Women’s and Gender Studies Department (WGST)  
Thesis Guidelines

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 Honors and theses. 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:

Departmental Honors with Thesis
Students with a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all courses in the major field above the 100-level are eligible for honors in the major department. If a student’s GPA is below 3.5 but above 3.0, departments or major advisors may petition the CCAP for an exemption to the GPA requirement.

WGST majors must take a minimum of two 300 level courses in the WGST Department. For the purposes of this requirement, WGST 360 and WGST 370 count as one course.

Preparation and Thesis Proposal
Students interested in pursuing a thesis should have appropriate background in the area of research. In the spring of junior year, the student should discuss thesis ideas with one or more WGST faculty members, and seek help (as needed) 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 a draft proposal outlined below to the Thesis Advisor by the first Monday of April (and petition if your grades fall between 3.0 and 3.5). The final Proposal should be submitted electronically (with the transcript attached) to the Thesis Advisor by the fourth Monday in April. For special Fall thesis proposal 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 considered by the Department faculty during the first week of the student’s senior year.

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

The Thesis Proposal should include the following four sections:
1. Thesis Description
   In 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

Approved March 2011, Last Revised September 2015
3. Background Course Preparation and GPA in the Major
List related course work (course titles/instructor/final grade) and any relevant intellectual or fieldwork.

4. A Current Transcript (unofficial is acceptable)

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 at least one draft chapter and a chapter outline of the entire thesis, discuss plans for completing the project, and answer any concerns on the part of the faculty. Only after this meeting and Department approval will the student be registered for WGST 370 (submitted to Registrar 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. The Jerome A. Schiff Fellowship funds senior honors projects. See the Office of the Provost and the Dean's webpage for more information on these and other possible grants.

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