

# GENDER STUDIES (GW)

## GW 101 - Introduction to Gender Studies

Credits: 4

An introduction to the origins, purpose, subject matters, and methods of the interdisciplinary study of gender. Students are expected to expand their knowledge of the relative historical and present social conditions of people of different genders in different contexts and to develop analytical skills for the examination of socially significant variables—race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality. Students will explore different and often opposing understandings of what constitutes feminism and feminist action. The class format will combine interactive lectures, reading assignments, discussion, formal research and writing assignments, and other student projects. Ideally, students will leave the class with an understanding of how gender structures cultural, political, economic, and social relations in various contexts.

**Note(s):** Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

## GW 202 - Lived Feminism: Engagement and Praxis

Credits: 2

Students will explore what it means to do "feminist praxis"—to carry the lessons and skills they have learned in Gender Studies to make change in the larger community of Skidmore and beyond. Students will formulate and complete a feminist praxis and/or community engagement project over the course of the semester. Students will decide on project with guidance of instructor. Examples of possible projects include: collaboration with a campus, local or national organization; community-based research and assessment; a public awareness campaign; a public event; a piece of political theater; a video; a website; a zine series.

**Prerequisites:** GW 101 and SSP 100.

**Note(s):** Fulfills Bridge Experience requirement.

## GW 210 - Ecofeminism, Women, and the Environment

Credits: 3

An interdisciplinary exploration of the complex relationship between feminist theory and praxis, and environmental philosophy and activism. Using the idea of "ecofeminism" as its unifying focus, the course examines such national and global issues as deforestation, overpopulation, species extinction, bioregionalism, environmental pollution, habitat loss, development, and agribusiness. Representative perspectives include those based in deep ecology, social ecology, animal and nature rights, human ecology, earth-based spiritualities, "wise use," the "land ethic," conservation, and wildlife management.

## GW 212 - Women in Italian Society: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Credits: 3

Students examine the changing role of women in Italian society. Authors and filmmakers studied include Natalia Ginzburg (Family Lexicon), Dacia Maraini (The Blind Countess), and Lina Wertmüller (Pasqualino Seven Beauties). A portion of the course is dedicated to the new multiethnic Italian reality. Texts by women immigrants in Italy in the last decade include works by Igiaba Scego and Christiana de Caldas Brito.

## GW 220 - Too Fat? Too Thin? Women and Eating Disorders

Credits: 3

The course begins with a historical examination of the ways in which the female body has been coded with meanings, and the effects those meanings have had on women's real lives. We will study the ambivalence and contradictions regarding norms of health, thinness, and obesity. We will approach eating disorders from feminist perspectives, which consider these behaviors as women's responses to oppression. Finally, we will consider food from a scholarly as well as real-life perspective.

**Prerequisites:** GW 101 or one course listed as applicable to Gender Studies.

## GW 221 - The Social Skin: Gender, Beauty & Body Modification

Credits: 3

A cross-cultural examination of body modification focusing squarely on the social construction of gender. Examples range from tattoos, cicatrices, and labrets to cosmetic surgery and bodybuilding. All societies mark and modify human bodies in some fashion, and for a wide variety of reasons. Students will study different and changing ideals of beauty for all genders and interrogate the complicated nexus between bodies and identities.

**Note(s):** Fulfills non-Western Cultures requirement; fulfills Global Cultural Perspectives requirement.

## GW 227 - Holding up Half the Sky: Gender, Writing, and Nationhood in China

Credits: 3

Interdisciplinary exploration of gender issues in China, especially but not exclusively focusing on the roles of women in the making of modern Chinese history. Students will learn about cultural specificities in the experiences of Chinese women while exploring the diverse meanings of "women's status" and gender relations. Themes to be examined in the course content include gendered subjectivities, the ideology of the new women, the impact of globalization and transnational capital, different gender roles, and women's writing from the Opium War to contemporary China. Emphasis on different stages of women's writing in relation to their cultural conditions and social awakening, and on the ways ideologies helped form gender identities in the twentieth century.

**Note(s):** Fulfills non-Western Cultures and Humanities requirements; fulfills Humanistic Inquiry and Global Cultural Perspectives requirements.

## GW 228 - Sexuality in Japan

Credits: 3

An exploration of sexualities in Japan emphasizing familial, historical, political, and sociological perspectives. Students will study the intersection of sexuality with popular culture and international relations, and address the following topics: marriage, prostitution, homosexuality, and pornography in contemporary Japanese society.

**Note(s):** Fulfills Social Sciences and non-Western Cultures requirements; fulfills Global Cultural Perspectives requirement.

## GW 251 - Special Topics in Gender Studies

Credits: 1-4

Topically-organized course focused on selected problems, areas, and issues of special interest in Gender Studies at the intermediate level. Topics vary depending on specialization and research interests of the instructor.

