Nebraska Wesleyan University

Gender Studies

Catalog

2012-2013

About the Program

The study of women, gender, and feminist scholarship is an interdisciplinary field that draws upon research in the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences, the arts, and professional education. Gender Studies courses encourage both male and female students to make strong personal connections between classroom material and their own experience. Through applying feminist theories to their own lives, students learn, interpret, and evaluate various cultural phenomena, using a broad range of criteria, including gender, ethnicity, race, class, age, and sexual orientation.

The Bachelor of Arts designates a broad-based liberal arts education. The Bachelor of Science is advisable for those who wish to signal social science expertise in a related career such as social work or counseling psychology.

Majors, Minors & Degrees

Majors

1. Gender Studies (B.A., B.S.)

Minors

1. Gender Studies

Courses

GEND 090 Introduction to Gender Studies

3 hours

This course serves as an introduction to feminist theory and the study of women's experience from biological, social, political, psychological, and historical perspectives. The students will consider images of women in various media compared to the realities of women's lives. Special attention will be given to the differences in women's and men's lives due to race, class, and ethnicity. Field work addresses the problems women confront in U.S. society such as rape, incest, abuse, poverty, and discrimination.

GEND 101 Masterpieces of Literature: Coming of Age or Sexualities

3 hours

An introductory course designed to help students appreciate the literary record of human relationships with nature, the supernatural, and each other. Each course examines a particular question or condition as it is represented in a restricted number of literary works, with core readings from the Bible, Greek or Roman classical literature, Shakespeare, literature by women, and literature by writers of color. Different topics are offered on a rotating basis for ENG 101 Masterpieces of Literature, however, only the topics of "Coming of Age-Becoming Women, Becoming Men" and "Sexualities" are available as GEND 101 Masterpieces of Literature: Coming of Age or Sexualities.

Prerequisite(s): ENG 001 English Language and Writing.

Coming of Age-Becoming Women, Becoming Men This course looks at texts that represent the forces and processes that are part of maturation, especially those related to gender identity. This course focuses on gender issues and includes feminist perspectives.

Sexualities This course is designed to help students appreciate the literary record of romantic relationships. Specifically, the course will explore how writers from different historical periods and cultural milieus address the issue of human sexuality. Note: same-sex relationships will be routinely read about and discussed in the class.

GEND 120 Psychology of Women

3 hours

An investigation of psychological theories and issues relating to the psychology of women from a feminist perspective. Gender bias in traditional psychological theories, research, and practice will be evaluated in relation to women's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Students will gain a better understanding of women's psychology across the lifespan and how other interacting constructs such as race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, nationality, and disability influence women's experiences. The social and political implications of how we understand women and gender will be explored, and emphasis will be placed on envisioning possibilities for individual (psychological) and social change.

(Normally offered each fall semester.)

GEND 125 Psychology of Gender

3 hours

A course examining the construct of gender. Topics include gender development and socialization, cross-cultural gender differences, institutions affecting gender roles, the social maintenance systems for gender roles, and gender issues in contemporary literature and the arts.

Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing.

GEND 130P Philosophies of Race and Gender

3 hours

Most Americans have some understanding of how the categories of race and gender influence our personal and social identities. Yet many Americans also assume that race and gender are "natural," i.e., that we are born into a certain race and naturally embody a certain sex. In this course, we will examine these assumptions by reading, discussing, and critically assessing the arguments for and against the "naturalness" of race and gender. We will consider how categories of race and gender position us, historically and philosophically, as a person of a certain "type" from whom certain behaviors are expected. We will look at socio-economic conditions and philosophic positions that support or challenge racism, sexism, classism, segregation, and violence.

GEND 130R Women and Religion

3 hours

This course will examine the roles of women in religious traditions. Students will encounter scholarship on gender, religion, and feminist theology in different traditions. The primary focus of this course will be on the religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, although other traditions and contemporary religious movements may be considered.

GEND 135 Family Violence

3 hours

This course will expose students to the various types of violence experienced by individuals and families across their lifespan. An introduction to various theories used in working with survivors of abuse will be presented and students will learn about bruises and fractures associated with child abuse. The influence of societal "isms", culture, gender, and sexual orientation related to

violence will be incorporated into the material being discussed.

(Normally offered each spring semester.)

GEND 137 History of Women in the United States

3 hours

Introduction to the experiences of women in the United States from colonization to the present, with an examination of cultural meanings attached to gender; various social inequalities in access to institutions, activities, and resources; and women's status, well being, and power in American society. The course investigates the lives of women from various social, ethnic, and racial groups, analyzing the ways that they affected one another. The course emphasizes sexuality, reproduction, and maternity, and also covers politics, law, work, education, and other issues in women's lives.

GEND 160 Music and Gender

3 hours

From Hildegard von Bingen to Nicki Minaj, this course examines the ways in which social constructions of gender have shaped the interpretation, reception, and historical narratives of popular, classical, and traditional musical styles. Through historiography and musical analysis, we will discuss systems of domination and subordination along with stereotyped and biased assumptions about women and men pertinent to the music of specific cultures and time periods.

GEND 170 Women and Power

3 hours

This course examines the participation of women in society and politics, and their ability to influence the policy decisions related to the issues of concern to them. The course will take a cross-national perspective, although primary emphasis will be women in Middle Eastern and South Asian societies.

