

Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

History and Trajectory of the Proposal for a Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

A 2004 external review recommended that the Gender Studies Program at Notre Dame develop a non-degree, credit-bearing graduate minor program as many other major research universities have done in the past two decades. The following is a proposal for such a program. This proposal has been approved by the Director of Gender Studies, the Gender Studies Steering Committee, and the College Council. It must be subsequently approved by the Graduate Council in order to be put into effect. Any changes to the proposal required by the Graduate Council will be implemented prior to its institutionalization.

Mission of the Gender Studies Program at Notre Dame

Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary academic program in the College of Arts and Letters at Notre Dame. Gender Studies analyzes the significance of gender—and the cognate subjects of sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religion, and nationality—in all areas of human life, especially in the social formation of human identities, practices, and institutions. Gender Studies gives scholars the methodological and theoretical tools to analyze gender and its cognates in their chosen disciplines in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. In the context of the Catholic identity of Notre Dame, Gender Studies facilitates the study of the intersection of gender and religion in the shaping of ethics, culture, and politics. At the undergraduate level, we offer a Supplementary Major and a Minor in Gender Studies. At the graduate level, we offer a predoctoral teaching fellowship program. We now aim to establish a graduate minor program for terminal master’s degree students and doctoral students at Notre Dame. Through participation in the graduate minor program, terminal master’s degree students and doctoral students would receive training in a growing and vital field of interdisciplinary research and teaching, and develop a sense of community with fellow Gender Studies scholars at Notre Dame and the broader academic profession.

Rationale for the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

The establishment of a graduate minor program in Gender Studies would facilitate and institutionalize interdisciplinary training in Gender Studies for terminal master’s degree students and doctoral students in the University. Many leading research universities with long-standing and renowned Gender Studies or Women’s Studies departments or programs offer highly respected graduate minor (also called “graduate certificate”) programs in this growing and marketable interdisciplinary field of graduate study (e.g., Indiana University-Bloomington, Princeton University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Yale University; see Appendix A). Through our proposed graduate minor program, doctoral students would receive professional interdisciplinary training in the field of Gender Studies that would make them more attractive candidates for a wider range of tenure-track positions both in their graduate disciplines and in the fields of Gender Studies and Women’s Studies. Most importantly, participation in this proposed graduate minor program would make our terminal master’s degree students and doctoral students more versatile scholars who have the training to become leaders in the study of gender over the course of their academic and other professional careers. Across the arts, humanities, and social sciences, the ability to research and teach in the field of Gender Studies is recognized as a vital and valuable skill. For this reason, this proposed graduate minor program is designed to educate a diverse range of terminal master’s degree students and doctoral students from across the University in the field of Gender Studies

in order to better prepare them for the interdisciplinary scholarly endeavors that they undertake at Notre Dame and beyond.

The establishment of a graduate minor in Gender Studies would also enable Notre Dame to further develop a prominent research niche of many of its faculty and graduate students: the study of the intersection of gender and religion, and, in particular, gender and Catholicism, in the shaping of ethics, culture, and politics.

Beyond the aforesaid educational goals, the establishment of a graduate minor program in Gender Studies would enable better recruitment and retention of graduate students and faculty interested in this interdisciplinary field of study. Current and prospective graduate students and faculty—often women and other minorities—have expressed enthusiastic interest in participating in such a minor program on the grounds that it would enhance the quality of their intellectual life and sense of belonging at Notre Dame.

Administration of the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

The administration of the minor program is conducted by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee. The Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee consists of the Director of Gender Studies and three members of the T&R faculty from the university nominated by the Director and approved by the Gender Studies Steering Committee. Each of the three appointed faculty members serves for a period of one year with the possibility of renewal, upon approval. At least one of the three appointed faculty members of the committee will be from the social sciences and one from the arts and humanities.

The Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee expects to initially oversee an enrollment of 15-30 graduate students per year, with numbers increasingly gradually and manageably over time. The maximum expected annual enrollment would be 50 students. Approximately 15 graduate students from a variety of doctoral and master's programs have expressed intent to enroll as soon as the minor is formally established. Further graduate students will be recruited into the program through letters to Directors of Graduate Studies and through advertisements on the Gender Studies weekly email announcement to over 160 faculty and students.

