

# STUDY OF WOMEN, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

## SWG 150 Introduction to the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality (4 Credits)

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of women's, gender and sexuality studies. Students learn key concepts and theories of the field by analyzing the social construction of sex, gender and sexuality as they intersect with race, class, nationality and (dis)ability at the individual, institutional and ideological levels, and in national and global contexts. The course examines the historical roots of feminist movements and thinking, and engages with contemporary movements for social justice. Texts include archival materials, films, personal narratives, theory, scholarly works, poetry, fiction, art, and popular writing and culture. Students learn interdisciplinary methodologies of archival research, historical analysis, literary and visual analysis, and theoretical analysis. Primarily for first- and second-year students. Enrollment limited to 25. {H}{S}

**Fall, Spring**

## SWG 211 Girls in the System: Gender, Youth and Justice (4 Credits)

This interdisciplinary course considers the issue of gender, race, sexuality and class in the juvenile justice system. Drawing on gender and sexuality studies, criminal justice and sociological literature, social critiques, policy papers, case law, documentary film, personal narratives and fiction, the course critically examines the history of the juvenile justice system; what it means to be in "the system"; the role of "justice" in the juvenile system; and reviews some of the major issues faced by the youth who are subject to this system. In addition, the course considers the role of youth action and resistance against the system. (E) {S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## SWG 217 Sexual Violence in the U.S. Today (4 Credits)

This course explores sexual violence in the United States from psychological, sociological, public health, feminist, legal, social justice, and criminal justice perspectives. It addresses the sexual victimization of teenagers and adults (not children) of all genders in a variety of social contexts, using an anti-oppression framework. The course also focuses on ways to make sexual violence prevention and intervention services better suited to culturally diverse people. (E) {S}

**Spring, Variable**

## SWG 220 Introduction to Queer and Trans Studies (4 Credits)

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of queer studies, including its historical formations and recent innovations. The course explores the roots of queer theory in feminist theories of subjectivity and desire, queer of color critique, and queer critiques of traditional domains of knowledge production, including psychoanalysis and visual culture. Students examine a wide range of media and forms of documentation ranging from archival material and oral histories, to critical theory. The course attends to race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability, and puts these and other topics or identifications in conversation with course material and discussions. {A}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## SWG 222 Gender, Law and Policy (4 Credits)

This course explores the impact of gender on law and policy in the United States historically and today, focusing in the areas of constitutional equality, employment, education, reproduction, the family, violence against women and immigration. Students study constitutional and statutory law as well as public policy. Topics include sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination, pregnancy and caregiver discrimination, pay equity, sexual harassment, school athletics, marriage, sterilization, contraception and abortion, reproductive technologies, sexual assault, intimate partner violence and gender-based asylum. Students study feminist efforts to reform the law and examine how inequalities based on gender, race, class and sexuality shape the law. The class also discusses and debates contemporary policy and future directions. {H}{S}

**Fall**

## SWG 227 Colloquium: Feminist and Queer Disability Studies (4 Credits)

In the essay "A Burst of Light: Living with Cancer," writer-activist Audre Lorde forges pioneering connections between the work of social justice and the environmental, gendered, and healthcare inequities that circumscribe black and brown lives. Following Lorde's intervention, this course examines contemporary feminist/queer expressive culture, writing, and theory that centrally engages the category of dis/ability. It will familiarize students with feminist and queer scholarship that resists the medical pathologization of embodied difference; foreground dis/ability's intersections with questions of race, class, and nation; and ask what political and social liberation might look like when able-bodiedness is no longer privileged. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 20. {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## SWG 230 Gender, Land and Food Movements (4 Credits)

The class begins this course by working alongside Gardening the Community, a youth-based and anti-racist food and land movement in Springfield, MA. Students center their studies on both regional and transnational women's movements across the globe to develop their understanding about current economic trends in globalization processes. Through the insights of transnational feminist analysis, students map the history of land and food to imagine a more equitable present and future. Students develop a community-based research project that spans issues of climate change, environmentalism, critical race analysis and feminism. Prerequisite: SWG 150. {H}{S}

**Fall**

## SWG 235 Colloquium: Black Feminism (4 Credits)

An in-depth discussion of the history, debates, theory, activism and poetics of Black Feminism. Students study the conversations, ruptures and connections produced in dominant feminist scholarship by black feminist theory. The class reads foundational and emergent work in the field. Students learn the history of those scholarly interventions and examine the pervasive ways of knowing that are being disrupted through black feminist scholarship. Students develop an understanding of the relationship between black feminism, feminism, women of color feminism and queer theory. Topics covered using theoretical texts, works of cinema and popular culture. Students examine cultural texts alongside theory to practice close reading as a methodological tool. Students finish with the analytical and methodological skills to identify and critique structures of power that govern everyday experiences of gender, the body, space, violence and modes of resistance. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 25.

