

# Graduate Student Handbook

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Department of Women's,  
Gender and Sexuality Studies



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## About the Handbook

This handbook contains the policies and procedures in place as incoming students enter the program. The policies and procedures detailed here, in conjunction with the policies and procedures described in the Graduate School Handbook (see below), will govern the course of a student's graduate study in the Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at The Ohio State University.

Procedures herein may be amended by action of the department's graduate faculty subsequent to admission. During the course of study, minor changes may be made to the handbook by the department for purposes of clarification only. In the event that a major change is made, such as a new program requirement, the change will apply only to the cohort entering the next academic year.

Current students will have the option of requesting that a specific change be applied to their program or they may continue to apply the rules in place at the time they officially entered the program. Exceptions to this rule include former requirements that can no longer be accommodated, or changes mandated by the Graduate School.

All changes mandated by the Graduate School must be applied. If there are any questions about changes to graduate program policies and procedures, please consult with a member of the Graduate Studies Committee or the Program Coordinator for further details.

This handbook describes program requirements, information about financial aid, and outlines the responsibilities of graduate students to successfully complete a graduate degree in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Students should keep a hard copy of the handbook for reference. An online version of the handbook can be found on the department's website.

## The Graduate School

The Graduate School is the governing body for graduate education at The Ohio State University. The Graduate School publishes an annual Graduate Handbook detailing the policies and procedures governing all graduate education at The Ohio State University. Students are bound by the terms and conditions detailed in the Graduate Handbook and failure to abide by these regulations may be grounds for dismissal. Departmental policies may not override the policies established by the Graduate School. The Graduate Handbook may be found on the [Graduate School's website](#).

# The Department of

## Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

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### Overview

Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) is an interdisciplinary field that examines how systems of oppression, resistance, and privilege operate. It is designed to provide students with an understanding of the importance of gender and sexuality as categories of analysis and their intersections with race, ethnicity, class, age, nationality, (dis)ability and other identity markers. WGSS offers an undergraduate major and minor, graduate minor, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

### Structure

Decisions in the department are guided by the department chair in association with the department's core faculty. The department office is staffed by three full-time employees, the Business Manager, Curricula and Outreach Specialist, and the Graduate Program Coordinator. WGSS also has its own subject librarian, 65 associated faculty members, and approximately 25 graduate students.

To address the needs and mission of the department, the following standing committees are in place:

- Advisory Committee
- Graduate Studies
- Undergraduate Studies
- Promotion and Tenure
- Speakers and Events
- Grants and Awards

Committee assignments are determined the summer before the start of the academic year in Autumn semester and include WGSS faculty, affiliated faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students where appropriate. WGSS graduate students also serve on other committees and projects on an ad hoc basis.

## **Current Department Members**

- [Staff profiles](#)
- [Faculty profiles](#)
- [Affiliated Faculty profiles](#)
- [Graduate Student profiles](#)

# Doctor of Philosophy, PhD

## Overview

Per Graduate School policy, the WGSS PhD requires a minimum of 80 graduate credit hours, at least 50 of which must be earned beyond the master's degree. The PhD program is subdivided into the regular PhD track and the direct-to-PhD track. It is expected to take five academic years to complete the degree requirements on the regular PhD track and six academic years on the direct-to-PhD track.

A candidacy examination covering coursework is recommended to be taken Autumn semester of the third year on the regular PhD track and during or Autumn semester of the fourth year on the direct-to-PhD track. The candidacy exam is followed by a prospectus defense during the semester immediately following candidacy exams. The final three years of the program are used to complete and defend a dissertation, comprised of an original work of scholarship.

The timelines for PhD students are recommendations rather than requirements. However, students should be aware that recommended timelines reflect the amount of time the department is typically able to fund students. Extending the recommended timeline may lead to financial costs for the student. Students and advisors are encouraged to consult with the Graduate Studies Committee about establishing a timeline that suits the student's needs while still complying with Graduate School regulations.

## Coursework

PhD coursework is geared towards preparing students for the intellectual capacity to read for their tailored 5 candidacy exams and design and implement dissertation projects. The

open elective coursework design allows students to take cutting edge research seminars while freeing them from cumbersome and restricting course requirements.

A minimum of 80 graduate credit hours are required for the PhD, of which 50 credit hours must be earned while in the program (up to 30 graduate credit hours may be transferred from another institution). These requirements will generally be met through the natural progression of coursework in collaboration with minimum enrollment requirements per semester.

GTAs are required to enroll in a minimum of 8 credit hours per semester and 4 credit hours for Summer term, if they so choose (Summer term registration is not required for GTAs on nine-month appointments).

Fellows are required to enroll in 12 credit hours each for Autumn and Spring semesters and 6 credit hours for Summer term.

There are 37 credit hours of required coursework for the PhD. Most PhD students will earn 45 credit hours of coursework if they take their exams during Autumn semester of their third year, without taking any summer credits hours (5 semesters at 9 credit hours per semester). Direct-to-PhD students are anticipated to earn 63 credit hours of coursework if they take their exams during Autumn semester of their fourth year, without taking any summer credit hours (7 semesters at 9 credit hours per semester).

All PhD students are expected to take at least two-thirds of their courses within the department, beyond the 30 hours for the MA, and not counting dissertation hours taken post-candidacy. A maximum of 6 credit hours at the 5000-level or above that were taken during the MA but not counted towards the degree may be used towards the PhD.

Given the anticipated credit hours by the time of candidacy, the following details the number of credit hours students may take outside of the department in relation to total credit hours earned:

- Minimum number of credit hours needed for degree:
  - 33 total, 21 in WGSS, 12 outside

- Expected earned credit hours for PhD by candidacy:
  - 45 total, 30 in WGSS, 15 outside
- Expected earned credit hours for direct-to-PhD by candidacy:
  - 63 total, 42 in WGSS, 21 outside

## Degree Requirements

### Required Core Theory Courses: 12 hours (4 courses)

- WGSST 7700 – Feminist Inquiry I
- WGSST 7701 – Feminist Inquiry II
- WGSST 7702 – Feminist Pedagogy
- WGSST 7760 – Feminist Inquiry: Methods

### Elective Courses: 21 hours (7 courses)

- 9 hours in WGSS courses at 5000-level or above
- 12 hours in WGSS or related discipline-based courses offered by other academic units

### Notes on Degree Requirements:

- All incoming students are required to take WGSST 7700 & 7702 in their first semester & 7 WGSST 7701 in their second semester.
- Only 6 hours of WGSST 8193 – Individual Studies may count toward the degree.
- Students may take more than 6 credit hours WGSST 8193, but these credits cannot be used to fulfill degree requirements.
- PhD students may use 6 credit hours taken as an MA student but not used toward the MA degree as part of PhD coursework.
- It is recommended that PhD students take an additional methods course. On occasion, faculty may teach 8860: Topics in Advanced Feminist Methods.
- Students should choose electives in consultation with the faculty advisor.

- WGSST electives are generally listed as “WGSST 8800.0X – Topics in Feminist Studies” with a subtitle describing the course for that semester. Course details will be announced the semester prior to offering.
- WGSS will offer between 1-3 elective courses per semester.
- It is strongly recommended that PhD students consider a graduate minor or graduate interdisciplinary specialization in conjunction with their research area.
- PhD students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English (see “Language Requirement” below).
- PhD students are permitted to take courses that will not count towards their degree requirements but do count as graduate credit hours.

## **Language Requirement**

Students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English by:

- Passing an examination in the given language.
- Passing a language department’s 6571 & 6572 or 1101 & 1102 with a grade of B or better.
- Making other arrangements with a qualified resource outside the university per advisor’s approval for unusual circumstances where a language is not offered at Ohio State.
- Showing reading competence in a second language before taking the Candidacy Examination by arranging a competency examination.
- Entering the program as an international student with English as a second language.

Students should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator by the end of Spring semester during their first year to discuss options for demonstrating language proficiency.

## **Transfer Credit**

If a student holds a master's degree from another institution, they should confer with their advisor during Autumn semester of their first year about receiving and applying transfer credit to the WGSS program. Students may transfer a block of 30 credit hours towards the PhD by completing the "Transfer of Graduate Credit" form in gradforms: [gradforms.osu.edu/](http://gradforms.osu.edu/).

Only in exceptional circumstances will individual courses be evaluated for transfer to waive WGSS PhD coursework requirements. In these circumstances, final determination about transfer and use of courses from other institutions will be made by the Graduate Studies 9 Committee in consultation with the student's advisor. Once a determination has been made, the Program Coordinator will assist in filing the necessary paperwork with the Graduate School.

