Women’s and Gender Studies

Women’s and Gender Studies Community Advisory Board

The department is privileged to have a strong and engaged community advisory board. They are:

Julie Armstrong, Ph.D. Teaches American literature, with a focus on race and gender, at USF St. Pete Campus.

Eleanor Cecil, Ph.D. Community Activist, involved in many progressive organizations, Board Member of Tampa NOW. Particularly interested in women’s issues and human rights issues; interested in supporting and learning from young women regarding feminist issues, very supportive of academics.

Edie Daly. 73 Old Lesbian Feminist. In 1981 she moved back to Florida, her home state, opened a women’s bookstore and co-founded a Lesbian Feminist Organization called Women’s Energy Bank (WEB), which for 24 years held monthly Salons for women. WEB also produces a monthly Feminist publication, Womyn’s Words. She is a member of OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change), Women in Black, a worldwide organization of women standing for peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution. She facilitates monthly Alternative to Violence experiential workshops for women in Coleman Federal Prison.

Susan Edwards. Board Facilitator, worked in education, researching and evaluating alternative educational programs for state and federal funders. As a social worker, worked with victims of domestic violence and their abusers (and wrote a public television documentary about domestic violence), as well as with previously incarcerated juvenile females and displaced homemakers. Worked as an arts administrator, advising artists and administering grants programs. Worked as a magazine and newspaper writer and editor, including a magazine devoted women’s sexuality.

Ronna J. Metcalf. Executive Director Life Enrichment Center, Tampa, Fl. Past chair w.o.m.e.n. - women’s organization for medical emergency needs (non-profit organization that provides funds for abortions for low-income women and girls)

Jackie Mirkin, age 79, is a retired social worker with a history of activism for peace and social justice with a particular focus on anti-racism and L/G/B/T rights. She and her wife, Edie Daly, co-chaired a community effort in Gulfport, Florida, that resulted in the passing of an ordinance protecting the rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgendered people in housing, employment, and accommodations. For the last several years she has been inspired by the high quality of her experiences as a senior audit student in Women’s Studies courses on the USF Tampa and St. Petersburg Campuses.

Genie Skypek, Ph.D. Licensed Psychologist, surveyor for the Joint Commission, the premier healthcare accreditation organization. Started the drug treatment program for women at the Women’s Survival Center, now known as the Centre for Women. Develops E-learning modules in behavioral health for Netsmart University; feminist; former adjunct in Women’s Studies.

Leisa Clark’s Spring 2010 Capstone Students

Visiting Instructor,
Leisa Clark’s Rehire

The Department of Women’s and Gender Studies is proud to welcome back Leisa Clark as Visiting Instructor and integral member of our faculty teaching this summer and again for the 2010/2011 academic year.

Her contributions are greatly appreciated and her classes are a profound success as you can see by the photo on the left of her spring 2010 Capstone students.

Last semester Leisa was also chosen as a winner of the 2010 Emerging Paradigms Conference!
New Grad Student: Mary Catherine Whitlock

Mary Catherine Whitlock, born in Griffin, GA which is an hour south of Atlanta and an hour north of Macon. Griffin was the kind of town where everyone knew if you called into work sick. It’s pretty much the middle of nowhere, but it was definitely home. I have always wanted tattoos. While growing up, I always had a lot of piercings and with tattoos being another way to decorate my body it just seemed natural. All of my tattoos are reminders of where I was and what I was going through at the time but having said that, most of them do stand for some kind of female empowerment. More are defiantly to come!

My hobbies/activities include but are not limited to: being an avid Rachel Maddow watcher, reading feminist blogs, sewing by hand because my machine has decided to die on me, playing with my cats, attempting to cook, loving music, cheering for my girlfriend at derby practice, being an overzealous thrift store shopper and cheap traveling! Currently my favorite fiction writer has got to be Pearl Cleage. I collect busts; right now I have eight. As far as my impression of USF, it is HUGE and slightly overwhelming. The campus is fairly large but thankfully I have only been lost on campus once! It has definitely been fun so far and I’m looking forward to having many more positive experiences at USF!

