

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
Advising Information for
Graduate Students in Women's Studies
Spring 2010

Please read the following information carefully and contact your academic advisor or Dr. Claire Sahlin at csahlin@twu.edu if you have any questions.

I. REGISTRATION FOR Spring 2010

Your early registration helps us plan for the upcoming semester. Beginning **November 2, 2009**, graduate students can register for classes online via Pioneer Portal. We strongly recommend that you register as soon as possible, since courses are limited in enrollment and caps will be strictly enforced. *Note:* The TWU registration system will not be available between the fall and spring semesters due to a database conversion project. You should register for Spring 2010 no later than December 1, 2009, if possible.

II. ADVISING

M.A. Students

Before you register, you should contact Dr. Sahlin or your academic advisor with any questions. We would like to approve your selection of courses to help ensure that they will be appropriate for your degree plan and future goals. Faculty members in Women's Studies are delighted to speak or correspond with you about how your program of study will further your career plans and/or plans for future academic study. Please feel welcome to contact us!

When you contact Dr. Sahlin or your thesis advisor, please provide the following information:

- the list of classes you would like to take in Spring 2010, and
- your future professional plans and/or the topic of your thesis, if you have decided to write one and already have selected a topic.

Graduate Certificate Students

Before you register, you should contact Dr. AnaLouise Keating (akeating@twu.edu), the Graduate Certificate advisor, about the selection of your courses. Courses should be selected, whenever possible, to complement your academic course of study and/or to further your professional goals.

III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

You are responsible for following the requirements outlined in the TWU Graduate Catalog, in the Women's Studies Graduate Student Handbook, and on the Graduate School website. The Women's Studies Graduate Student Handbook is accessible on the Department of Women's Studies Blackboard site (under "Documents"). Please read the Handbook carefully.

The M.A. Program

Please familiarize yourself with the requirements for the M.A. Program, which include a thesis OR a non-thesis/comprehensive examination option. All M.A. students must complete a minimum of 36 graduate credit hours, including Foundations for Scholarly Inquiry, U.S. Women of Colors, Feminist Theories, and Feminist Epistemologies. A minimum of 18 graduate credit hours must be taken in Women's Studies. All students must be registered during the semester in which they plan to graduate (even if they have already completed 36 credit hours).

(1) Thesis Option

The thesis option is strongly encouraged for those who intend to pursue further doctoral or professional studies (e.g., law school, an advanced degree in public policy, etc.). The thesis, whose recommended length is 35-40 pages, is written under the guidance of an advisor and should make an original contribution to the field of Women's Studies. The thesis option includes an oral examination. Six credit hours of thesis work (WS 5983 and WS 5993) are counted toward the degree plan.

(2) Comprehensive Exam Option

The non-thesis/comprehensive exam option is strongly encouraged for those who consider the M.A. in Women's Studies to be their terminal degree. This option includes 36 credit hours of courses and a written, comprehensive, take-home examination. The exam is offered during the week prior to each fall and spring semesters.

The comprehensive exam will be distributed next on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. and will be due by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 2010. If you plan to take the comprehensive exam in January 2010, you must notify Dr. Claire Sahlin no later than Tuesday, December 1, 2009. Send an email message to her at csahlin@twu.edu.

A sample exam can be found under "Documents" on the Department of Women's Studies site in Blackboard. We recommend that you prepare for the exam by reading the sample exam carefully, organizing your books and notes, and writing practice essays.

The Graduate Certificate

The Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies requires a minimum of 18 hours of coursework at the 5000-level or above with an average grade of B or better and selected in consultation with the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate Advisor.

At least 9 hours must be selected from the following: Foundations for Scholarly Inquiry, Feminist Pedagogies, Feminist Epistemologies, U.S. Women of Colors, and Feminist Theories.

At least 3 to 9 hours must be selected from the following: Law, Gender and Sexuality; Rights, Race and Social Justice; Transgressive Identities: Queer Theories and Critical 'Race' Theories; Feminism and Religion; Ecofeminist Theorizing, Spirituality, and Activism; Gloria Anzaldúa Seminar: Theories, Politics, and Transformation; Women's Studies Seminar

(topics will vary); and WS 5853 Spiritual Activism: Social Justice Theories for Holistic Transformation.