## **Advising**

Students are responsible for requesting committee members to serve on their candidacy exam and dissertation committees. It is recommended that these committee members be selected from the WGSS core or affiliated faculty. One of the committee members must be the student's WGSS faculty advisor. Affiliated faculty members may serve as full co-advisors in conjunction with a WGSS core faculty member for the candidacy exam and/or dissertation defense. In order to achieve intellectual coherence, the Graduate Studies Committee suggests that the official WGSS faculty advisor remain the same for both the candidacy exam and dissertation committees whenever possible. If a student's advisor leaves Ohio State, the student and their advisor will consult with the Graduate Studies Committee to determine a course of action.

## **Annual Review**

The practice of annual reviews is one that PhD students will likely encounter in their academic lives after graduate school. Every year during Spring semester, all PhD students are reviewed by the WGSS core faculty to ensure timely progress towards degree, identify

and resolve problems before they become unmanageable, and share successes. Students are expected to complete a self- evaluation prior to meeting with the student's advisor early in Spring semester. After the student meets with the advisor to discuss progress, the advisor will fill out a separate evaluation form.

The faculty will review the self-evaluation and the advisor's evaluation in advance of a faculty meeting where progress will be discussed. The Graduate Studies Committee will decide if co-advisors from other programs need to be present for the evaluation. If there are concerns over progress or problems, the faculty decide how the issues should be addressed and determine a plan of action which outlines consequences if the issues are not resolved. The Graduate Studies Committee Chair will write a brief letter to each student and advisor summarizing faculty discussion and decisions. It is the responsibility of the student to follow up on action steps and deadlines as needed.

Dates are always subject to change, but the following is a guide for Annual Review timeline:

- **Beginning of March:** Student completes selfevaluation
- **Mid-March:** Student meets with advisor for annual meeting
- **End of March-beginning of April:** Advisor submits evaluation
- **Beginning of April:** Faculty review evaluations
- **Mid-April:** Faculty meet to discuss annual reviews
- **May:** Letter sent from Graduate Studies Chair summarizing annual review

## **Graduate Progression Policy**

The Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Graduate Program supports and adheres to the University's Graduate School Handbook rule which states, "a student must maintain a graduate cumulative point-hour ratio of 3.0 or better in all graduate credit courses and must maintain reasonable progress to be considered in good standing." This translates to earning no less than a B for a course to be counted toward the 80 credits required to

complete the PhD. Students who fail to earn a B or better in a class and therefore cannot earn credit hours for the course may fall behind in the program. Insufficient progress in the dissertation may also cause students to fall behind. Failure to maintain reasonable progress through the program may result in suspension.

Students who fall below a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on probation by the Graduate School and given one semester to improve their performance. Students who fail to do so may be suspended from the program.

## **Continuous Enrollment**

As per the Graduate School's policy on continuous enrollment, students are required to be enrolled for at least three credit hours every semester (not including summers) until graduation. More information about continuous enrollment can be found here: [gradsch.osu.edu/continuous-enrollment.html](https://gradsch.osu.edu/continuous-enrollment.html)

## **Candidacy Examination**

The candidacy exam marks the transition from PhD student to PhD Candidate. After successful completion of the candidacy exam, students will shift focus from 12 studying coursework to pursuing independent research and writing a dissertation. The candidacy exam is therefore designed to show that students are intellectually prepared to pursue independent research by demonstrating mastery in a broad range of theories and concepts covered in coursework.

Regular PhD students should plan on taking the candidacy exam during Autumn semester of the third year. Direct-to-PhD students should plan on taking the candidacy exam during Autumn semester of the fourth year.

The candidacy examination consists of two portions, written and oral, administered by the student's examination committee and under the auspices of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Graduate School. The written portion evaluates a student's

comprehension of their fields, readiness to undertake independent research, and capacity to express complex ideas clearly. The written exam has three, twenty-page sections.

In close consultation with the advisor and exam committee, a student will choose one of the following options: three timed exams of four days each, resulting in three 20-page essays; three 20 page papers; or a combination thereof. Timed exams require distinct reading lists developed with exam committee members. Papers allow the student to either develop and augment past seminar work or compose new essays based on the student's evolving research agenda. Students pursuing are strongly encouraged to consider this process as one leading to a publication.

Timed exams will take place over four days and can be scheduled over a weekend or during the week. Should a student take more than one timed exam, the weekends or weeks scheduled do not need to be consecutive. Students will work with their exam committee in consultation with the Program Coordinator to schedule the exam days.

According to Graduate School rules, the oral defense must take place within one month of completion of the written portion. The date of the oral defense must be filed with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the exam date.

If a student fails any portion of the exam, the candidacy examination ommittee must decide whether the student will be permitted to take a second candidacy examination. The nature of the second candidacy examination is determined by the candidacy examination committee. Typically, a second exam includes both a written and an oral portion. In cases where a student's performance on the first written exam was of such a high caliber that the exam committee does not request any rewrites, then only the oral portion needs to be repeated. If any portion of the first written exam was not satisfactory, the exam committee must administer a second written exam. A second oral exam will always be required. The candidacy examination committee for a second exam must be the same as the committee for the first attempt unless a substitution is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

A Graduate Faculty Representative will be assigned to serve on the second oral examination.

As per Graduate School policy, students who fail the candidacy examination twice are not allowed an additional examination. After two unsatisfactory attempts at the candidacy examination (including the supplemental candidacy examination), students are not permitted to be a doctoral candidate in the same or in any other graduate program at this university. A notation of dismissal will be posted to the student's academic record and further registration will be barred. Students may seek admission to a master's degree program at this university by utilizing the transfer of graduate program procedure and securing a support letter from the Graduate Studies Committee chair of the proposed master's program.

## **Post-Candidacy Residency Requirement**

Both MA and PhD students are required to be in residence during their time in the graduate program. However, post candidacy PhD students can request up to 3 consecutive remote semesters for fieldwork purposes. This must be stated in the yearly survey for allocation of course assignments for the following academic year. It is the student's responsibility to discuss and receive approval from their faculty advisor.

## **Exam Committee**

Students are required to form an exam committee no later than the semester preceding their exam. The exam committee must be comprised of four faculty members who hold graduate faculty status, including the primary advisor who will serve as the chair of the committee. Students taking at least one timed exam should identify a member of their committee who will oversee writing the questions for each timed exam. The question writer may or may not be the student's advisor.

Graduate faculty status applies to all core WGSS faculty and most affiliated faculty in other departments. Students and their advisor should consult with the Graduate Studies Committee if an alternate format seems necessary. Before preparation for the exam occurs, students must meet with the members of their exam committee to lay out and agree upon the parameters of the exam components, reading lists and to answer any questions regarding content and process.

## **Disability Accommodations**

Students in need of disability accommodations to complete their candidacy examination should consult with the Office of Disability Services, their faculty advisor, PhD committee, and when appropriate, the Graduate Studies Committee, for insight on how the candidacy examination standards may be met in conjunction with appropriate disability accommodations. Visit the Office of Disability Services website for additional information: [slds.osu.edu/](http://slds.osu.edu/)

## **Preparing for the Exam**

Students will work closely with their advisor to determine what format their candidacy exams will take. The advisor will ultimately determine which combination of the written options shall be selected.

Students taking at least one written timed portion should prepare reading lists corresponding to the number of timed essays no later than the semester preceding the exam. Many of these works may have been read as part of the chosen coursework, although many will be new works to fill in gaps.

Reading lists should be approximately 50-100 items (books and articles).

Any individual work can appear only on one list, even though it may be applicable to more than one field of specialization. Each list should include works that reflect the student's lines of inquiry and should be developed in consultation with the exam committee

members. Reading lists should be submitted to the relevant committee members for further development and approval. Once the reading lists have been finalized, the student should electronically file them with the Program Coordinator.

Students taking at least one essay exam should work with their advisor to determine acceptable topics and format. Essays may be entirely new works or revised versions of seminar papers. Since students pursuing papers are strongly encouraged to consider this process as one leading to a publication, students should consult with their advisor and committee members to determine which publications to target.

## **Structure of Exam**

The candidacy exam is divided into two parts: the written exams and the oral defense. As outlined above, the written portion has two options for completion: a timed exam or an essay exam. Students will complete three written portions of around 20 pages each, excluding bibliographies. The advisor will ultimately determine which combination of the written options shall be selected.

### **Part I: Written Exams**

#### *Option A: Timed Exams*

- Each timed written exam will take place over a period of four days. Exam questions will be composed by members of the exam committee. Questions will be formulated to require answers that draw material from across epistemological categories and lines of inquiry. The Program Coordinator will electronically distribute the exam questions at 9:00 am on the first of the timed exam. Timed exams will consist of two questions, from which the student will respond to one. The student will write one, 20-page essay, plus a bibliography, which is due to the Program Coordinator by 5:00 pm on day four of the timed exam.

