

STUDY OF WOMEN AND GENDER

SWG 100 Issues in Queer Studies (2 Credits)

This course introduces students to issues raised by and in the emerging interdisciplinary field of queer studies. Through a series of lectures by Smith faculty members and invited guests, students learn about subject areas, methodological issues and resources in queer studies. May not be repeated for credit. Graded S/U only. {H}{L}{S}

Spring

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

An introduction to the interdisciplinary field of the study of women and gender through a critical examination of feminist histories, issues and practices. Focus on the U.S. with some attention to the global context. Primarily for first- and second-year students. Enrollment limited to 25. {H}{S}

Fall, Spring

SWG 220 Introduction to Queer 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. We will explore 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 will examine a wide range of media and forms of documentation ranging from archival material and oral histories, to critical theory. Throughout the course we will attend carefully to race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability, and will put these and other topics/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. We will study feminist efforts to reform the law and examine how inequalities based on gender, race, class and sexuality shape the law. We also discuss and debate 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 234 Feminist Science Studies: Postcolonial, Posthuman, Queer (4 Credits)

Feminist science studies is a rich and diverse interdisciplinary field with genealogies in science practice, history, social sciences, and philosophy. Science studies has been a vital resource to feminist, queer, critical race, post-colonial, and disability theory and has also been profoundly shaped and extended by work in these fields. This class introduces core epistemological interventions and innovations in feminist and postcolonial science studies in order to frame readings of exciting new and classics works in the field. In particular we will explore themes of post/colonialism, posthumanism, and the queer. {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. will be doing. Run by the journal Editor, the class will discuss 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 will also become familiarized with feminist journal production processes and ethics, promotion and marketing strategies, co-curricular events planning and archival research. Instructor permission only. S/U only. Enrollment limited to 5.

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. Enrollment limited to 18. {H}{S}

Fall

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

Offered as AMS 267 and SWG 267. What is learned by reading Queer Ecologies alongside Butler's *Lilith's Brood*, or *Over the Hedge* as environmental racism? The class considers what it means to have a racialized and sexualized identity shaped by relationships with environments. How is nature gendered, racialized and sexualized? Why? How are analytics of power mobilized around, or in opposition to, nature? How are conceptions of "disability" and "health" taken up in environmental justice movements? Students investigate the discursive and practical connections made between marginalized peoples and nature, and chart the knowledge gained by queering our conceptions of nature and the natural. Enrollment limited to 20. (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 Colloquium: 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. Enrollment limited to 20. {S}

Spring

SWG 281/ SAS 281 Love, Devotion and Desire in Bollywood and Beyond (4 Credits)

This course examines the dominant gaze in Bollywood romantic genre films and how it constitutes the notion of romantic love and desire. The class explores the concept of love-devotion-desire in Vaishnav and Sufi texts and their influences on Bollywood. By engaging with feminist scholars and considering the female gaze from South Asian directors, especially those who challenge gender norms, the class tries to understand desire and love outside the heteronormative structure. The course also has guest lectures by South Asian activists and filmmakers. (E) {A}

Fall, 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)

In this course we will consider the manner in which norms of gender and sexuality are reflected, reinforced, and challenged in popular culture. We use theories of knowledge production, representation, and meaning-making to support our analysis of the relationship between discourse and power; our engagement with these theoretical texts helps us 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 our critical engagement with a selection of films, music, television, visual art, and digital media we will discuss mainstream conventions and the feminist, queer, and queer of color interventions that enliven the landscape of popular culture with which we contend in everyday life. Prerequisite: SWG 150 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 25. {A}{S}

Spring

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. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. 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.). Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {S}

Fall, Variable

SWG 300qc Seminar: Topics in the Study of Women and Gender-Queer Conversation (4 Credits)

Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required.

Spring

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

This seminar 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? We draw on queer, trans, Black feminist, critical disability and feminist science studies blueprints for world-building. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required.

