

WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES, MA

Effective Spring 2026, admission to the Women's and Gender Studies, MA program is suspended.

The MA in Women's and Gender Studies is designed for students who intend to pursue additional academic degrees and students who seek graduate credentials to further their career goals. The degree combines advanced Women's and Gender Studies courses in feminist theory, research methods, global feminisms, and selected topics with graduate-level courses in many disciplines. Over forty faculty members at UWM are Women's and Gender Studies affiliates and offer graduate courses that are cross-listed with Women's and Gender Studies.

Students completing an MA in Women's and Gender Studies will:

- Gain an understanding of Women's and Gender Studies as an interdisciplinary field of study and research.
- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of feminist theory and research methods.
- Develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to analyze competing perspectives and integrate various bodies of knowledge across academic boundaries, paying particular attention to gender-based assumptions and their consequences on individuals, social and cultural groups, and institutions.
- Demonstrate an awareness of women's diverse experiences based on factors such as age, race, sexuality, gender identity, class, religion, and ability status.
- Acquire the background necessary for entry into PhD programs in Women's and Gender Studies. The MA also prepares students for further graduate studies in many fields of the humanities, social sciences or professions, as well as career fields that require an advanced degree.

Admission Requirements

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Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

The Women's and Gender Studies MA Program accepts fall admission only.

Admission

In addition to satisfying Graduate School requirements (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/>) for admission, applicants must apply online via the UWM Graduate School Admission Application. Additionally, the following materials must be submitted to be considered for admission:

- Official or unofficial transcripts for all work done at higher education/post-secondary institutions
- Three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's academic or professional work

- A sample of the applicant's written work that demonstrates the applicant's critical thinking, research, and writing skills
- A letter of intent (reason statement) explaining the applicant's reasons for graduate study

GRE (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre>) scores are not required for application to the WGS MA Program. However, UWM may require GRE scores for fellowships or awards.

Applicants may be admitted with course deficiencies provided that the deficiencies amount to no more than two courses. Students are expected to satisfy deficiency requirements within three enrolled semesters. The deficiencies are monitored by the Graduate School and the program. No course credits earned in making up deficiencies may be counted toward the degree.

Financial Aid

Women's and Gender Studies offers a graduate teaching assistantship. Women's and Gender Studies also has two need-based scholarships for which graduate students are eligible. Scholarship decisions are made each spring. Contact the program for applications.

The UWM Graduate School offers the AOP (Advanced Opportunity Program) and Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowships (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/types-of-funding/#fellowships>).

Advising

Graduate advising is the responsibility of the Women's and Gender Studies Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who provides initial advising for students until they choose an advisor.

Credits and Courses

To earn an MA in Women's and Gender Studies, students must complete 30 credits. Fifteen credits are in required Women's and Gender Studies courses (15 with thesis option):

Code	Title	Credits
Required		
WGS 700	Feminist Issues and Scholarship	3
WGS 701	Feminisms in Global Context	3
WGS 710	Advanced Feminist Theory	3
WGS 711	Feminist Epistemologies and Research Practices	3
WGS 740	Advanced Queer Theory	3
Select one G or U/G WGS course ¹		3
Electives		
Select 12 credits in graduate-level courses in consultation with the WGS Director of Graduate Studies.		12
Total Credits		30

¹ Excluding WGS 497, WGS 700, WGS 990, and WGS 999.

No more than six credits may be in undergraduate/graduate (U/G) courses, and no more than six transfer credits may apply. Students may not count more than three credits of WGS 999 toward the degree.