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 237 Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism (2 Credits)**

This practicum course is an academic complement to the work students interning with the Meridians journal as Praxis interns, Quigley Fellows, STRIDE Fellows, MMUF, Meridians interns, etc. are doing. Run by the journal editor, the class discusses the scholarly, creative, artistic, archival and artistic work published in Meridians and how it is informed by - and contributes to - intersectionality as a paradigm and practice. Students also become familiarized with feminist journal production processes and ethics, promotion and marketing strategies, co-curricular events planning and archival research. S/U only. Enrollment limited to 5. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 238 Women, Money and Transnational Social Movements (4 Credits)**

Flickers of global finance capital across computer screens cannot compare to the travel preparations of women migrating from rural homes to work at computer chip factories. Yet both movements, of capital and people, constitute vital facets of globalization in the current era. This course centers on the political linkages and economic theories that address the politics of women, gender relations and capitalism. Students research social movements that challenge the raced, classed and gendered inequities, and the costs of maintaining order. The course assesses the alternatives proposed by social movements like the landless workers movement (MST) in Brazil, and economic shifts like the workers cooperative movement. Assignments include community-based research on local and global political movements, short papers, class-led discussions & written reflections. {S}

**Spring**

**SWG 241 White Supremacy in the Age of Trump (4 Credits)**

This course analyzes the history, prevalence and current manifestations of the white supremacist movement by examining ideological components, tactics and strategies, and its relationship to mainstream politics. Students research and discuss the relationship between white supremacy and white privilege, and explore how to build a human rights movement to counter the white supremacist movement in the U.S. Students develop analytical writing and research skills while engaging in multiple cultural perspectives. The overall goal is to develop the capacity to understand the range of possible responses to white supremacy, both its legal and extralegal forms. {H}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 245/ CCX 245 Colloquium: Collective Organizing (4 Credits)**

Offered as SWG 245 and CCX 245. This course introduces students to key concepts, debates and provocations that animate the world of community, labor and electoral organizing for social change. To better understand these movements' visions, students develop an analysis of global and national inequalities, exploitation and oppression. The course explores a range of organizing skills to build an awareness of power dynamics and learn activists' tools to bring people together towards common goals. A central aspect of this course is practicing community-based learning and research methods in dialogue with community-based activist partners. Prerequisite: CCX 120 or SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 18. {H}{S}

**Fall**

**SWG 257 Colloquium: Queer Northampton (4 Credits)**

This course focuses on the growing field of queer American history. This course explores the histories of same-sex desire, practice, and identity, as well as gender transgressions, from the late 19th century to the present. Using a wide range of sources, including archival documents, films, work by historians, and oral histories, students investigate how and why people with same-sex desire and non-normative gender expressions formed communities, struggled against bigotry and organized movements for social and political change. This course pays close attention to the intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality, and the ways that difference has shaped queer history. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 20. {H}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 267/ AMS 267 Colloquium: Queer Ecologies: Race, Queerness, Disability and Environmental Justice (4 Credits)**

Offered as AMS 267 and SWG 267. This course examines interrelationships of race, sex, sexuality, gender, queerness, disability, class, embodiment, nation, Indigeneity, nature, and sustainability through critical engagement with a body of scholarship known as Queer Ecologies, e.g. anti-racist feminist and queer scholarship on science, labor, popular culture, cultural and environmental preservation, politics, bodies, and sexual and reproductive practices. The course draws theoretical muscle from feminist science studies, queer of color critique, critical race theory, crip theory, feminist theory, and more. Students learn basic participant observation methods, read scholarship, and analyze cultural artifacts such as web and print advertisements, television shows, films, and fiction. Enrollment limited to 18. {E} {H}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 270 Colloquium: Oral History and Lesbian Subjects (4 Credits)**

Grounding the work in the current scholarship in lesbian history, this course explores lesbian, queer and bisexual communities, cultures and activism. While becoming familiar with the existing narratives about lesbian and queer lives, students are introduced to the method of oral history as a key documentation strategy in the production of lesbian history. How do research methods need to be adapted, including oral history, in order to talk about lesbian and queer lives? Texts include secondary literature on 20th-century lesbian cultures and communities, oral history theory and methodology, and primary sources from the Sophia Smith Collection (SSC). Students conduct, transcribe, edit and interpret their own interviews for their final project. The oral histories from this course are archived with the Documenting Lesbian Lives collection in the SSC. Prerequisite: SWG 150 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 20. {H}{L}

