Women's Studies

Jennifer Fish, Chair
(757) 683-3823
https://www.odu.edu/womensstudies

Women's Studies is a multi- and interdisciplinary field of study that examines gender in historical and contemporary contexts with an emphasis on women’s lives and perspectives. The department values the complex intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, nation, and other identities.

Both the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees are offered through this department. Students in any discipline can also earn a graduate certificate in Women’s Studies. These degrees enhance career opportunities in governmental and non-governmental agencies, law, criminal justice, public relations, journalism, counseling, the health professions, business, social welfare, education, and many other fields. They also provide a strong foundation for students interested in pursuing graduate work.

Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science—Women's Studies Major

Written Communication * 6
Oral Communication 3
Mathematics 3
Language and Culture ** 0-12
Information Literacy and Research 3
Human Creativity 3
Interpreting the Past 3
Literature 3
Philosophy and Ethics 3
The Nature of Science 8
Impact of Technology ***
Human Behavior ****

Total Hours 38-50

* Grade of C or better required in both ENGL 110C and the second written communication course before declaring a major.
** Proficiency through 102 level-BS only; Proficiency through 202 level-BA only and not met by associate degree.
*** Satisfied in the major by WMST 390T.
**** WMST 201S cannot be used to satisfy this requirement.

Bachelor of Arts - Major Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>WMST 201S</td>
<td>Introduction to Women's Studies</td>
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<td>WMST 301</td>
<td>Feminist Foundations</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMST 302W</td>
<td>Dimensions of Diversity: Intersectionality</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMST 390T</td>
<td>Women and Technology Worldwide</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMST 401W</td>
<td>Women: A Global Perspective</td>
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<td>WMST 460W</td>
<td>Feminist Theory</td>
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<td>ENGL 463W</td>
<td>Women Writers</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>ENGL 477</td>
<td>Language, Gender and Power</td>
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<td>HIST 363</td>
<td>Women in U.S. History</td>
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Select four of the following: 12

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<tr>
<td>WMST 303</td>
<td>Queer Studies</td>
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<td>WMST 304</td>
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<td>WMST 306</td>
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<td>WMST 395</td>
<td>Topics in Women's Studies</td>
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Women's Studies as a Second Major

Students interested in Women's Studies but who already have a major may be able to fulfill their upper-division general education requirements by selecting Women's Studies as a second major. Such students must complete the same departmental requirements as those majoring solely in Women's Studies, but may count up to three Women's Studies approved courses taken for their other major toward their Women's Studies major as well. For instance, a student majoring in both Sociology and Women's Studies may count three courses (such as SOC 340, SOC 343, and SOC 427) taken toward their sociology requirements as three electives for their major in Women's Studies.

Minor in Women's Studies

WMST 201S is a prerequisite for the minor and is not included in the grade point average for the minor. Required courses are:

- WMST 301: Feminist Foundations 3
- or WMST 302W: Dimensions of Diversity: Intersectionality Among Women
- WMST 390T: Women and Technology Worldwide * 3
- Two additional WMST courses (at least one at the 400 level) 6

Total Hours 12

* Meets impact of technology requirement.

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all courses required for the minor. Completion of the undergraduate Women's Studies minor will fulfill the upper-division General Education requirements.

Advising

To declare a Women's Studies major or minor, students must see an advisor in the Women's Studies Department. All Women's Studies majors are required to have a conference with their advisor before each semester (preferably during preregistration).

Linked B.A./B.S. in Women's Studies and M.A. in Humanities

The linked program in Women's Studies and Humanities makes it possible for exceptional Women's Studies majors to count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both an undergraduate and graduate degree. Students must earn a minimum of 150 credit hours (120 for the undergraduate degree and 30 for the graduate degree). For more information consult the Humanities section of this Catalog.

WOMEN'S STUDIES Courses

WMST 201S. Introduction to Women's Studies. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the interdisciplinary field of women's studies, drawing on materials from the social sciences. Topics include the social construction of gender, cross-cultural variations in women's lives, media representations, work, health, women's roles in politics, and sexuality. Prerequisites: Must qualify to enroll in ENGL 110C.

WMST 226S. Honors: Women in A Changing World. 3 Credits.

A special honors version of WMST 201S open only to students in the Honors College. Prerequisites: ENGL 110C.

WMST 301. Feminist Foundations. 3 Credits.

This course is designed to develop students' skills in writing, critical reading, research, and argument while examining topics in women's studies. The course also covers the history of women's studies as a discipline and current opportunities for majors and minors. Prerequisites: WMST 201S.

WMST 302W. Dimensions of Diversity: Intersectionality Among Women. 3 Credits.

This course explores women's experiences at intersections of gender, race, and class within society, in general, and specifically within the various women's movements that have taken place in the 19th and 20th Centuries, charting the development of feminism. Additionally, the course examines the need for the discipline of Women's Studies to sponsor change for women. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: WMST 201S, a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, and 6 semester hours in literature, history, social sciences, or performing arts courses.

WMST 303. Queer Studies. 3 Credits.

This course is an interdisciplinary study of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) experiences. It introduces students to personal, cultural, and political aspects of queer life while examining social forces such as heteronormativity, the social construction of gender, and homophobia and their impact on queer lives. Prerequisites: WMST 201S or instructor approval.

WMST 304. Chick Flicks. 3 Credits.