#### *Option B: Essay Exams*

- Students will work closely with their committee to determine an acceptable timeline for the delivery of essay exams. It is strongly recommended that all essay exams be submitted to the committee within two weeks of the start or conclusion of any timed exams.

## **Part II: Oral Defense**

The completed written portions of the exam should consist of three portions, each around 20 pages in length, excluding bibliographies. All written work will then be evaluated by the student's exam committee. These essays should be regarded as the beginning of a discussion that will be completed during the oral exam.

The oral defense must be completed within one month of the written exams. The defense will take approximately two hours. Questions for the oral defense can pertain to any works on the reading lists, the written portion of the exam, or any other pertinent field-related matter. To ensure fairness to all, students may not speak with their advisor between the written and oral portions of the exam about their written exams.

## **Exam Expectations**

Satisfactory answers are:

- Thorough: explicitly answering all parts of the question and using the requested number and type of sources.
- Well-organized: they contain a coherent thesis, a sustained argument, and are synthetic of the material from coursework and reading lists.
- Original: answers may not include long excerpts of other people's work or the student's own work written for other purposes.

Unsatisfactory performance on any portion will result in failure of the exam. At the recommendation of the exam committee, a student may retake a portion or all of the exam a second and final time. Failure on the second try will result in permanent dismissal from the Graduate School. In accordance with Graduate School policy, satisfactory

performance results in the advancement to candidacy the semester following the completion of the exams. All-but-dissertation (ABD) PhD candidates should enroll in three credit hours of WGSST 8999 – Dissertation with their advisor each semester, excluding summer, until graduation. Unless candidates can demonstrate compelling need and have their advisor's approval, they should not enroll in any additional coursework apart from WGSST 8999.

## **Applying for the MA on the way to the PhD**

PhD students may obtain the MA by successfully completing 30 credits and passing the MA written exam or by successfully completing the PhD candidacy exam. Obtaining the MA will not interfere with progress toward the PhD. See the forms section for instructions on which form to file to receive the MA via candidacy.

## **WGSST 3320: Special Topics in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies**

PhD candidates who serve as Graduate Teaching Associates are eligible to propose a course to be taught under WGSST 3320: Special Topics in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Proposed syllabi will be vetted by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, which will look at the feasibility of the course, its possibilities for attracting students, and its pedagogical value. WGSS encourages students to submit course proposals that are closely related to their dissertation's topics or to their broad areas of expertise.

## **Prospectus**

In the semester following the completion of the candidacy exam, candidates should formalize their dissertation committee and prepare a dissertation prospectus. The prospectus is a general overview of the planned dissertation project, with an informed but not necessarily comprehensive bibliography of primary sources, secondary sources, and research methods. It should be used to guide but not determine the research and writing process and should be prepared in consultation with the dissertation committee.

The prospectus should be 15-30 pages, double-spaced excluding the bibliography and should contain the following:

- Abstract: A brief summary of the project that explains the contribution to the field.
- Project Discussion: Situates the study within the relevant literature.
- Discussion of Methodology: Briefly describe the methodology the project will use.
- Chapter Outline: An outline of the expected chapter organization.
- Working Bibliography: Should include basic sources already read and key sources needed to fully realize the project.

The prospectus should be reviewed and approved at a meeting with the dissertation committee no later than the last week of the semester following the candidacy exams. An internal WGSS prospectus approval form should be electronically signed by all committee members and submitted to the Program Coordinator along with a copy of the prospectus.

Since the prospectus defense is an internal WGSS requirement and not a Graduate School requirement, there may be some leeway with regards to timing of the prospectus defense. However, delays in the prospectus defense may lead to shortened time for dissertation writing. Any variations to the prospectus defense timeline should be determined by the advisor in conjunction with the dissertation committee.

## **Dissertation and Final Oral Defense**

### **Dissertation Overview**

After successful completion of the candidacy exam, PhD candidates will complete the research and writing of an original work of scholarship supervised by the advisor. If the recommended timelines for program milestones are followed, candidates should have three years of funding to complete the dissertation. If a candidate fails to complete the dissertation during funded years, they may continue to pursue the dissertation at their own expense. Regular PhD candidates should plan on defending their dissertation by the Spring

semester of the fifth year. Direct-to-PhD candidates should plan on defending their dissertation by the Spring semester of the sixth year.

### **Dissertation Committee**

The dissertation committee is chaired by the primary advisor and composed of two or more graduate faculty members, one of whom must be a core WGSS faculty member apart from the primary advisor. The dissertation committee may or may not be the same as the candidacy exam committee. The Graduate Studies Committee recommends that the advisor remain the same for both committees whenever possible in order to achieve intellectual coherence and timely completion.

### **Dissertation Expectations and Timeline**

Candidates should meet regularly with their advisor to discuss dissertation expectations and requirements. Acceptable dissertation length, requisite number of sources, and other considerations will be determined in conjunction with the committee.

It is the candidate's responsibility to determine a dissertation timeline to ensure a timely submission for graduation. All dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School using the specified Graduate School formatting. The Graduate School has strict deadlines for the defense and submission of dissertations. In order to hold the final oral defense, the dissertation must be approved by the student's committee and have undergone the required Graduate School formatting check, and all forms must be filed at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense date.

Additional deadlines are updated on a semester-by semester basis, so be sure to check the Graduate School's website for the dates pertaining to your semester of graduation: [gradsch.osu.edu/calendar](http://gradsch.osu.edu/calendar)

Based on typical Graduate School deadlines, the following is a rough guide for a dissertation timeline for Spring semester:

- Week 3 (Friday, end of January) | Apply to graduate
- Weeks 5-10 (February-March) | Share working drafts with committee as requested
- Weeks 5-10 (February-March) | Set dissertation defense date with committee and contact Program Coordinator to reserve a room
- Two Weeks Prior to Defense Date (mid-March) | Submit final draft of dissertation to committee
- Two Weeks Prior to Defense Date (mid-March) | Approved “Application for Final Examination” due to the Graduate School
- Two Weeks Prior to Defense Date (mid-March) | Complete required format check at the Graduate School
- One Week Prior to Defense Date (end of March) | Share dissertation materials with external reviewer
- Week 13 (beginning of April) | Defend Dissertation at Final Oral Exam
- Week 14 (Friday, mid-April) | “Report on Final Examination” due to the Graduate School
- Week 15 (Friday, end of April) | Submit approved and final thesis to the Graduate School
- Week 15 (Friday, end of April) | “Report on Final Document” due to the Graduate School
- Week 15 (Friday, end of April) | Submit approved and final dissertation to the Graduate School

### **Working Drafts**

Candidates will work with their advisor and committee to determine when they wish to review working drafts of the dissertation. Working drafts are solely for the candidate’s benefit and there is no minimum number of submissions required. Drafts should be submitted to all committee members for suggestions prior to finalizing the dissertation’s form and content.

## **Final Draft**

A complete, word processed final draft of the dissertation is due to the candidate's committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation defense date. This final draft must be approved by the committee before you the Application for Final Examination form may be approved. The dissertation must conform to the Graduate School formatting requirements as described on the Document Preparation page of the Graduate School's website: [gradsch.osu.edu/completing-yourdegree/dissertations-theses/document-preparation](http://gradsch.osu.edu/completing-yourdegree/dissertations-theses/document-preparation) An external graduate faculty representative will be assigned by the Graduate School to participate in the final oral defense. The candidate will be required to send the external faculty member a copy of the dissertation for review at least one weeks prior to the oral defense. Format reviews for PhD dissertation and master's thesis students can be done remotely or in-person. Students who want to have a remote review will upload a complete draft of their document to [gradschoolformatreview@osu.edu](mailto:gradschoolformatreview@osu.edu). In-person format reviews of the complete document draft can be done on a walk-in basis in 247 University Hall from 8:30 a.m. thru 3:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday except holidays

## **Oral Defense**

The candidate's advisor and committee will set expectations for a successful defense prior to the examination date. The oral defense must be scheduled for at least two hours in length and may be open to the public. At least one hour of the two-hour examination period must be allotted to discussion of the research and to questions from the committee.

Students wishing to hold their examination virtually will be required to adhere to the Graduate School's Guidelines for Video Conferencing.

During the examination, if the graduate faculty representative (GFR) finds that parts of the process are not up to the quality standards that all doctoral students and faculty must adhere to, the GFR is expected to halt the examination and contact the Graduate School immediately for guidance. The examination may then be rescheduled without prejudice to the candidate once the issues raised by the GFR have been satisfactorily resolved.

Only the final oral exam committee members may be present for a discussion of the candidate's performance and the outcome of the defense. After discussion, the satisfactory/unsatisfactory decision is reached by means of a vote. The announcement of satisfactory or unsatisfactory will be announced after deliberations.

