



WOMEN'S STUDIES



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Women's Studies: Overview

[...] Women's and gender studies provides you with the tools to understand the explicit and implicit roles that gender plays in everyone's life every day. By exploring the complexities of gender—from history, theory, and current events—we begin to understand gender's powerful effect and its inherently mutable nature. These courses draw gender out; name it; dissect it; and, most importantly, encourage students to challenge what they thought they knew.

Women's studies programs grew out of the women's liberation movement, with San Diego State University and Cornell University establishing two of the first departments in 1970. Activists pushed for these programs, along with others such as Chicano or Latino studies and African American studies. They were established as a corrective to the traditional focus of the white- and male-dominated academy. As Alice E. Ginsberg, editor of *The Evolution of American Women's Studies*, explained to *Inside Higher Ed*, the purpose of these courses has always been “to make visible what has been invisible and to make conscious what has been overlooked or silenced.”

The classes address the traditional absence or seeming absence of women in history, science, the arts, and politics, and they also offer new perspectives of reflection and analysis. In women's and gender studies, students are introduced to a range of important thinkers, such as Audre Lorde, Bell Hooks (written as bell hooks), and Gloria Anzaldúa. They scrutinize trends that ripple through history and uncover tropes that appear in popular culture. Importantly, the discipline is an ever changing and adapting one—it encourages examination of debates within feminism, such as the tendency to prioritize white women's perspectives and experiences over those of women of color. It is instructive to understand the work that early activists undertook to change this focus and apply these lessons to contemporary activism.

Since their inception, such programs have been met with suspicion, and as any women's and gender studies major can tell you, plenty of derision. And people continue to discount the subject for a wide range of reasons. They believe the classes are only for radical feminists or that the courses lend themselves to unproductive bickering or bullying. Even those who support women's and gender studies in theory often opt out, because they think they already know enough about the subject by virtue of their identity as female, queer, trans, or gender-neutral.

[...] To any doubters, a quick glance at the news highlights the need for the study of gender dynamics. Women's issues—including pay inequality, campus sexual assault, representation in politics, and access to health care—are frequent subjects of discussion. But how we talk about these topics is as important—if not more so—than that we're talking about them in the first place. Many of the debates lack knowledge and depth, and all of these subjects demand more informed discussion and would benefit from feminist analysis.

One of the mainstays of women's studies is the concept of intersectionality—how different forms of discrimination and oppression interact. Intersectionality tells us that there is no one singular experience for women because of the way gender works in

conjunction with race, ethnicity, social class, and sexuality.

[...] Further, as Ginsberg highlighted, “In women’s studies classes, teachers do not claim to be the only ‘expert’; student voices count for a lot.” These courses allow students the chance to be in direct dialogue with others they might not otherwise socialize with and the chance to discuss topics they might not otherwise approach. While we might sit with the same classmates in lab or in lecture, women’s and gender studies courses rely on fostering dialogue and breaking down barriers of communication. Encouragement, open discussion and listening respectfully to another’s lived experience in women’s and gender studies course is an education that cannot be overrated.

Source:

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2015/09/womens-and-gender-studies-class-learn-to-understand-and-recognize-sexism-in-everyday-life.html>

WHO EMPLOYS WOMEN’S STUDIES GRADUATES?

- Government and community organizations
- Educational institutions
- Consulting firms
- Financial service firms
- Non-profit agencies
- Social advocacy groups
- Religious organizations
- Mental health facilities
- Community centers
- Welfare organizations
- Behavioral health clinics
- Residential care facilities
- Social service agencies
- Communications and public relations
- Publishing houses
- Media organizations
- Project management
- Law/Legal services
- Market research firms
- Human resources

PROGRAM RELATED SKILLS:

- Write detailed research papers
- Summarize concepts and ideas
- Read and think critically
- Use unfamiliar materials
- Read and analyze texts
- Conduct literature review
- Evaluate ideas and research
- Generate new ideas
- Gather and interpret information and data

- Statistical abilities
- Create research designs
- Support ideas with facts
- Work well under pressure

