Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies, BA

Students who major in gender, women's, and sexuality studies (GWSS) explore the ways that gender and sexuality intersect with class, race, ethnicity, nationality, and transnational processes. Students develop interdisciplinary research and writing skills, the ability to address structural inequalities from the local to the global level, and the critical tools necessary to work toward social transformation and social justice. GWSS majors participate in two high-impact experiences that prepare them for careers in a wide range of fields. They participate in a practicum at a community-based site where they learn to integrate feminist theory and practice; then, during their senior year, they do rigorous, original research for critical or creative projects on topics of their own choosing.

Learning Outcomes
Students graduating with a major in gender, women's, and sexuality studies will demonstrate how to:

• apply feminist intersectional theory in scholarly and creative practice;
• evaluate issues, research problems, and construct arguments using GWSS tools and concepts;
• communicate effectively with diverse audiences through speech, writing, and other forms of creative and scholarly expression; and
• work collaboratively with others in diverse communities using core GWSS strengths and skills.

Requirements
The Bachelor of Arts with a major in gender, women's, and sexuality studies (GWSS) requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 39 s.h. of work for the major. Students must maintain a grade-point average of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

Students may declare the major at any time. They are advised by the Academic Advising Center until they have earned 30 s.h. of credit. Transfer credit is evaluated case by case; ideally, these courses should be offered by the Department of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies (prefix GWSS). At least half of the material in global/comparative topics courses must have a non-U.S. context.

Undergraduate Core
The undergraduate core consists of three courses. GWSS:1001 Introduction to Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies examines cultural and social beliefs about sex, gender, race, class, and sexuality; GWSS:1002 Diversity and Power in the U.S. explores the intersections of race, class, and gender in the United States. GWSS:3005/SJUS:3005 Practicum teaches students how to apply feminist intersectional concepts in a practicum experience organized in collaboration with community partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:1001</td>
<td>Introduction to Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:1002</td>
<td>Diversity and Power in the U.S.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3005/SJUS:3005</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution Requirements
The distribution requirements (total of at least 12 s.h.) are chosen from the following lists. They include one GWSS theory course, one transnational theory course, one GWSS course with a global/comparative focus, and one GWSS or other course with a race/ethnicity focus. Students may request permission from the director of undergraduate studies to use courses not on these lists; ideally, these courses should be offered by the Department of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies (prefix GWSS). At least half of the material in global/comparative topics courses must have a non-U.S. context.

Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3100</td>
<td>LGBTQ/Queer Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3200</td>
<td>Theories for Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transnational Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3010/GHS:3015</td>
<td>Transnational Sexualities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3326/GHS:3327</td>
<td>The Politics of Progress: NGOs, Development, and Sexuality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3350/ANTH:3125/IS:3350</td>
<td>Transnational Feminism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Global/Comparative Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2052/RELS:2852</td>
<td>Women in Islam and the Middle East</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2108/ANTH:2108</td>
<td>Gendering India</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2151/ANTH:2151/IS:2151</td>
<td>Global Migration in the Contemporary World</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Race/Ethnicity in the U.S. Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2222/ASIA:2222/WLCC:2222</td>
<td>Women in Premodern East Asian Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2571/ENGLISH:2571/SJUS:2571</td>
<td>Visualizing Human Rights (if not taken to fulfill the Race/Ethnicity in the U.S. Focus area)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2650/GHS:2650</td>
<td>Global Reproduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2674/GHS:2674/REL:2674</td>
<td>Food, Body, and Belief: A Global Perspective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2700</td>
<td>Transgender People, Politics, and Cultures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:2900/ANTH:2191</td>
<td>Love, Sex, and Money: Sexuality and Exchange Across Cultures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3101/ANTH:3101</td>
<td>Anthropology of Sexuality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3121/ANTH:3121</td>
<td>Love, Marriage, and Family in India</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3131/ASIA:3431/REL:3431</td>
<td>Gender and Sexuality in East Asia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3157/HIST:3157</td>
<td>Gender, Sexuality, and Human Rights</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3185/WLCC:3185</td>
<td>Global Women's Cinema</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3326/GHS:3327</td>
<td>The Politics of Progress: NGOs, Development, and Sexuality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3427/HIST:3427</td>
<td>Family, Gender, and Society in Early Modern Europe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:4026/FREN:4026</td>
<td>French Women Writers</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:4140/ANTH:4140/CBH:4140/GHS:4140</td>
<td>Feminist Activism and Global Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:4540/FREN:4540</td>
<td>Gender and Sexuality in French Cinema</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJUS:1046/ANTH:1046/GEOL:1046/GWSS:1046</td>
<td>Environmental Politics in India</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Race/Ethnicity in the U.S. Focus**

