

WOMEN'S STUDIES

FALL 2009

GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

The Women's Studies Department's curriculum explores how institutionalized sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism limit human achievement and dignity--and examines the changes necessary for society to eliminate these limitations. A major goal of the Department of Women's Studies is the reexamination and reevaluation of traditional disciplines in the light of insights provided by feminist thought. Students and faculty engage in an analysis of the extent to which a sexist perspective has determined the content, subject matter, research and theory of various disciplines. Participants in the program are, however, equally committed to moving outside the confines of traditional disciplines to develop new methodologies, new subjects and new theories based on a multidisciplinary approach to the study of women. Finally, the program seeks to encourage students to engage in a reexamination of their own lives and of the world around them. Graduate opportunities include an M.A. in Women's Studies, a dual B.A./M.A. degree for qualified students, Graduate Certificate in Women and Public Policy. Other discipline-based concentrations in Women's Studies are also available. For more information, contact the Chair of Women's Studies, SS 341, at 442-4220.

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AWSS 510 (21332) (1-2 crs)
Graduate Orientation in Women's Studies
Janell Hobson
W 5:45-7:05
LI 320

Wss 510, required for all new master's students in Women's Studies, is an introduction to the UAlbany Women's Studies master's program, the Department, and the field. Topics covered include the role of Women's Studies within the academy, the challenges of interdisciplinarity and of intersectional feminist analysis, and the role of research and teaching in feminist activism. Women's Studies faculty will meet with the class to discuss their teaching, research, and activism. Students will also learn about the option of participating as instructors-of-record in Introduction to Feminisms (the Teaching Collective) for the spring semester. Prerequisite: Admission to M.A. program in Women's Studies or permission of instructor. Course carries variable credit; most students enroll for 2 credits but enrollment for 1 credit is possible with permission of Department.

AWSS 512 (31875) (4 crs)
Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics in the Asian Diaspora
Vivien Ng
TH 5:45-8:35
ES 242

With an emphasis on historical perspectives, this course covers the transnational context of Asian diaspora. The course will also include analysis of the social constructions of gender, sexuality, and race. Contemporary experience and issues will also be covered, especially in relation to issues of identity and identity politics, the media, and the politics of representation. Special focus will be placed on films made for, by, and about Asians in America.

AWSS 515 (31885) (4 crs)
Global Politics of Women's Bodies
Barbara Sutton
TH 2:45-5:35
ES 241

Women's bodies have been sites of oppression and resistance in different societies around the world. This course is a critical examination of the politics of women's bodies across national boundaries, in diverse cultures, and in relation to pressing social forces, such as militarization, nationalism, economic globalization, religious fundamentalisms, colonial legacies, and global policies with health and environmental impacts. Ideas, practices, and policies affecting women's bodies in different countries will be examined not only in relation to particular cultural milieus, but also in connection to more global trends, including historical, economic, social, and political linkages among countries. Possible topics include embodiment and social suffering; transnational sexualities; reproductive politics; beauty and the media; bodies as sites of violence; women's bodies, racism, and colonialism; embodiment and political protest; bodily scars of neoliberalism; environment, health, and disability; and transnational activism centered on women's bodies.

AWSS 560/A SOC 560 (30818/30524) (3 crs)
Families
Glenna Spitze
T 10:15-1:05
AS 350

In this course we read and discuss the research of literature on families, with emphasis on recent and contemporary U.S. patterns. Topics include theoretical perspectives on families, relationship formation and dissolution, gendered patterns and power relations, parent-child relations, paid and unpaid work, relations with extended family members, violence, and family policies. The readings emphasize diversity among families, and we examine research literature with a critical eye toward underlying assumptions. The course is designed to meet the needs of students from various programs. Students in Sociology will find it very useful in preparing for comprehensive exams in family sociology and related areas (including gender). Women's Studies students interested in women, society and public policy often choose this course as an elective. We also welcome students from Social Welfare, Public Administration and Policy, and other social sciences. Course requirements include reading and active participation in class discussion, a book review, and a final research paper.

AWSS 561/AARH 561 (32410/32325) (3 crs)
Women in Film
Audrey Kupferberg
W 5:45-8:35
FA 126

Women in Film gives a multi-dimensional look at women in cinema – as they are seen in films, as they make films, as they see films. The course will examine the contributions of women through the first 100 years of cinema and analyze various genres. Women to be studied include: Dorothy Arzner, Marilyn Monroe, Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, Anita Loos, Frances Marion, Ida Lupino, Verna Fields, Barbara Streisand, Lillian Gish, Lenore Coffee, and others. Prerequisite: Arh 260

AWSS 575/AARH 575 (32326) (3 crs)

Women in Art

Sarah Cohen

MW 2:45-4:05

FA 114

This course examines representations of women in European and North American art from the Renaissance through the present day. We pay special attention to works made by women, considering how women artists negotiated their position as both subjects and objects of artistic depiction.