- Formulate and defend positions
- Work independently and collaboratively
- Insight into group dynamics
- Ability to resolve conflicts/counselling
- Ability to assess needs
- Ability to debate, persuade, mediate and present your thoughts and opinions to others
- Ability to apply complex theoretical concepts to everyday practice and professional dilemmas

- Understand different people and their views
- Understand difference and discover the intersections between racism, homophobia, sexism, classicism, and other forms of oppression
- Recognize assumptions and make inferences
- Summarize concepts using vocabulary appropriate for diverse audiences
- Ability to work with advocacy groups, human rights organizations, environmental and consumer groups, health care, and youth, elderly and social services
- Accept intellectual and personal challenges, take a stand and support it with evidence
- Personal growth that includes self-empowerment; the belief that one can change one's self and the world
- Awareness of how gender identity is constructed and an increased sense of what is important in creating strong families and social relationships
- Knowledge about power relationships and injustice

POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Detailed career profiles are available in the Career Centre. Some occupations require further education and experience.

Social Work

Child Life Specialist
 Social Worker*
 Support Worker*
 Family Support Worker
 Child & Youth Worker*
 Marriage & Family Therapist*
 School Counsellor*

Advocacy

Executive Director of a Non-Profit Organization
 Human Right Advocate*
 Victims' Advocate
 Non-Profit Administrator

Education

Professor*
 Special Education Teacher*
 Educational Administrator
 Elementary School Teacher*
 ESL Teacher*
 High School Teacher*

Health Care

Health Care Coordinator
 Health Clinic Medical Assistant
 Nurse/Midwife*
 Hospital Foundation Executive Director
 Health Policy Planner*
 Community Health Promoter

Arts & Media

Librarian*
 Journalist*
 Editor*
 Archivist*
 Artist*
 Musician*
 Casting Director*
 Writer*
 Gallery Director
 Historian*
 Media Correspondent
 Speech Writer

Other

Researcher*
 Sociologist*
 Clergy*
 Lawyer*
 Lobbyist*
 Mediator
 Human Resources Diversity Specialist*
 Volunteer Manager*
 Community Worker*
 Religious Worker*
 Settlement & Youth Worker

Government/Law

Border Service Agent
 Public Policy Analyst*
 Foreign Service Officer*
 Legislative Aide
 Government Administrator
 Policy Researcher*
 Politician*

Public Relations/Business Communications

Corporate Communications Coordinator
 Community Service Agency Director
 Market Research Analyst*
 Event Planner*
 Fundraiser*
 Advertising Account Executive*
 Union Organizer
 Project Manager
 Public Relations Specialist*
 Labour Relations Specialist

*View these titles at Career Cruising, available on [CLN](#) under the *Resources* tab.

HOW TO GET EXPERIENCE

Start early by seeking relevant summer, part-time and volunteer opportunities that will help you gain experience and develop the skills that employers want. Below is a sample of the types of temporary positions that recently posted on various job-searching websites, including the Career Learning Network (CLN). To access these sites, visit <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/jobs/resources-links>

Volunteer

- Volunteer/Committee Member, Take Back the Night March
- Volunteer/Board of Directors member, Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)
- Volunteer, Rise Up! Digital Archive of Feminist Activism
- Safe City Ambassador, Safe City Mississauga
- Volunteer Publicist & Communications Coordinator, Journey to Diversity Workplaces
- Member, EqualVoice
- Activity Support Volunteer, VHA Home HealthCare
- Social Media & Email Marketer, hEr VOLUTION
- Lunch Volunteer, School for Young Moms
- Gender, Knowledge And Communication Advisor, Cuso International (Nigeria)
- Gender-Based Violence Awareness Advisor, Cuso International (Peru)

Part-Time Positions

- Concierge, Women's Homeless Shelter
- Research Assistant, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Student Research Position, Women's College Hospital
- Community Support Worker (Part Time), Ontario Women's Centre
- Coordinator, Member Recognition & Engagement, Girl Guides of Canada
- Trainer (Academics Education), WE CAN WIN
- Women's Program Worker (Bengali speaking), The Neighborhood Group