If the defense is deemed satisfactory, each examiner indicates approval by posting their decision on the Report on Final Examination form that must be submitted to the Graduate School by the posted deadline for the semester of graduation.

If the defense is deemed unsatisfactory, the final oral defense committee must decide whether the candidate will be permitted to take a second final oral defense and must record that decision on the Report on Final Examination form. Should the GFR cast the only negative vote at the conclusion of the examination, the matter will be referred to the Graduate School for review.

If a second examination is held, the final oral defense committee must be the same as the original one unless a substitution is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. All other rules pertaining to the final oral defense must be followed.

A candidate who fails the final oral examination twice is not allowed an additional examination. After two unsatisfactory attempts at the final oral examination, a candidate is not permitted to be a doctoral candidate in the same or in any other graduate program at The Ohio State University. A notation of dismissal will be posted to the candidate's academic record and further registration will be barred. If this happens, a candidate may seek admission to a master's degree program at Ohio State by utilizing the transfer of graduate program procedure and securing a support letter from the Graduate Studies Committee chair of the proposed master's program.

Upon written appeal by the candidate or a member of the final oral examination committee, the Graduate School Grievance Committee will review the candidate's final oral examination to ensure its conformity to Graduate School rules and to determine if it

was conducted fairly and without prejudice to the candidate. See the Graduate School Handbook for additional details.

### **Submission**

A candidate's exam committee may have edits for the candidate to complete before submitting the final document to the Graduate School. The deadline for dissertation submission and the Report on Final Document form is typically one week after the Report on Final Examination is due. The dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School by the published deadline for the semester of graduation. Since the dissertation must be received before the close of business, it is strongly recommended that candidates submit the dissertation at least one day prior to the deadline.

The final dissertation must be submitted electronically as a PDF document to OhioLink, the Ohio Library and Information Network. Candidates are not required to publish the dissertation and hard copies will not be accepted. The dissertation may not include materials restricted from publication. For assistance in determining if the dissertation contains restricted materials, contact the WGSS subject librarian. Information on how to submit the dissertation can be found on the Graduate School's website on the page Format Review and Submission.

### **Delay in Submission/Graduation**

If the defense is found to be unsatisfactory or a candidate fails to complete the submission process by the Graduate School's published deadlines, they may need to delay the submission of the dissertation and subsequently graduation. To obtain a delay in submission/graduation, candidates may either retract the application to graduate and redo the process the following semester, or petition to have the application moved to the end of the semester option (EOS). The EOS allows candidates to complete all degree requirements and submit all forms by the end-of-semester deadline, i.e. the last business day of the semester. If a candidate can complete all degree requirements by this deadline, the degree will be awarded at the following semester commencement ceremony.

Candidates will be considered finished with their degree and will not have to register or pay fees for the semester in which the degree is conferred.

### **Delayed Release of Dissertation**

If a candidate wishes to delay the public release of their dissertation, they may petition the Graduate School at the time of submission by filing the “Delay of Final Document” form.

Approval of this petition will delay the release of the dissertation for up to five years.

## Overview

Per Graduate School policy, a minimum of 30 credit hours are required for any master's degree. The WGSS MA curriculum requires 31 credit hours of coursework, including 5 core courses and 6 electives. It is expected to take two academic years to complete the degree requirements.

While the WGSS MA curriculum only requires 31 credit hours of coursework, MA students will earn an average of 36 credit hours through the required courses and minimum enrollment requirements per semester. GTAs are required to enroll in a minimum of 8 credit hours per semester. Fellows are required to enroll in 12 credit hours for Autumn and Spring semester and 6 credit hours for Summer term.

In consultation with their advisor, students will complete the master's examination in WGSS either by presenting a portfolio of written work or writing a thesis to conclude the program.

## Coursework

MA coursework should be geared towards preparing students for their MA portfolio or thesis. The required 29 core theory courses provide students with the foundational knowledge they will need to succeed in the program, while the elective courses should be used to cultivate a focus area which students will examine in their portfolio or thesis.

## Degree Requirements

**Required Core Courses:** 12 hours (4 courses)

- WGSST 7700 – Feminist Inquiry I
- WGSST 7701 – Feminist Inquiry II
- WGSST 7702 – Feminist Pedagogy
- WGSST 7760 – Feminist Inquiry: Methods

**Elective Courses:** 18 hours (6 courses)

- 9 hours in WGSS courses at 5000-level or above
- 9 hours in WGSS or related discipline-based courses offered by other academic units

**Notes on Degree Requirements:**

- All incoming students are required to take WGSST 7700 & 7702 in their first semester & WGSST 7701 in their second semester.
- Students take WGSST 7702 during their second semester as a GTA.
- Students on fellowship for the entirety of their MA are exempt from taking WGSST 7702. These students will need to take an additional three elective courses to replace the credit hours associated with WGSST 7702.
- Only 3 hours of WGSST 8193 – Individual Studies may count toward the degree.
- Students should choose electives in consultation with the faculty advisor. Choices should reflect a coherent program of study that provides a broad grounding in WGSS as well as familiarity with a specific focus area.
- WGSST electives are generally listed as “WGSST 8800.0X – Topics in Feminist Studies” with a subtitle describing the course for that semester. Course details will be announced the semester prior to offering.
- WGSS will offer between 1-3 elective courses per semester.
- It is strongly recommended that MA students consider a graduate minor or graduate interdisciplinary specialization with their non-WGSS elective courses.

## Graduate Progression Policy

The Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Graduate Program supports and adheres to the University's Graduate School Handbook rule which states, "a student must maintain a graduate cumulative point-hour ratio of 3.0 or better in all graduate credit courses and must maintain reasonable progress to be considered in good standing." This translates to earning no less than a B for a course to be counted toward the 30 credits required to complete the MA. Students who fail to earn a B or better in a class and therefore cannot earn credit hours for the course may fall behind in the program.

Insufficient progress on the thesis or MA portfolio may also cause students to fall behind. Failure to maintain reasonable progress through the program may result in suspension.

Students who fall below a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on probation by the Graduate School and given one semester to improve their performance. Students who fail to do so may be suspended from the program.

## MA Examination

### Exam Overview

The MA examination is a test of the student's knowledge of the field and serves as the culminating experience to earn the master's degree. The two forms of examination offered to MA students in the program include the following: the master's portfolio option, consisting of two 20-page papers; or the master's thesis option, a 40– 45-page thesis.

Students must decide by the end of their first year in the program which option they wish to pursue for their final MA examination and form an examination committee of at least two Graduate Faculty members, including the student's advisor. Students pursuing the thesis option must file a copy of their proposal with the department by the third week of the Autumn Semester of their second year in the program. The portfolio option requires both Graduate Faculty members to sign off on the approval of the final form of the two papers

with an optional oral defense at the discretion of the advisor, while the thesis option requires an oral defense of the MA committee.

### **Exam Committee**

Students are required to form an exam committee by the beginning of Autumn semester during their second year. The committee is comprised of the student's WGSS faculty advisor and at least one additional graduate faculty member. The additional graduate faculty member may hold an appointment outside of the department. Additional committee members may be added provided the previous criteria have been met.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Students in need of disability accommodations to compete their MA examination should consult with the Office of Disability Services, their faculty advisor, MA committee, and when appropriate, the Graduate Studies Committee, for insight on how the MA examination standards may be met in conjuncture with appropriate disability accommodations. Visit the Office of Disability Services website for additional information: [slds.osu.edu/](http://slds.osu.edu/)

## **MA Portfolio Option**

### **Portfolio Overview**

The MA portfolio option is the default option for students in the WGSS MA program. The portfolio consists of two papers approximately 20 pages in length that aim to be of journal submission quality. An oral defense of the student's portfolio may be held at the discretion of the advisor and exam committee but is not required.

### **Portfolio Expectations**

The two papers comprising the portfolio may be revised versions of seminar papers or original work. It is expected that students choosing this option invest additional labor,

reading, and revision in the process of polishing seminar papers. Students pursuing the portfolio option should meet regularly with their advisor and committee to establish expectations for a successful portfolio. Acceptable portfolio content, requisite number of sources, and other considerations will be determined in conjunction with the exam committee.

