

Current Catalog Wording:

A minor in Women's and Gender Studies consists of 21 semester hours, including one required course (WGS 200), five core courses, and one elective as shown in the following table. Core courses must include at least 6 semester hours of humanities and 6 semester hours of social and natural sciences listed below. Note that 12 of the 21 semester hours must be at the 300-level or higher. Students must also complete a portfolio and portfolio conference during their final semester at UAH. A student interested in minoring in Women's and Gender Studies should contact the director of the program for advising.

Proposed New Catalog Wording:

A minor in Women's and Gender Studies consists of 21 semester hours, including one required course (WGS 200), three core courses, and three additional core or elective courses as shown in the following table. Core courses must include at least 3 semester hours of humanities and 3 semester hours of social science and management courses listed below. Note that 12 of the 21 semester hours must be at the 300-level or higher. Students must also complete a portfolio and portfolio conference during their final semester at UAH. A student interested in minoring in Women's and Gender Studies should contact the director of the program for advising.

Summary of Changes:

- 1) "one required course (WGS 200), five core courses, and one elective" changed to "one required course (WGS 200), three core courses, and three additional core or elective courses"
- 2) "Core courses must include at least 6 semester hours of humanities and 6 semester hours of social and natural sciences listed below" changed to "Core courses must include at least 3 semester hours of humanities and 3 semester hours of social science and management courses listed below."

Background Information

When the Women's Studies Minor was introduced in 1998 (changed to Women's and Gender Studies in 2014), its creators required minors to complete 21 hours distributed as follows:

- 200-level introductory class (3 hours)
- 5 "core" classes (15 hours)
- 1 "elective" course (3 hours)

"Core" courses were defined as having women and/or gender at the center of inquiry, in terms of the subject matter or an approach that develops critical thinking relevant to the understanding of Women's and Gender Studies issues. "Elective" courses were defined as having significant component of the course covering women or gender, or employing methodologies that are particularly useful in the interpretation of gender issues.

In the past five years, it has become increasingly the case that only one or two “core” courses are offered in some semesters, the timing of which might conflict with coursework required for the student’s major. However, in most semesters, a number of “elective” courses are offered. Thus, students are frequently petitioning to have “elective” courses count as “core” courses in order to complete their minors on time.

Thus, we have decided to change our distribution requirement, beyond the required 200-level introductory course, to be 3 “core” and 3 either “core” or “elective” courses.

The previous distribution also entailed a requirement of 6 hours of “humanities” and 6 hours of “social and natural sciences.” (Because the minor no longer contains natural sciences courses and does feature one management class, we are changing the name of the category to “social sciences and management.”)

At present, this category features only four courses, two Sociology courses, one Psychology course (which requires several prerequisites that many students do not have unless they are Psychology majors or minors), and one Management course.

Due to these limited offerings, we have decided to make the requirement “3 semester hours of humanities” and “3 semester hours of social sciences and management” courses for the “core” courses required by the minor, instead of the formerly 6 required hours in each category.

Academic Justification

The increase of “elective” WGS course offerings at UAH, which have a strong gender component but without women and / or gender as their sole focus, reflects broader developments within the humanities and social sciences disciplines as a whole. As gender approaches have become “mainstream” in most disciplines, scholars are increasingly combining them with other approaches such as social movement theory, ecocriticism, postcolonial theory, etc.

Thus, in changing our minor requirements, we meet two academic objectives. First, we bring our requirements in line with the courses we are actually offering, which aids student progress to graduation. Second, we allow our students to be exposed to courses that make the study of women and gender or the use of gender theory their central focus (“core” courses), as well as courses that bring gender analysis together with other scholarly and methodological approaches (“elective” courses). This allows students to gain a full picture of the status of gender-based inquiry in the academy today.

Student Need and Demand

Approximately half of the WGS minors petition for at least one exemption to have an “elective” course count as “core” courses, and they sometimes ask for two or three exemptions, especially if the student is a double major or double minor and has diminished scheduling flexibility. Thus, it is likely that students will be overwhelmingly pleased with this change, especially as it will create less stress and fewer complications for them as they complete their degree programs, without sacrificing the scholarly integrity of their academic experience.

Listing of Courses with Credit Hour Distributions or Deletions

CORE COURSES:

Humanities:

CM416	Women Orators
EH418	Representative Texts by Women Writers
EH462	Shakespeare II
EH 465	Dramatic Literature
HY367	Women in U.S. History
HY390	Women in Modern European History
HY483	Women and Gender in Latin America
PHL335	Feminist Philosophy

Social Sciences and Management

MGT462	Employment Law for Managers
PY406	Psychology of Women
SOC206	Marriage and Family
SOC306	Sociology of Gender

Special Topics courses may be included in this area. Examples include: ARH 320 ST: Women in Antiquity; ARH 320 ST: Modern Women Artists; EH 440 ST: Friendship in Early Modern England; EH 440 ST: Native Women’s Literature; WLC 204 ST: Performing Gender: Exploring Gender Roles and Sexuality in International Cinema; WLC404 ST: Hispanic Women Writers. See an advisor for a current list. WGS 340 (Special Topics) or WGS 499 (Independent Study) may count as core courses if the course carries 3 hours credit (with permission of Director).

ELECTIVE COURSES:

ARH103	Art in Non-Western Traditions
ARH309	Contemporary Art and Issues
ARH 310	Nineteenth Century Art
CM/PY330	Nonverbal Communication
CM333	Interpersonal Communication

CM433	The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication
CM455	Communication and Culture
EH242	Mythology
EH403	Literary Criticism and Theory
EH430	The American Novel
EH438	African American Literature
EH 451	Arthurian Romance
HY370	Technology in American History
HY383	Food in World History
HY482	Comparative Slavery and Abolition
HY485	Nazi Germany and the Holocaust
PHL102	Introduction to Ethics
PHL303	Contemporary Philosophy
PHL 337	Philosophy of Race
PSC/PHL438	Contemporary Political Thought
PY/SOC375	Social Psychology
PY/BYS437	Psychobiology of Stress and Illness
SOC105	Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
SOC415	Sociology of Globalization
SOC435	Sociology of Social Movements

Special Topics may be included in this area. Examples include PHL 403: Advanced Moral Philosophy: Care Ethics; PSC 440 Regional Studies: African Politics; PSC 440 Regional Studies: Latin American Politics. See an advisor for a current list.