In its fourth year, the minor program will be reviewed by the Graduate School in collaboration with the College of Arts and Letters.

Requirements for the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

Any terminal master's degree student or doctoral student who is interested in this graduate minor program will initially meet with the Director of Graduate Studies in his/her own department, institute, or program to determine whether s/he is in good standing in the graduate program and thus able to consider undertaking the requirements for the Gender Studies Graduate Minor. If the student is found to be in good standing, s/he shall arrange with his/her Director of Graduate Studies, his/her main faculty advisor (if one has been chosen), and the Director of Gender Studies to announce his/her intention to fulfill the requirements for the Gender Studies Graduate Minor.

At that point, an advising file will be created in the Gender Studies office that will track the progress of the student through the graduate minor program.

Terminal master's degree students will complete three 3-credit hour graduate courses cross-listed in Gender Studies or approved by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee, including the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" in Gender Studies (for a total of 9 credit hours) and participate in the Gender Studies Research Workshop for 2 semesters (including the presentation of a research paper in this forum) to fulfill the requirements for the minor.

Doctoral students will complete three 3-credit hour graduate courses cross-listed in Gender Studies or approved by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee, including the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" in Gender Studies (for a total of 9 credit hours), participate in the Gender Studies Research Workshop for 3 semesters (including the presentation of a research paper in this forum), plus show evidence of substantial research in a gender-related area, to fulfill the requirements for the minor.

Substantial research in a gender-related area can be demonstrated by a significant portion of the dissertation, fieldwork, a substantial research paper, a published article, or a master's qualifying paper. Satisfaction of this requirement is determined by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee.

A student must petition the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee to approve a course that is not cross-listed in Gender Studies, or an upper-level undergraduate course, to count toward the above requirements.

A student may petition the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee to grant various exceptions to the above requirements.

The expectation is that the fulfillment of the requirements of the graduate minor will not increase the time necessary for the completion of the terminal master's or doctoral degree, but rather will productively complement the student's timely progress toward the degree.

Coursework in the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

The "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" in Gender Studies is the only course specifically required for students in the master's and doctoral tracks of the program. It will be offered once a year, usually in the Fall semester. It is a theory and methods course that provides professional training in Gender Studies at the graduate level across at least two scholarly disciplines. The Director of Gender Studies will ensure that a diverse range of interdisciplinary approaches to Gender Studies are represented in this course over any five-year period. The "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" is intended to serve as a gateway course for both the master's and doctoral tracks in the minor program. It is recommended but not required that students take the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" prior to further graduate coursework in Gender Studies.

To fulfill the remainder of the course requirements, students may pick any two courses from the graduate curriculum in Gender Studies or approved by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee according to the above policy (see "Requirements"). It is expected that the formal establishment of this minor program will enable and encourage the expansion and diversification of the graduate curriculum

in Gender Studies (see Appendix B for a table of recent and projected graduate courses in Gender Studies).

Double-counting of courses for the requirements of this minor program and another graduate program at Notre Dame is permitted.

Graduate students with tuition scholarships whose tuition credits do not cover the cost of taking courses for this minor program may petition the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee to audit a course to fulfill the aforesaid requirements. The student must register as an auditor and complete all work for the course according to the instructor's specifications. The student must present copies of the written work performed for the course to the Gender Studies Program office for recording in his/her advising file.