Internships

- Citi Canada Women's Leadership Program - Early Identification (ID) Program
- Student Placement, Canadian Women's Foundation
- Women in Capital Markets (WCM) Internship Program, CPP Investment Board
- Women, Peace and Security Network Canada Internship. The MATCH Fund
- Young Women in Public Safety Internship Program, Government of Canada
- Young Canada Works (YCW)
- Ontario Internship Program
- Public Administration, Policy and Research Summer Student 2019, York Region
- Growth Coordinator, Think Dirty Inc.
- Summer Paid Internship Program (PIP), National Women's Law Centre

Additional Related Student Organizations

Join a student club or an academic society at UTM to meet like-minded people, explore your interests, and make valuable connections. To view a list of current clubs and societies, visit the Centre for Student Engagement's website: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/utm-engage/centre-student-engagement>

Some organizations you may also consider are:

- **Women and Gender Studies Student Alliance (WGSA)**
<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/women-studies/why-study-gender/wgs-society>
- **UTM Women's Centre**
<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/women-studies/why-study-gender/utm-womens-centre>
- **UTM Sexual Education Centre** <https://utmsec.weebly.com/>
- **Because I am a Girl** <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/126560>
- **Boss Women UTM** <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/128001>
- **Women in STEM Mentorship** <https://www.wiseuoft.org/industry-mentorship-program>
- **Women in Tech** <http://icubeutm.ca/womenintech2018/>
- **OUT@UTM** <http://outatutm.com/>
- **UTM Positive Space** <http://positivespace.utoronto.ca/mississauga/>
- **UTM Women and Gender Equity Centre** <https://utmwgec.ca/>
- **UTM Black Students' Association** <https://www.facebook.com/UTMBLACK/>
- **University of Toronto's World of Women** <https://www.facebook.com/uoftwow>
- **Free the Children at UTM** <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/3086>
- **Intersectionality** <https://ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/127977>
- **Students for a Free Tibet UTM**
<https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/127519>
- **Style and Profyle** <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/128045>
- **UNICEF UTM** <https://ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/127897>
- **UTM Model United Nations** <https://www.utmun.org/>
- **UTM Liberals** <https://ulife.utoronto.ca/organizations/view/id/126667>

Featured/Published Work

Feminist scholars often conduct research based on issues within Women's Studies. Recent Canadian academic publications have included research in the following areas and issues:

- **Non-Consensual Disclosure of Intimate Images as a Crime of Gender-Based Violence**
Canadian Journal of Women and the Law 30(1)
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/690052#info_wrap
- **Preventing Gender-Based Violence Among Adolescents and Young Adults: Lessons From 25 Years of Program Development and Evaluation**
Violence Against Women 25(1) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801218815778>

Create a Portfolio

To market your skills and knowledge gained as a Women's Studies student, create a portfolio demonstrating your work. Select a few research papers, assignments, projects, or any work that you have published in journals, magazines, etc., that illustrate your writing skills. You can make mention of the relevance of your portfolio in your cover letter, and consider sharing a significant project you have worked on during an interview.

Canadian Feminist Journals/Publications

- *Canadian Woman Studies Journal*
<http://www.cwscf.ca/>
- *Atlantis*
<http://journals.msvu.ca/index.php?journal=atlantis>
- *Resources for Feminist Research Journal*
<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/rfr/>
- *Women, Culture, & Society Undergraduate Review*
<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/women-studies/women-culture-society-undergraduate-review>
- *Herizons Magazine*
<http://www.herizons.ca/>
- *Feminist.com*
<https://feminist.com/>

Join an Association

There are many benefits of becoming a member of association(s), such as developing a network of contacts, learning about industry trends, accessing industry-related job postings, and stating your affiliation on your resume. Some associations related to this major are:

- Canadian Women's Studies Association <https://www.wgsrf.com/>
 - Canadian-wide, bilingual, professional association of Women's and Gender

Studies practitioners in Canada. It is composed largely of academic faculty across Canada, in addition to graduate and undergraduate students, community activists, and policy researchers -- but is open to everyone who supports its mission and goals.

- Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW).
<https://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/>
 - CRIAW is a not-for-profit organization that promotes research, which reflects the diverse experiences of women in Canada. Members have access to the online resource centre, information on current and upcoming research projects, and CRIAW's newsletter. Members also get discounts on publications and conference admissions.

Explore Careers with LinkedIn

Use the profiles of LinkedIn members to see how their career developed over time. It may give you ideas about what you could do to succeed in your career.

- Go to Search field (*Search for people, jobs, companies...*) at the top of the page
- Enter a career title you are interested in and click search icon
- Filter the search results by selecting 'people'
- Look at the members to see who has been in the career

The information is about how they built their experience, the first jobs they got after graduating and what additional education and training they may have done. If one of the profiles is a 2nd level connection, consider requesting an introduction so that you could do an information interview.

SAMPLE JOB LISTINGS FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS/RECENT GRADUATES

Below is a sample of delisted positions that were posted on various job posting websites. To access UofT's job board, visit the Career Learning Network (CLN) and click on Jobs.

- Undergraduate/Graduate Research Assistant, Indigenous Visual Culture Research Centre (INVC-RC), OCAD University
- Canadian Ombudsperson, Office of the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise, Canada
- RED Path Research Coordinator, NWAC, Ottawa, ON
- Women's Counselor/Advocate Relief, Interim Place, Mississauga, ON
- Consultant for Gender and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Prevention, Youth Challenge International - Ottawa, ON
- Research Officer - Women and Science, PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA, Ottawa, ON
- Project Coordinator, Anova: A Future Without Violence, London, ON
- Counsellor / Advocate, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region, Waterloo, ON

- Residential Relief Counselor, Elizabeth Fry Kingston, Kingston, ON
- Employee Wellness & Equity Advisor, OCAD University
- Senior Development Officer, Leadership Giving, York University, Toronto, ON
- Consultant for Gender and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Prevention, Youth Challenge International, Ottawa, ON

HOW CAN THE CAREER CENTRE HELP?

The Career Centre has many resources and events to help you, whether it be exploring an industry of interest or gaining experience in a specific area. To help navigate these resources, drop by and speak to one of our Career Assistants to get started. Visit the Career Centre website (www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers) and sign up for our e-newsletter to keep updated with our latest events and resources. You may also sign up for Resume Critiques through CLN (www.cln.utoronto.ca), or cruise through our online job database. Take a look at our events calendar to find out what's coming up in the next couple of weeks and sign up for workshops, employer events and more. If you have any questions, please call or visit our Centre in-person. We are happy to help!

Library Resources

Our Resource Library consists of great books to help you plan your career. These books cover everything from identifying potential career options, writing a great resume and cover letter, preparing for different types of interviews and being prepared to answer some of the tougher interview questions. The following are resources especially relevant to Women Studies students. They can be found on our "Get Experience" shelf in the *Career Options for Women* bin.

- *Mother Leads Best: 50 women who are changing the way organizations define leadership*
- *Canada's Best Employers for Women: A guide for job hunters, employees and employers*
- *Success Strategies for Women in Science: A portable mentor*
- *Northern Lights: Outstanding Canadian Women*
- *Career Options for Women: A series of 13 videos profiling women who chose occupations that are usually practiced by men*

Our Library also includes a comprehensive LGBTQ+ binder for anyone who may be interested in relevant career information. You will find this binder on the "Get Experience" shelf.

Several books are also available in our E-Library catalogue. This collection includes:

- *101 Careers in Social Work ('What about careers in...')*
- *Career Choices of Female Engineers ('What about careers in...')*
- *Careers in Focus: Activism ('What about careers in...')*
- *Creative Careers ('What about careers in...')*
- *Who Says It's a Man's World ('What's my career plan?')*
- *The MBA Slingshot for Women ('What's my career plan?')*
- *Race, Gender, and the Labour Market ('What's my career plan?')*

- Success Strategies from Women in STEM (*'What's my career plan?'*)
- Feminine Capital (*'How can I be an innovator?'*)

The National Occupational Code Binders

The National Occupational Code binders in the Career Resource Library provide very detailed, specific and extensive information relating to hundreds of careers. From general overviews of the job, to working conditions, to sample job postings related to the field and related articles, the binders are sure to provide you with in-depth answers to many of your job-specific questions.

