GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES, M.A.

The master's degree in gender and women's studies provides advanced feminist training in gender analysis for students with a variety of academic backgrounds and career plans. Incorporating local, cross-cultural and transnational emphases, the curriculum encourages students and faculty from the humanities, arts, social sciences and natural sciences to develop innovative ways of expanding knowledge about gender in global, local, and historical contexts. As the name gender and women's studies indicates, the M.A. retains the emphasis on women's lives and situations that have historically informed the field of women's studies, while also emphasizing the incisive import of gender as a category of analysis transforming knowledge about, for example, masculinity and men's lives, transgendered lives, as well as other complex topics. The degree engages the wide-ranging and multidisciplinary perspectives associated with gender studies and women's studies: queer studies, transgender studies, sexuality studies, race and ethnicity studies, disability studies, area and global studies, cultural studies, postcolonial and transnational studies.

The M.A. curriculum draws from the strengths of current course offerings in the program, as well as from methodologies and course offerings in other fields and departments. Among the domains of inquiry explored within the curriculum are: work, family and education; social movements, the state and civil society; bodies, genders, health and sexualities; individual, collective and communal identities; communications, technology and culture industries; politics of representation, media and cultural practices; migration, immigration, labor and political economy; militarism, international relations and governmental processes; intersectionality of systems of women's oppression; and arts, performance, and visual cultures. Some courses investigate these topics at the global level while others focus on the local, regional or national levels. The curriculum ensures an overarching transnational and cross-cultural framework. Courses use interdisciplinary methodologies and/or disciplinary approaches.

The degree program is designed to be a two-year full-time sequence; however, the program is also flexible enough to allow part-time students to pursue the M.A. All students are expected to maintain satisfactory progress in the graduate program in accordance with the regulations of the Graduate School and department policies.

Each student will complete 30 credits of coursework plus a thesis or a comprehensive exam project. Of the 30 credits, at least 15 must be in designated courses in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies. The remaining credits may also be departmental courses or may be chosen (entirely or in part) from graduate-level courses in other departments and programs in the university. All courses should be selected in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the advisor, who must approve the selections.

THE DEPARTMENT

During a period of activism and debate that extended across the University of Wisconsin System, the women's studies program was established in 1975. It has grown steadily from a small program offering three courses a year to one of the largest and most well-respected programs in the United States. An undergraduate major serves more than 100 students each year; an undergraduate certificate serves approximately 150 students; a master's program admits approximately six students each year; and a doctoral minor and certificate at the graduate level are also offered. In 2008, the program achieved department status and changed the name to the Department of Gender and Women's Studies.

Gender and women's studies is a well-established field of scholarship—a multidiscipline with its own body of theory, its array of accepted methods, and a history of scholarly contributions focused on the place of gender and women in society. Its research and teaching seek to expand the understanding and appreciation of gendered lives and experiences, both historically and in contemporary societies. In building this understanding, scholarship encompasses the arts and humanities and the social and natural sciences.

Scholarship and teaching in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies actively engages with multiple dimensions of the social, political and cultural dynamics of power. For example, gender and women's studies scholars explore how gender is intrinsic to global processes, how these processes intersect with local, regional and national identities, and how gender itself is shaped by race, ethnicity, dis/ability, nationality, sexuality, class, caste, age, and religion. Gender and women's studies scholars make contributions both by reevaluating past knowledge and by developing new interdisciplinary research methods and theories. Many academic disciplines, in fact, have undergone paradigm shifts that have been directly influenced by the theoretical and research approaches developed in the field of gender and women's studies.

Department faculty members and affiliates bring together a broad range of interests, research agendas, and teaching styles. The curriculum reflects this interdisciplinarity and offers students an opportunity to apply gender analysis in fields such as African American studies, African studies, American Indian studies, anthropology, the arts, Asian American studies, communications studies, comparative literature, Chicana/o and Latina/o studies, disability studies, education, folklore, health sciences, history, international studies, law, Latin American Studies, literature, media, philosophy, performance studies, political science, psychology, sociology, sexuality studies, South Asian studies, and visual culture. Faculty members have national and international reputations both as gender and women's studies scholars and as disciplinary scholars. In publications, leadership and awards, the department is among the most visible gender and women's studies departments in the country.

