



“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

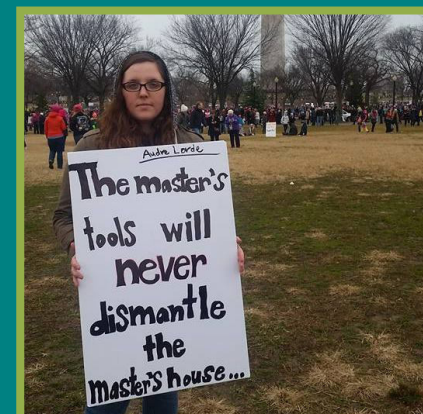


“My education in Women’s and Gender Studies has been transformative and foundational not only in my intellectual pursuits, but also in my personal life. Gender Studies education has taught me how to theorize, explore, and critically analyze gender and sexuality as they function in society. It has offered 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



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Women’s and Gender Studies Major

Why WGS?

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 trans-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.

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 operates 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.



Core Courses
WS 201 - Intro to Women's & Genders Studies
WS 202 - Intro to Contemporary Feminisms & Gender Theories
WS 203 - Intro to Methods for WGS Research
WS 492 - WGS Senior Seminar
WS 493 - Internship

Global Perspectives
These courses emphasize global, transnational, and intersectional perspectives on gender. Students learn about gender in comparative perspective across various global regions and nationalities. Courses used to fulfill this requirement may not be used to fulfill Thematic Area credits required for the major.

Women's and Gender Studies Major Requirements

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).

Thematic Areas
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 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, economics, environment, political science, epidemiology and public health, family and child ecology, psychology, sociology, urban planning, and women's studies.

Message From The Co-Directors

Dr. Stephanie Nawyn
Co-Director for Academic Programs, Outreach, and Engagement

Dr. Wenda Bauchspies
Co-Director for International Research and Engagement

The social world is defined, constrained and remade by social norms related to gender and sexuality. The WGS curriculum at MSU is designed to prepare our students to engage with gender and sexuality in globally-informed ways. Through classroom instruction and experiential learning, our graduates are prepared to take on real-world challenges. We strive to create learning environments in which students can explore new ideas and challenge themselves, and we are always looking for new ways to support our students and help them succeed.

Complete Your Degree Abroad!

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Sexual Politics in Amsterdam

Students in this program learn about sex and gender politics, policy, and history in the Netherlands, one of 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 LGBT 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.



"[This] program was one of the most challenging things of my academic career, but...I learned so much. It really pushed my comfort zones, and also, really what I understood to be sex and gender in general. I feel like it took my understanding of feminism and sexuality and gender studies to a whole new level that you could only get by going abroad."

-Makailyn Boughton

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 site 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 feminist movements based at the University of Leeds. Program fees also include travel and attendance for the British Psychological Society's prestigious Psychology of Women Section conference in Windsor.



"Studying abroad in London was such a great experience and I am forever grateful. During my month in London, I was exposed to a new culture, new experiences and new educational concepts. On the study abroad we partook in many events outside of the classroom including the Annual Psychology of Women Conference...that were fitting to our studies."

-Caitlin Dubay