This course will offer a pivotal focus on the under-representations and misrepresentations of young women of color, lesbians, working class women, women over forty, and women with disabilities in the majority of commercial films targeted at the "average" American woman consumer. Students will examine the cultural phenomenon of the chick flick and consider Hollywood and independent media responses to the new visibility and focus on women. Additionally, students will assess chick flicks as possible empowering models for girls and young women of all races and ethnicities and consider feminist responses to questions of post-feminism within these representations. Prerequisites: WMST 201S or instructor approval.

WMST 306. Women, the Environment, and Climate Change. 3 Credits.

This course will examine ways that women have been actively involved in environmental issues from earliest history through today. Students will assess their own connection to place and examine and access ecofeminist theory and national and global environmental justice movements, along with briefly reviewing gender and farming practices. Finally, the course will examine how climate change issues are affecting lives around the globe, including ours, and question how gender-, race-, and class-sensitive responses to the environmental challenges facing our planet can be created. Prerequisite: ENGL 110C.

WMST 368. Internship. 3-6 Credits.

Course provides an opportunity to gain experience working in organizations and government agencies. Students' work should engage with women's issues at the local, regional, national, and/or global levels. Students must work for at least 50 hours per course credit. (Qualifies as a CAP experience.) Prerequisites: A minimum of one WMST course, junior standing and instructor approval.

WMST 390T. Women and Technology Worldwide. 3 Credits.

An exploration of women as designers and users of technology and of the impact of technology on women's lives across the world. Variations in women's experiences by race, class, and culture will be stressed, along with particular focus on global developments that shape the context of women's and men's lives. Prerequisites: Three semester hours in literature, history, social sciences, or performing arts courses. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: WMST 201S, a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, and 6 semester hours in literature, history, social sciences, or performing arts courses.

WMST 395. Queer Studies. 3 Credits.

A study of selected women's studies topics. These courses are usually interdisciplinary. All topics are described on the women's studies website and in material distributed to academic advisors Prerequisites: WMST 201S or instructor approval.

WMST 396. Women's Studies. 3 Credits.

A study of selected women's studies topics. These courses are usually interdisciplinary. All topics will be described on the women's studies website and in material distributed to academic advisors Prerequisites: WMST 201S and sophomore standing or permission of the instructor.
WMST 400/500. U.S. Women's Activism. 3 Credits.
This course historicizes U.S. women's social, political, and rhetorical activism over the last 200 years, tracing their entry into and shaping force upon public life. The course examines the development of women's activism in the nineteenth century, the twentieth century women's (or feminist) movement, and its current status, particularly in relation to postfeminism and a "third" wave. Prerequisite: WMST 201S.

WMST 401W/501. Women: A Global Perspective. 3 Credits.
An analysis of the global forces that impact women's lives throughout the world. Particular emphasis is placed on the status of women in the developing world, international institutions that protect women's rights, and efforts to promote gender equality worldwide. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: WMST 201S and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C.

WMST 402/502. Feminisms and Sexualities. 3 Credits.
This course will examine feminist approaches to the subject of sexuality in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The course examines theorizations of sexuality, such as radical, critical race, and transnational feminisms, queer theory, and trans studies. Key questions will be: how have feminists theorized sexualities? What does sexuality have to do with feminist studies or practices? How do other identities, such as race and class, inform sexuality? Prerequisite: WMST 201S, WMST 390T, or instructor approval.

WMST 405/505. Gender and Media. 3 Credits.
This course examines media-based sites of knowledge production using a feminist approach, in order to imagine new and more complex ways to think about media rhetorics: celebrity culture; digital media; and the politics of representation. Key questions will be: What roles do media play in shaping social movements? What are the promises and pitfalls of activist interventions in the realm of commercial culture? In what ways might we complicate narratives of co-optation or selling out? The class explores these questions using an intersectional lens attentive to the complex interconnections of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Case studies will include national, international, and transnational media events. Prerequisite: WMST 201S, WMST 390T, or instructor approval.

WMST 460W/560. Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.
A study of the renaissance in feminist thought since the 1960s through close readings of key documents and texts. The course covers a variety of feminist perspectives as expressed in both theory and practice. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: WMST 201S or WMST 302W and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C.

WMST 470/570. Feminist Research Methods. 3 Credits.
The course explores the ethics, practice, and multiple forms of conducting feminist research. Narrative research methods are practiced through hands-on oral herstory assignments. Throughout the course, the process of knowledge construction is interrogated from a feminist perspective. Prerequisites: WMST 460W.

WMST 495/595. Topics in Women's Studies. 3 Credits.
Advanced seminars on selected topics. The subject matter is usually interdisciplinary. These seminars are more fully described on the women's studies website and in material distributed each semester to academic advisors. Prerequisites: WMST 201S or instructor approval.

WMST 496/596. Topics in Women's Studies. 3 Credits.
Advanced seminars on selected topics. The subject matter is usually interdisciplinary. These seminars will be more fully described on the women's studies website and in material distributed each semester to academic advisors. Prerequisites: WMST 201S or permission of the instructor.

WMST 497/597. Independent Study. 1-6 Credits.
Independent study of an interdisciplinary women's studies topic, or a reading plus internship project to be selected under the direction of a women's studies faculty member. Conferences and papers as appropriate. Prerequisites: A minimum of one women's studies course and approval of instructor and chair of department.

WMST 498/598. Independent Study. 1-6 Credits.
Independent study of an interdisciplinary women's studies topic, or a reading plus internship project to be selected under the direction of a women's studies faculty member. Conferences and papers as appropriate. Prerequisites: A minimum of one women's studies course and approval of instructor and chair of department.