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Women's Studies Major Guidelines 1982

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WOMEN'S STUDIES AT DENISON UNIVERSITY

Denison University offers rich opportunities in Women's Studies. In any given academic year over a dozen different courses in Women's Studies are offered. Disciplinary experts in Women's Studies are to be found in the departments of English, History, Sociology/Anthropology, Religion, Philosophy, Economics, Biology, Political Science, Speech Communications, Athletics and Physics among others. The Director of Women's Studies also works in close conjunction with the Coordinator of Women's Programs to sponsor extra-curricular learning.

WHAT IS WOMEN'S STUDIES?

The Women's Studies Program and allied departments offer students an opportunity to pursue in depth some of the most challenging and vibrant scholarship of recent decades. The study of women is by definition interdisciplinary and draws upon research in the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences and the fine arts. Women's Studies courses are now solidly established in over 2000 colleges and universities in the United States, though the depth and breadth of Denison's offerings are unique for a college of its size.

The New Scholarship on Women, as it is termed, is multidimensional in its purposes and academic implications. It seeks to deconstruct error in traditional disciplines which have neglected the experience of half of humanity. Women's Studies is in part compensatory. However, the accumulation of new facts when women are routinely included as categories of study carries with it far-reaching implications: the new learning challenges many disciplines to arrive at new theoretical perspectives. Women's Studies scholarship is gradually reconstructing our notions of reality. In history, for example, inclusion of women challenges standard interpretations of the impact of certain historical events, such as the industrial revolution; while in biology, the inclusion of women as research subjects is forcing a revision of certain physiological principles. The net effect of this new research, which permeates virtually every discipline, is transformational. Women's Studies majors and minors are encouraged to combine a solid disciplinary grounding with the interdisciplinary perspectives of Women's Studies.

THE PRACTICAL DIMENSION

The study of such a complex field as Women's Studies offers a challenging liberal arts education to any student. Women's Studies encourages independence of thought, analytic thinking and an ability to integrate knowledge from a variety of fields. These crucial skills are invaluable in a world in which problems can rarely be solved using the perspective of only one discipline. Employers and professional schools alike stress that they want graduates who can analyze complexity. Recent Denison Women's Studies majors and minors include a student in medical school, an owner of a small business and a Congressional aide, an indication of the relevance of Women's Studies to a wide variety of career paths.

THE PERSONAL DIMENSION

Women's Studies also offers students --women and men-- an opportunity to study topics of direct personal relevance. Psychology courses may probe issues of role socialization and its consequences in individual lives; economics, the discriminatory impact of the marketplace, and possible solutions; political science, the legal position of women; anthropology, the cultural construction of gender systems and their cross-cultural variability; and literature, the female experience as it is lived in the world of the artistic imagination. Women's Studies encourages students to explore their own values and life-choices. Its pedagogy stresses the importance of personal as well as theoretical insights.

THE BROADER COMMITMENT

Women's Studies scholarship challenges many traditional disciplinary assumptions. Because it transforms our vision of the past, it inevitably carries with it implications for the present and future. Women's Studies majors and minors are encouraged to serve an internship with a political, social service or research agency that focuses on women's issues. This not only provides practical job experience but also fulfills a commitment to the broader community of women. Women's Studies recognizes that it is part of an interdependent system of social change. Though its scholarship is rigorous, Women's Studies is not value free. Stemming in part from its discoveries, Women's Studies holds to the premise that all humans are created equal and strives to create a society in which the dignity and aspirations of both sexes are respected.

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THE MAJOR IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

To major in Women's Studies, a student is required to take a minimum of 32 credit hours, 21 of which must be distributed as follows:

W.S. 101 (formerly ID 246) Women's Studies*	3 credits
Philosophy 275, Philosophy of Feminism	4 credits
Two courses in Minority Studies	8 credits
Advanced Seminar in Women's Studies	2 credits
Senior Research	4 credits

*Since it is possible for students to take this course more than once, no more than 6 credit hours in W.S. 101 will count toward the 32-credit minimum for the major.

The remaining 11 credits are elective and should be chosen by the student in consultation with the Director of Women's Studies.

The student majoring in Women's Studies is encouraged to combine academic theory with practice by participating in one or more field experiences, preferably in programs through which the student's work can be evaluated by a member of the Denison faculty. Students might elect to meet this expectation by participating in programs ranging from DCA-sponsored projects to the GLCA Philadelphia Urban Semester to January Term internships. Students might also take Psychology 202 (Field Experience in Psychology) or Field Experience in Black Studies. These suggestions are illustrative rather than inclusive, and the student is encouraged to choose an experience suitable to her or his interests.

THE MINOR IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

The minor in Women's Studies is intended to complement and enrich traditional, disciplinary majors. It is flexibly designed to accommodate many different majors and schedules in the Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences.

The student who minors in Women's Studies ~~should~~^{must} coordinate course selection with the Director. At least six courses must be selected (for a minimum of 19 credits), of which four must be from the current catalogue listing under Women's Studies. Because of the relationship between the problems of women and those of other minority or disadvantaged groups, at least two courses for the minor must be in the areas of Black Studies, Latin American Area Studies, or other intercultural studies. These two courses need not focus specifically on women nor need they be ones that fulfill the Minority and Women's Studies General Education requirement. The Director of Women's Studies can provide information about which courses meet this part of the requirement.