One of these:

- GWSS:2571/ENGLISH:2571/SJUS:2571
- GWSS:2800/AFAM:2800
- GWSS:3133/ANTH:3133/SJUS:3133

**Electives**

Students must complete 12 s.h. of GWSS/SJUS courses numbered 1000–4999; at least 6 s.h. of the 12 s.h. must be completed from the upper-level GWSS/SJUS courses numbered 3000–4999. Students can count GWSS distribution area requirement courses as electives if they were not used to fulfill their area requirements. With the instructor's permission, honors students may count a graduate-level course numbered 5000 or above toward the electives requirement.

In choosing electives, students are encouraged to pursue a course of study that emphasizes breadth and depth in a specific discipline (anthropology, English, and history, among others) or a focus area (art, writing, literature, sexuality, media, global and transnational studies, race and ethnicity, health, and so on).

**Capstone Courses**

These courses help students develop and create their capstone projects.

Students first take GWSS:3900 Research for Public Engagement in the fall semester of their final year, which focuses on developing advanced research, reading, and writing skills and choosing capstone topics. In the spring of their senior year, students take GWSS:4090 Senior Research Seminar, a research and writing workshop in which students work collaboratively with their classmates to complete their
creative or scholarship capstone work, including creating a poster for the end of the semester Senior Research Poster Show.

Students who write an honors thesis enroll in GWSS:4095 Honors Senior Thesis in the spring semester of their senior year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:3900</td>
<td>Research for Public Engagement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:4090</td>
<td>Senior Research Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWSS:4095</td>
<td>Honors Senior Thesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Honors in the Major**

Students have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Departmental honors students must maintain a University of Iowa grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.33 and a GPA of at least 3.50 in the major. Students must write an honors thesis that requires two semesters of work during the senior year: fall (thesis research by enrolling in GWSS:3900 Research for Public Engagement) and spring (thesis writing by enrolling in GWSS:4095 Honors Senior Thesis).

Students who intend to graduate with honors in the major should meet with the gender, women’s, and sexuality studies (GWSS) director of undergraduate study before the end of their junior year. They also must select a faculty member to serve as their honors thesis mentor before they begin their thesis work. They should meet with their mentor at least twice in the fall semester of their senior year to discuss their project. The department recommends that students consider faculty members from whom they have taken GWSS courses.

**University of Iowa Honors Program**

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the university’s honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the gender, women’s, and sexuality studies major.

**Career Advancement**

Gender, women’s, and sexuality studies (GWSS) majors develop the critical skills and problem-solving abilities needed for engaging the challenges of contemporary life. Graduates work in diverse settings, such as government and nonprofit agencies, newspaper offices, human resource departments, museums, theaters, international human rights organizations, schools, and hospitals. They do fund raising, political organizing, teaching, writing, research, advocacy work, counseling, diversity training, and marketing. They become social workers, nurses, midwives, doctors, editors, librarians, business managers, grant writers, campaign directors, educational administrators, program coordinators, lawyers, and professors.

A GWSS undergraduate education provides a solid foundation for pursuing graduate degrees from schools of social work, public health, law, education, international relations, public affairs and public policy, and medicine. The major also prepares students for a wide range of graduate programs, including gender and women’s studies, history, anthropology, urban education, creative writing, political science, human rights, human sexuality, and counseling.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

**Academic Plans**

**Four-Year Graduation Plan**

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the university's Four-Year Graduation Plan.