### **Portfolio Timeline**

It is the student's responsibility to develop a portfolio timeline with their committee to ensure a timely submission. All finalized and approved master's portfolios must be filed with the Program Coordinator no later than the Graduate School deadline for approved final documents. Graduate School deadlines are updated on a semester by-semester basis, so be sure to check the Graduate School's website for dates pertaining to the semester of graduation: [gradsch.osu.edu/calendar](http://gradsch.osu.edu/calendar). Based on typical Graduate School deadlines, the following is a rough guide for an MA portfolio timeline for Spring semester graduation:

- Week 3 (Friday, end of January) | Apply to graduate
- Weeks 5-10 (February-March) | Share working drafts with your committee as requested
- Weeks 8-11 (March) | Set portfolio defense date, if required by committee, and contact Program Coordinator to reserve a room
- Week 12 (April 1) | Submit final draft of portfolio to committee • Week 13 (beginning of April) | Defend portfolio if required
- Week 14 (mid-April) | Report on portfolio submission due to the Graduate School
- Week 15 (end of April) | File approved and final portfolio with the Program Coordinator

### **Working Drafts**

Students should work with their advisor and committee to determine when they wish to review working drafts of the portfolio papers. Working drafts are solely for the student's benefit and there are no minimum number of submissions required.

### **Final Draft**

Students will submit a complete final draft of the full portfolio to their committee at least one week prior to the Graduate School's Examination and Reports deadline, or in the case of an oral defense, a week before the scheduled oral defense date. This final draft must be approved by the committee before a student sits for their oral defense.

### **Optional Oral Defense and Approval**

The optional oral portfolio defense is similar to a MA thesis or PhD dissertation defense. The committee will set expectations for the defense. To approve a student's portfolio, committee members will post their decision on the Report on Final Document by the published deadline for the semester of graduation.

### **Filing the Final Approved Portfolio**

A student's exam committee may have edits for the student to complete before filing the final portfolio with the Program Coordinator. The deadline for portfolio filing is typically one week after the Report on Final Document is due from the committee, on the Graduate School's Approved Documents Submission Deadline. Portfolios must be filed before the close of business.

### **Delay in Submission/Graduation**

If the portfolio is found to be unsatisfactory, a student needs to delay the filing of their portfolio, or a student fails to complete the submission process by the Graduate School's published deadlines, the student may either retract their application to graduate and redo the process the following semester, or petition to have their application to

graduate moved to the end of the semester option. The end of the semester option allows a student to complete all degree requirements and submit all forms by the last business day before the start of the next semester (End-of-Semester Deadline). If the student can complete all degree requirements by this deadline, their degree will be awarded at the following semester commencement ceremony. Students do not have to register or pay fees for the semester in which the degree is confirmed.

## **MA Thesis Option**

### **Thesis Overview**

The MA thesis is a culminating experience students may choose to earn their master's degree. A thesis is a work of original research at an advanced level and is expected to be between 12,000 and 14,000 words (roughly 40–45 pages), although the final length will be determined in conjunction with the student's faculty advisor and exam committee. The thesis option requires substantial research and often draws on primary as well as secondary sources. Students will work closely with their advisor at all stages of thesis development, from the study design to the research and writing.

### **Preparing for the Thesis**

To pursue the thesis option, students must have approval from their advisor and submit a thesis proposal to the Graduate Studies Committee by the third week of Autumn semester during their second year. The proposal for thesis research requires careful thinking, reading, and preliminary research. If a student wishes to pursue fieldwork for their MA thesis, they must plan well ahead of the suggested timeline in order to seek funding for the research. Students doing research with human subjects are required to obtain IRB approval prior to initiating any research. Should a student wish to pursue research with human testing, they will need to submit IRB applications no later than the beginning of Spring semester during their first year in the MA program. Learn more about IRB approval here: [orpp.osu.edu/irb/](http://orpp.osu.edu/irb/) Even if the thesis will not require fieldwork, students will need to

begin planning for the thesis during Spring semester of the first year. Students should work with their advisor to identify a thesis subject and potential committee members, begin work on the proposal, and begin research.

### **Thesis Proposal**

A thesis proposal is due to the Graduate Studies Committee by the third week of Autumn semester during a student's second year. The proposal should contain the following:

- Cover letter: Provides a short rationale for desire to complete thesis rather than the MA exam.
- Abstract (300-400 words): A brief summary of the thesis.
- Project justification (4-5 pages): Clearly explains the topic or central research question, the resources and relevant scholarship informing the project's argument and design, and a methodology for addressing the topic or research question.
- Thesis outline (1 page): An overview of the sections/chapters that will comprise the thesis.
- Timeframe and deadlines: A detailed timeline for thesis completion.
- Thesis committee members: The names and contacts of the committee members.
- Bibliography (no more than 1 page): A sample bibliography of main sources.
- Advisor's approval: A letter from the student's advisor approving the thesis option.

### **Thesis Expectations and Timeline**

Students should meet regularly with their advisor to discuss thesis expectations and requirements. Acceptable thesis length, requisite number of sources, and other considerations will be determined in conjunction with the thesis committee.

It is the student's responsibility to develop a thesis timeline with their committee to ensure a timely submission. All master's theses must be submitted to the Graduate School using the specified Graduate School formatting. The Graduate School has strict deadlines for the defense and submission of master's theses. These deadlines are updated on a semester-

by-semester basis, so check the Graduate School's website for the dates pertaining to the planned semester of graduation: [gradsch.osu.edu/calendar](https://gradsch.osu.edu/calendar).

Based on typical Graduate School deadlines, the following is a rough guide for an MA thesis timeline for Spring semester:

- Week 3 (Friday, end of January) | Apply to graduate
- Weeks 5-10 (February-March) | Share working drafts with the committee as requested
- Weeks 8-11 (March) | Set thesis defense date with committee and contact Program Coordinator to reserve a room
- Week 12 (April 1) | Submit final draft of thesis to committee
- Week 13 (beginning of April) | Defend thesis
- Week 14 (mid-April) | Report on thesis defense due to the Graduate School
- Week 15 (end of April) | Submit approved and final thesis to the Graduate School

### **Working Drafts**

Students should work with their advisor and committee to determine when they wish review working drafts of the thesis. Working drafts are solely for the student's benefit and there are no minimum number of submissions required. While revising working drafts, be sure to determine a date with the committee for the thesis defense and contact the Program Coordinator well in advance to reserve a space for the defense.

### **Final Draft**

Students will submit a complete, word processed final draft of their thesis to the committee at least one week prior to the scheduled thesis defense date. This final draft must be approved by the committee before a student sits for their oral defense. The thesis must conform to the Graduate School formatting requirements as described on the Document Preparation page of the Graduate School's website: [gradsch.osu.edu/completing-yourdegree/dissertations-theses/document-preparation](https://gradsch.osu.edu/completing-yourdegree/dissertations-theses/document-preparation).

## **Oral Defense and Approval**

The oral thesis defense is similar to a PhD dissertation defense. The committee will set expectations for the defense. If the student presents an acceptable thesis, the committee members indicate approval by posting their decision on the Report on Final Document by the published deadline for the semester of graduation.

## **Submission**

Even if the committee approves the thesis, they may have edits for the student to complete before submitting the final document to the Graduate School. The deadline for thesis submission is typically one week after the Report on Final Document is due. The thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School by the published deadline for the semester of graduation. Since the thesis must be received before the close of business, it is strongly recommended that the thesis be submitted at least one day prior to the deadline. The final thesis must be submitted electronically as a PDF document to OhioLink, the Ohio Library and Information Network. Students are not required to publish their thesis, and hard copies will not be accepted. The thesis may not include materials restricted from publication. For assistance in determining if a thesis contains restricted materials, contact the WGSS subject librarian. Information on how to submit the thesis can be found on the Graduate School's website: [gradsch.osu.edu/current-students/dissertations-and-theses/format-review-and-submission](https://gradsch.osu.edu/current-students/dissertations-and-theses/format-review-and-submission)

## **Delay in Submission/Graduation**

If the thesis is found to be unsatisfactory, a student needs to delay the submission of their thesis, or a student fails to complete the submission process by the Graduate School's published deadlines, the student may either retract their application to graduate and redo the process the following semester, or petition to have their application to graduate moved to the end of the semester option. The end of the semester option allows a student to complete all degree requirements and submit all forms by the last business day before the start of the next semester (End-of-Semester Deadline). If the student is able to complete

all degree requirements by this deadline, their degree will be awarded at the following semester commencement ceremony. Students do not have to register or pay fees for the semester in which the degree is confirmed.

### **Delayed Release of Thesis**

If a student wishes to delay the public release of their thesis, they may petition the Graduate School at the time of submission by filing the form “Delay of Final Document.” Approval of this petition will delay the release of their thesis for up to five years.

# WGSS

## Graduate Minor

### Overview

The WGSS graduate minor is open to any graduate student outside of the Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies interested in developing a secondary area of expertise. The graduate minor provides an excellent background for students in a wide variety of disciplines.

Completion of the graduate minor is noted on the official Ohio State transcript.

### Coursework Requirements

The requirements for the minor include successful completion (with grade B or above) of 12 credit hours of graduate-level WGSS courses.

