



University of Northern Iowa

Women's and Gender Studies



Fall 2018 Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

IN THIS ISSUE

Our Students Are Making a Difference!

This year, in an effort to highlight the significant work that our program and students are doing, we decided to reprise the WGS newsletter. Our plan is to publish each semester moving forward.

Now more than ever, we need Women's and Gender Studies. Our program highlights the importance of academia within social justice realms, and our students are proof! Currently, we are home to 7 full-time MA students (with 3 additional joining us spring semester) and 2 part-time students. We also have 1 graduate student pursuing a WGS certificate, and 45+ minors.

On a daily basis, our students work to identify solutions to societal and cultural issues of gender, oppression, and privilege. We are fortunate to have students representing both the US and around the world to give personal perspective. Check out the introductions to our cohorts to learn more about the work that our MA students are doing on and off campus!

UNI's WGS program offers graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity

to explore how our intersecting identities affect our lives on personal, political, societal, and global levels.

In addition to our work in the academic realm, the WGS programming office works hard to provide the UNI campus with opportunities to learn more about these issues outside of the classroom through event planning. This fall saw several successful programs both in content and attendance.

We look forward to the 2019 Spring Semester and hope that you will continue to follow the WGS office in all of our happenings. Please keep up with us by checking our website often!

<https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies>

Check us out on social media:



UNI Women's & Gender Studies



@uniwgs



wgs@uni.edu



Meet Our Cohorts/Students/Faculty

Meet our first-year students and hear from our second-year cohort about their theses and research projects



Programming News/Alumni Update/Scholarships & Awards

Read about our events from the fall semester, and learn about our upcoming programs happening in spring 2019

A Letter from our Director

Greetings!

It gives me great pleasure to write to you as the new Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at UNI! After serving as Interim Director starting in January 2017, I was hired permanently for the position this past summer. I am also an Associate Professor of English in the Languages and Literatures Department, and my research focuses on the historical development of attitudes toward gender and sexuality in medieval Europe.

There have been many successes and changes to the program that I am eager to share with you. After the restructuring of the Master's degree to include an Applied Track with two focuses (Gender and Violence Prevention, and Gender and Wellness), we have seen a renewed interest in WGS and its interdisciplinary approach to these critical social issues. Several students have even returned to the program to finish their degrees as a result of their interest in the Applied Track, which better suited their career goals. As you will see in this newsletter, it has generated interest in WGS from a wide variety of students, including those from outside the United States, which not only enhances the diversity of our student body but also considerably augments the program's quality and experiences for everyone.

As of this summer, we found an institutional home in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences under the dedicated direction of Dean Brenda Bass. Although WGS remains an interdisciplinary program, drawing from the expertise and skills of faculty and staff among all of the colleges at UNI, having the guidance and support of the Dean and a place in CSBS has increased the stability of the program in many important ways. Consequently, we can now turn our attention more fully to the future of WGS and realize the vision that began more than forty years ago, when Women's Studies was created by faculty who were passionate about promoting feminist scholarship and activism at the university.

I am excited to continue the progressive work of these many wonderful directors and coordinators who came before me! I welcome your questions, thoughts and suggestions as we move forward during this crucial period in our history, both inside and outside the university. Please feel free to stop by the WGS office and chat, give me a call, or send an email. I would love to hear from you!

Best wishes for a joyful holiday season and good health, happiness and success in the New Year!

Wendy Marie Hoofnagle



MEET OUR STUDENTS

First-Year Cohort



Sara Naughton she/her/hers
Hometown: Erie, Pennsylvania.
Earned her bachelor's degree in Creative Writing and Gender Studies at Slippery Rock University with a minor in Sociology. Sara is working as a Graduate Assistant for the WGS Office and for the Center for Violence Prevention.

Applied Track Student

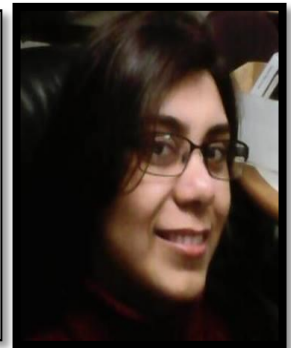
Elena Golosova she/her/hers
Hometown: Saint-Petersburg, Russia
Earned her bachelor's degree in Social Work at Saint Petersburg State University. Elena is working as a Graduate Assistant at the Center for Violence Prevention and for the UNI Geography Department.

Applied Track Student



Alia Afzal she/her/hers
Hometown: Patna, India
Earned her bachelor's in English Literature at Patna University and completed her first master's degree in English at UNI in summer 2017. Alia is working as a Teaching Assistant in Survey for English Literature I with Dr. Wendy Hoofnagle.

