total of 24 credit hours. One elective must be the practicum, either WGS 452 or WGS 492		24
Total credit hours		48

Elective courses will be chosen by the student in conjunction with a faculty advisor in order to tailor a coherent program of study to the individual student's particular academic and/or professional objectives while ensuring that the student sustains a strong interdisciplinary focus at the graduate level. Elective courses may be offered by Women's and Gender Studies or by other departments/programs at DePaul, provided that such courses meet the criteria for inclusion within the Women's and Gender Studies curriculum (with permission).

Capstone/Final Project Requirements

All students must complete an MA Final Project, selecting one of the following options:

Portfolio

The Portfolio Final Project Option requires that the student conduct a comprehensive analysis of their learning while a graduate student in WGS. The student must prepare and submit (1) a collection of at least four to five seminar papers, practical or creative projects, and/or other research products that are the outcomes of core and elective courses; and (2) a Portfolio Essay (minimum 18-20 pages) that offers a reflective and critical analysis of how the papers/projects reflect the students intellectual, creative, and analytical development over the course of their graduate studies.

Students who select the Portfolio Option will complete, in addition to required Core Courses in the MA Program, a six-course elective focus plus one course of WGS 493 – during which they will write the Portfolio Essay. They will also be required to present and defend the portfolio project to the Chair of their Final Project and one additional faculty member, one of whom must be appointed in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at DePaul. The student is also required to present their final project to a public audience at a WGS Graduate Student Final Project Presentation event.

Practical Project

The Practical Project Option requires that the student plan, develop, and defend a practical project that is grounded in interdisciplinary scholarship, feminist and/or gender theories, and that has a direct and practical application to community service, advocacy, and/or education. Practical projects take a variety of forms; for instance, it could be a participatory action research project with an organization, or a curriculum to be taught in community-based or educational setting, or a public policy or human rights related educational or advocacy project, or any project created for implementation with a broader community. In general, the MA Practical Project in WGS consists of the project itself (e.g., the curriculum, the participatory action research report) and a Framing Paper (minimum 18-20 pages) in which you frame the mission, goals, methods, components, and expected outcomes of the project you have undertaken.

Students who select the Practical Project option will complete, in addition to required Core Courses in the MA Program, two courses of WGS 493. They will also be required to present and defend the Practical Project to an MA Final Project Committee. The student is also required to present their final project to a public audience at a WGS Graduate Student Final Project Presentation event.

Creative Project

The Creative Project Option requires students to create an artistic and/or literary project that gives voice to issues or questions in Women's and Gender Studies. It should be informed by feminist theory and scholarship, and it should address a significant theme or question within the field.

A Creative Project may be a play, an art exhibit, a memoir, a novel, a collection of short stories, a collection of non-fiction essays, a mixed-media work, a dance or musical performance, a film, a website—to name just a few of the multiple possibilities open to students choosing this option. In general, the MA Creative Project in WGS consists of the creative project itself and a Creative Project Framing Paper (minimum 18-20 pages) in which you describe and frame the creative project.

Students who select the Creative Project Option will complete, in addition to the required Core Courses in the MA Program, two courses of WGS 493.

Thesis

The Thesis Option requires that the student plan, execute, and defend an independent and original analytical research project that makes a contribution to current scholarship in the field of women's and gender studies and related subfields. The thesis should show accomplishment in methods of research, critical judgment, and, if appropriate, praxis that characterizes feminist research. Thesis research must be grounded in interdisciplinary scholarship as well as feminist and/or gender theories, and must reflect considerable engagement with relevant literature and methodology in the field. The thesis consists of approximately 35-50 pages of text with a substantial bibliography.

Students who select the Thesis option will complete, in addition to required Core Courses in the MA Program, two courses of WGS 493 focused on researching and writing the thesis. You are required to present and defend the thesis to an MA Final Project Committee. The student is also required to present their final project to a public audience at a WGS Graduate Student Final Project Presentation event.