



Women's & Gender Studies

a MINOR that makes a MAJOR difference

Women & Jesuit Mission

At General Congregation 34, the Society of Jesus acknowledged that “the legacy of systematic discrimination against women . . . is embedded within the economic, social, political, religious and even linguistic structures of our societies” (Decree 14.363) and invited Jesuits & Jesuit institutions “to align themselves in solidarity with women” (14.373), e.g., by means of “explicit teaching of the essential equality of women and men, . . . esp. in schools, colleges and universities” (14.374), “support for liberation movements which oppose the exploitation of women and encourage their entry into political and social life” (14.375); and “specific attention to the phenomenon of violence against women” (14.376).



WGS & CREIGHTON'S JESUIT MISSION

Quite purposefully and critically, the WGS Program adds women and the demands of gender-justice to “the integrating vision of the world” to which the University Mission Statement commits us. In so doing, numerous WGS courses introduce students to the concept of INTERSECTIONALITY, which theorizes gender as but one of multiple elements that comprise a person's identity within the social order: race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, able-bodiedness, etc.

For more information about the Women's & Gender Studies Program, contact its current Director, Dr. Susan Calef, in the Department of Theology.

What is WGS ?

A program in the College of Arts & Sciences that combines two interdisciplinary fields – Women's Studies and Gender Studies – to offer an 18-credit hour minor to undergraduates.

WS + GS = WGS

Reflective of its foundations in **Women's Studies** (WS), WGS highlights women's experiences and contributions, both historically and in contemporary societies around the globe, and introduces students to diverse expressions of feminist and womanist thought. As **Gender Studies** (GS), the program explores experiences and constructions of gender and sexuality. By virtue of the combination of these two fields, in Creighton's program students discover new, more inclusive ways of thinking & relating in contemporary society.

THE VALUE OF WGS

Sex, sexuality, and gender, which are fundamental aspects of human experience, are currently among the most contentious issues in the American cultural context. By introducing students and the campus community to the scholarship on gender and sexuality, WGS provides opportunity to explore and examine “hot-button” issues with the rationality and disciplinary expertise necessary to our collective search for solutions to current problems and controversies.

In addition, by exposure to scholarship on, for example, offensive gender and racial stereotypes & on sexist or non-inclusive language that demeans, marginalizes, and alienates others, students gain the knowledge and critical awareness to interact more effectively with colleagues and clients of various cultural backgrounds and diverse sexual orientations. Such capacities can enhance career competence and personal relationships in the future.

ATTENTION TO DIFFERENCE

Attention to the intersecting elements of gender, race, class, and other social coordinates of identity affords students a more nuanced and critical understanding of the workings of systems of domination that impact people's lives, thereby preparing them for more effective action on behalf of justice. As a WGS minor ('08) observed, “The WGS minor is the most promising vehicle available for developing the critical tools one needs to cogently advocate for women and other marginalized people in the local and global communities.”

Making a Difference

The program slogan (“a MINOR that makes a MAJOR difference”) intends a twofold meaning. First, WGS intends to make a major difference in the personal, professional, and intellectual lives of Creighton students. Second, the program aims to make a difference by providing critical “lenses” with which students can conduct research in their major fields of study. Students present their research to the campus community at the annual **WGS Student Showcase** as well as to a larger public, e.g., at the **No Limits WGS Student Conference** hosted by the University of Nebraska system.



RESEARCH

Many CAS faculty who teach WGS courses conduct research and publish on women, gender, and/or sexuality. Their expertise affords opportunity for faculty-student collaborative research and the development of mentoring relationships.

HONORING DIFFERENCE-MAKERS

Annually WGS recognizes graduating minors for “making a difference” in the classroom, in research, and in service. Reflective of its commitment to “the incarnational work” of academics appropriate to a Jesuit institution, i.e., “walking the talk/thought” of the classroom into advocacy on behalf of justice, WGS bestows awards for such advocacy, including the **Kali Mann Memorial “Iron-Jawed Angels” Award for Leadership in Service of Gender Justice**, the **SAGE Award** (Student Advocate for Gender Equity), and “**Making a Difference: Faith in Action for Others.**”