Thesis Track Student



Second-Year Cohort



Rawan AbuMahady she/her/hers
Hometown: Gaza, Occupied Palestine
Earned her bachelor's in English from Al-Azhar University. Rawan is a Fulbright student working as a Teaching Assistant in Gender Issues in Communication with Dr. Victoria DeFrancisco, and as a Research Assistant for Dr. Shahina Amin.

Thesis: Palestinian Women's Embroidered Worlds

Joyceline Amoako she/her/hers
Hometown: Accra, Ghana
Earned her bachelor's degree in Adult Education and Psychology at the University of Ghana. Joyceline is working as a Graduate Assistant for the WGS Programming Office and the Center for Violence Prevention.

Thesis: Women's Occupational Health and Safety in the Informal Economy, Focusing on Maternal Market Traders in Ghana.



Konul Karimova she/her/hers
Hometown: Gabala, Azerbaijan
Earned her undergraduate degree in Linguistics at the Azerbaijan University of Linguistics and is currently working as a Graduate Assistant at the Center for Violence Prevention. She is also completing an internship at Riverview Center in Waterloo, IA.

Research Project: Quantitative Content Analysis of the Social Support Messages between the Survivors of Violence

Ashley Meyers ze/hir/hirs
Hometown: Brooklyn Park, Minnesota
Earned her bachelor's degree in Women's and Gender Studies and Religion from Luther College. Ashley is working as a Teaching Assistant in Psychology of Gender with Dr. Carolyn Hildebrandt and in Violence in Intimate Relationships with Dr. Michael Fleming.

Thesis: Beyond "Born This Way": Reconsidering Trans Narratives



WGS SPOTLIGHTS

SWAG Minors

Brenna Wolfe

she/her/hers

Brenna is a Senior Sociology and Public Administration major with a SWAG minor. She is the Director of Gender Violence Prevention in Northern Iowa Student Government and the President of Sociology Club. Next year she plans to attend law school in hopes of pursuing a career as a civil rights lawyer. In her spare time, she volunteers with Waypoint Services.

Brenna is the WGS 2018-2019 Frances L. Webster SWAG Minor Scholarship recipient.

"I chose the SWAG minor because I am a huge feminist and I love discussing social issues. This minor allows me to be more knowledgeable about others' experiences."



Spencer Navara

he/him/his or they/them/theirs

Spencer is a Sophomore Global Studies major with a SWAG minor. He is the Director of Outreach for the Sociology Club and works in the Study Abroad Office on campus. Spencer chose the SWAG minor because classes associated with the minor are ones that he enjoys, and the subject matter is something he is passionate about!

"I hope to get a graduate degree in Student Affairs and continue to work somewhere I can continue to promote international outreach. A fun fact, I can play six instruments!"



Work Study

Laura Buffington

she/her/hers

Laura is one of two work study students in the WGS office. Laura joined us this year and is a Freshman Political Communication major. She is the Co-Director of Public Relations for UNI Proud and an active member of Northern Iowa Feminists. Her professional goals include working on campaigns to help get individuals into office that will benefit America on national and local levels. As an academic goal, she would like to graduate with a degree in Political Communications, a minor in Art, and a SWAG minor within the next four years. She is also a huge Harry Potter fan!

Why did she want to be a work study for WGS? "It sounded like an inclusive program to work for. I also have an interest in pursuing the minor and wanted to get to know the program more. So far it's been a great experience!"



WGS AFFILIATE FACULTY

Dr. Benjamin Baker

he/him/his

Dr. Benjamin Baker is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies. He earned his Ph.D. in Communication Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research tends to employ qualitative methods and is aimed at understanding the ways interpersonal communication serves to construct and/or deconstruct marginalized identities within the family context. For example, his dissertation, entitled “Exploring the Dialects of Family Identity, Marriage, and Parenthood in Married Gay Fathers’ Relational Talk,” examined how gay male fathers discursively create and sustain their family identities when faced with challenges to their legitimacy. He is in the process of finalizing several studies, including an investigation into relational sense-making for gay and lesbian service members who served before, during, and after the U.S. military’s Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy; an analysis of transgender family narratives relative to family identity; and the effects of hurtful messages on familial relationships for individuals who identify as bisexual.

Dr. Baker has been a part of the WGS advisory board since his first semester on campus as an Assistant Professor – Fall of 2017.

In his own words... “Feminism has a huge impact on my role as an instructor. For instance, I strive to create classroom settings wherein every student feels included in the conversation. To create that type of welcoming atmosphere, I make sure to give each of my students the opportunity to talk openly, honestly, and without fear of judgment during classroom discussions. I firmly believe in the axiom, ‘if you can’t see it, you can’t be it,’ so I specifically pick diverse images when preparing my slides for lectures that incorporate all types of cultural backgrounds.”



