

Western Kentucky University

Guidelines for Women's Studies Faculty and Approved Electives

Mission Statement

The Women's Studies Program broadens women's and men's knowledge and awareness of gender dynamics, globally and historically, with an emphasis on issues that are central to women's experiences.

Goals:

- sharpen critical analysis of gender issues
- enhance intellectual and personal growth
- promote ethical conduct and social justice
- practice diversity
- strengthen communication across diverse cultures and academic disciplines

These goals support the university's goals in a number of ways. As an interdisciplinary program, Women's Studies enhances intellectual and personal growth by synthesizing various ways of knowing, learning, and communicating. For the undergraduate minor, approved electives must be taken in both the humanities and the sciences/social sciences, thus exposing students to alternative methods of social, political, scientific, and literary analysis. Both core courses in the interdisciplinary minor (Introduction to Women's Studies and Western Feminist Thought) meet three general education requirements—writing, ethics, and the social sciences designations—demonstrating the program's commitment to these facets of a liberal arts education. The graduate certificate consists of five courses: two core courses and three electives, one of which must be outside the student's home discipline.

I. Women's Studies Faculty

Women's Studies faculty include all faculty under current contract with Western Kentucky University who have taught a course listed as a Women's Studies course over the past four years and whose teaching, research, and/or service is substantially and appropriately connected to Women's Studies, as determined by the Women's Studies Curriculum and Steering Committees.

Every other year (even years), all Women's Studies faculty will see that relevant course syllabi and a copy of their current CV are on file in the Women's Studies office.

To become a member of the Women's Studies Faculty, supply the following materials to the Curriculum Committee (c/o the program):

a cover letter describing your experience in women's studies, including a statement about how your work is compatible with the mission and goals stated above; also include evidence of approval from the head of the department in which the course is listed;

a syllabus for the course you would like the committee to consider as an approved elective; or a sample syllabus or detailed outline for a course you wish to teach in the future, including texts and assignments;

a current CV.

After these materials have been reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, you may meet with the Committee to discuss your plans. Pending approval by the Curriculum and Steering Committees, the Director of Women's Studies will notify you and your department head of the decision. At this time, a rotation schedule should be discussed.

Membership in the Women's Studies Faculty is reviewed every other year.

II. Women's Studies Courses

Given the mission of the Women's Studies Program, it is understood that Women's Studies courses aim to:

assist students in exploring how social constructions of gender have contributed to the oppression and/or empowering of women and men, historically and in contemporary America and the world;

- introduce students to differences, including, but not limited to, those based on ability, age, class, ethnicity, family composition, gender identity, race, region, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and the distribution of resources in and among countries and groups globally;
- reflect current feminist scholarship on women and gender and current feminist theory;
- incorporate pedagogies that stress collaborative and active learning and that facilitate critical thinking, reading, and writing;
- focus on women and gender, substantially in an undergraduate course and predominantly in a graduate course;
- use women authors and authors who celebrate the lives and contributions of women.