The department lists more than 100 courses, both crosslisted and specific to the department. Many courses are available to both advanced undergraduate and graduate students. Some enroll only graduate students. The department offers 20–25 courses each year, augmented by crosslisted courses from other departments. Selected courses are also offered in the summer.

CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON GENDER AND WOMEN

The Center for Research on Gender and Women was established in 1977 to promote scholarly interactions among women and gender studies researchers on campus, as well as linkages with women's studies centers and scholars nationally and internationally.

The research center engages in different kinds of activities to stimulate gender and women's studies research, including organizing lectures, colloquia, workshops and conferences, featuring campus, national and international speakers and creative artists. The center promotes research collaboration and externally funded research projects, provides proposal
writing support, sponsors an honorary fellow program, facilitates networking of women and gender studies scholars across campus, and fosters links with other gender and women's studies research centers around the country and the world.

These exchanges, as well as other events sponsored by the center, serve to draw together faculty, graduate students, and community members for mutual enrichment. Questions about the center should be sent to the director of the Center for Research on Gender and Women. (https://crgw.gws.wisc.edu)

**ADMISSIONS**

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The following items are required as a part of the graduate application for the M.A. Program in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies:

1. One (1) copy of official transcripts or academic records from each institution attended. International academic records must be in the original language and accompanied by an official English translation. Documents must be issued by the school with the official seal/stamp and an official signature.

2. Three (3) letters of recommendation. We prefer that at least two of the letters come from academic sources. These letters may now be submitted on-line. Please see the Graduate School's web link for instructions.

3. Statement of reasons why you wish to pursue the M.A. Degree in Gender and Women's Studies (2–3 pages). In their personal statements, applicants should explicitly articulate their academic interests and goals, describe how an M.A in Gender and Women's Studies complements those intellectual goals, and explain how the faculty and the program at UW-Madison is especially well matched with the applicant's interests.

4. Curriculum vitae or resumé.

5. Writing sample, such as a paper submitted for a course in an academic program. The admissions committee wishes to see an entire piece of written work, generally between 5 and 10 pages. We prefer an academic paper or policy memo (professional writing) because we are looking for presentation of argument as well as appropriate writing skills.

6. The Department of Gender and Women's Studies does NOT require GRE scores.

**APPLICATION DUE DATE**

Applications for fall admission is December 15.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Graduate School sets minimum requirements for admissions (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements).

Applications to the Graduate School are made online at this website (http://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

Items that should be sent to the Graduate School are listed here (http://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/process).

If you have questions, please send an email to Diane Walton, Student Services Coordinator, at dwalton@wisc.edu or the Director of Graduate Studies. (https://gws.wisc.edu/graduate/graduate-advising)

**FELLOWSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The Department of Gender and Women's Studies offers teaching assistant (TA) positions to incoming M.A. students. TA positions provide tuition remission, a stipend and health insurance. Our current departmental policy is to award new M.A. students at least two semesters of guaranteed funding through TA positions in our introductory courses. The department is sometimes able to offer additional TA positions after the two semesters of guaranteed support. Additional funding from the department or the College of Letters & Science, including TA positions, are based availability and on our curriculum schedule each academic year. The availability of TA positions may be different for international students and eligibility will be determined at the time of admission. There are a limited number of TA positions and applicants to the M.A. program should not count on a teaching assistant position in the department as a means of financial support for their entire two years of study. The department encourages M.A. students to apply for advertised teaching assistant and project assistant positions that may be available elsewhere on campus. All TA positions are contingent upon evaluation and performance. Students must be in good standing to be eligible for departmental funding.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

**FUNDING**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

We offer TA positions to new M.A. students, including tuition remission, stipend and health insurance. We award new students at least 2 semesters of guaranteed funding and sometimes offer additional positions. Availability of positions may be different for international students; eligibility is determined at admission. There are a limited number of TA positions, so do not count on these as support for the entire 2 years of study. We encourage students to apply for positions elsewhere on campus.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/ #policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.
MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No</td>
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</table>

Mode of Instruction Definitions

**Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.

**Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
<th>30 credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>16 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>21 of the 30 credits applied toward the graduate degree credit requirement must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Grade Requirements</td>
<td>The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments and Examinations</td>
<td>Students complete either a thesis or exam, and can read more about them here: <a href="https://gws.wisc.edu/ma-requirements/">https://gws.wisc.edu/ma-requirements/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Requirements</td>
<td>Contact the program for information on any language requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REQUIRED COURSES

30 credits, 15 of which must be in courses in the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies

**GEN&WS 880 Proseminar: Graduate Study in Gender and Women’s Studies**

**GEN&WS 900 Approaches to Research in Women’s Studies/Gender Studies**

A graduate level feminist theory course

A thesis project or exam

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

A Graduate Program Handbook containing all of the program’s policies and requirements is forthcoming from the program.

