

Women's and Gender Studies

Master of Arts

For More Information

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The mission of the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) at The University of Texas at Austin is to promote research, teaching, and learning that centers the categories of gender and sexuality, recognizing that experiences of gender and sexuality are also inextricable from race, nationality, caste, disability, and socio-economic class. Through rigorous intersectional and feminist scholarship, decolonial and feminist teaching, and creative and public-facing programming, we seek to articulate, analyze, and critique relationships among gender, sexuality, power, knowledge, oppression, and liberation. We seek to be an international resource for research, teaching, and learning, cultivating intellectual spaces where students, faculty, and community can produce and proliferate knowledge about gender and sexuality that will create a more equitable and just world.

Our areas of expertise include: feminist theory; intersectional feminisms; LGBTQ+ studies; disability studies; the history, culture and socio-political processes of genders and sexualities; and the transnational politics of gender and sexuality (including transnational Black and indigenous feminisms, feminisms of the global South, and gender and migration). We are committed in all aspects of our work to anti-racist and queer feminisms.

Within CWGS, the LGBTQ Studies Program contributes to campus-wide resources for an LGBTQ-friendly and gender-inclusive campus. Central to our mission is the affirmation of queer and trans students, faculty, and staff including people of color, undocumented people, Indigenous peoples, disabled people, and people with multiple marginalized identities – as well as a commitment to engaging with queer and trans scholarship, including critical race scholarship, disability studies, Indigenous studies, and other interconnected critical frameworks.

Facilities for Graduate Work

The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, which administers the master's degree program in women's and gender studies, is a campus-wide interdisciplinary program with almost three hundred affiliated faculty members from almost all colleges and schools. WGSS hosts a major lecture series or scholarly conference each year and its annual Emerging Scholarship in Women's and Gender Studies Conference in which graduate and undergraduate students present their work.

The University offers several unique resources for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research in women's and gender studies. Students and faculty have the support and collaboration of a dedicated Women's and Gender Studies/LGTBQ Studies Librarian at the University Libraries. The Harry Ransom Center includes celebrated rare book and

manuscript collections in American and modern literature, including letters by Radclyffe Hall and the papers of Una Troubridge; papers of twentieth-century authors including Anne Sexton and Julia Alvarez; papers, including diaries and recipes, reflecting women's daily life; artwork, including Frida Kahlo's Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird (1940), as well as the photographs of Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron; and more, as reflected on the HRC's Women's Studies area guide. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection is one of the world's great collections of materials in Latin American, Mexican American, and Latino studies. Archival collections at the Benson include the materials of queer Chicana feminist author Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Texan author of *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*; letters of Nobel-prize winning Chilean author and diplomat Gabriela Mistral; materials of internationally-renowned Austin musician Tish Hinojosa; and the papers of the National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization. The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History holds the largest collection of extant historical manuscripts dealing with Texas, including the Black Texas Women Archive of materials and oral histories gathered by Austin-based historian Ruthe Winegarten; the papers of Frances (Sissy) Tarlton Farenthold, Texas-based international advocate for human rights who visited Greenham Commons and was nominated to be the Democratic candidate for the US vice presidency; the Lesbian Issues Collection of journals (1975-1991) and two letters by Rita Mae Brown; and the papers of various Austin and Texas feminist and women's organizations including the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the Austin Chapter of the National Organization for Women. Various locations in the University Libraries house microfilm sets of archival collections of advocates and organizations, including those of feminist organizing in Brazil, diaries of regional groups of women in the nineteenth century, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Sanger, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The University Libraries developed the Black Queer Studies Collection, a virtual collection that makes visible the libraries' substantial holdings in black diasporic queer materials. The [Women's and Gender/LGBTQ Studies Librarian](#) provides additional information about women's studies holdings.

Convenient to the University are other research facilities, including the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, the Texas State Library and Archives, and the Austin History Center. The Austin History Center houses archives of local advocates and organizations, including the Texas Statewide Queer People of Color Organization, and has research guides for materials on women's resources, African American sources, Asian American sources, Mexican American sources, and more.

Areas of Study

Women's and gender studies comprises research or creative work that raises new questions, formulates theories, or carries out empirical investigations that further understanding of science, social science, history, the humanities and arts, education, public and social policy, and paradigms of knowledge in applied and professional fields in such a way that women and gender systems are brought to the center of scholarship. Students pursue disciplinary and interdisciplinary research or creative work that prepares them for research or professional careers in which knowledge about women, gender, and sexuality is crucial. Students who complete the program graduate with a greater understanding of the field of women's and gender studies; an understanding of and commitment to resisting interlocking oppressions; critical knowledge of women's human rights; and scholarly connections to the department's faculty. The master's degree in women's and gender studies is excellent preparation for further training in public policy, social work, health care, education, the arts, technology, and business. It also prepares graduates to pursue doctoral work in a traditional discipline or in women's and gender studies at another institution.