Professional Development in the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

In order to foster the professional development of students enrolled in the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program, the Gender Studies Research Workshop has been established. This research workshop gives graduate students, faculty, and senior thesis students the opportunity to present, engage, and contribute to the development of interdisciplinary work in Gender Studies. Several times during a semester, the group meets to discuss papers presented primarily by graduate students but also by senior thesis students and faculty from Notre Dame and other universities. The purpose of the Gender Studies Research Workshop is to create a sense of scholarly community among the students and faculty involved in the graduate minor program, to foster norms of professional scholarly interaction among the students, give graduate students opportunities to serve as role models for senior thesis students, and expose students and faculty to current interdisciplinary research in the field of Gender Studies. Participation in the workshop is a requirement of enrollment in the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program. The Director of Gender Studies will appoint, each summer, an advanced graduate student who is enrolled in the program to organize the workshop for the following academic year. A model for this interdisciplinary research workshop is the University of Chicago's Political Theory Workshop, which is led by graduate students, primarily features papers by graduate students, and enjoys strong and consistent faculty support and involvement.

Teaching in the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

The "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" and other Gender Studies graduate seminars may be taught by the Director of Gender Studies, members of the Gender Studies Faculty (including its Senior Fellows), or the Visiting Professor in Gender Studies. They may be cross-listed in another graduate program, according to the agreement of the Director of Gender Studies and the Director of Graduate Studies of the department, institute, or program. Although it may be cross-listed, the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" may also be offered regularly as a stand-alone graduate course in Gender Studies. The Director of Gender Studies will work with department chairs and the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Letters to secure release time from departmental teaching responsibilities for faculty to teach the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" when it is taught as a stand-alone course. In general, the cross-listing process will enable most teaching in the graduate minor program to be compatible with departmental teaching responsibilities (See Appendix C).

Awarding the Gender Studies Graduate Minor

At the beginning of the semester in which they expect to graduate from Notre Dame, terminal master's degree students and doctoral students will confirm with the Director of Gender Studies that their advising files are complete and ready for review by the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Committee. The three appointed faculty on the committee will review each student's file and advise the Director of Gender Studies on the status of his/her progress through the requirements for the graduate minor. At the time of the confirmation of the student's completion of the aforesaid requirements for either the master's or doctoral level graduate minor and his/her graduation from Notre Dame with one of the aforesaid degrees, the Director of Gender Studies will certify to the Graduate School that the student has completed the Gender Studies Minor. The Graduate School will notify the Registrar so that the minor will appear on the student's transcript. The Director of Gender Studies will issue to the student a letter of certification suitable for use in an academic job dossier.

Appendix A: Models for the Gender Studies Graduate Minor Program

For the specifications of the Gender Studies and Women's Studies graduate programs that served as models for this proposal, please see the following websites:

Indiana University-Bloomington: <http://www.indiana.edu/~gender/>

Princeton University: <http://www.princeton.edu/~prowom/>

University of Wisconsin-Madison: <http://www.womenstudies.wisc.edu/>

Yale University: <http://www.yale.edu/wgss/index.html>

Appendix B: Recent and Projected Graduate Courses in Gender Studies

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Instructor</i>	<i>Rank/ Credential</i>	<i>Area(s) of Interest</i>	<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Cross-lists</i>
Fall 07	Science and Social Values	Janet Kourany	Associate Professor of Philosophy/ Ph.D.	Feminism; feminist philosophical accounts of science	GSC 53500	Philosophy
Fall 07	Global Sociology	Jackie Smith	Associate Professor of Sociology/ Ph.D.	Global women's movements; gender and social movements	GSC 53651	Sociology
Fall 07	Renaissance Literature	Susannah Monta	Associate Professor of English/ Ph.D.	Gender, Catholicism, & Renaissance literature	GSC 60500	English
Fall 07	Victorian Public Sphere	David Thomas	Associate Professor of English/ Ph.D.	The "new woman" in Victorian Literature	GSC 60549	English
Fall 07	Women Mystics in Monastic Traditions	Ann Astell	Professor of Theology/ Ph.D.	Women mystics; women in Catholicism	GSC 60550	Theology
Fall 07	Cultural Studies of the Body-Mind	Gene Halton	Professor of Sociology/ Ph.D.	Gender, sex, and human experience of the body and mind	GSC 63650	Sociology
Fall 07	Family Seminar	Joan Aldous & David Klein	Professors of Sociology/ Ph.D.s	Sociology of marriage and family	GSC 63651	Sociology
Fall 07	Labor Economics	Kasey Buckles	Assistant Professor of Economics/ Ph.D.	Gender and class in labor economics	GSC 63652	Economics and Econometrics
Spring 08	Literature, Women, and Society	Maria Rosa Olivera-Williams	Associate Professor of Spanish/ Ph.D.	Women in Latin American literature	GSC 60551	Romance Languages
Spring 08	Gender and Identity in Irish	Briona NicDhiarmada	Visiting Professor of Irish/ Ph.D.	Gender in Irish literature	GSC 60552	Irish Language & Literature

