

Women's and Gender Studies Department (WGST)
Thesis Guidelines
Approved March 2011

Department Honors

WGST offers a single path to Department Honors that requires writing a thesis involving two units of independent research (360 and 370) during the senior year. Students considering writing a thesis should read carefully the College information on these: <http://www.wellesley.edu/DeanCollege/CCI/Honors/main-thesis.html>. WGST students writing an honors thesis must follow these College guidelines as well as the WGST specific guidelines as follows. Please note this crucial requirement from the college's guidelines:

Your GPA in the major must be at least 3.5 in courses above the 100-level that are listed on your major declaration form.

If your GPA in the major falls between 3.0 and 3.5, the department/program may petition CCAP (formerly known as the CCI) on your behalf if they support you for honors work.

Preparation and Thesis Proposal

Students interested in pursuing a thesis should have appropriate background in the area of research. In the spring of her junior year, she should discuss her ideas with one or more WGST faculty members, and seek help with finding an appropriate WGST faculty member to be the thesis Advisor.

Eligible students who wish to propose a thesis ordinarily do so in the spring semester of the junior year. Submit the materials outlined below to the advisor by the first Monday of April (and request a petition if your grades fall between 3.0 and 3.5). For special Fall thesis consideration (for example, if the student is not in residence in the spring semester), send a proposal to the advisor over the summer that will be approved the first week of the student's senior year.

The Department makes decisions about thesis proposals in a May Department meeting. Written notification of the outcome will be sent to the student.

Materials to submit:

1. Thesis Proposal

In the thesis proposal (500-1000 words), the student should explain the plans for the project, including the intellectual goals of the thesis, major questions to investigate, and methods of research.

2. Two to Three Page Bibliography

List both primary and secondary sources.

3. Background Course Preparation

List related course work (course titles/instructor/final grade) and any relevant intellectual or fieldwork.

4. Current Transcript and GPA in major

Mid-Year Meeting

Accepted thesis students will receive a Department timeline outlining important dates and reasonable progress expectations for the year. For example, WGST thesis students must meet with their advisor and one additional faculty member from the Department in December or January. At this point the student will present the work done so far, discuss her plans for completing the project, and be prepared to answer any concerns on the part of the faculty. Only after this meeting and Department approval will the student be registered for WGST 370 (must be submitted by Department Chair).

Research Grants

The Department does not have grants for thesis work. The Pamela Daniels Fellowship offers funding of an original senior project – see the Office of the Provost and the Dean’s webpage for more information on this and other possible grants:
<http://www.wellesley.edu/DeanCollege/stugrnt.html>

Ruhlman Conference

The Department asks that WGST honors students apply to present their research at the Ruhlman Conference as part of their honors work.