The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies offers the Master of Arts degree, two dual degree master's programs, and a graduate portfolio program.

Graduate Studies Committee

The following faculty members served on the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) in the spring 2024 semester.

Amelia Acker	Vox Jo Hsu
Bedour Alagraa	Alison Kafer
Kamran Ali	Lee Ann Kahlor
Megan Alrutz	Elizabeth L Keating
Jacqueline L Angel	Su Yeong Kim
Katherine M Arens	Philippa Judith Levine
Jossianna Arroyo Martinez	Carol H MacKay
Lucy Atkinson	Michael S Mackert
Hina Azam	Madhavi Mallapragada
Phillip J Barrish	Jill A Marshall
Kirsten L Belgum	Jennifer McClearen
Mary C Beltran	Kelly McDonough
Chad J Bennett	Matthew S McGlone
Mary A Bock	Martha Menchaca
Paola Bonifazio	Sofian Merabet
Pascale R Bos	Julia L Mickenberg
Keffrelyn D Brown	Julie A Minich
Simone Arlene Browne	Lisa L Moore
Noel B Busch-Armendariz	Gretchen Murphy
Charlotte Canning	Mary C Neuburger
Mia E Carter	Martha G Newman
Shannon Eileen Cavanagh	Yolanda C Padilla
Mounira M Charrad	Shelley M Payne
Karma Ruth Chavez	Domino R Perez
Lina Chhun	Samantha Nicole Pinto
Judith G Coffin	Nicole D Ramsey
Ashley Coleman Taylor	Donna L Rew
Jackie Cuevas	Ann M Reynolds
Elizabeth Cullingford	Sharmila Rudrappa
Janet M Davis	Nancy Schiesari
Andrew F Dell'Antonio	Sonia T Seeman
Diana M Dinitto	Faegheh S Shirazi
Hector Dominguez-Ruvalcaba	Christen Anne Smith
Karen Engle	Pauline T Strong
Caroline Faria	Sharon L Strover
Ashley Farmer	Eric Tang
Virginia C Garrard	Gayle M Timmerman
Gloria Gonzalez-Lopez	Rebecca M Torres
Rachel Valentina Gonzalez-Martin	Anita L Vangelisti
Laurie B Green	Pavithra Vasudevan
Lauren Jae Gutterman	Lorraine O Walker
Sabine Hake	Samuel C Watkins
Julie Hardwick	Lynn R Wilkinson
Mark D Hayward	Jennifer M Wilks
Elizabeth A Hedrick	Christine L Williams
Geraldine Heng	Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski
Kathleen M Higgins	Helena Woodard
Neville Hoad	Hershini Young

Admission Requirements

An admission committee composed of Graduate Studies Committee members evaluates all applications. The committee seeks to admit a small, dynamic group of students who will make a difference in the community, both in and outside of academia. The limited size of the incoming cohort allows the program to provide each student with

personal attention and fosters a sense of community among students and faculty members.

The Admissions Committee looks for candidates with an understanding of women's and gender studies as a field, commitment to antiracist feminist practice, a strong academic background, and a clear sense of the topics or areas they wish to pursue during the two-year master's degree. The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies depends on students to be activists and leaders in the community. The Admissions Committee also looks for students who will not only attend class but also attend workshops and conferences, form organizations, volunteer, and participate in extracurricular activities.

A complete list of required application materials is published by the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Graduate Portfolio Program

The women's and gender studies graduate portfolio program is open to all graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin. It offers graduate students from all disciplines an opportunity to incorporate women's and gender studies into their degree programs. Students may enter the program at any point in their graduate work, but it is recommended that they do so as soon as they decide to pursue the portfolio.

The program builds upon the Department's rich and broad-based expertise across disciplines and colleges/schools. Portfolio students develop a specialization unique to their own program of work through women's and gender studies courses, scholarly papers, and presentations.

Once all portfolio requirements are completed and the student's graduate degree is awarded, their official University transcript will indicate completion of the graduate portfolio in women's and gender studies.

In addition, interested students may receive an in-house certificate for the "WGS Portfolio Program with LGBTQ/Sexualities Track" by taking courses identified as having LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) studies content. This list of courses is known as the "Pink Book," and is published on the WGSS website.

Requirements and application information are available online.

Graduate Seminar Courses

The Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies offers an interdisciplinary program that focuses on understanding women's experiences from a variety of perspectives and on the role gender plays in shaping society. The program's large and diverse faculty draws on the scholarship of more than 270 distinguished faculty members from twenty-nine departments and 14 colleges and schools. Women's and Gender Studies 393, *Seminar: Topics in Women's and Gender Studies*, provides access to cutting-edge scholarship from multiple perspectives by offering topics from nearly every graduate discipline. The program's faculty affiliates offer as many as thirty different seminar classes every semester.