Master’s Program Specialization in the History of Women and Gender

M.A. HANDBOOK
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Administration

Program Directors: Professor Rebecca Karl & Professor Mary Nolan (Fall 2016); Professor Linda Gordon (Spring 2017)

Chair: Professor David Ludden

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Faculty

Hasia Diner: Women and immigration, Jewish Women in America

Nicole Eustace: U.S., Atlantic World, emotion, and the history of women and gender

Linda Gordon: 20th-Century U.S. social and political, family and social policy, the U.S. west

Martha Hodes: 19th-century U.S., race in transnational perspectives, gender and sexuality

Rebecca Karl: Modern China, theories of nationalism, Marxism, modernity, gender & radicalism in modern China

Michele Mitchell: Diaspora, North America, U.S. history and gender history


Mary Nolan: Modern European social, cold war, European-American relations, labor, consumption, imperialism

Leslie Peirce: Ottoman history, gender, law & society, comparative empires
**Program Overview**

The History of Women and Gender Program at NYU draws its strength from a long tradition of feminist scholarship and our faculty’s commitment to investigating the history of women and gender. Faculty and student interests cover a wide variety of geographic and chronological fields of specialization. Our explorations of theory and methodology encourage students to explore the social and political meanings and uses of gender constructs and to challenge traditional narratives about men and women across history.

Earning an M.A. degree in the History of Women and Gender prepares students for a wide variety of careers, including working in historical societies, historic houses, and museums; editing historical papers; and consulting for television and film documentaries. The program can also serve as preparation for teaching at the secondary school level or as a foundation for more advanced graduate study. Admission to the program is highly selective.

**Program Requirement**

The M.A. in the History of Women and Gender is a 32-credit program. Students will take the following set of courses:

1. “M.A. Pro-seminar” (HIST-GA2022). The seminar provides students with a general introduction to the professional study of history. (4 credits)

2. “Approaches to History of Women and Gender” (HIST-GA1763). This course, designed specifically for students in the Women and Gender Program will familiarize students with the methodology and historiography fundamental to the historical study of women and gender. It will showcase faculty from the NYU History Department whose research and writing employ gender as an important category of analysis. (4 credits)

3. Two further courses that focus substantively on gender in history. These may be courses offered by our core faculty or, with approval, courses offered by faculty from across the university and beyond. (8 credits) Please see the list of Core Faculty included in the handbook.

4. Three topical history courses in the chronological and geographic field of choice. These should be selected according to students’ interests in order to deepen their historical expertise. (12 credits)

5. Thesis Credit. All students in the Women and Gender Program complete a master’s thesis under the supervision of a thesis director. Once a field of specialization has been determined (normally by the end of the first semester) students should select a faculty advisor from among the program’s core faculty*. To complete course requirements, students must register for an independent study course with the advisor as the thesis is being written. (4 credits) Please see the detailed Thesis Guidelines provided in the handbook.

**Thesis Guidelines**

The research and writing of an original M.A. thesis is a crucial component of the Women and Gender Program. It provides students with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate both their skills as historians and their competence in using gender as a fundamental tool of analysis. The
The goal in writing the M.A. thesis is to produce an article-length work with potential for publication. For those interested in pursuing doctoral studies in history, the thesis can also serve as a writing sample for submission to Ph.D. programs.

General Information:

1. All students write the M.A. thesis under the direction of their faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is to be chosen from among the program’s core faculty. By the end of the first semester, students should select an advisor whose research and teaching interests correspond with their own planned area of focus.

2. Students should begin meeting with their advisor to plan the thesis a semester in advance (normally in the first semester of the second year).

3. In the final semester, students must register for an independent study course (HIST-GA 3021) with their advisor (4 credits). This is the thesis credit. Students should schedule regular meetings (every 3 or 4 weeks as needed) with the advisor, who will serve as a sounding board during the research and writing process.

4. Every M.A. thesis will be read by two readers. Students should select a second reader in consultation with their primary advisor. The second reader should normally be selected by the beginning of the final semester.

5. Once the thesis has been submitted and read, a thesis defense will be scheduled. During this one-hour meeting, the student will present and explain the findings of the thesis while answering questions about content and argument from the two members of the thesis committee.

6. Deadlines:
   I. End of first semester: select a faculty advisor in area of interest who will serve as your thesis advisor. Students may ask a faculty member with whom they have worked or, in consultation with the Program Director, they can determine a relevant faculty member and approach that professor.

   II. Beginning of 3rd semester: choose topic with aid of advisor and begin thesis research.

   III. Start of 4th (final) semester: select second reader.

   IV. April 1: FINAL DEADLINE for submission of thesis.

   V. May: Thesis defense should be scheduled by this month. It is the student’s responsibility to coordinate this with the advisor and second reader.
Thesis Requirements:

1. Content: The thesis, which must be written in grammatically correct English, should present the results of original primary-source research in the student’s chosen area of geographic and chronological expertise. (In the case of research on sources written in languages other than English, the research should be conducted in the original language.) The thesis should offer a clear argument using gender as a central category of analysis, not simply provide summary descriptions of sources.

2. Scope: The thesis should present a full review of the relevant scholarly literature on the topic selected and present original arguments and analysis based on the primary-source research.

3. Length: The thesis should be 40 to 50 pages long.

4. Originality: The thesis should be entirely the student’s own work. All primary and secondary sources should be carefully cited to avoid any appearance of plagiarism. Students are responsible for knowing and following university policies on academic integrity.

5. Style: Notation should follow the Chicago Manual of Style.

Seminar Series

All history graduate students who work on issues of women and gender are invited to attend the Women and Gender Program’s seminar series. Regular attendance is encouraged for students enrolled in the master’s degree program. All meetings will be held in KJCC. The format features collaborative discussions works-in-progress by professors from NYU and from outside as well as by students. Events are announced through the listserv. Students who attend are expected to read the pre-circulated papers and to participate in discussion.