

# *Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality*

*Dr. Karen Flood, Director of Studies*

The study of gender and sexuality has long constituted a vibrant and engaging field for interdisciplinary work and intellectual inquiry. At the heart of this field is the assertion that gender and sexuality are fundamental categories of social organization and power that are inseparable from race, ethnicity, class, nationality, and other categories of difference. Some of the areas of study that fall within this concentration's purview include women's history, lesbian/gay/bisexual studies, gender and science, the representation of gender and sexuality in literature and film, women and work, masculinity studies, political and social movements, queer and feminist theory, transnational feminisms, women and poverty, transgender studies, and gender and religion.

The concentration in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (WGS) provides students with a rigorous grounding in the theory and methodology of gender and sexuality studies, while encouraging students to develop individual areas of focus that will culminate in a thesis project. All concentrators are required to take sophomore tutorial (WGS 97) to familiarize them with foundational texts about sexuality and gender. In the junior tutorial (WGS 98r) concentrators work one-on-one with a tutor on a specific area of interest, with a view to laying the groundwork for their senior theses. In the senior tutorial (WGS 99a/b) students design, research, and write senior theses. Senior theses for all concentrators (including joint concentrators) must feature a WGS-related topic. In keeping with the interdisciplinary character of WGS, senior theses may draw upon a wide range of approaches, including literary analysis, ethnography, scientific investigation, archival research, visual analysis, and cultural or political critique. Seniors also take an oral examination that covers both the senior thesis and general knowledge of the field.

In addition to the tutorial sequence, full concentrators must enroll in WGS 1300 (methodology) and one of the two other foundational courses: WGS 1200 (historical approaches) or WGS 1210 (theories of gender and sexuality). In addition to WGS courses, concentrators may fulfill concentration requirements by taking courses on WGS-related topics in other programs and departments. (A list of pre-approved courses from other departments is available on the WGS website.) Students will work with concentration advisers to develop cohesive plans of study that are primarily situated within the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences.

Beginning with the class of 2010, students will apply for admission to WGS in the fall of sophomore year. Students may also apply in the spring of the sophomore year or at the beginning of the junior year by submitting a written statement explaining their interest in the program. The Director or Assistant Director of Studies will review applicants' previous academic records and may also elect to interview students before admission to the program. Application materials are available in the WGS main office and on our website: [www.fas.harvard.edu/wgs](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/wgs).

Students can do a **joint concentration** with WGS and a range of other concentrations including African and African American Studies, Anthropology, Economics, English, Environmental Science and Public Policy, Government, History, History and Literature, History and Science, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, Romance Languages, Social Studies, Sociology, and Visual and Environmental Studies. Specific guidelines for required courses may be obtained from the Directors of Studies.

Students may also complete a **secondary field** in WGS (see page 385 of this *Handbook* or the secondary fields website—[www.secondaryfields.fas.harvard.edu/WGS/program-desc-WGS.htm](http://www.secondaryfields.fas.harvard.edu/WGS/program-desc-WGS.htm)—for more details). The secondary field allows students to pursue an interest in studies of

women, gender and sexuality outside of their work for their concentrations. Students must take one foundational course (WGS 1000, 1200, 1210 or 1300), which will ground them in the history, methodology or theory of gender and sexuality studies. The flexibility of the four remaining course requirements allows students to sample from the rich course offerings in WGS while developing core areas of interest.

We advise first-year students and sophomores interested in WGS to take either WGS 1000: Introduction to Women, Gender and Sexuality, or a topical course of their interest within the 1100 level. Students interested in WGS as a concentration or a secondary field should meet with either the Director of Studies or the Assistant Director of Studies.

Further information is available in *The Concentration in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Handbook* and on our website: [www.fas.harvard.edu/wgs](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/wgs). Students may wish to consult the *Guide to Gender-Related Courses, Programs, and Other Resources*, available in the WGS main office or at [www.ksg.harvard.edu/wappp/courseguide/index.htm](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/wappp/courseguide/index.htm).