Fun fact about Dr. Baker

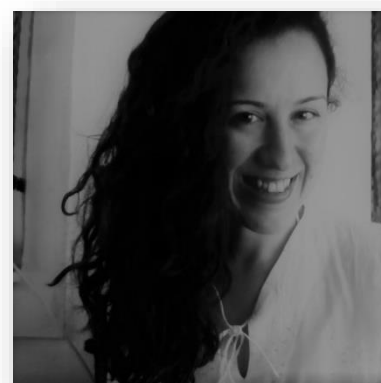
He just turned 35 and has never had a cavity!

Dr. Yasemin Sari

she/her/hers

Dr. Yasemin Sari is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and World Religions. Dr. Sari earned her Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Alberta in September 2015. She was a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Postdoctoral Researcher at Goethe University, Frankfurt in 2016. As a political philosopher, her work mainly focuses on democratic political theory, especially as it relates to human rights, extra-institutional recognition, and the borders between citizen and non-citizen. Her current research takes up the global refugee crisis. Dr. Sari joined the UNI community in August 2017 and became a member of the Women’s and Gender Studies advisory board in January 2018.

In her own words... “As a supporter of feminist issues, I advocate for women’s rights on the basis of equality for all. In my teaching, I highlight the important roles women played in political and economic revolutions, and how equal rights play out in both social and political settings.”



Fun fact about Dr. Sari

She is fluent in English, Turkish, and a bit of German! She also went paragliding in Turkey last summer.

PROGRAMMING NEWS

This fall, our **CROW (Current Research on Women and Gender) Forum** continued to be a staple in our programming office. Dr. Shahina Amin (Economics) kicked off the semester with her presentation "Teaching and Managing Faculty-Student Interactions as an International Faculty Member" at our October forum. In November, Kyrie Borsay, (WGS adjunct) presented her research titled "Implicit Bias: Unconscious Associations Influenced by Experience." December's CROW forum had two presenters, Dr. Alan Heisterkamp and Dr. Michael Fleming, (Center for Violence Prevention & SAHS) presenting "A Community in Motion: Preventing Trauma and Abuse Where We Are." CROW Forums present unique opportunities for students to hear about ongoing research and work in the field from their very own faculty, and we look forward to continuing our monthly forums during the spring semester! You can visit our website to keep updated on dates and presenters:

<https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/current-research-women-gender-crow-forum>

October was a busy month for us! We started it off with the WGS Programming Office providing students, faculty and staff the opportunity to send a personal message during the **Post-Card Writing Session for Dr. Christine Blasey Ford**. Over 40 postcards were written and sent to Dr. Ford's university address in California. The postcards included drawings, words of support and thanks for her bravery in testifying in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee. (Pictured below.)



Also in October, WGS continued the tradition of bringing **The Clothesline Project** to UNI. (Pictured on the right.)

During the week of October 22nd, in conjunction with Relationship Violence Awareness Month, the campus community was invited to participate in this interactive event in order to raise awareness for the issue of violence against women, the LGBTQ+ community, and other marginalized populations. Those who have been affected by violence and or sexual assault, first-hand or otherwise, decorated t-shirts with their thoughts, feelings and supportive messages. After three days of participation, over 40 shirts were made by the campus community. These were then hung on clotheslines for our day of Bearing Witness in the Maucker Union Courtyard on Friday October 26th. For the first time in many years, shirts were hung outside in order to reach a larger portion of the student population. Many of our shirts decorated in previous years were hung in Sabin Hall throughout the week for an emotional impact.

Thank you to those who participated in the event through decoration, support, and Bearing Witness.

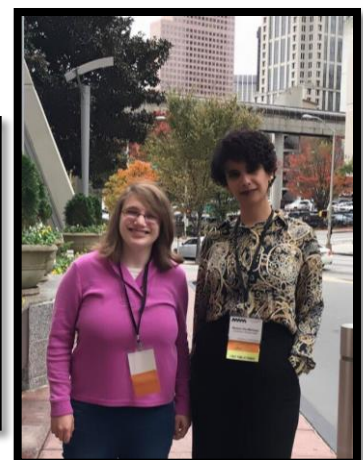
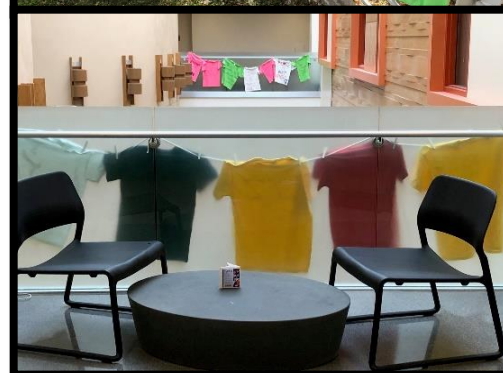
We look forward to continuing with the Clothesline Project tradition in 2019.