**Spring**

**SWG 271 Reproductive Justice (4 Credits)**

This course is an interdisciplinary exploration of reproductive health, rights and justice in the United States, examining history, activism, law, policy and public discourses related to reproduction. A central framework for analysis is how gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, disability and nationality intersect to shape people's experiences of reproductive oppression and their resistance strategies. Topics include eugenics and the birth control movement; the reproductive rights and justice movements; U.S. population control policies; criminalization of pregnant people; fetal personhood and birth parents' citizenship; the medicalization of reproduction; reproductive technologies; the influence of disability, incarceration and poverty on pregnancy and parenting; the anti-abortion movement; and reproductive coercion and violence. Prerequisite: SWG 150 or equivalent. {S}

**Spring**

**SWG 277 Colloquium: Feminist Public Writing (4 Credits)**

This interdisciplinary course teaches students how to translate feminist scholarship for a popular audience. Students practice how to use knowledge and concepts they have learned in their women and gender studies classes to write publicly in a range of formats, including book and film reviews, interviews, opinion editorials and feature articles. The course explores the history and practice of feminist public writing, with particular attention to how gender intersects with race, class, sexuality, disability and citizenship in women's experiences of public writing. The course also considers some of the political and ethical questions relating to women's public writing. Enrollment limited to 20. {A}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 288 Immigration and Sexuality in France and Europe (4 Credits)**

Taught in English. This course analyzes the politics of sexuality in immigration debates in France and Europe, from the 1920s to the present. Students examine both cultural productions and social science texts: memoirs, psychoanalytical literature, activist statements, sociological studies, films, fashion, performance art, music videos, and dance forms. France has historically been the leading European host country for immigrants, a multiplicity of origins reflected in its current demographic make-up. Topics include: the hyper-sexualization of black, brown, and Muslim bodies, France as a Mediterranean culture, immigrant loneliness in Europe, intermarriage and demographic change, the veil and niqab, as well as sexual nationalism and homo-nationalism. May be taken concurrently with FRN 288, which is taught in French, for FRN credit. Enrollment limited to 35. {H}{L}{S}

**Fall**

**SWG 290 Gender, Sexuality and Popular Culture (4 Credits)**

This course considers the manner in which norms of gender and sexuality are reflected, reinforced and challenged in popular culture. The class uses theories of knowledge production, representation and meaning-making to support an analysis of the relationship between discourse and power; the engagement with these theoretical texts helps track this dynamic as it emerges in popular culture. Key queer theoretical concepts provide a framework for examining how the production gender and sexuality impacts cultural production. Through a critical engagement with a selection of films, music, television, visual art and digital media, the class discusses mainstream conventions and the feminist, queer and queer of color interventions that enliven the landscape of popular culture. Prerequisite: SWG 150 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 25. {A}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 291 Queer and Trans Visual Culture (4 Credits)**

As representations of queer and trans subjectivities has left the largely coded citations of the closet, they have come to rely on discursively complex and intersectional forms of representation that at once exceed, and rely on, queer cultures, communities and even subjects. Queer and trans visual culture has long offered a way for queer subjects to both represent, and come to understand, who they are and how meaning is inscribed onto and through [their] bodies. This class leverages history and theory to explore a range of media from fine art to popular culture, and develop a queer lens with which to interrogate visual culture.

This class maps the trajectory from the early twentieth century to our present moment and ultimately seeks to describe what queer visual representation is—and perhaps is not—today. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 20.(E) {A}{H}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300ah Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender- Abortion History, Law and Politics (4 Credits)**

On June 24, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, reversing a half-century-long precedent of constitutional abortion rights. This course explores the history, law and politics of abortion in the U.S. before, during and after Roe. The course examines ideologies, strategies and tactics of the abortion rights movement as well as the anti-abortion movement, focusing in particular on the gender and racial politics of these movements. Discussions include abortion access, anti-abortion violence, "crisis pregnancy centers," fetal personhood campaigns, the criminalization of pregnancy, abortion pills, telemedicine abortion and self-managed abortion. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300gv Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Women Fighting Back: Gender and Violence (4 Credits)**

Patriarchal societies are permeated with gendered violence. Across time and place, men and boys have perpetrated multiple forms of violence against women and girls, including intimate partner violence, sexual assault and harassment, and reproductive coercion—usually without legal or social consequences. This course explores how women and girls fight back against male violence historically and today, using a wide range of strategies, including collective resistance, legal challenges, art, film, humor and, sometimes, physical violence. Using intersectional feminist theory, the class reflects on how and why patriarchal societies allow male violence against women and girls, and punish female resistance to male violence. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300js Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Justice and Security (4 Credits)**