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. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {A}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 305 Seminar: Queer Histories & Cultures (4 Credits)

This course is an advanced seminar in the growing field of queer American history. Over the course of the semester, we will explore 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, we will 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 will pay 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 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 311 Seminar: Queer Conversions (4 Credits)

What does queer life look like when placed in conversation with religious ideas of conversion, rebirth, and transformation? How is the queer subject recognized as (il)legible through practices of confession, ritual, and re-creation? This seminar course will situate conversations about community, transformation, ritual, and critique in the studies of religion and queer theory. We will look at case studies including faith based ex-gay movements, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, and transnational Afro-Latinx Santería practices. Students will write independent analytic and reflective pieces, which will culminate into a workshopped final research paper or podcast essay. Cannot be taken S/U. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 14. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. (E) {L}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 314 Seminar: Documenting Queer Lives (4 Credits)

This course examines visual and literary documentations of queer life by reading memoirs and screening short and feature length documentaries films. We consider the power and value of documenting queer lives while examining the politics of visibility as impacted by race, class and gender. We will attend to the expansiveness of the term "queer" and consider the performativity of gender and the fluidity of sexuality in our analysis of each text. Students will produce a short film, write a short biography or propose another mode of documenting experiences of queer life as members of, or in solidarity with, the LGBT community. Prerequisites: SWG 150 and one additional SWG course. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {A}{L}

Spring

SWG 318 Seminar: Women Against Empire (4 Credits)

Anti-imperialist movements across the globe in the 20th century carried with them multiple projects for the liberation and equality of people. These movements sought to build sovereign nations independent of colonial power and to develop radically new social orders. For women in these movements, the problem of empire had complex regional and local inflections that began with the politics of reproduction. This course will look at three sites of women's involvement contesting empire: first, the struggles of anti-imperial movements, second, women in the nationalist movements after formal independence and third, women's movements in the current age of empire that has developed alongside the stealth of economic globalization and remote-control warfare. Prerequisite: SWG 150 and permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {H}{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. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. 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. We will 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. We will study the ways that queer theory, from these different vantage points, challenges norms of knowledge production, temporality, space, gender, and belonging. Prerequisite: SWG 150. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required.

Fall, Spring, Alternate Years

SWG 333 Seminar: Sexual Harassment and Social Change (4 Credits)

This course is an interdisciplinary examination of sexual harassment and assault historically and today in a variety of locations, including the workplace, schools, the home, the military, and on the street. We will explore the emergence and evolution of social movements against sexual harassment and assault, and how these movements advanced law and public policy on these issues in the United States. A central focus will be on how relations of power based on gender, race, class, sexuality, age, disability, and nationality shape people's experiences of sexual harassment and assault and their responses to it. Prerequisite: SWG 150 and permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {H}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 360 Seminar: Memoir Writing (4 Credits)

How does one write a life, especially if it's one's own? This writing workshop addresses the profound complexities, challenges, and pleasures of the genre of the memoir, through intensive reading, discussion, and both analytical and creative writing. Our readings will be drawn from a range of mostly contemporary memoirists with intersectional identity locations—and dislocations—drawing from a range of voices, experiences, and representations, pursuing what the class comes to identify as our own most urgent aesthetic and ethical questions. Our attention will be to craft, both in the memoirs we read and those we write. Writing sample and instructor permission required. Juniors and seniors only. Enrollment limited to 12. {H}{L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 377 Seminar: Feminist Public Writing-Calderwood (4 Credits)

This interdisciplinary course will teach students how to translate feminist scholarship for a popular audience. Students will 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. We will explore 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. We will also explore some of the political and ethical questions relating to women's public writing. Prerequisite: SWG 150 and one other SWG course. Cannot be taken S/U. Enrollment limited to 12. Juniors and seniors only. Instructor permission required. {A}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

SWG 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)

For qualified juniors and seniors. Admission by permission of the instructor and director of the program. No more than 4 special studies credits may be taken in any academic year and no more than 8 special studies credits total may be applied toward the major.

Fall, Spring

SWG 430D Honors Project (4 Credits)

An 8-credit, two-semester thesis 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.

Fall, Spring, Annually