In November, WGS was happy to give three of our second-year students the chance to attend the **National Women's Studies Association Conference** in Atlanta, Georgia this past November!

(Pictured on the right.)



THE CLOTHESLINE PROJECT



ALUMNI UPDATE

Do you have an update?

We want to hear from our alumni! Please email us with what you have been up to since graduating.

Tell us about your career(s), moves, family, and of course, professional work!

Email us with your updates and pictures along with the year you graduated from UNI at

wgs@uni.edu

We are also looking for **#throwbackthursday** photos for our Facebook page. If you have some memories from your time with WGS, please send them our way!



Tsering Kyi Class of 2018

Kyi is one of our most recent graduates, having graduated in May 2018 in the Applied Track. She came to us from her homeland of India. Kyi's research project was titled "An Examination of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Model through an Indian Cultural Perspective."

In her words: I came back here at the end of July and yes, for almost two months, I was in my home and helping my parents. It really felt great to be back home and to be around the people I love the most but having said that, I do miss the US and UNI sometimes. I miss having my own space and doing things independently over there. Here, sometimes it does get suffocating but I am doing fine and better now. I guess these are some of the reverse culture shocks, but yeah! Adjusting to it very well.

Regarding my work, I am currently working as a section officer in the Women's Empowerment Desk (WED) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). I have joined my work September 1st 2018. To tell you briefly about my work, Our Desk works

on the project related to the empowerment of Tibetan women and any gender related issues. The Desk was founded in 2008 and since its inception, the desk has done lots of projects on Tibetan women empowerment, leadership workshops, and economic empowerment. It helps to create awareness and conversation on gender and gender related problems in the Tibetan community. Women's Empowerment Desk (WED) is part of a larger program called Social and Resource Development Fund (SARD) which is funded by many funders like USAID, PRM, SOIRM who supported Tibetan struggles and causes. This year our team has submitted our proposal relating to GBV and especially on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) so, I am very hopeful it will get accepted and then we can start working on it. With the whole #metoo campaign, I am hopeful, that the conversation about sexual violence will not only be easier, but people can collectively come together to fight against this issue and be more receptive.

Some of the key challenges that I have faced so far in my community are the denials towards the existence of gender inequality in the community and how difficult it gets sometimes to implement your vision into practice. Beside the challenges, I am hopeful this job will give me a platform to really contribute back to my community and make some changes in terms of creating gender equality, health and just society.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Agathon Fellowship \$1000

Who is eligible?

All students, (graduate and undergraduate) who have demonstrated a strong commitment to, and have had active roles in, supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) issues are encouraged to apply. Preference given to WGS graduate students. Applicants must have at least a 3.0 grade point average and will be full time at UNI during the 2019-2020 academic school year.

Deadline: March 1st, 2019, for information <https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/scholarships-and-awards>

Francis L. Webster Scholarship \$500 Tuition Award

Who is eligible?

Any declared Women's and Gender Studies or Studies in Sexuality, Women and Gender (SWAG) minor who has completed or is completing at least six hours of Women's and Gender Studies required courses, and who will not graduate before December 2019. Applicants must have completed or is completing at least 6 hours of WGS or cross listed courses by the end of spring 2019 semester.

Deadline: March 1st, 2019, for information <https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/scholarships-and-awards>

Outstanding Graduate Paper Award \$100 and CROW Presenter

Who is eligible?

Current UNI Graduate students from ALL departments and programs are eligible to apply for this award. Applicants must submit a paper, identified as but not limited to the following: a chapter from a Master's thesis; a paper submitted for a course at UNI as a graduate student; a conference paper; or a creative project focusing on any of the gender identity intersections such as race, class, sexuality, etc.

****Please note, the author of the winning paper must be willing and available to present the paper at the CROW (Current Research on Women and Gender) Forum on Monday, April 1, 2019 at 12-1pm, in Rod Library.**

Deadline: February 15th, 2019, for information <https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/scholarships-and-awards>

Yang Travel Award

Who is eligible?

Current WGS students (graduate and undergraduate) who plan to study and do research in China. This award is for travel support associated with that study abroad and/or research. Applicants must have at least a 2.5 grade point average and will be a UNI student during the 2019-2020 academic school year. SWAG minors need to have completed at least 6 hours of WGS or cross listed courses by the end of spring 2019 semester.

Deadline: April 15th, 2019, for information <https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/scholarships-and-awards>

Notables and Quotables



Judy Horacek is an Australian cartoonist, artist, writer and children's book creator. Her cartoons have been pinned up on doors and walls all over the world.

In the next issue...



CROW Forums



Women's History Month (March)



Outstanding Graduate Award (April)



Take Back the Night (April)