**Required Core Theory Course:** 3 hours (choose one)

- WGSST 7700 – Feminist Inquiry I
- WGSST 7701 – Feminist Inquiry II

**Elective Courses:** 9 hours (3 courses)

- 9 hours in WGSS courses at 5000-level or above

\*Graduate Minors are strongly encouraged to take 7700 or 7701 as their first WGSS course.

Please contact the Program Coordinator for additional information on planning and declaring the WGSS graduate minor.

## Dual or Combined Degrees

### Overview

To pursue a dual or combined degree, a student must first be accepted into both programs. Students should consult with the Graduate Studies Chairs of both programs to learn the specifics of each application process, particularly if a student is already enrolled in one program. Dual or combined MA programs typically takes three years to complete.

Dual degree students must select a “home” department. The program of study will be developed individually after consultation with advisors in each department. The program of study must be approved by the advisor and submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee. Per Graduate School Policy, 50% of coursework must be unique to each degree. For example, of the 30 credit hours needed to complete the MA in WGSS, 15 credit hours may only count towards the WGSS MA. Both departments must agree to accept the classes that will count towards both degrees.

WGSS PhD students may not pursue dual degrees unless additional funding is secured to cover the cost of the MA degree. Dual MA/PhD students may not overlap any credit hours between the MA and PhD. As such MA/PhD students should expect a longer time to degree. Dual or combined PhDs are not permitted except in extremely rare circumstances.

### Funding for Dual or Combined Degrees

Funding provided by WGSS is allotted for the average time to degree within WGSS. For example, MA funding provided by WGSS is for two years as the average time to degree is two academic years. Students enrolled in dual degree programs that take beyond this average time to degree will still only receive WGSS funding for the average WGSS time to

degree. Additional funding considerations for dual and combined programs are determined on an individual basis due to differentiating tuition and fee costs across The Ohio State University.

## Program Planning and Advising

### Program Planning

#### Understanding WGSS Elective Courses

WGSS electives are generally listed as “WGSST 8800.0X – Topics in Feminist Studies” with a subtitle describing the course for that semester. For example, when registering for courses in Buckeyelink a student might see a course listed for Autumn semester as “WGSST 8800.01 – Topics in Feminist Studies.” To learn more about the course, the student can navigate into the offering and view the “Topic” and “Notes” sections to read the full course title and course description. The department website will also articulate the seminar topics in detail the semester prior to the offering. Each offering of WGSST 8800.0X is repeatable up to 15 credit hours.

#### Enrolling in WGSS Courses

To prevent students in WGSS from being locked out of necessary courses, all seats in WGSS classes are initially reserved exclusively for WGSS MA and PhD students. These are open to WGSS students on a first come, first serve basis. For Spring and Summer courses, seats are held until a week after the final enrollment window opens. For Autumn courses, seats are held until all incoming WGSS MA and PhD students have had an opportunity to enroll, typically in late June.

WGSS students are encouraged to enroll in WGSS courses as soon as their enrollment window opens. Students can find their enrollment window information in the Buckeyelink student center under the Enrollment tab. If a window is not listed, click “details” and select the semester in question to see when the window opens. Once course seats have been

released for external enrollment, seats cannot be re-held for WGSS students and there is little that can be done if a class fills. WGSS students are encouraged to enroll in courses they may need even if they may drop the course before the start of the term.

WGSS graduate minors may register for WGSS courses after the seats have been released for general enrollment. At that time, graduate minors will be able to add the course in Buckeyelink without special permissions.

If a graduate minor wishes to secure a place in a course before the seats have been released, they may place themselves on the waitlist and will be added to the course automatically once the seats are opened. To sign up to receive an email about information on when the WGSS course seats will be released, please visit the enrollment information page on the WGSS website: [wgss.osu.edu/enrolling-wgss-graduate-courses](http://wgss.osu.edu/enrolling-wgss-graduate-courses).

## **Advising**

Maintaining a professional relationship with a supportive advisor is a key aspect of development as a graduate student. This section provides students and faculty advisors guidelines for how to form a helpful and productive relationship. Portions of this section have been adapted from the appendix “Graduate Advising Best Practices” located in the Graduate School Handbook: [gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/f-graduateadvising-best-practices](http://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/f-graduateadvising-best-practices).

### **Faculty Advising**

A faculty advisor is assigned to each incoming student based on research interests at the time of admission. Permanent advisors should be determined well in advance of preparing for the MA or PhD exams. If a student wishes to change advisors, first speak with the assigned advisor to discuss the change, then with the Program Coordinator to obtain the Change of Advisor form. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor to discuss the program of study and its requirements on a semesterly basis, prior to registering for classes.

Regular and clear communication is essential to good graduate advising. It is recommended that as much communication as possible occur in person or over the phone to enhance clarity, reduce ambiguity and misunderstanding, and to resolve conflict. Written communication (mail and e-mail) is appropriate, especially to document situations and potentially contentious issues. Problems that arise should be addressed immediately and clearly so that the student and their advisor can work to remedy issues in an expedient manner.

### **Departmental Advising**

In addition to the advising students receive from their faculty advisor, they should plan on meeting with the Program Coordinator at least once a year to review their program plan, consider when courses will become available, and tentatively demarcate when milestones will be met. Students will work with their advisor, committee, and the Program Coordinator to schedule milestones during their program, so it is important to be in touch with all parties regarding dates and deadlines.

### **Advising Responsibilities**

Students, their advisor, and the department have specific duties when it comes to advising. The following is a breakdown of those responsibilities:

- **Graduate Student Responsibilities**

- Conduct academic pursuits in an ethical manner and develop professional habits.
- Uphold Ohio State's Code of Student Conduct.
- Pursue opportunities that advance your career as a graduate student and beyond.
- Take ownership of academic progress. • Devote significant and productive time toward degree completion.
- Stay abreast of requirements for degree completion through regular discussions with your advisor and the department.

- Clearly communicate career goals and concerns related to academic progress
- Initiate communication with your advisor.
- Respect the responsibilities of the advisor.
- Maintain open communication with your advisor.
- Allow sufficient time for your advisor to provide feedback in advance of deadlines.
- Maintain professionalism by keeping up with graduate student responsibilities even when your advisor is not present.
- Provide ample time and appropriate materials for completion for any requested letters of recommendation.
- Be considerate of your advisor's other time commitments.
- **Graduate Advisor Responsibilities**
  - Conduct advising in an ethical manner, including when recruiting advisees.
  - Communicate clear intentions, expectations, and requirements to potential and current advisees, including how long you expect to stay in your current position and the amount of funding support available to advisees.
  - Address problems immediately so you and your advisee can remedy issues expediently.
  - Maintain communication and interact with graduate students in a professional manner.
  - Communicate clear expectations for time to degree completion and publication expectations.
  - Provide periodic and regular evaluations of progress toward degree.
  - Provide timely written feedback on advisee's professional writing (article drafts, dissertation chapter drafts, etc.).
  - Give students appropriate credit for their work, e.g., as reflected in author strings in journal articles or books.
  - Be considerate of the advisee's other time commitments.

- Aid in preparing students to be the best professional they can be.
- Initiate conversations about academic progress and stay current about degree requirements and procedures.
- Initiate conversations with advisees about career goals.
- Support traditional and non-traditional career goals.
- Help graduate students develop professional skills that will make them competitive for employment in their given field.
- Encourage students to take part in activities that will enrich their academic development, e.g., by participating in professional conferences and other networking activities.
- Respect advisees' academic and non-academic commitments and responsibilities.
- Provide prompt and honest feedback on student's work.
- Allow reasonable time for students to prepare requested materials.
- Do not require that a student continue to provide a service (e.g., teaching, laboratory management, mentoring of other students, etc.) under terms that can hinder a student's degree completion.
- **Graduate Program Responsibilities**
  - Maintain clear communication with students and advisors.
  - Note: Students and faculty advisors should be on the lookout for regular reminder emails every semester from the Program Coordinator.
  - Establish graduate advising best practices that pertain specifically to the local graduate program and its graduate degrees.
  - Maintain a graduate program handbook, including the steps and processes for students to complete degree requirements and grievance procedures for graduate students and advisors.
  - Hold a yearly orientation to familiarize new students and faculty with the graduate program and the university.

- Create and maintain an easily accessible online list of information for graduate students that contains links to the Graduate School Handbook and other relevant university resources. Note: See the Toolkit tab on the WGSS webpage: [wgss.osu.edu/toolkit](http://wgss.osu.edu/toolkit)
- Provide yearly written review of performance for graduate students and advisors.

