

# WGS-1510: INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

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## Cuyahoga Community College

**Viewing: WGS-1510 : Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies**

**Board of Trustees:**

January 2022

**Academic Term:**

Fall 2022

**Subject Code**

WGS - Women and Gender Studies

**Course Number:**

1510

**Title:**

Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

**Catalog Description:**

Introduction to the field of women's and gender studies, which transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries. Analysis of gender's role in shaping human societies of past and present: their history, their expression through arts and literature, their philosophy of feminism, and comparative conditions of women in diverse cultures and social locations.

**Credit Hour(s):**

3

**Lecture Hour(s):**

3

## Requisites

**Prerequisite and Corequisite**

None.

## Outcomes

**Course Outcome(s):**

Demonstrate an understanding of the field of Women's and Gender Studies as an academic discipline.

**Objective(s):**

1. Define the concept of interdisciplinarity as it applies to Women's and Gender Studies.
2. Discuss central debates within the field, both current and historical.
3. Identify significant concepts originating from other academic disciplines in both the Humanities and Social Sciences.
4. Discuss significant elements of feminist theory.
5. Identify feminist research methodologies, both qualitative and quantitative, across a variety of subject areas.
6. Identify information sources within the field of Women's and Gender Studies.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Differentiate between various theories of gender.

**Objective(s):**

1. Define essentialism, biological determinism, and social construction as they relate to gender.
2. Describe the ways in which gender as a socially constructed identity category intersects with a multitude of other socially constructed identities.
3. Discuss the social processes that shape beliefs about gender both in the U.S. and globally.
4. Identify ways in which traditional gender roles affect individuals and society as a whole.

5. Discuss how social and cultural institutions, such as education, media, family, religion, economies, affect individuals of different gender identities.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Analyze the ways in which oppression is gendered.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Cultural Sensitivity: Demonstrate sensitivity to the beliefs, views, values, and practices of cultures within and beyond the United States.

**Objective(s):**

1. Define concepts of privilege, oppression, sexism, and patriarchy.
2. Recognize relevant ethical issues associated with privilege and oppression.
3. Explain basic principles of intersectional and transnational feminisms.
4. Describe identity as a complex concept that includes an individual's race, color, language, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, and socio-economic status.
5. Recognize the ways that gendered oppression has shaped history with specific focus on ethnocentrism, colonialism, slavery, democracy, capitalism, and imperialism.
6. Explain how cultural practices within historical, social, cultural, and economic systems shape people's socio-cultural status and access to resources across genders.
7. Describe the meaning of empathy and synthesize ways in which empathy across a range of socio-cultural identities has the capacity to reduce the impacts of gendered oppression.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Examine the impact of women's activism on society both past and present.

**Objective(s):**

1. Identify significant events in the history of women's fight for equality in society.
2. Identify the ways in which women throughout history have challenged ethnocentrism, colonialism, slavery, and imperialism.
3. Identify important current events, issues, and movements relating to women and examine how they exist in an historical context.
4. Explain the concept of feminist praxis.

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**Methods of Evaluation:**

1. Oral presentations
2. Written analysis of historical or contemporary popular culture texts
3. Tests including multiple choice, short answer, and essay type questions
4. Analysis of primary and secondary source materials
5. Research paper
6. Service learning projects related to course topics
7. Final evaluation of course and impact

**Course Content Outline:**

1. Women's & Gender Studies as an academic discipline
  - a. Emergence of the field with the history of the women's movement
  - b. Interdisciplinary perspectives
  - c. Relationship to and differentiation from Queer Studies and Gender Studies
2. Theories of Gender
  - a. Biological perspectives
    - i. Biological determinism
    - ii. Differences among theories of sex and gender
    - iii. Feminist essentialism
  - b. Social Construction
    - i. Gender roles and expectations in society
    - ii. Gender identity, gender expression, sexuality
    - iii. Socialization processes
    - iv. Theories relating to gender formation
    - v. Structural sexism of social institutions