## REQUIREMENTS

**For students entering the College in Fall 2006 or later.  
Other students should refer to the *Handbook for Students*  
from the year in which they declared their concentration.**

### 13 half-courses

For students entering the concentration in 2007-2008 or later, the requirements are as follows:

1. *Required courses:*
  - a. WGS 97 (one term), 98r (one term); 99a and 99b (see item 2).
  - b. Choose **one** of the foundational courses: WGS 1200 or 1210 (formerly 1001 and 1003).
  - c. WGS 1300 (formerly WGS 1002).
  - d. Any WGS course numbered 1400+ or substituted course by permission of the Director of Studies.
  - d. Five half-courses in WGS or on WGS-related topics. (A list of pre-approved courses from other departments is available on the WGS website.) Students will work with concentration advisers to develop cohesive plans of study that are primarily situated within the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences. Concentration credit will be granted for courses that provide context or further methodological or theoretical training for the student's thesis. WGS 1000 and/or an additional foundational course (WGS 1200 or 1210) beyond that required can count within this group of five classes.
  - f. One half-course outside of the student's primary area of the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences (e.g., a student focusing on the humanities must take one half-course in the social sciences or the natural sciences).
2. *Tutorials:*
  - a. *Sophomore year:* WGS 97 (one term). Letter-graded.
  - b. *Junior year:* WGS 98r (one term) required. Letter-graded. A 20–25 page junior essay is required.
  - c. *Senior year:* WGS 99a and 99b, the writing of the senior thesis. Graded SAT/UNS. In order for a student to receive a grade of SAT for the fall term, a substantial part of the thesis work must be submitted by the end of the term.
3. *Thesis:* Required of all concentrators.
4. *Oral Examination:* Required. Each concentrator takes an individually tailored oral General Examination at the end of the senior year.

### **Joint Concentration**

WGS can be combined with a range of other concentrations. A joint concentration is an excellent choice for students who want to actively integrate their studies, building toward a final combined thesis project.

#### **Women, Gender, and Sexuality as the Primary Concentration** **8 half-courses**

1. *Required courses:*
  - a. WGS 97 (one term), WGS 98r (one term); 99a and 99b.
  - b. Choose **one** of WGS 1200 or 1210 (formerly WGS 1001 and 1003).
  - c. WGS 1300 (formerly WGS 1002).
  - d. Two half-courses within WGS or on WGS-related themes. (A list of pre-approved courses from other departments is available on the WGS website.)
2. For Tutorials, Thesis, and Oral Examination information, please see 2, 3, and 4 in the requirement for full concentrators, above.

#### **Women, Gender, and Sexuality as the Allied Concentration** **5 half-courses**

1. *Required courses:*
  - a. WGS 97 (one term), and WGS 98r (one term).
  - b. Choose **one** of WGS 1200, 1210, or 1300 (formerly WGS 1001, 1003, and 1002, respectively).
  - c. Two half-courses within WGS or on WGS-related themes. (A list of pre-approved courses from other departments is available on the WGS website.)
2. For Tutorials, Thesis, and Oral Examination information, please see 2, 3, and 4 in the requirements for full concentrators, above.

### **ADVISING**

Each student meets regularly with her or his assigned adviser. The Director of Studies is the primary academic adviser for sophomores and juniors, and the Assistant Director of Studies is the primary academic adviser for seniors..

For up-to-date information on advising in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, please see the Advising Programs Office website: [www.fas.harvard.edu/~advising/concentrations/WGS.html](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~advising/concentrations/WGS.html).

### **RESOURCES**

The Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America is the leading research library in the field. The library holds more than 35,000 volumes, 800 collections of personal and organizational papers, 50,000 photographs, oral histories, videotapes, and other historical materials. The library collects information on women's rights, suffrage, social welfare and reform, pioneers in the professions, and the family. Carol J. Pforzheimer Student Fellowships are awarded annually to undergraduates to use the resources of the library.

The Henry A. Murray Research Archive is a multidisciplinary research center whose focus is the study of lives over time. It is also a national archive for social science data on human development and social change, especially data that illuminate women's lives and issues of concern to women. Students and researchers at all levels, from undergraduates to scholars, use

the center's resources. These include studies of family life, careers, psychological development, political participation, and mental health.

### STUDY ABROAD

With good planning, a term abroad or out of residence can be a very meaningful educational experience. In the past our concentrators have spent terms taking courses in countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Chile, Australia, Spain, and France. Most concentrators who go abroad to study do so in the fall term of junior year, which allows them to return to campus in time to take the junior tutorial (98r) the following spring. Concentrators who wish to study abroad during the spring term of junior year must make special arrangements to complete the junior tutorial a term early (i.e., in the fall of junior year). If you are a concentrator considering a term abroad, please consult your concentration adviser and the study-out-of-residence adviser as soon as possible. Plans for study out of residence must be approved by the university significantly in advance of the term in which a student plans to be away.

### HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

For further information, contact the main office at 617-495-9199 or via email at [wgs@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:wgs@fas.harvard.edu). The office of the Committee on Degrees in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality is located on the ground floor of Boylston Hall. A handbook describing the concentration, a list of current course offerings, and application materials are available from the office.

### ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

#### Number of Concentrators as of November

Concentrators	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality	12	9	10	13	14
Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality + another field	2	4	2	2	1
Another field + Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality	12	11	10	17	11