GEND 173 Gender and the Art of Film

3 hours

This course will examine representations of masculinity, femininity, and androgyny in primarily U.S. film. Students will learn to recognize and evaluate elements of film art. Using variety of film theories, we will analyze Hollywood and independent movie images of men and women for the messages conveyed about gender roles and expectations.

GEND 190 Selected Topics

1-5 hours

A course designed to treat subject matter not covered in other courses or to provide advanced study of subject matter introduced in other courses. The title, content, and credit hours will be determined by current mutual interests of Gender Studies faculty and students.

Prerequisite(s): GEND 090 Introduction to Gender Studies, plus additional requirements as may be determined by the instructor.

GEND 195 Independent Study

1-3 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged research project supervised by a Gender Studies faculty member. Special Projects may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.

Pass/Fail only.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor.

GEND 196 Special Projects

1-3 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged project supervised by a Gender Studies faculty member. Special Projects may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.

Pass/Fail only.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor.

GEND 197 Practicum

1-8 hours

A supervised, experiential learning opportunity in which the student is assigned to an agency dealing with gender concerns. Students prepare weekly written reports and a summary paper at the close of the semester. All students enrolled in the practicum will meet regularly with the faculty coordinator to discuss their practicum activities and their relevance to gender studies.

Pass/Fail only.

Pre or corequisite(s): GEND 090 Introduction to Gender Studies.

GEND 204 Women's Health: Global Perspective

3 hours

This course introduces women's health with an emphasis on global issues. Women's health will be examined using the influences of social, political, economic, cultural, and geographical factors. Students will examine the basic health needs of all women and compare the availability of and types of services in different parts of the world. A unique component of this course is the opportunity to work with women from another country to learn about other women's health concerns.

Prerequisite(s): GEND 090 Introduction to Gender Studies or SOC 003 Introduction to Sociology or a beginning level anthropology course or permission of the instructor.

GEND 222 Sociology of Gender

3 hours

This course explores sex and gender relations as major features of social life; it considers the social construction of gender and examines the impact of gender ideologies on the social positions of women and men. In particular, it emphasizes the inequality of women's social positions in modern societies, and the embedded gender inequality in social institutions.

Prerequisite(s): SOC 003 Introduction to Sociology or SOC 004 Social Problems.

(Normally offered alternate years.)

GEND 227 Feminist Theories

3 hours

An exploration of the varieties of contemporary feminist thought. We will examine the points of convergence among feminist philosophers but also attend seriously to the issues that divide them. Special consideration will be given to race, class, and diverse attitudes toward marriage and reproduction. Having established that feminism is not a single, homogeneous system, we will inquire as to whether this constitutes a flaw or a liberating potential.

GEND 240 Women Writing Across Cultures

3 hours

Fiction and essays by women from various cultures (including the U.S., Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean) will be the focus of this course. The multicultural, international reading list will provide students insight into the lives and experiences of women most likely very different from themselves; thus they can appreciate and learn from the differences and make connections across cultures.

Prerequisite(s): ENG 001 English Language and Writing and ENG 101 Masterpieces of Literature.

GEND 241 Women in the Biblical World

3 hours

This course will examine the role and status of women as depicted in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Students will focus on the stories and laws concerning women that are found in the Bible as well as in extra-biblical materials.

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing.

Offered as part of the Classics Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

GEND 250 Communication and Gender

3 hours

This course offers an exploration of theories of the creation and perpetuation of gender and gender roles through communication. In turn, students will consider the question of the impact of gender on communication. Students will examine gender in a variety of contexts including families, schools, and media.

GEND 255 Women of the American West

3 hours

This course highlights women's experiences in the American West from precontact to present, and explores topics of myth and stereotypes; women's roles in the home, family and community; and racial, class and ethnic differences in women's experiences.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 001 United States History to 1877 and HIST 002 United States Society and Culture since 1877 or permission of the instructor.

GEND 262 Contemporary Theatre: Performance of Gender Topic Only

3 hours

Contemporary Theatre is a course designed to situate the study and practice of theatre within contemporary cultural contexts. Each course examines a particular cultural issue or condition as it is represented in a number of theories, dramatic works, production methods, theatre enterprises, and broader cultural practices. Different topics are offered for THTRE 262 Contemporary Theatre, however, only the topic of "Performance of Gender" is available as GEND 262 Contemporary Theatre: Performance of Gender Topic Only.

Prerequisite(s): Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

GEND 295 Independent Study

1-3 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged research project supervised by a member of the Gender Studies faculty. Independent Study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.

Prerequisite(s): Minor in Gender Studies, junior or senior standing, and permission of the Gender Studies instructor.

GEND 296 Special Projects

1-3 hours

An opportunity for a student to engage in an individually arranged project supervised by a member of the Gender Studies faculty. Independent Study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.

Pass/Fail only.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor.

GEND 297 Practicum

1-8 hours

A supervised, experimental learning opportunity in which the student is assigned to an agency dealing with gender concerns. Students prepare weekly written reports and a summary paper at the close of the semester. All students enrolled in the practicum will meet regularly with the faculty coordinator to discuss their practicum activities and their relevance to gender studies.

Pass/Fail only.

Prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s): GEND 090 Introduction to Gender Studies.

GEND 299 Feminist Research

3 hours

A student will complete a research project or senior thesis under the direction of at least two Gender Studies faculty members. The student will present an oral defense of the thesis.

Prerequisite(s): Senior standing and permission of the Gender Studies faculty members.