After graduating high school, my parents would not allow me to attend Georgia State because they were worried about me drifting into “the wrong crowd” in Atlanta. So, I ended up at Gordon College in Barnesville, GA. I was lucky enough to beg one of my professors to have a class that focused on women (it was Women and Science Fiction), which was a first for the college. After transferring to GSU, I had already had a little bit of Mulvey under my belt and decided to take my first Women’s Studies class. In class, we read Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire, and it was all over. I knew without a doubt that I wanted to teach this same kind of material to students in the years to come and change the way they see the world, just as it changed mine.

Leisa Clark’s iPad Grant

Leisa has also been asked to return to this summer’s Institute as an “alumnus” to teach a section. She will also be working, along with graduate program assistant and MA candidate, Jennifer Ellerman, to guide our graduate teaching assistants in the use of technologies beyond Blackboard.

Marilyn’s Feminist Perspectives on Sexuality Class

This summer, Marilyn is offering her newly created class: “Feminist Perspectives on Sexuality”. Here are excerpts from the syllabus. This class includes:

- An ecstasy of exploration
- A cornucopia of challenge
- A kaleidoscope of knowledge
- A vertigo of vision
- A cultivation of compassion

We will be experimenting with both form and content. The syn/energy in the room will be enough to levitate the building… Key to making this class work will be to practice dance between careful listening, relevant voice, and deliberate silence. We will be assumption-free concerning each others’ sexual histories, identities, experience.

We will focus on (1) how do we make theory about sexuality, including what are the relationships between experience, consciousness-raising, and theorizing; (2) discovering/affirming/unsettling our boundaries and belief systems; (3) reading, reading, reading. AND writing — articles, short prose pieces, poems.

This course is designed for us to work and play with the discourse of sexuality as agency and celebration. We will ask: What is sexuality? What isn’t? We will include readings on the rocky evolution of feminist thinking about sexuality. We will contextualize notions of exchange, desire, pleasure and taboo in our lives.
Diane Price-Herndl on her new course offered in the Fall 2010 semester: We will investigate the ways that technology is shaped by, and in turn shapes, gender in an era when bodies are rarely unmarked by encounters with machines.

Women’s and Gender Studies is a natural academic home for me, because I work at the intersection of several disciplines: feminist theory, American literature, medicine, and disability studies. I have long been interested in the ways that a medicalized view of the body shapes not just our perceptions of other peoples’ bodies, but of our own. I started from American novels of the mid-nineteenth century that had plots centered on women’s illnesses, but I have—in the more than 20 years I’ve been working on this question—ended up branching out to lots of different texts (ads, science fiction film, advice books, and photography to name a few). The questions I ask have to do with how those texts use, invoke, or create a techno-scientific (or pseudo-techno-scientific) discourse to enframe bodies. My courses often focus on non-standard bodies: technologically enhanced bodies or bodies with disabilities or illnesses. My scholarship has focused for the last several years on the cultural discourses of breast cancer, from autobiographies to novels, poetry, and art, and from Supreme Court decisions to pink-ribbon campaigns. In addition to my work on bodies and cultural representation, I have published essays on American fiction, feminist theory, and narrative theory, as well as anthologies of feminist literary theory and of women’s literature. My teaching covers a pretty wide range; over the last twenty years, I have taught more than forty different courses, from introductory classes to graduate seminars, and in both English and Women’s Studies. I frequently teach both literary and feminist theory. Some of my other favorites have included: Toni Morrison and Critical Race Theory; Aliens, Monsters, and Cyborgs in Science Fiction Film; American Novel after the Bomb; and Bodies and Technology: Reading Gender in the Posthuman Era.

Academia has taken me around the country; a native Texan, I did my graduate work at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis) and University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill). I taught in Vermont, New Mexico, and Iowa before moving to USF.

Michelle Hughes Miller on her new course offered in the Fall 2010 semester: Our exploration this semester will entail unpacking the politics of Motherhood, as lived, as represented and as regulated within the social world.