## Financial Support

### Overview

The Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies offers Graduate Associate (GA) appointments to most students accepted into the graduate program. GA positions are 50% full time equivalency (FTE), which equates to 20 hours of work per week. GAs work for the department as teaching, research, or administrative assistants. GA positions typically include a nine-month stipend and waiver of tuition for the academic year. Students who have held 50% or greater GA appointment for both Autumn and Spring semesters are entitled to a full fee authorization during the Summer term immediately following their appointment without being on appointment. In addition, the university provides GAs with a 100% subsidy for the cost of required student health insurance. Students are responsible for some fees and remaining health insurance costs.

MA Graduate Associates are typically eligible for a maximum of two years of support from the department. Regular PhD Graduate Associates are typically eligible for up to five years of funding, and direct-to-PhD Graduate Associates are typically eligible for up to six years of funding. Dual and combined degree program students admitted into WGSS as their primary program are typically eligible for funding for the average time to the WGSS degree. For dual and combined students with the WGSS MA as their primary program, that equates to two years of support. However, financial support for students in dual and combined programs is determined on an individual basis due to differentiating tuition and fee costs across The Ohio State University.

Graduate Associates are hired for the academic year or as specified in the GA appointment contract. A limited number of Summer term GA positions may be available. These

positions are competitive and are only offered to qualified students, with advanced doctoral students receiving preference.

Continuing appointments are based on satisfactory performance of responsibilities. Renewal of all types of associateships is contingent on student enrollments, the department's budget, and remaining in good standing as defined by the Graduate School and the department. Students are strongly encouraged to become Ohio residents.

## **Graduate Teaching Associateships**

Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA) assignments are determined based on department need. While GTA preferences for course assignments will be solicited, preferences are not guaranteed to be met. Students may teach independent sections or serve as a grader or recitation leader for larger sections of different courses. Courses may be taught in person or online. Teaching assignments are determined the previous academic year and will be made available by Spring semester. Teaching assignments are always subject to change based on department need. Reappointment as a GTA is contingent upon satisfactory performance in the classroom and fulfillment of teaching responsibilities assigned by the supervisor.

Graduate Research Associate (GRA) positions are available to students in limited numbers. GRAs assist faculty members in their research or work on other departmental projects. When GRA positions become available, they are announced by the department with a call for applications.

Reappointment as a GRA is contingent upon satisfactory performance of responsibilities assigned by the supervisor.

All GAs are provided with a desk in an office, either in the main department offices (286 University Hall) or in the auxiliary GA offices (30 Dulles Hall and 37 University Hall).

## **GA Expectations**

To hold a GA position, a student must:

- Be registered for at least 8 graduate credit hours (3 hours for ABD Students).
- Be in good standing (minimum 3.0 GPA) when the appointment becomes effective.
- Maintain reasonable progress toward a graduate degree.
- Perform responsibilities satisfactorily in the view of the supervisor, who will consider evaluations, observations, attendance, and other evidence of appropriate responsibility.
- Satisfy requirements noted by the Graduate Studies Committee or WGSS department.

Students absent from campus for fieldwork may postpone use of GA funding for up to one academic year. Please note: due to the continuous enrollment policy, post-candidacy students must be enrolled for at least three credit hours every semester (excluding Summer term) until graduation.

GAs must perform satisfactorily in their job assignments in order to receive continued funding. Expectations generally include, but are not limited to, meeting deadlines, practicing clear communication, following departmental policies and procedures, performing assigned duties reliably and consistently, and attending mandatory events. For further information on expectations specific to GTA positions, see the WGSS GTA Handbook.

GAs are evaluated every term by their supervisor. If these evaluations show deficiencies, the Department Chair, in consultation with the student's faculty advisor and the Graduate Studies Chair, will work with the student to address performance issues and provide a written summary of expectations. If performance does not improve, the department may withdraw the student's funding. Students who maintain good academic progress may continue in the program without funding.

GA appointments may be terminated prior to the end of the appointment period only with the written approval of the Graduate School. A GA appointment is terminated prior to the end of the appointment period for any of the following reasons:

- The GA is no longer enrolled in the Graduate School.
- The GA is registered for fewer than the number of credit hours required for a GA appointment or fewer than three credit hours for a doctoral student who has passed the candidacy examination.
- Performance as a GA is determined to be unsatisfactory by the employing unit. The GA graduates.
- The appointing unit has insufficient funds.

In exceptional cases, a Graduate Assistant (GA) appointment may be terminated prior to the end of the appointment period, if performance deficiencies are not adequately addressed. This refers only to GA-assigned tasks and does not encompass academic progress. The termination process is detailed in [Section 9.2](#) of the Graduate School Handbook. If performance deficiencies are identified, the WGSS Graduate Studies Committee will communicate these to the GA, along with a timeline and expectations for remedial action. Performance improvement plans are iterative and collaborative, incorporating ongoing input from the GA, the supervisor/instructor, the graduate advisor, and the Director of Graduate Studies. All performance improvement plans will allow at least four weeks for demonstrated improvement, excluding instructional breaks and approved leave. Early termination of a GA appointment may also affect future reappointment.

More information about Graduate Associate appointments and expectations can be found in the Graduate School Handbook Section IX, concerning

Graduate Associates: [gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh/gsh-section-9-graduate-associates](https://gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh/gsh-section-9-graduate-associates)

## **Fellowships**

The Graduate School offers a variety of fellowships to incoming students selected through a university-wide competition. Fellowships include a stipend and waiver of tuition and fees for 12 months. Fellows are expected to enroll as full-time students (12 credit hours) during the funded year(s). Potential fellowship nominees should note that they must submit GRE scores and have a complete dossier on file in the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies office in time for the competition (December 1). The department nominates competitive applicants for the fellowship competition in January. Each fellowship year awarded replaces a year of departmental GA funding. Fellows must adhere to the Graduate School's regulations regarding fellowships to remain in good standing. See the Graduate School's page on Fellowships for further information: [gradsch.osu.edu/funding/fellowships](http://gradsch.osu.edu/funding/fellowships).

## **Financial Aid**

Ohio State's Office of Student Financial Aid (SFA) helps students finance their education through loans, grants, and scholarships. SFA administers several scholarships for which graduate students are eligible. These scholarships usually carry special eligibility requirements. SFA also administers the Federal Work Study program, for which graduate students are eligible.

See the Office of Student Financial Aid website for further information: [sfa.osu.edu/](http://sfa.osu.edu/)

## **Grants and Awards**

The department and the university at large offer a variety of grants and awards for graduate students to assist in funding research, including travel grants. For a current list of department sponsored grants and awards, visit the department website's "Grants/Awards" section: [wgss.osu.edu/awards](http://wgss.osu.edu/awards)

For additional information about Ohio State funding opportunities, visit the Graduate School's page on funding: [gradsch.osu.edu/funding](https://gradsch.osu.edu/funding)

## **Grievance Procedures**

Students who have any concerns or issues regarding responsibilities, assignments, procedures or evaluations, should first speak with their faculty advisor and GTA supervisor. If it is impossible to reach a mutually satisfactory arrangement, students should consult with the Department Chair. If the grievance is still unresolved, students should follow the grievance procedures established by the Graduate School: [gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/d-student-grievancesrelated-to-graduate-examinations-and-gaappointments](https://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/d-student-grievancesrelated-to-graduate-examinations-and-gaappointments).

If you or a colleague experience harassment, discrimination, or abuse because of your education and/or instruction surrounding race, gender, or sexuality, please reach out to the Graduate Studies Coordinator, the Graduate Studies Chair, or the Department Chair. These actions are not tolerated at Ohio State or otherwise, and the department will offer its full support if necessary.

## **Leave of Absence**

Life does not always plan around Graduate School, and in rare circumstances students may have to take a shortterm absence (one day-two weeks) or a formalized leave of absence (two-six weeks).

Appropriately addressing these challenging life situations requires clear and open communication. The department is dedicated to helping students succeed and will work with the student to develop a plan and reach out to additional units, offices and services as needed.

For all leaves of absence, students should first consult with their faculty advisor, the department's Administrative Manager, and the department's Program Coordinator. Initial guidelines for all absences can be found here: [gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/e-short-](https://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/e-short-)

term absences and leaves of absence. From here, the department will guide the student in contacting the right resources and guide them through what documentation will be necessary to formalize their leave of absence.

Leaves of absence are overseen by the department on a case-by-case basis. However, a general overview of short-term leaves of absence can be found here:

[gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/e-5-short-term-absences-and-leaves-of-absence-short-term-absences](https://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook/e-5-short-term-absences-and-leaves-of-absence-short-term-absences)

## Support and Resources

### Student Organizations

#### Intersections

Intersections, the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Graduate Student Association, provides an open space for graduate students to voice concerns, foster fellowship and community, and further professional development. The organization acts as the liaison between Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies faculty and graduate students, and organizes multiple events throughout the year. Students are encouraged to take an active part in Intersections as soon as their first semester on campus.