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Instructor</i>	<i>Rank/ Credential</i>	<i>Area(s) of Interest</i>	<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Cross-lists</i>
Spring 08	Marital Therapy Practicum	David Smith	Professor/ Ph.D.	Clinical psychological study of marriage	GSC 61650	Psychology
Spring 08	Colonial Latin America	Karen Graubart	Assistant Professor/ Ph.D.	Gender, race, and class in colonial Latin America	GSC 63500	History
Spring 08	Social Classes and Stratification	David Hachen	Associate Professor/ Ph.D.	Gender in social stratification	GSC 63601	Sociology
Spring 08	Gender Studies Interdisciplinary Core Graduate Seminar	Eileen Botting	Associate Professor/ Ph.D.	Gender and human development	GSC 63600	Political Science
Fall 08	Gender Studies Interdisciplinary Core Graduate Seminar	Christine Traina	Visiting Professor in Gender Studies/ Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Northwestern University/Ph.D.	Gender, feminism, and Catholic theology	GSC 636--	Theology
Fall 09	Gender Studies Interdisciplinary Core Graduate Seminar	Barbara Taylor	Visiting Professor in Gender Studies/ Professor of History, University of East London /Ph.D.	Gender and women's selfhood; gender history; feminist theory	GSC 636--	History
Fall 09	British and Irish Children's Literature	Norma Clarke	Visiting Professor in Gender Studies/Professor of English, Kingston University, London/ Ph.D.	Women writers; children's literature; gender and literature	GSC 636--	English

Appendix C: Resources for the Graduate Minor Program in Gender Studies

The Gender Studies Program will request that the Graduate School support this new Graduate Minor Program in Gender Studies with a budget of \$1500/yr. This funding will be used to fund the research workshop for students enrolled in the graduate minor program. Funding will be used to cater the meetings of the group and occasionally to bring faculty from other universities to give papers at the workshop. This funding, if granted, would supplement the extant budget of the workshop (\$500/yr), which is currently supplied by the Genevieve D. Willis Endowment for Women at Notre Dame.

The funding supplied by the Graduate School would also support any special events or lectures associated with Gender Studies graduate seminars, any costs incurred in the certification of graduate students in the program, and any costs incurred in maintaining an updated reference library of academic employment newsletters for graduate students to use in our office.

The Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Letters has agreed to guarantee the funding necessary to support the release of faculty from teaching responsibilities in their home departments so that they may teach the "Interdisciplinary Core Seminar" in Gender Studies when it is taught as a stand-alone course without cross-lists. Support for all other graduate course offerings is guaranteed by the cross-listing process by which Gender Studies and other interdisciplinary academic programs generate their course listings. (Given these arrangements, the solicitation of letters of support from department chairs for faculty teaching or planning to teach in the minor program seemed unnecessary).

To supplement the above resources for graduate teaching in Gender Studies, we also have a new Visiting Professorship Program in Gender Studies that will begin in the Fall Semester of 2008. This program is currently funded by a gift from the College and may eventually be funded by an endowment, as requested in the University's Strategic Plan. Each of these visiting professors will teach a Gender Studies graduate seminar during their respective semesters on campus (see Appendix B).

The Gender Studies office has plenty of space to house the graduate minor program and its activities.

The Gender Studies Program has enough support for the development of library holdings (in its own library and in the Hesburgh Library) relevant to the graduate minor.

The Graduate Minor in Gender Studies, as proposed above, was approved and put into effect as a non-degree, credit-bearing graduate program by the Graduate Council on 6 February 2008.