Michelle Hughes Miller was most recently an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where she taught and researched issues related to gender and justice. She also designed and taught a seminar for graduate students on pedagogy. Her recent research projects include a feminist critique of mothers of criminals in film, a situational analysis of hiring practices in higher education, the effects of self-disclosure in the classroom, and competing definitions of sexual harassment. For the past three years she also spent half of her time as the Director of University Women’s Professional Advancement (UWPA). Her director responsibilities involved creating and implementing programming such as the UWPA Women’s Leadership Series, development of a Status of Women report, and working with faculty in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) to further the advancement of women in those disciplines. She is really excited to be joining the faculty at the University of South Florida as a tenured Associate Professor of Sociology and Women’s and Gender Studies.

Advising eScheduler

Academic Advising at USF is an integral part of a student’s academic success. Advisors at USF uphold three components of advising: curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes. USF advisors will assist students with course and program selection, the development of goals, the learning process, and the navigation of campus and community resources. Successful advising is a collaboration between the student and the advisor. The relationship between advisor and advisee is built on trust, honesty and mutual respect. Students must clearly articulate and explore their goals, aspirations, strengths and weaknesses with their advisor to ensure that the advisor is able to provide an individualized academic plan. Students who actively participate in the advising process will not only have a better understanding of the university’s goals, mission, policies and procedures, but will also develop a life-long commitment to learning and community involvement. Academic advisors are wonderful resources for USF students. We encourage you to take advantage of their knowledge and advocacy!

How often should you see an advisor? It is important that you see your advisor at least once a year. New students should see an advisor each semester during the first year at the university. Students should prepare before each advising appointment by preparing questions and reviewing their degree audit.

When is the best time to see an advisor? See your advisor early in the semester. If you wait until the week before your registration appointment time, your advisor may not have any available appointments. The College of Arts & Sciences utilizes the eScheduler system to track appointments. To make an advising appointment with the WST advisor, Dr. Rinck, go to:

http://usfweb3.usf.edu/appointments/StudentSignon.asp
Or, http://www.cas.usf.edu/gus/advising/
Mission of the Department

Women's and Gender Studies is a discrete discipline that has its own evolution, bodies of knowledge, sets of theories, associated pedagogies, academic projects and curriculum challenges and strategies.

The department offers a full range of interdisciplinary courses in Women's Studies, and based in feminist theory/pedagogy/methodology. All of our areas are contextualized by global perspectives beyond gendered identities in the United States. As such the Department takes a transnational/global approach to Women's and Gender Studies. Our graduate and undergraduate students will be trained in signature areas qualifying them for competitive positions in the areas which require skills in critical thinking, inquiry and global perspectives.

Grow your knowledge... explore the world!

WST 2250 — The Female Experience in America (CRN 85564) Offered completely online!
WST 2600 — Human Sexual Behavior (CRNs 85562 and 85563)
WST 3015 — Intro to Women's Studies (CRNs 80843 or 88681 for online)
WST 3225 — Women, Gender, and the Environment (CRN 87046) Offered completely online!
WST 3311 — Issues in Feminism (CRN 81902)
WST 3370 — Women and Social Action (CRN 84260) Offered completely online!
WST 4310 — History of Feminism (CRN 83497)
WST 4335 — Classics in Feminist Theory (CRN 82015)
WST 4930 — The Female Experience II: Women & Food (CRN 90539) Offered completely online!
WST 4930 / 5934 — Bodies & Technology (CRNs 90486 & 90487) Permit only.
WST 4930 / 5934 — Politics of Motherhood (CRNs 90493 & 90492) Permit only.

Recent Graduates

The Women's and Gender Studies Department graduated nine undergraduates this past spring. Of the nine, two graduated cum laude and one graduated magna cum laude. Some of our recent graduates will be going on to graduate school in Library Sciences, Psychology and Law, while others have applied for jobs with Planned Parenthood and other feminist service-oriented organizations. Two recent graduates are doing volunteer work in the community.

Congratulations to our recent graduates!

Erin Spence, Patty Johnson, Dannean McDaniel, Dieudonne Jean, Alicia Rosenberg and Meghan Milanese - Class of Spring 2010

http://wgs.usf.edu/