Women’s Studies Courses for Fall 2015

To complete a minor in Women’s Studies, students must take History 130 (Introduction to Women’s Studies) plus 5 additional courses drawn from at least 2 different disciplines. These courses often overlap nicely with chosen major fields. For Fall 2015, Women’s Studies minors can choose from the following courses:

**WMST 130/HIST 130: Intro to Women’s Studies**

This course provides an introduction to Women’s Studies, a field of scholarship dedicated to the inclusion of women’s experiences and feminist perspectives in the academy. The course places the emergence of women’s studies in historical perspective, then examines the transformative power of women’s studies in a number of fields. The goal will be to assess how including women, gender, and feminist perspectives changes academic methods, goals, and outcomes.

**HIST 332: Women and Religion in America**

This course will explore women’s roles and experiences in a variety of American religious traditions. Topics and themes may include: Amerindians and missionaries; colonial Puritanism; the great Awakenings and evangelical reform; marriage and the utopian experiments; Judaism; the immigrant Church; voodoo; Catholic religious orders; and other contemporary religious topics. *Prerequisite: Six credits in history*

**COM 400: Gender, Culture and Communication**

This course explores the dynamics between gender, communication, and culture in today’s society. Areas studied will include the following: how communication creates and perpetuates gender roles; how human behavior reflects socially created gender roles; how people can act and communicate to improve their individual and collective lives in terms of gender roles. This is an experiential course in which students will connect theory and research with their own lives.
ENGL 220: Literature and Gender

This course will examine literary texts with special emphasis on gender issues. Questions may be raised, for instance, about gender definitions and roles, gender and language, gender as a locus of economic, political, social, or literary power. Topics will vary from semester to semester. The course may be organized around a group of writers, a historical period or movement, a genre, a theme, or a combination of these.

WMST 385/MDIA 335: Gender and Media

An examination of gender differences as reflected in media. The course will focus on how gender is constructed in domestic and international films, television, video games, etc. Topics include the “gaze,” the patriarchal structure of the entertainment industry, the psychological positions of the male and female spectator, and theoretical approaches to feminist and masculinist analysis of texts. Readings will draw from feminist, psychoanalytic, semiotic, and sociological perspectives. Offered as and when necessary.

Prerequisite: Junior standing

POSC 214: Gender and Law

This course examines the relationship between gender and the law, by exploring a variety of issues ranging from work and family to women and bodily autonomy. The course focuses on the conceptual assumptions underlying legal doctrines and precedents while paying close attention to the effects of gender-conscious laws on women and men of different races, classes, and sexualities. This course also addresses the constraints of law and considers the extent to which law is an appropriate vehicle for social change.

Prerequisite: POSC 110

PSCY 331: Psychology of Women

The psychology of women course is conceptualized within traditional psychological as well as feminist theory. A survey of findings on women from various fields (personality, cognitive, physiological, social, developmental and abnormal psychology) will be presented. The course offers discussion and study of the development of women’s roles and personality across the lifespan, drawing from the work of a variety of authors. Emphasis will be placed on the concept of resilience in women, using examples from historical as well as current figures.

Psychology of Women introduces the student to a wide range of topics pertaining to women and their experiences. It weaves together research and theory from several areas of psychology (developmental, social-personality, cross-cultural, and clinical) as well as from related academic fields. Critical emphases of the discipline include gender similarities and differences (myths and stereotypes associated with men and women, gender comparisons research, and origins of any identified differences) and topics specific to women that are inadequately covered in traditional fields of psychology. Prerequisite: PSYC 101
SOC 336: Social Inequality

This course investigates those processes whereby members of society are placed into higher and lower status based on differential access to wealth, power, and prestige. Emphasis is on the historic and contemporary institutional organization and reproduction of social inequality according to social class, gender, ethnicity, age, and perceived handicap in America within the global context of the modern world system. Functionalist, conflict, and interval explanations of these processes are fully considered. The integration of theories of social inequality with direct experience through the classroom simulation of the social-class structure in American society is a major dimension of the course. Opportunities for involvement aimed at lessening social inequality in community-based sites are also available.

Prerequisite: SOC 101; priority to Social Work majors

Special Topics Courses:

SPAN 392: Latin American Women Writers in Translation

This course is based on discussion and analysis of representative works by 20th and 21st-century women writers from the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America. Readings will provide a diverse overview of the central themes, sensibilities, and aesthetic directions of Latin American women writers, with attention to the historical and cultural contexts in which they write.

[Discussions will be in English. Students seeking credit for Spanish will be expected to read and write in Spanish (beyond the 200-level).]

Gender Studies Pathway

Students can also choose a Gender Studies Pathway to fulfill requirements in the Marist Core.

The Gender Studies Pathway focuses on gender as a significant cultural and cognitive category. Courses examine how gender has influenced the lives, status, and opportunities of all people, and attend to ways in which gender intersects with race, class, and ethnicity to shape social structures and individual experiences.

Each Pathway must contain 4 courses covering a minimum of 3 different disciplines. Honors and special-topics courses may be used in Pathways if they have been approved for this purpose.
Interested in Serving on a Women’s Studies Steering Committee?

We are looking for faculty and students interested in working with us to help direct and grow the Women’s Studies program. This group will likely begin meeting during the 2015-2016 school year and will require attendance at occasional meetings.

Stay in Touch with Women’s Studies!

