

# HARRIET TUBMAN DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES

---

## College of Arts and Humanities

3121 Susquehanna Hall  
Phone: 301-405-6877  
wgss@umd.edu  
<http://wgss.umd.edu>

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry analyzing structures of power, especially as they are grounded in gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, ability, and other inequalities, and as they configure historical and contemporary struggles for social change. The department and faculty enjoy a global reputation for innovative theoretical and methodological interventions and for their attention to curriculum transformation and global women's studies institution building. With a core faculty of eight and more than 80 affiliate faculty from across the campus, the program offers a B.A., M.A./Ph.D., undergraduate and graduate certificates in women, gender, and sexuality studies, a minor in black women's studies, and an undergraduate minor and certificate in LGBTQ studies.

## PROGRAMS

### Major

- Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Major (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/women-gender-sexuality-studies/womens-gender-sexuality-studies-major/>)

### Minors

- Black Women's Studies Minor (ARHU) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/women-gender-sexuality-studies/black-womens-studies-minor/>)
- LGBTQ Studies Minor (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/women-gender-sexuality-studies/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-studies/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-studies-minor/>)

### Certificates

- LGBTQ Studies Certificate (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/women-gender-sexuality-studies/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-studies/LGBTQ-studies-certificate/>)
- Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Certificate (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/women-gender-sexuality-studies/women-gender-sexuality-studies-certificate/>)

## ADVISING

Advising is mandatory for all majors each semester. Please email [wgss@umd.edu](mailto:wgss@umd.edu) or call 301-405-6880 for assistance scheduling an appointment.

Certificate students and minors are also encouraged to consult with the Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies academic advisor prior to registration each semester.

To review the academic plan for this major, go to <http://arhu.umd.edu/academicsadvising/academic-plans/>.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Experiential Learning (WGSS Scholarship in Practice Requirement)

As part of the major, students are required to complete a hands-on, practical learning experience. They may do so through a teaching assistantship, an undergraduate internship, or a research or creative works assistantship. Students in the certificate and minor programs may also apply for experiential learning.

The Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship (UTA) is an opportunity to work closely supporting a member of the department faculty in an undergraduate course. This structure allows UTAs to build expertise, develop pedagogical competencies, and strengthen their knowledge base in the areas of feminist, critical race, and queer pedagogical debates and approaches. This is especially relevant for students interested in careers in teaching or academia. UTA positions in WGSS are unpaid and credit bearing, students are required to enroll in 3 credits of WGSS358. Priority for teaching assistantships is given to students who have successfully completed the course they wish to TA. Positions are advertised during the registration period for the semester in which they occur and assistants are chosen by the faculty member who they will support.

The Undergraduate Internship experience is designed to provide students with the opportunity to combine theory and practice and get hands on experience with women's, gender, and sexuality issues in a workplace or organizational setting. The course has two components: work at the internship setting developing practical skill sets applicable to that environment, and work with a faculty mentor to prepare readings and/or research that provide a framework to think about the internship experience and an opportunity to reflect on the pragmatic and political issues. Internships can be taken for 3 - 6 credits of WGSS368 based on the combined number of hours worked at the internship site and on associated academics. Students seek internship opportunities in local, state and federal governments, non-profit organizations, policy and research institutions as well as agencies committed to social change. Past internship sites have included: MCASA-Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, NAACP Maryland State Conference, National Organization for Women, Institute for Women's Policy Research, HIPS, League of Women Voters of Maryland, Sinister Wisdom lesbian literary and art journal, Jewish Women International, Asian Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project, D.C. Rape Crisis Center, the District Alliance for Safe Housing, the State of Maryland Lt. Governor's Office and other state and national legislative offices. To learn more about the Internship program visit <http://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/experiential-learning/>.

The Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Assistant (URCA) provides an opportunity to work alongside a faculty mentor to develop an

enhanced understanding of specific research methods and/or creative practices; the overall goal is to provide students with an understanding of how field contributions are made, either by crafting their own research contributions, or providing support for a faculty mentor's ongoing research. Positions are generally advertised during the registration period in which they occur and are chosen by the faculty member who will be directing them. All URCA students register for 3 credits of WGSS378.

## Departmental Honors Program

The Honors Program (<https://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/experiential-learning/>) is designed to give students the opportunity to pursue an area of passionate academic interest in greater depth than that allowed by formal classes. Honors students engage in rigorous interdisciplinary research under the close supervision and mentorship of a department faculty member. Students can be expected to gain a deeper understanding of some aspect of women's, gender, and/or sexuality studies and to develop habits of self-reliance, individual initiative, and critical analysis. The culminating thesis may be a sustained piece of writing or a substantial creative or activist project. Applications to the Departmental Honors Program are accepted in mid-Fall and mid-Spring.

## Student Community

The Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) strives to build a vibrant community of students. Undergraduate and graduate students are given voice at the department level through the election of a student representative who participates in department faculty meetings. The department has a vibrant series of Social Justice Hangouts and other events held each year to bring together students and faculty from all our programs and the broader university community. To learn more about this community visit <http://wgss.umd.edu/current-students/>.

## Triota

Iota, Iota, Iota (Triota) is a national Women's Studies Honor Society. The UMD chapter is a student run organization that strives to maintain feminist values of egalitarianism and inclusiveness. It celebrates the diversity of experiences that are central to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Triota works to promote student research and activism in socio-political issues that affect all minority groups and aims to recognize and promote the academic achievements of students enrolled in WGSS and LGBT courses. For more information please contact [wgss@umd.edu](mailto:wgss@umd.edu).

## Scholarships and Financial Assistance

For information about scholarships and financial assistance offered by the department, please visit <http://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/scholarships-awards/>.

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) administers all types of federal, state and institutional financial assistance programs and, in cooperation with other university offices, participates in the awarding of scholarships to deserving students. For information, visit: <http://financialaid.umd.edu>.

## Awards and Recognition

The department administers a variety of awards and grants to encourage and recognize outstanding scholarship, research, leadership and service.

The Rodler/Wood Scholarship (<https://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/scholarships-awards/rodler-wood/>) is awarded

annually based on one or more of the following criteria: demonstrated financial need, hardship based on sexual orientation, academic interest in LGBT Studies, and extracurricular activities on behalf of LGBT issues. The Rodler/Wood Scholarship is presented at the annual Lavender Graduation ceremony each spring.

Each fall the department funds travel awards to support the participation of undergraduate students in the National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference. Any student in the university who has completed 12 credits of WGSS/WMST and/or LGBT courses is eligible to apply for the NWSA travel award (<https://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/national-womens-studies-association/>).

The department also recognizes graduating students who have excelled in academics or in service to the campus and community at our Departmental Commencement Ceremony.

For information on any of these awards, including how to apply, contact the department at [wgss@umd.edu](mailto:wgss@umd.edu) or visit <http://wgss.umd.edu/academic-programs/undergraduate/scholarships-awards/>.