

Doctor of Philosophy in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Why study women, gender and sexuality studies?

WGSS was built out of the dual goals of examining inequalities resulting from gender, race, sexual orientation, and class using an interdisciplinary lens and translating this research into meaningful, tangible knowledge that contributes to the betterment of communities. Our interdisciplinary faculty members are engaged in research that examines many of the cutting-edge issues vexing contemporary times, both domestically and internationally, such as discrimination, violence, human trafficking, health and inequality, and migration, to name a few. The common thread throughout these different areas of research is the focus on investigating the factors that create and contribute to vulnerability and power across time and geography.

WGSS students learn about the ways in which people's roles in society have been constructed and the ways in which these roles have changed and continue to change. WGSS courses will make you informed about, and sensitive to, issues of gender in relation to education, lifestyle, social roles and status, sexuality, legal status, and equity. You may face these issues at work, in society, and in your world; WGSS courses will help you to deal with them in an informed, responsible, and just manner.

What will women, gender, & sexuality studies give me?

- Awareness of the issues facing people of all genders – and the world – today.
- Knowledge of many different academic fields.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Strong writing and researching abilities.
- A solid base on which to enter the workforce, pursue further education, and have an impact in the world.
- Graduates of WGSS go on to do many different things, and the possibilities are endless.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission

The Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies PhD program accepts applications for fall admission only. All applications and admissions

materials must be received by the deadline listed on the department's website (<https://wgss.ku.edu/graduate-admission-requirements/>) to be considered for admission for the following fall semester.

Application Materials

Applicants should upload the supporting application documents listed below to the online application (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). There is no need to send copies of application materials directly to the Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies department.

- Copy of official transcripts (<http://graduate.ku.edu/transcripts/>) from all colleges or universities attended
- Resume or CV
- Statement of purpose (no longer than two pages, single spaced)
- Writing sample (no longer than 30 pages)
- Three letters of recommendation

Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements. (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>)

Contact

Visit the Department of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies website for detailed information about PhD admissions requirements (<https://wgss.ku.edu/graduate-admission-requirements/>).

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

The Ph.D. program requires completion of core and elective courses and demonstration of depth in a chosen concentration or track. Students must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of core courses in WGSS, 15 credit hours of elective courses in WGSS, and 18 credit hours of coursework in an approved concentration or track as outlined below. A list of WGSS elective courses can be found in the department's graduate student handbook. (<https://wgss.ku.edu/graduate-student-handbook-0/>) The Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement is satisfied by WGSS 802, WGSS 803, WGSS 804, and theory and methods coursework. All coursework within WGSS and within the concentration should be selected in consultation with a faculty advisor.

WGSS Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
WGSS 800	History of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies	3
WGSS 801	Feminist Theory (or an alternate WGSS theory course with permission of the Director of Graduate Study)	3
WGSS 802	Feminist Methodologies	3
WGSS 803	Feminist Pedagogy	1.5
WGSS 804	Professionalization Seminar in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies	1.5
Five elective courses within WGSS selected in consultation with faculty advisor		15
WGSS 999	Doctoral Dissertation	1-12

Approved Concentrations

Concentrations are approved in African and African-American Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Classics (Greek and Roman Studies), Communication Studies, English, Film and Media Studies, History, History of Art, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Theatre,

Indigenous Studies, and Museum Studies. Students who wish to pursue an alternative concentration may do so with approval from their faculty advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Concentration Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	Theory Course	3
	Methods Course	3
	Fields Course	3
	Three Elective Courses	9

Qualifying Exam

Students will take a qualifying exam after completing (or enrolling in enough hours to complete) 30 credit hours of coursework, typically in their fourth semester of the program. This exam covers material in WGSS history, theory, and methods. Students who successfully pass this exam will be awarded the MA degree in WGSS. The committee will also weigh the quality of the performance on the exam to determine if the student will be approved to continue on to the Ph.D. Awarding of the MA degree does not guarantee approval to continue to the Ph.D.

Comprehensive Oral Exam

After completion of all required coursework (or in the final semester of coursework), students will take a comprehensive oral examination, the centerpieces of which are a portfolio of all major written work (exams, papers, syllabi), three annotated bibliographies, and a dissertation prospectus.

Dissertation

After passing the comprehensive oral examination, students will write a dissertation approved by a departmental dissertation committee and pass a final oral defense of the dissertation to complete the doctoral degree.

Additional Information

Additional information about course and degree requirements for the Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies doctoral program is located in the department's graduate student handbook (<https://wgss.ku.edu/graduate-student-handbook-0/>).