Industry Reports and Labour Market Information:

To learn more about the not for profit sector click on: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/industry-reports> . You can also find out additional information about the Canadian labour market for that sector by visiting: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/labour-market-information>

Other Panel Packages

Visit the Career Centre website for in-depth Profile Packages covering a wide-range of subject areas. Other packages that may be of interest for Women's Studies students are, (but not limited to):

- Careers in Activism
- Diversity
- Careers in Journalism
- International Development

The Career Centre has also compiled [Program Plans](#) for specific major/specialist programs offered at UTM. Program Plans provide an overview of the many academic and co-curricular opportunities available to help you get the most out of your UTM experience. To make this process less overwhelming for you, we've divided the plans by year of study, with suggestions for experiences to pursue within each year. You can find our Program Plans here: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/program-plans/program-plans>

Employer Directories

If you are looking for potential employers to contact for informational interviews about potential job openings take a look at our employer directories to help you find the prospective employers that interest you the most. Women's Studies students may be particularly interested in visiting *Charity Village*, (<http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/main.asp>), a Canadian database listing non-profit organizations across the country.

Tip Sheets

Do you like information in an easy-to-read, easy-to-digest, take-home format? Check out our tip sheets on subjects like Effective Interviewing, Networking, and Preparing for Graduate School.

Events

Would you like a chance to interact with prospective employers and expand your networking circle? The Career Centre offers a number of events that help you brush shoulders with professionals and experts from all fields. Attend the Get Experience Fair, Professional Schools Fair, and Summer Job Fair. Practice putting those networking skills to use and land yourself a job!

UTM Career Centre

Updated: Feb. 2019

Check out the events and workshops section of the Career Learning Network to find out what is happening on campus www.clnx.utoronto.ca/home.

Extern Job Shadowing Program

Are you still curious about what career path is best for you? Would you like a chance to experience working in an industry to find out if it's really the path for you? The Extern Job Shadowing Program can help. This job-shadowing program grants you a one- to five- day placement in a career of your choice. Placements have included: Translator, Family Counsellor, Teacher, Editor/Writer, and Speech Language Pathologist. Go to the Career Learning Network to register for the workshop that will help you to prepare for your placement. To register go to: www.clnx.utoronto.ca and then go to Workshops and Events to see when the next workshop is happening.

Career Counselling

Are you feeling lost, unsure and overwhelmed with finding out what career path you would like to choose? Have you decided on a career or the type of job you want, but are curious of the steps to getting there? Our Career Counsellors are here to help. Book an appointment with one of our professionals who can help you determine what paths you can take after graduation or how your area of study can relate to a career post-grad.

Job Postings

Are you graduating soon or a recent graduate? Are you struggling with your job search? Both our Career Counsellors and Employment Strategists are happy to help. Book an appointment in person or by calling our Centre. We also advise you attend our 'Now That I'm Graduating, What's Next?' workshop. This allow you to gain access to full-time job postings while you finish your final year of study or access full-time job postings for up to two years after you graduate. For general job postings during any time of your degree, visit our job database on CLN. To learn more, check out our Career Centre website.

Please feel free to come and visit us in Room 3094, South Building. You can also reach us by phone or by 905-828-5451 email at careers@utm.utoronto.ca.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Interested in learning what previous Women's Studies graduates have pursued? Visit UTM's departmental website for Women's Studies (<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/women-studies/women-gender-studies>) to find detailed alumni profiles of students who built a diversity of career paths. This information, along with other details found on the website, may inspire your own career direction.

Additional Web Resources

- [TalentEgg - What Can I Do With My Women's Studies Degree?](#)
- [WorldWideLearn.com - Careers in Women's Studies](#)
- [Top Universities - Finding a Job With a Gender Studies Degree](#)
- [The Balance - Women and Gender Studies Major Skills](#)
- Portland State University <https://www.pdx.edu/careers/what-can-i-do-degree-womens-studies>