**Before the third semester begins:** GWSS:1001 Introduction to Gender, Women’s, and Sexuality Studies.

**Before the fifth semester begins:** GWSS:1002 Diversity and Power in the U.S. and two GWSS electives.

**Before the seventh semester begins:** one GWSS distribution course (theory or comparative/non-U.S. focus) and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree.

**Before the eighth semester begins:** GWSS:3005 Practicum, GWSS:3900 Research for Public Engagement, one more GWSS distribution course (theory or comparative/non-U.S. focus), and at least one more GWSS elective.

**During the eighth semester:** enrollment in all remaining coursework in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate.

**Sample Plan of Study**

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

**Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies, BA**

**Course** | **Title** | **Hours** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Career</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any Semester</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GE CLAS Core: Sustainability</strong> a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First Year**

**Fall**

GWSS:1001 Introduction to Gender, Women’s, and Sexuality Studies | 3 |
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030 The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric | 3 - 4 |
GE CLAS Core: Values and Culture b | 3 |
CSI:1600 Success at Iowa | 2 |
Elective course c | 3 |
**Hours** | 14-15 |

**Spring**

GWSS:1002 Diversity and Power in the U.S. | 3 |
RHET:1030 or ENGL:1200 Rhetoric or The Interpretation of Literature | 3 - 4 |
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab b | 4 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE CLAS Core: Social Sciences</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elective course</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hours** 15-16

**Second Year**

**Fall**

| Major: elective course        | 3 |
| Major: race/ethnicity in the U.S. focus course | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level | 4 - 5 |
| Proficiency or elective course | 1 |
| Elective course               | 3 |

**Hours** 16-17

**Spring**

| Major: global/comparative focus course | 3 |
| Major: elective course               | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level | 4 - 5 |
| Proficiency or elective course       | 1 |
| Elective course                      | 3 |

**Third Year**

**Fall**

| GWSS:3005 Practicum               | 3 |
| Major: theory course              | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: World Languages Third Level | 4 - 5 |
| Proficiency or elective course    | 1 |
| Elective course                   | 3 |

**Hours** 16-17

**Spring**

| Major: transnational theory course | 3 |
| Major: 3000-level or above elective course | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level | 4 - 5 |
| Proficiency or elective course     | 1 |
| Elective course                    | 3 |
| Elective course                    | 3 |

**Hours** 16-17

**Fourth Year**

**Fall**

| GWSS:3900 Research for Public Engagement | 3 |
| Major: 3000-level or above elective course | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts | 3 |

| Elective course | 3 |
| Elective course | 3 |

**Hours** 16-17

**Spring**

| GWSS:4095 Honors Senior Thesis | 3 |
| or GWSS:4090 Senior Research Seminar | 3 |
| GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences without Lab | 3 |
| Elective course                | 3 |
| Elective course                | 3 |
| Elective course                | 3 |

| Degree Application: apply on MyUI before deadline (typically in February for spring, September for fall) | |
| Hours | 15 |

**Total Hours** 122-128

---

- **a** Sustainability must be completed by choosing a course that has been approved for Sustainability AND for one of these General Education areas: Natural Sciences; Quantitative and Formal Reasoning; Social Sciences; Historical Perspectives; International and Global Issues; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts; or Values and Culture.
- **b** GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.
- **c** Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.
- **d** Students select at least 12 s.h. in major electives with a minimum of 6 s.h. numbered 3000 or above.
- **e** See the General Catalog for list of approved courses.
- **f** Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.
- **g** Typically this course is offered in fall semesters only. Check MyUI for course availability since offerings are subject to change.
- **h** Typically this course is offered in spring semesters only. Check MyUI for course availability since offerings are subject to change.
- **i** Please see Academic Calendar, Office of the Registrar website for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor or Graduation Services.