Electives

Code	Title	Credits
Approved Electives outside of WGS		
AFRIC 565G	Topics in African & African Diaspora Studies: (Topic: "Black Women Writers")	3
AFRIC 700	Foundations and Theories in African & African Diaspora Studies	3
AFRIC 800	Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods in African & African Diaspora Studies	3
ANTHRO 641G	Seminar in Anthropology: (Topics: "Lives of American Indian Women", "Women and Development")	3
ANTHRO 942	Seminar in Prehistory and Archaeology: (Topic: "Archaeology of Gender")	3
COMMUN 651	Current Topics in Rhetorical/Public Communication: (Topic: "The Rhetoric of Women's Rights in the US")	3
COMMUN 802	Marital and Family Communication	3
COMMUN 860	Seminar: Issues in Communication: (Topic: "Rhetoric of Marriage and Family")	3
COMMUN 874	Rhetoric of Women's Rights in the US	3
CRM JST 424G	Sex Crimes, Human Trafficking, and the Internet	3
CRM JST 970	Readings in Criminal Justice Research: (Topic: "Women and Criminal Justice")	3
ENGLISH 463G	Writers in African-American Literature: (Topic: "Toni Morrison and Gloria Naylor")	3
ENGLISH 465G	Women Writers: (All Topics)	3
ENGLISH 504G	Studies in Literature, 1660-1800: (Topic: "Sex and Enlightenment")	3
ENGLISH 517G	Studies in African-American Literature: (Topics: "Black Women in Fiction and Film", "Images of Black Women in Fiction and Film")	3
ENGLISH 547G	Studies in Theory and Criticism:	3
ENGLISH 622G	Seminar in Irish Literature:	3
ENGLISH 623G	Seminar in American Literature: (Topic: "American Women Regionalists")	3
ENGLISH 625G	Seminar in Literary History: (Topic: "Major Early Women Writers")	3
ENGLISH 628G	Seminar in Literature by Women: (All Titles)	3
ENGLISH 629G	Seminar in Literature and Sexuality: (All Titles)	3
ENGLISH 631G	Seminar in African-American Literature: (Topic: "Images of Black Women in African-American Fiction and Films")	3
ENGLISH 633G	Seminar in Rhetoric and Professional Writing: (Topic: "Intergenerational Feminisms")	3
ENGLISH 685	Honors Seminar: (Topics: "Chinese American Women Writers", "Romance Plot in Fiction by British Women, 1800-2000")	3
ENGLISH 690	Seminar in Contemporary Cinema and Media: (Topic: Global Women Directors)	3
ENGLISH 771	Literature of the English Renaissance: (Topic: "Early Modern Women Writers")	3
ENGLISH 776	Women Writers: (Topics: "Gender, Anger and Revenge", "Early Women Writers", "Greatest Hits")	3
ENGLISH 780	African American Literature: (Topic: "Sex and Sexuality")	3
ENGLISH 783	World Literature in English: (Topic: "Texts and Concepts")	3
ENGLISH 784	Topics in Transnational Literature (Topic: "Transnational Fiction: (Un)Settling & Gender")	3
ENGLISH 812	Seminar in Theories of Composition and Rhetoric: (Topic: "Feminist Rhetorics")	3
ENGLISH 820	Seminar in Advanced Topics in Literary Criticism and Research: (Topic: "Feminist Theory and Criticism")	1-3
ENGLISH 843	Seminar in Renaissance Prose and Poetry: (Topic: "Women Writers")	3
ENGLISH 872	Seminar in Women Writers: (All Topics)	3
ENGLISH 875	Seminar in Modern Literature: (Topics: "Becoming Modern - Gendered Narratives", "Virginia Woolf")	3
ENGLISH 876	Seminar in Media Studies: (Topics: "Family Photography", "Queer Cinema and Television")	3
ENGLISH 878	Seminar in Feminist Critical Theory: (All Topics)	3
ENGLISH 882	Seminar in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: (Topic: "American Women Writers and the Sentimental")	3
ENGLISH 883	Seminar in Twentieth-Century American Literature: (Topic: "Multiculturalism")	3
ENGLISH 885	Seminar in Critical Theory: (Topics: "Psychoanalysis, Gender, Sexuality", "Queer Theory", "Spivak")	3
FILM 720	Graduate Seminar I (Topic: "Feminism 2.0 - Gender in Art in Remix Culture")	1-6
FILMSTD 669	Screening Sexuality: (Topic: "Screening Sexuality")	3
FRENCH 733	Seminar in French Literature: (Topic: "French Women Writers")	3
HIST 373G	Topics in Gender and History: (Topic: "When Normal Wasn't: Sex and Gender to 1700")	3
HIST 600	Seminar in History: (Topics: "Gender, Technology, and the Body in Modern Europe", "Social Justice Movements in America Since 1945")	3
HIST 840	Colloquium on Global History: (Topic: "Gender and Imperialism: 1830 to 1940")	3
HIST 841	Colloquium on Modern Studies: (Topic: "Queer Theory")	3

HIST 900	Seminar on U.S. History: (Topics: "History of Women in America", "Women and Reform - 19th and 20th Centuries")	3	SOC WRK 791	Current Topics in Social Work: (Topics: "Family Violence - A Cycle to be Broken", "Women, Work and Family")	1-3
HIST 940	Seminar on Global History: (Topics: "Gender, Religion and Colonization", "Slavery & Gender in Early American & the Caribbean", "Gender, Sexuality & Imperialism")	3	SOC WRK 820	Seminar in Social Work Practice: (Topic: "Intimate Partner Violence")	3
HIST 950	Seminar on European History: (Topic: "Christianity and Sexuality from New Testament Times to the Present")	3	SOCIOL 444G	Sociology of the Body	3
JAMS 660G	Seminar in Contemporary Issues in Media Studies: (Topics: "Gender, Race and Class in Wedding Media", "Gender and the Media", "Race, Gender and Media")	3	SOCIOL 495	Seminar in Sociology: (Topics: "The Social Construction of Female Affiliation", "The Work-Family Intersection")	3
JAMS 661	Seminar in Media Communication and Society: (Topic: "Gender and Popular Culture")	3	SOCIOL 925	Sex and Gender	3
JAMS 840	Topics in Media Law and Ethics: (Topic: "Pornography and Hate Speech")	3	SOCIOL 927	Seminar in Sociology of Contemporary Institutions: (Topics: "A Sociology of Welfare", "Issues in Family and Gender", "Sociology of Gender", "The Family and the State")	3
JAMS 845	Topics in Gender, Sexuality, and Media: (Topic: "Gender and Popular Culture")	3	SOCIOL 928	Seminar in Social Organization: (Topics: "Gendered Institutions", "The Sociology of Sex & Gender")	3
JAMS 860	Seminar in Media Studies: (Topic: "Pornography, Privacy, and Hate Speech")	3			
KIN 575G	The Social Construction of Obesity	3			
KIN 590G	Current Topics in Human Kinetics: (Topic: "Body Image: Influences Health Related Implications")	1-3			
NURS 620G	Global Food Security and Systems	3			
NURS 763	Issues in Women's Health and Development	3			
NURS 779	Special Topics Seminar: (Topic: "Current Issues in Women's Health Development - Health of Older Women")	1-5			
PHILOS 554G	Special Topics in the History of Modern Philosophy: (Topic: "Women Philosophers")	3			
PHILOS 562G	Special Topics in Ethics and Social and Political Philosophy: (Topic: "Personhood and the Abortion Issue")	3			
POL SCI 471G	(Topics: "Civil Rights Movements", "Law and Sexuality", "Women, the Workplace, and the Law")	3			
PSYCH 611G	Current Topics: (Topic: "Feminist Perspectives on Psychoanalysis - Etiology and Treatment of Eating Disorders")	1-4			
PSYCH 711	Current Topics in Psychology: (Topic: "Feminist Perspectives on Psychoanalysis - Etiology and Treatment of Eating Disorders")	1-4			
SOC WRK 630G	Families and Poverty	3			
SOC WRK 771	Development of the Family Over the Life Span	3			

Additional Requirements

Thesis, Paper or Project, or Examination

Students complete the degree with a written thesis, paper or project, or comprehensive examination. All options include an oral defense.

The thesis is an academic research paper that demonstrates the student's ability to carry out an independent investigation, to analyze data (qualitative and/or quantitative), and to present the results in a clear, systematic form. The thesis includes a review of relevant scholarship and makes a contribution to the field.

The master's paper is a more limited, shorter scholarly product that often takes the form of a scholarly essay of publishable quality. The master's paper demonstrates the student's ability to formulate an argument, analyze data, present results in a clear, systematic form, and show familiarity with relevant scholarship.

The master's project may be a creative or artistic project that is research-based or a research-based practical project.

The examination is a comprehensive written examination that addresses central texts and issues in the field of Women's and Gender Studies.

Time Limit

Students must complete the MA within five years of enrollment, in compliance with Graduate School time-to-degree requirements.

Women's and Gender Studies MA Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Women's and Gender Studies MA program will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of feminist, women's, and gender issues in local, national, and/or global contexts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of gender and other identity categories such as class, race, sexuality, age, or ability status.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of relevant perspectives within feminisms and feminist theory.

- Properly apply theoretical terms and concepts of feminist and gender analysis.
- Demonstrate mastery of relevant theoretical terms and concepts of feminist and gender analysis.
- Productively analyze complex material using gender as a framework.
- Write a well-structured, well-argued paper using relevant academic sources.