I started my Women and Gender Studies degree without any idea whatsoever about what it was or what career it would lead me into. All I knew was that I wanted to work with women and girls, especially back in my home country of Kenya (and eventually the African continent) to live happier and more fulfilling lives. The guidance and support of my WGS professors and classmates has helped me explore, discover and build my interests fearlessly. I now have a clearer image of what I want to do.”

- Naomi Kamitha

“A major highlight of the WGS program at MSU is the internship component. My experience with Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan was both incredibly inspiring and helped to clarify my career goals. This practical application of what we learn in the classroom demonstrates the power of a gender studies degree to prospective employers.”

- Sara Denbo

“My education in Women’s and Gender Studies has been transformative and foundational not only in my intellectual pursuits, but also in my personal life. Gender Studies education has taught me how to theorize, explore, and critically analyze gender and sexuality as they function in society. It has offered me opportunities like the Amsterdam Study Abroad Program, studying Sexual Politics, Gender Identity, and Sexuality, that gave me a global and transcultural examination of the social constructions of gender and sexuality, exploring political and social culture and its impacts on forming and structuring these identities across difference.”

- Jonathan Walkotten

“The WGS program gave me the opportunity to study abroad in the Netherlands, improve my communication skills, dabble in other interesting classes, and I was able to participate in an internship that brought my two majors together. I interned at the MSU Community Music School in East Lansing, and after graduation, I was hired as a teacher and manager at the CMS in Detroit. My advice to other students is, don’t be afraid to make a change! It seems risky, but taking a risk is better than living with remorse.”

- Perry Holmes

Women’s and Gender Studies

Major at MSU

Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen) at MSU
The WGS major emphasizes the intersections of gender with other social identities such as race, social class, religion, ethnicity, nationality, age, and sexual orientation. The major provides a nuanced and deep understanding of women’s experiences and the structural and cultural dynamics of how gender and sexuality are constructed in our world. Students who wish to pursue the WGS Major should contact the GenCen Advisor to design a course of study by emailing gencenad@msu.edu.

Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and History
Study the interrelation of gender and race over time through courses in anthropology, literature, history, geography, political science, sociology, and women’s studies.

Sexuality and Conflict/Violence
Explore the power dynamics of gender and sexuality in conflict situations through courses in anthropology, criminal justice, communications, family and child ecology, geography, history, science, political science, psychology, sociology, and women’s studies.

Gender and the Arts and Humanities
Focus on gender within the arts and humanities by taking courses in literature, language, media studies, history, political science, philosophy, religion, writing, and women’s studies.

Gender Applied: Health, Urban, and Public Policy
Learn how to apply theory and action in relation to public policy, health, and geography through courses in anthropology, criminal justice, literature, medicine, political science, sociology, science, and women’s studies.

Global Perspectives
There are no specific courses required for the major. The WGS major requires all 5 core courses, a minimum of 12 credits in a Thematic Area, and a minimum of 6 credits in Global Perspectives courses (see your advisor).

Major Requirements
Women’s and Gender Studies
These courses emphasize global, transnational, and intersectional perspectives on gender. Students learn about gender in comparative, historical, academic training. The major equips students with knowledge relevant to a variety of careers and professions, and provides students with experiential learning opportunities that have helped WGS graduates find employment in a wide variety of fields.

Why WGS?
Students in this program learn about sex and gender politics, policy, and history in the Netherlands, including the most sexually liberal countries in the world. Excursions include a trip to Brussels, where students visit the European Parliament and meet with representatives from the Intergroup on LGBTQ rights. Students take guided, academic tours of Amsterdam neighborhoods, including the Red Light district. The final weekend of the program, students attend the world-famous Canal Pride festival.

Complete Your Degree Abroad!
Students have the opportunity to participate in exciting field excursions while in-country.

Environment & NGOs: Internships in Malawi
This program provides students the opportunity to receive academic credit while participating in an internship with a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Malawi. Six of the seven weeks in Malawi are spent in a full-time internship with an NGO. Students will have the opportunity to participate in exciting field excursions while in-country.

Gender, Sex, and Feminism in the UK
Prepare to experience London as a global city of power and knowledge, and examine London as a place of great diversity, but also of great inequality. On site learning takes place at the Natural History Museum, Houses of Parliament, Tate Modern, and the British Library. Additionally, the program includes excursions to Soho Pride to celebrate international Pride month and to Feminist Archive North – a large archive of materials from British feminism and women’s studies based at the University of Leeds. Program fees also include travel based at the University of Leeds. Program fees also include travel and registration for the British Psychological Society’s prestigious Psychology of Women Section conference in Windsor.

Gay, Lesbian, and Gender Studies in Amsterdam
Students in this program learn about sex and gender politics, policy, and history in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Students attend the world-famous Canal Pride festival.

Pride festival.

Students attend the world-famous Canal Pride festival.

Complete Your Degree Abroad!
Students have the opportunity to participate in exciting field excursions while in-country.

The Women’s & Gender Studies (WGS) Major at MSU is offered through the College of Arts & Letters and is overseen by GenCen. The WGS Major offers comparative, interdisciplinary, and transhistorical academic training. The major equips students with knowledge relevant to a variety of careers and professions, and provides students with experiential learning opportunities that have helped WGS graduates find employment in a wide variety of fields.

The WGS major emphasizes the intersections of gender with other social identities such as race, social class, religion, ethnicity, nationality, age, and sexual orientation. The major provides a nuanced and deep understanding of women’s experiences and the structural and cultural dynamics of how gender and sexuality are constructed in our world. Students who wish to pursue the WGS Major should contact the GenCen Advisor to design a course of study by emailing gencenad@msu.edu.

Message From The Co-Directors
Dr. Stephanie Nawyn
Dr. Wenda Bauchspies
Co-Director for Academic Programs
Co-Director for International Programs

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