Undergraduate students will take quizzes and exams. Graduate students in Women's Studies will write research papers. Graduate students in Fine Arts will have the option of writing research papers or creating artwork that engages issues addressed in the class.

AWSS 590 (31873) (4 crs)

Research Seminar in Women's Studies

Vivien Ng

T 5:45-8:30

SL-G02

Seminar in the theory and practice of women's studies research to examine: what distinguishes women's studies from other disciplines; the relationship between research and community/political activism; how research is changing the traditional disciplines and the methods used in research. Permission of instructor required.

AWSS 597 (1-4 crs)

Independent Study

ARR

Study in an area of special interest not treated in course currently offered. Work performed under the direction of a professor chosen by the student on a topic approved by the program. May be repeated with approval. Not open to undergraduates.

AWSS 599 (4 crs)

Topics in Women's Studies: Tourism, Culture, and Identities

Patricia Pinho

TH 4:15-7:05

AS 15

In this course we will examine tourism in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will analyze the impact of tourism on the identities of both hosts and guests. Employing theories and methods from Anthropology, Sociology and Cultural Studies, we will explore such questions as: What is the role of tourism in the formation of regional, national and transnational identities? How does tourism reflect and constitute global inequalities of economic and social power? Does it reinforce race and gender inequalities? What is the impact of tourism on local communities, and what influence can local communities have on tourists? We will discuss the re-creation of traditions to satisfy the tourist market; the importance of the notion of "authenticity"; the search for the "exotic other"; and the recent trends of ethnic tourism, roots tourism, eco-tourism, sex tourism, and "favela-tour" (slum-tour). While most of our readings will focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, some will pertain to other regions of the world for the sake of comparative analysis.

AWSS 639 / AHIS 628 / AHIS 639 /AHIS 662 (32612/31977/31982/30288) (4 crs)
Readings in Gender and Society: Women, Gender and Sexuality in Modern Africa
Iris Berger
T 4:40-6:40

African gender history has expanded in recent years to include not only women's roles, but studies in masculinity and sexuality. This reading course will focus primarily on changes in the position of women in colonial and post-colonial Africa, but will also examine the literature on masculinity and sexuality. Topics will include work, marriage and family, childbirth, religion, and politics. Emphasis will be placed on the critical assessment of assigned readings, which will include books, articles, life histories and autobiographies, and novels. Writing assignments will include short responses to readings and a long final paper.

AWSS 644/A SOC 644 (30814/30532) (3 crs)
Global Gender Issues
Christine Bose
W 2:45-5:35
SS 117

Using feminist theories and research drawn from sociology, anthropology, political economy, demography, and development studies, this course will examine a wide variety of gender-related international issues. These include, but are not limited to: survival (such as health and reproduction, education, war); population issues (like sex ratios or female headed households); economics (informal economy, micro-enterprises, export processing, tourism, post communist changes); political participation and state policies; and resistance and social change (nationalism, migration, environmental and housing movements, women's movements, lesbian and gay movements). Special emphasis is placed on how global economic and political transformations affect women and men.

AWSS 645/A SOC 645 (30820/30534) (3 crs)
Topics in Gender Research:
Karyn Loscocco
TH 11:45-2:35
AS 350

In this seminar we will examine how gender and national leadership varies across institutions and societies. Topics will include: patterns of gender and leadership in global perspective; explanations for the low level of women in leadership positions and why this level varies across societies; the impact of women's leadership on organizations, social movements and public policy; global feminist movements; and constraints and opportunities for men's and women's leadership in the state, civil society and the economy. Theoretical issues are briefly addressed, but the primary focus is on empirical studies.

AWSS 689 (1-4 crs)
Master's Project Proposal Writing
ARR

Preparation and planning for M.A. Final Project, under direction of M.A. committee. This independent study course is optional for those planning to take WSS 690 the following semester. Prerequisite: Admission to M.A. program in Women's Studies and permission of Women's Studies Graduate Faculty Advisor.

AWSS 690 (3-4 crs)

MA Final Project

ARR

Research leading to successful completion of a three hour written examination; or a 25-30 page paper; or presentation of creative work or a project involving political action. Prerequisite: admission to MA program in Women's Studies and permission of Women's Studies Graduate Faculty Adviser.

AWSS 697 (1-4 crs)

Advanced Independent Study

ARR

Study by a student in an area of special interest not treated in courses currently offered. Work performed under direction of a professor chosen by the student on a topic approved by the department. May be repeated with approval. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

AWSS 797 (1-4 crs)

Advanced Independent Study

ARR

Study in an area of special interest not treated in course currently offered. Work performed under the direction of a professor chosen by the student on a topic approved by the program. May be repeated with approval. Not open to undergraduates. (Course description from the Graduate Bulletin)