We welcome your ideas, questions, and announcements of upcoming events or calls for papers

1) Join our Facebook group “Marist Women’s Studies”

2) To join a Marist Women’s Studies email list to receive announcements from the program, please send your contact information to angela.laflen@marist.edu or kristin.bayer@marist.edu

3) Check us out on the web at http://www.marist.edu/liberalarts/womensstudies/

4) Contact the co-directors at kristin.bayer@marist.edu and angela.laflen@marist.edu
Women’s Studies Program Celebrates 20 Years

By Tricia Fallo

“Women's studies provides a rich and flexible education while also integrating knowledge across traditional academic boundaries. Women's studies coursework also challenges students to examine the intersection of gender issues and cultural, political, and personal experiences in academic contexts.” -Dr. Angela Laflen

2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Women’s Studies Program at Marist College. To celebrate, on March 4th, co-directors Angela Laflen and Kristen Bayer invited a panel of professors to speak about the history of the program and women’s studies in general. The panel included JoAnne Myers, Shannon Roper, Anne Bertrand-Dewsnap, Michelle Smith, and Justin Myers. Together, they represented the departments of Political Science, Communication, Art History, English, and Sociology, while discussing how feminism, women’s activism, and gender and race issues are involved in each of their fields.
The Women’s Studies Program, founded in 1995, offers an interdisciplinary minor that focuses on race, class, gender, and sexuality issues. Dr. Laflen explains, “The great thing about the Women’s Studies program is that it is an interdisciplinary minor, so students have the chance to craft their minor based on the courses they choose to complete. As a result, though, students gain an appreciation for the importance of gender to the study of multiple disciplines and how issues of gender intersect with other categories such as sexuality, race, and ethnicity, among others.” Students minoring in Women’s Studies are required to take Introduction to Women’s Studies, and then can choose four other courses from at least three academic disciplines. Some of the courses students can choose from include Literature and Gender; American Feminism; Gender, Culture, and Communication; Social Inequality; or Sex, Evolution, and Behavior. Each semester, there are also special topics courses that count toward the minor such as Prof. Smith’s Feminist Rhetorics or Prof. Bertrand-Dewsnaps’s Women in Art courses.

Taking courses like this can have a tremendous, positive impact on students. Dr. Bayer said “I think any study that involves inclusivity to otherwise marginalized groups enhances our awareness of the world around us but also how we fit into it. We have established at Marist a program that includes analysis and consideration of race, class, and gender. All of this means that students emerge from Marist questioning representations of themselves and those around them in order to identify and combat discrimination but to also have the confidence to determine and reach their potential.”

A minor in Women’s Studies is a great option for all kinds of students. Professors participating in the March 4th panel agreed that the men and women who go through Women’s Studies are some of the brightest students at Marist. Additionally, employers value students with an awareness and sensitivity to some of society’s oldest and most important issues. The Women’s Studies Program allows students “to question authoritative narratives of identity, develop ways to change that narrative and to contest inequality,” Bayer said.

Laflen and Bayer attribute the success of the program to faculty, staff, and student commitment. Laflen said “there are so many Marist faculty with a connection to gender studies, many of whom weave issues of gender into their courses. Across campus, many faculty have conducted research and published articles and books directly related to gender. Marist students in general have also been enthusiastic about studying gender issues in the contexts of different disciplines.” In the future, the directors hope to offer even more courses as part of the minor and to add additional offerings focused on masculinity, sexuality, and race.
Upcoming Events:

At Marist:

April 10: Ally Training
3:30 - 5:00 pm
MU 3204
An Ally is a person trained in providing a welcoming and safe environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Together, Allies form a network of people who can provide support, and referral information for LGBTQ persons within our campus community. Allies stand against bigotry and discrimination. Registration is required. Email Jeffrey Kaine at jeffrey.kaine@marist.edu to register.

April 29: Feminist Rhetorics Mini-Conference
12:30 pm
Fontaine 105
Students will share brief conference proposal style abstracts describing their research projects for the course, as a sampler of the topics, methodologies, and questions that motivate research in feminist rhetorics. All are invited to attend.

April 30: “The Words They Call Us”
7 pm
Student Center 3102-3105
This event is offered by the Marist Ally Network.

In the Community:

April 17: Sex, Money, and Power: A Dialogue between Feminism and Economics
SUNY New Paltz
11:30 am-5 pm
Registration for this event is required.
Dr. Stacey Radin (PhD in Psychology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University) is a psychologist, researcher, and consultant who has dedicated her career to the development of girls and women. She is the founder and president of Corporate Equilibrium, specializing in the psychology of organizational effectiveness, and a member of the United Nation’s Working Group on Girls. Dr. Radin is also Founder and CEO of Unleashed-- a social justice program for middle schools empowering them to take a stand against an injustice they care deeply about; advocating for animal rights and welfare. Most recently, she is the author of Brave Girls: Raising Young Women with Passion and Purpose to Become Powerful Leaders with Leslie Goldman, published by Simon & Schuster in 2015.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals and abstracts are being solicited for the 2015 Women & Society Conference. This feminist conference is interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary, covering all aspects of women & gender being studied in the academy. The conference mentors and models feminist inquiry/scholarship for undergraduate students so joint faculty/student papers and excellent student papers are also considered, undergraduates may attend at no cost.

Please send your 250 word abstract with a brief bio. Papers, workshops, roundtables and panels are welcome; please include abstracts and bios for all participants, with one contact person. Please include all contact information--including home and e-mail addresses for summer correspondence to:

Women & Society Conference c/o Shannon Roper
School of Communication & the Arts
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

OR submit online at: http://www.marist.edu/liberalarts/womensstudies/conference.html
For more information email: WomenAndSocietyConference@Marist.edu
Proposals must be postmarked no later than July 13, 2015.