This course explores understandings of security and justice from a feminist perspective. It draws upon a trans-disciplinary range of social theories and materials from both the US and international contexts (mostly in the Global South) to critically explore how traditional practices of security authorize and protect specific interests while destabilizing and rendering vulnerable other populations. The course centers grassroots practices of security, peace and justice that challenge prevailing militarized and securitized assumptions and practices. At the heart of this course is a commitment to questioning our conceptions of how security works around the intersections of power and oppression (i.e., gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.). Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300lr Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Beyond the Grind: Feminist and Disability Theories of Care, Love, Rest and Resistance (4 Credits)**

This course turns to disability justice, Black feminist, feminist-of-color and Marxist feminist thought in order to explore the revolutionary potential of care, love and rest. Additionally, the course examines the complications and contradictions of care work under U.S. racial capitalism. Rather than viewing practices of love and care as a sideline to activist movement work, the course takes these practices seriously by engaging a range of texts from the late 20th and 21st centuries. Discussions include mutual aid, disability justice, queer forms of kinship, Black feminist love-politics, global economies of care work and anti-work politics. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {L}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300qf Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Writing Against Erasure: Abortion, Adoption and Queer Family-Making (4 Credits)**

Whether Shere Hite's report on women's sexual experiences, Alice Walker's search for the unmarked grave of Zora Neale Hurston, or Ann Fessler's social history of pre-Roe "maternity homes," generations of feminist writers have made it their life's work to unearth silenced and erased histories. This writing seminar uses the Smith archives, engages with Saidiya Hartman's concept of "critical fabulations" to address gaps in institutional knowledge, and conducts field interviews to contribute original work to the feminist project of truth-telling and the repair of the collective memory. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. (E){H}{S}

**Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300qt Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender- Building Queer and Trans Lives (4 Credits)**

This course considers "building" as both metaphor and practice in queer and trans feminist epistemologies. What systems and institutions (e.g. white supremacy, settler colonialism, binary gender, ableism, late-stage capitalism, the carceral state) do queer and trans epistemologies slate for demolition or destruction? Should certain structures (e.g. medical, educational, political, scientific, housing) and relationships (e.g. platonic, romantic, sexual, caregiving, community) be repaired or renovated? What needs to be built from scratch or salvaged from existing resources to ensure sustainable, accessible, non-violent, joyful modes of living? The course draws on queer, trans, Black feminist, critical disability and feminist science studies blueprints for world-building. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 300wk Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Feminist Ways of Knowing (4 Credits)**

This course explores feminist learning as an endless movement by centering the praxis, politics and poetics of collective knowledge production. How do one know what one knows? Who and what are served by that knowledge? How might a commitment to anti-coloniality and justice push one to imagine, make and move differently in relation to structures of violence that one seeks to transform? Students dive into these questions by engaging with over 25 years of organizing and co-creativity inspired by the Sangtin movement and Parakh Theater in India, and they make connections with these through embodied activities in the classroom. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 303 Seminar: Queer of Color Critique (4 Credits)**

Students in this course gain a thorough and sustained understanding of queer of color critique by tracking this theoretical framework from its emergence in women of color feminism through the contemporary moment using historical and canonical texts along with the most cutting-edge scholarship being produced in the field. The exploration of this critical framework engages with independent films, novels and short stories, popular music, as well as television and digital media platforms such as Netflix and Amazon. We discuss what is ruptured and what is generated at the intersection of race, gender, class and sexuality. Prerequisites: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}{S}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 321 Seminar: Marxist Feminism (4 Credits)**

Marxist feminism as a theory and a politics both imagines alternate, liberatory futures and critiques present social orders. Beginning with a simple insight: capitalism relies on the class politics of unpaid, reproductive "women's work," Marxist feminists in the 19th century sought to imagine new social connections, sexualities and desire to overthrow patriarchy, slavery, feudalism and colonialism. Today, queer of color and decolonial feminist theory, alongside abolition, environmental and reproduction justice movements, rejuvenate this tradition of Marxist feminism. This seminar focuses on theoretical writings from around the world to better understand radical social movements from the past and the present. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {H}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**SWG 327 Seminar: Queer Theory (4 Credits)**

This course brings together foundational and contemporary queer theoretical texts to discuss the history and production of sexuality and gender in the U.S. Students practice close reading canonical queer theoretical texts alongside scholarly interventions to the canon that emerge from queer of color critique, trans theory and black queer studies. The course studies the ways that queer theory, from these different vantage points, challenges norms of knowledge production, temporality, space, gender and belonging. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Restrictions: Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**SWG 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)**

For qualified juniors and seniors. No more than 8 special studies credits total may be applied toward the major. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**SWG 430D Honors Project (4 Credits)**

An 8-credit, two-semester thesis taken in addition to the 10 courses that fulfill the major. Eligibility requirements for honors work, and supervision and evaluation of the thesis, are determined by the Program Committee for the Study of Women and Gender as outlined on the Program website at [www.smith.edu/swg/honors.html](http://www.smith.edu/swg/honors.html). Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**