3. Women in Society
  - a. Women & Gender and Work
    - i. Horizontal and vertical segregation of labor
    - ii. Pay equity/wage gap
    - iii. Sex work
  - b. Women & Gender and Education
  - c. Women & Gender and Family
  - d. Women & Gender and Religion
  - e. Women & Gender and Politics
    - i. Significant legal cases
    - ii. Selected women politicians and their contributions
  - f. Women & Gender and Media
4. Women's Health and Reproduction
  - a. Reproductive Justice
  - b. Birth control, abortion, pregnancy, and childbirth
  - c. Breastfeeding
  - d. Lifecycle and Aging
  - e. Women in the healthcare system
  - f. Women and scientific research
5. Violence Against Women
  - a. Rape and rape culture
  - b. Intimate partner violence
  - c. Street harassment
  - d. Human trafficking
  - e. Pornography and Sex Work
  - f. Sexual Harassment
6. Feminist Theory
  - a. Epistemology
  - b. Intersectionality
  - c. Standpoint theory
  - d. Marxist Feminism
  - e. Transnational Feminism
  - f. Literary/Linguistic Feminism
7. Activism, Praxis, and Social Change
  - a. Suffrage
  - b. Property rights
  - c. Workplace rights
  - d. Violence against women
  - e. Reproductive rights
  - f. 21st Century/Third and Fourth Wave Activism

## Resources

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. NY: Routledge, 1991.

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Eisenstein, Hester, and Alice Jardine, eds. *The Future of Difference*. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1985.

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Ellmann, Mary. *Thinking About Women*. NY: HBJ, 1968.

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Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. NY: Norton, 1963.

---

Fuller, Margaret. *Women in the Nineteenth Century*. NY: Norton, 1971.

---

Greenspan, Karen. *The Timetables of Women's History: A Chronology of the Most Important People and Events in Women's History*. NY: Simon Schuster, 1994.

---

Griffin, Susan. *Woman and Nature: To Roaring Inside Here*. NY: Harper Row, 1980.

---

Hooyman, Nancy R., and Judith Gonyear. *Feminist Perspectives on Family Care: Policies for Gender Justice*. NY: University Press, 1995.

---

Jameson, Elizabeth and Susan Armitage, eds. *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*. Tulsa: University of Oklahoma, 1996.

---

Jardine, Alice A. *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985.

---

Jejeebhoy, Shireen. *Women's Education, Autonomy, and Reproductive Behavior: Experience from Developing Countries*. NY: New York UP, 1998.

---

Jordan, Shirley M., ed. *Broken Silences: Interviews with Black and White Women Writers*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1993.

---

MacKinnon, Catharine A. *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law*. Cambridge, MASS: Harvard UP, 1987.

---

Millett, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. NY: Avon, 1969.

---

Ostriker, Alicia Suskin. *Feminist Revision and the Bible*. Cambridge, MASS: Blackwell, 1993.

---

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*. Boston: Beacon, 1983.

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Walker, Alice. *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down*. NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.

---

Boylan, Anne M. *Women's Rights in the United States: a History in Documents*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

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Braithwaite, Ann, and Catherine Orr. *Everyday Women's and Gender Studies: Introductory Concepts*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017.

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Gillis, Melissa, and Andrew Jacobs. *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: an Interdisciplinary Approach*. Oxford University Press, 2020.

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Kang, Miliann; Lessard, Donovan; Heston, Laura; and Nordmaken, Sonny . *Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies*. University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.7275/R5QZ284K>

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Kelly, Suzanne M., et al. *Women: Images and Realities: a Multicultural Anthology*. 5th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2012.

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Launius, Christie and Holly Hassel. *Threshold Concepts in Women's and Gender Studies Ways of Seeing, Thinking, and Knowing*. 2nd ed. Taylor and Francis, 2018.

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Murphy, Michael J., and Elizabeth N. Ribarsky. *Activities for Teaching Gender and Sexuality in the University Classroom*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2013.

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Saraswati, L. Ayu, et al. *Introduction to Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Interdisciplinary and Intersectional Approaches*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

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Shaw, Susan Maxime, and Janet Lee. *Gendered Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press, 2020.

---

Titus, Megan L., and Wendy L. Walker. *Gender: A Reader for Writers*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

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White, Jacquelyn W. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Gender*. McGraw Hill, 2013.

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#### **Resources Other**

1. *Columbia Journal of Gender & Law*
2. *European Journal of Women's Studies*
3. *Feminist Studies*
4. *Feminist Review*
5. *Feminist Teacher*
6. *Gender*
7. *Gender and Education*
8. *Gender and Society*
9. *Journal of Gender Studies*
10. *Journal of Women's History*
11. *Ms. Magazine*
12. *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society*
13. *Women's Studies Quarterly*
14. *Women's Studies International Forum*

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