#### Other Groups

There are multiple groups, both on-campus and locally, students may wish to consider joining. Here are a few that are popular with WGSS graduate students:

- Ohio State Coalition for Black Lives
- International Socialist Organization (ISO)
- Disabilities Studies Graduate Student Association (DSGSA)

Please browse through the Ohio State student organization database to see a full list of the organizations at Ohio State.

### Career Development

Students are encouraged to begin planning their career early in the program. There are multiple resources on campus to help students plan for the next phase of their careers.

This section provides an overview of where to find and how to utilize these resources. Contact the Program Coordinator with questions or for additional assistance with career planning and development.

## **Campus & General Resources**

### Office of Student Life: Career Counseling and Support Services

- Provides career counseling, job/internship postings, advice on the academic job market, research on companies, and relocation resources for graduate and professional students. [careers.osu.edu/](https://careers.osu.edu/)

### Office of Alumni Career Management

- Provides assistance with career advising, resumes and cover letters, career fairs, interviewing, and offers a job posting board specifically for alumni. [osu.edu/alumni/resources/career-management](https://osu.edu/alumni/resources/career-management)

### Versatile PhD

- An online community for PhD students that offers advice and support for careers inside and outside of academia. Ohio State offers a subscription for students to access both the free and premium content on the site. [gradsch.osu.edu/versatile-phd](https://gradsch.osu.edu/versatile-phd)

### OUAB Grad/Prof

- The Ohio Union Actives Board, Graduate and Professional student committee hosts a variety of professional growth programs, such as a job search series, and etiquette dinner, and development workshops, throughout the academic year. [ouab.osu.edu](https://ouab.osu.edu)

### Preparing Future Faculty Program

- The PFF Program offers Ohio State graduate students the opportunity to experience firsthand the unique challenges and rewards of an academic career at a smaller college or university. Students who are one to two years away from completing their PhD are eligible to apply. [gradsch.osu.edu/pursuing-yourdegree/career-development/preparing-future-faculty](https://gradsch.osu.edu/pursuing-yourdegree/career-development/preparing-future-faculty)

#### Michael V. Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning

- The Drake offers multiple professional development opportunities and workshops throughout the academic year for those interested in instruction and curriculum development. [drakeinstitute.osu.edu/](https://drakeinstitute.osu.edu/)

#### *Chronicle of Higher Education*

- The Chronicle hosts a large job search site named Vitae, which posts careers inside and outside of academia.
- Visit [Chronicle of Higher Education's website](https://www.chronicle.com/)

#### *The Graduate School*

- Offers information on additional on- campus resources for career development.
- Visit the [Graduate School's website](https://www.gradschool.osu.edu/)

### **Department & Program Specific Resources**

#### *Professional Development Workshops*

- Hosted by the WGSS graduate student group Intersections and sponsored by the department, there are multiple workshops held throughout the academic year on topics ranging from online teaching training to preparing for conferences. Topics and dates are announced via the WGSS graduate student listserv.

#### *The National Women's Studies Association (NWSA)*

- The NWSA hosts an annual conference and also offers members access to job postings related to WGSS.
- Visit [NWSA's website](#)

#### *Graduate Studies Committee*

- Faculty members on the WGSS Graduate Studies Committee are available to review application letters and other materials sent in support of applications to academic positions. Contact the Graduate Studies Chair or the Program Coordinator for further assistance.

#### **Tips for Graduate Students**

##### *Consider all career possibilities*

- Speak with your advisor honestly about what you would like to do upon the completion of your degree. Knowing what you might like to do can inspire additional opportunities.

##### *Pursue a graduate minor, graduate interdisciplinary specialization, or additional degree*

- Most coursework plans have room to finish a grad minor, GIS or in some cases dual degree. The more versatile you are, the more prospects you will have.

Speak with the Program Coordinator to learn more about how to fit one of these options into your program plan.

Visit [Graduate School's website](#) for more information on options.

##### *Attend workshops and conferences*

- Many opportunities at Ohio State are no or low-cost events, which present opportunities to network and develop professional skills for every career path.

- As a WGSS graduate student, you are expected to attend all WGSS-sponsored events.

#### *Use your resources*

- Take advantage of the resources early and often to network and build connections with people in and outside of academia.

#### *Understand your skill set*

- The private sector is in need of people who have the high-level critical reading and writing skills. Learning how to market your skill set for both academic and nonacademic jobs will serve you well.

## **Academic Integrity and Misconduct**

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and syllabi may constitute academic misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335- 23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct. Students should review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

f the department is obligated by the University Rules to report students suspected of academic misconduct to the Committee on Academic

Misconduct. If COAM determines that a student has violated the University's Code of Student Conduct, the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in a course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

Adapted from [COAM's website](#)

[Student Code of Conduct website](#)

## Forms

### Gradforms

Most of the forms relating to graduate study are filed and submitted online through the Graduate School's forms portal known as [Gradforms](#). The Gradforms site is operated by the Graduate School and all questions should be directed towards the Gradforms help line. Students can find handy guides about Gradforms on the [Graduate School's website](#).

### Additional Forms

Certain forms, such as the course enrollment permission form and grade change forms, are the purview of the Registrar. A good rule of thumb is that if the form is not available on Gradforms, it is a Registrar form. Students and faculty can access the secure Registrar forms portal on the [Registrar's website](#) by clicking on the "Forms" section under the faculty drop down menu.

For the course enrollment permission form, visit the [Registration page on the Graduate School's website](#).

For additional WGSS forms, see the [WGSS Toolkit website](#).

## Resources for Graduate Students

Being a graduate student can be one of the most rewarding and challenging times of your life. But you are not alone in this journey! Here are just a few resources that can help you meet your needs and navigate life at Ohio State and in Columbus. If you have any questions about these or other resources, feel free to ask the department staff or fellow graduate students for advice and insight.

## **Health Resources**

### *Ohio State Counseling and Consultation Services*

- Provides comprehensive individual and group mental health services, psychoeducational prevention and outreach programming to currently enrolled graduate students. All enrolled students are eligible for 10 free counseling sessions per academic year. CCS also works with spouses/partners of students who are covered by the Comprehensive Student Health Insurance and offers couple's counseling. To schedule an appointment: (614) 292-5766
- [CCS website](#)

### *Wilce Student Health Center*

- Your main resource for student health care. Offers primary care, health screening services, referrals, prescription services, vaccinations, radiology, and OBGYN services. To schedule an appointment: (614) 292-4321
- [Student Health Services website](#)

### *Ohio State Student Wellness Center*

- Offers education and assistance in balancing the “nine dimensions of wellness,” including information on nutrition, financial coaching, and free HIV/STI testing.
- [Student Wellness Center website](#)

### *RUOK? Buckeyes*

- An anonymous, interactive questionnaire designed to identify if you are at-risk of suicide and resources to seek assistance. Hotline assistance is available 24/7.
- [OSU's Suicide Prevention website](#)

#### Suicide Prevention Services and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- (614) 221-5445 or (800) 273-8255

### University and Teaching Resources

#### *The Graduate School*

- The governing body of your graduate program. They dictate and detail policy and procedures. The Registrar The registrar keeps the academic calendar for each semester and is a vital resource for forms.
- [Graduate School's website](#)
- [University Registrar's website](#)

#### *Ohio State Library Services*

- This is your resource for research and scholarship. If you have specific WGSS research questions, contact the WGSS subject librarian.
- [University Libraries website](#)
- [University Libraries for WGSS website](#)

#### *Office of Distance Education and eLearning*

- ODEE provides assistance and resources to online instructors.
- [ODEE's website](#)

#### *College of Arts and Sciences Technology Services*

- ASCTech provides IT and technical assistance to all of the instructors within the College of Arts and Sciences.

- [ASCTech's website](#)
- For immediate assistance: (614) 688- 4447

#### *Office of the Chief Information Officer*

- The OCIO is the broad university tech support provider. They have walk in hours at the Thompson Library and the Tech Hub, offer online and phone assistance, and provide classroom IT assistance.
- [OCIO's website](#)
- Main line: (614) 688-4357; Classroom help line: (614) 247- 4357

#### *Carmen Help*

- ODEE and ASCTech can both assist with questions concerning Carmen, Ohio State learning management system and online course platform.
- [ODEE's website](#)
- [ASCTech's website](#)

#### *Michael V. Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning*

- Supports and advocate for all who teach at Ohio State. UCAT provides both professional development opportunities and multiple resources to assist instructors.
- [Drake Institute's website](#)

#### *Book Orders*

- Instructions on how to place book orders for your course can be found in the WGSS toolkit. [sbx-osu.com/](http://sbx-osu.com/) Textbook ordering instructions.
- [WGSS' book ordering website](#)

DEPARTMENT OF **WOMEN'S,  
GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES