Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Our graduate certificate program allows students in PhD programs to enhance their disciplinary studies with a concentration in gender studies.

The Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) program offers graduate certificate students the means of meeting and working with graduate students in other departments. Graduate certificate students are on the program’s mailing lists, and they are invited to participate in a variety of events, including special guest lectures, conferences, faculty searches and informal gatherings.

The mentored teaching experience in WGSS takes place over two semesters. During the first semester, students undergo mentored teaching preparation in which they observe the class they will teach, they are mentored by the instructor, and they attend instructor meetings devoted to examining content and pedagogy. In addition, they develop a syllabus — often in consultation with their WGSS teaching mentor and their department adviser — that is reviewed carefully by WGSS faculty. These students may also be undergoing mentored teaching experiences in their own departments during this first semester. During the next semester, they teach the WGSS course, and they are observed by WGSS faculty and, in some cases, by faculty in their own departments. These faculty use a rubric for their assessment that is made available to the student; students receive a written assessment that they then discuss with the observing WGSS faculty member. Sometimes students are observed and assessed more than once. Participation in this program broadens students’ teaching experiences and their credentials for future job opportunities. The following departments are involved in this program: Anthropology, Art History, Education, English, German, History, Philosophy, Political Science, and Romance Languages and Literatures.

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Degree Requirements

Graduate Certificate in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Graduate students interested in the graduate certificate in WGSS should first apply for admission to the Washington University department in which they wish to obtain an advanced degree. After being admitted, each student should notify their department adviser and the WGSS program director of their plans to obtain the WGSS certificate. In addition, each student should submit an “Application for Admission to Certificate Program” form to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences office, with a copy also given to the WGSS office. The earlier that the WGSS department knows who these students are, the earlier these students can be included in mailings about program activities, lectures, conferences and other events. Certificate application forms are available in the Graduate School office.

The graduate certificate in WGSS requires the completion of five courses, at least two of which must be drawn from 400-level or above home-based WGSS courses. The other three required courses must be drawn from 400-level or above home-based or cross-listed WGSS courses or from other program-approved, gender-based courses (students will consult with the program director for approval). Since a certificate requires three courses beyond those required for a student’s home degree, participation in the certificate program may require an extra semester of graduate classes. Those students who are not interested in the certificate but who want to concentrate on gender within their disciplines to enhance their credentials and enrich their training may do so by pursuing a graduate minor in accordance with the policies of their individual departments. Other students may participate in WGSS courses without commitment to a concentration.