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may accept prior graduate coursework from other institutions toward the minimum graduate degree credit and minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement. The minimum graduate residence credit requirement can be satisfied only with courses taken as a graduate student at UW–Madison.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

For well-prepared advanced students, the program may decide to accept up to 7 credits numbered 300 or above completed at UW–Madison toward fulfillment of minimum degree and minor credit requirements. This work would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above.

UW–Madison University Special

The program may decide to accept up to 15 University Special student credits as fulfillment of the minimum graduate residence, graduate degree, or minor credit requirements on occasion as an exception (on a case-by-case basis). UW–Madison coursework taken as a University Special student would not be allowed to count toward the 50% graduate coursework minimum unless taken at the 700 level or above.

PROBATION

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could
result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor.

An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**

Students in the MA program are expected to carry 6 credits per semester. They may carry up to 12 although we do not encourage more than 9. Students who would like to carry fewer than 6 credits must apply in writing to the DGS for a waiver of this requirement and are not eligible to work as TAs.

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

**OTHER**

To remain in good standing in the M.A. program, certain deadlines and expectation must be met in a timely fashion.

1. Students are expected to file their advisor form by the first week of classes of their second year of study.
2. Students are required to have a thesis or exam committee arranged by the first week of their fourth semester.
3. Students are required to defend their thesis or complete their exams by the end of their fourth semester; formal requests for an extension of the time for the thesis or exam will be considered, but not guaranteed.
4. Filing the thesis or the written exam: The thesis or the written exam needs to be submitted to the DGS for filing by the designated thesis deposit deadline of the Graduate School.
5. Any incomplete grades must be resolved by the end of the following semester, unless a faculty extension is granted.
6. Students must be in good standing to be eligible for departmental funding.
7. Due Dates (Based on consecutive full time enrollment of all four semesters without summer sessions)

   Formal requests for an extension of the time for the thesis or exam will be considered, but not guaranteed.

Failure to meet any of these requirements may result in a student being asked to leave the program.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Demonstrate the ability to read, understand, and critique the major concepts and theories related to feminism, women, and gender, and apply these critical perspectives across disciplines.
2. Understanding of historical and contemporary agency by people across a spectrum of gender and the ways this agency has shaped lives in various geographic settings.
3. Demonstrate the ability to analyze the intersections between gender and other socially meaningful categories, such as race, class, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, nation, religion, and sexuality, and to explain how gender functions as a social institution.
4. Demonstrate the ability to conduct interdisciplinary feminist analysis that (1) includes a critical literature review, (2) selects appropriate research methodologies, and (3) proposes an appropriate research design to collect, analyze, interpret, and present findings.
5. Develop and utilize strong cultural competencies (e.g., sensitivity to race/ethnicity/gender/disability/sexual orientation issues) to allow them to enter into various cultural, social, economic, civic, academic, and workplace settings.
6. Acknowledge and engage in ethical courses of action in research and collaborative practice.

**PEOPLE**

**FACULTY**


Assistant Professors: Chris Barcelos (https://gws.wisc.edu/staff/barcelos-chris), Keisha Lindsay (https://gws.wisc.edu/staff/lindsay-keisha), Annie Menzel (https://gws.wisc.edu/staff/menzel-annie), Sami Schalk (https://gws.wisc.edu/staff/schalk-sami)
Faculty Affiliates: See the GWS Faculty Affiliates (https://gws.wisc.edu/people/affiliates-directory) for more information about instructors on campus who are engaged in feminist-inspired teaching and research.

LECTURERS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS

See the current semester’s GWS Lecturers and Teaching Assistants directory (https://gws.wisc.edu/people/lecturers-and-teaching-assistants-ta).