**Prerequisites:** GW 101.

**Note(s):** Repeatable, with the approval of the department, if the topic is different each time.

## GW 275 - Feminist Theories

Credits: 4

A critical exploration of the history, development, influence, and implications of feminist theories. Instructors will introduce students to in-depth study of at least 3 feminist theoretical traditions. Course content covers early (e.g., seventeenth century) as well as contemporary time periods, in particular current trends in antiracist feminist, gender, and queer theories.

**Prerequisites:** GW 101.

**Note(s):** Students are also encouraged, but not required, to take GW 202 before GW 275, or to take the two concurrently.

**GW 311 - Queer Theory**

Credits: 4

An overview of key themes and critical frameworks in queer theory. Topics include histories of sexuality, systems and structures of oppression including heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia; resistance to oppression, systemic and structural violence against LGBTQIA2S+ people; queer/trans activisms, and diverse experiences of sexuality. This course considers the relationships between queer/trans identities and experiences and racism, (settler) colonialism, sexism, ableism, classism, and other forms of oppression. It focuses on representations in art, literature, social media, and other cultural production, and queer temporalities, affects, and aesthetics.

**Prerequisites:** *GW 101 or completion of the college expository writing requirement.*

**Note(s):** Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

**GW 321 - Feminist Studies of Science & Technology**

Credits: 4

An exploration of how science and technology intersect with gender and race in a global context. How have scientific disciplines such as biology or engineering defined and shaped gender and race? In what ways can science reinforce, or alternatively, challenge sexism and racism? Drawing primarily on feminist science studies scholarship and feminist science fiction, this course will critically examine practices of science and technology and the way they shape and are shaped by larger political, cultural, and social contexts across the globe with particular attention to BIPOC perspectives within and beyond the United States. We will begin with the assumption that science and technology are not neutral or natural phenomenon, but rather cultural and social constructs. That is, science and technology are shaped by human interests, and embedded in metaphors and narratives which represent deep cultural values and assumptions that need to be examined. In this course we explore key socio-political questions about the role of science and technology in society such as: Why do scientists continue to look for sex differences in the brain? What does DNA ancestry testing really tell us about our racial identity? Why don't we have a male birth control pill? How can feminist science fiction help us to imagine and create new approaches to science and technology that will better serve the lives of marginalized peoples?

**Prerequisites:** *GW 101 or BST 101 or permission of instructor.*

**Note(s):** Fulfills Global Cultural Perspectives requirement.

**GW 351 - Special Topics in Gender Studies**

Credits: 1-4

Topically-organized course focused on selected problems, areas, and issues of special interest in Gender Studies at the advanced level. Topics vary depending on specialization and research interests of the instructor.

**Prerequisites:** *GW 101.*

**Note(s):** Repeatable, with the approval of the department, if the topic is different each time.

**GW 371 - Independent Study in Gender Studies**

Credits: 1-4

A program of individual reading and research under the direction of the gender studies faculty.

**Prerequisites:** *approval of the Director of Gender Studies.*

**GW 374 - Feminist Methodologies**

Credits: 4

An exploration of how feminist scholars challenge dominant theories of knowledge and approaches to research. This course provides a framework for thinking about methods and forms of knowledge production that engage questions of social justice, value reflexivity, and center liberatory praxis. Emphasis is placed on the inter-disciplinary nature of inquiry in gender studies and the ways in which particular methodologies arise from and relate to specific theoretical positions. Instructors introduce students to a range of research methods and course culminates in student proposals for an advanced research project that they will complete the following semester (GW 375).

**Prerequisites:** *GW 101, GW 202, and Feminist Theories requirement.*

**Note(s):** Must be taken fall of senior year.

**GW 375 - Senior Seminar In Gender Studies**

Credits: 4

An integration of students' previous experiences at Skidmore while enabling the production of new and creative works. Students will engage in advanced research, will complete a major project (proposed in the preceding semester in GW 374), and will present their research to the seminar. They will also execute a community engagement component derived from their research, and explore possibilities for Gender Studies majors after graduation.

**Prerequisites:** *GW 374.*

**Note(s):** Fulfills Senior Experience Coda requirement.

**GW 376 - Senior Thesis**

Credits: 3

Independent study and research leading to a thesis examining, from an interdisciplinary perspective, a topic relevant to gender studies. Students will work under the direction of a faculty advisor as well as a second reader.

**Note(s):** Open to gender studies majors only.

**GW 399 - Internship in Gender Studies**

Credits: 1-4

Internship opportunity for students whose academic and cocurricular experience has prepared them for professional work related to gender studies. With faculty sponsorship and approval of the director of the Gender Studies Program, students may extend their educational experience into such areas as counseling, education, crisis intervention, health care delivery, business and management, and other areas relevant to gender studies. Academic assignments will be determined by the faculty sponsor in consultation with the on-site supervisor.

**Prerequisites:** *Two courses in gender studies, at least one of which is at the 200 or 300 level.*