Any remaining hours are selected in consultation with Dr. AnaLouise Keating, the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate Advisor. These electives must be related to Women's Studies at the 5000-level or above.

IV. DEGREE PLAN FORM

If you are in your second or third semester in the M.A. program, you should complete and submit your degree plan form to your advisor (as an email attachment) as soon as possible. You can find the form on the TWU Graduate School web page (click on "Forms") at <http://www.twu.edu/gradschool/forms.asp>. It is recommended that you submit your degree plan when you have completed 9-12 credit hours in the program.

The degree plan requires you to list all the courses you have taken or plan to take. It also requires you to specify the chair of your Graduate Committee as well as the other faculty member(s) who will serve as members. It is possible to make subsequent changes to your degree plan in the future by completing a "Change in Degree Plan" form (found on the TWU Graduate School Web site).

Thesis students: Only two faculty members are required to participate on graduate committees; unless you have a specific reason for including a third faculty member, we recommend that you include only two. The chair of your Graduate Advisory Committee will be your thesis advisor and will serve as your academic advisor. You should invite a faculty member with expertise related to your thesis topic to serve as your Committee Chair, and you should consult with your Committee Chair about the selection of your second committee member. Your Committee Chair will sign your degree plan before it is submitted to Dr. Sahlin for her approval as department chair.

Comprehensive exam students: Your Advisory Committee members should be listed on your degree plan as Dr. AnaLouise Keating, Dr. Judy Rohrer, and Dr. Beverly Thompson.

For further instructions, please see the document "Directions for Degree Plan," which is accessible on the Department of Women's Studies Blackboard site under Documents.

V. SELECTION OF ELECTIVE COURSES

See the following Web site for the Spring 2010 Schedule of Classes:
<http://www.twu.edu/academics/schedule.asp>.

If you're interested in taking a course outside of the Department of Women's Studies, it is strongly recommended that you contact course instructors and/or departments to make sure that the course you'd like to take is appropriate for you (i.e., that it doesn't have prerequisites that you haven't fulfilled.) Courses must be at the 5000-level or above.

We suggest that you select electives consistent with your academic and professional goals. If you are considering future doctoral work in such areas as History, Anthropology,

Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, or Rhetoric, choose electives that will prepare you for your future studies and make your application as competitive as possible for admission into doctoral programs. It is a good idea to inquire whether particular doctoral programs have specific prerequisites and work to fulfill those prerequisites, if possible, while you are pursuing your M.A. degree.

Sometimes it is advisable, depending on your interests, to select courses (whenever possible) that relate to a particular theme, e.g. race/ethnicity, higher education, women's health, literature, religious studies, Mexican-American studies, sexuality studies, African-American studies, U.S. history, etc. (*Note:* Universities and community colleges generally require instructors to have at least 18 graduate credit hours in the field in which they wish to teach.) It is also possible to pursue an 18-credit-hour Graduate Certificate in Diversity Studies through the TWU Department of Sociology.

TWU graduate students may register for graduate courses at the University of North Texas through the Federation of North Texas area universities. For more information about how to register for graduate courses at UNT, you should call the TWU Graduate School at 940-898-3415.

Internships: You may also wish to consider arranging an internship (volunteer work) for credit at a social service agency or non-profit organization. Specific guidelines and requirements for internships are found in the Women's Studies Graduate Student Handbook, which is accessible on the Department's Blackboard site. Contact Dr. Sahlin if you are interested in arranging an internship.

Students in our program have completed internships at the following sites, among others:

- Denton County Friends of the Family, <http://www.dcfof.org/test.asp>
- AIDS Services of North Texas, <http://www.aidsntx.org/aidsservices>
- Mosaic Family Services, <http://www.mosaicservices.org>
- The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future, <http://www.thewomensmuseum.org>
- The Human Rights Initiative of North Texas, <http://www.hrionline.org>
- The Chiapas Project, <http://www.chiapas-project.org/>
- The Woman's Collection in the TWU Library, <http://www.twu.edu/library/womans-research.asp>