Welcome Back!

While campus looks a little different this year, the Women and Gender Studies department is excited for the opportunities that are upon us for the academic year. Between new students, learning situations, and various other factors that come along with living in a pandemic, this department is giving it our all to plan events, participate in activism, and be there for our students in the safest ways possible.
Cierra Naglowsky | She/Her

From: Altoona, PA
Thesis Track Student with an emphasis on the intersections of Queer, Fat, and Disability Studies

Spent COVID Summer: Swimming, spending time with kitties, and gardening.

Fun Fact: Loves to embroider, knit, cook, and is known to be a movie snob

Hakima Afzaly | She/Her

From: Afghanistan
Thesis Track Student with an emphasis on improving gender related policies in the policy sectors of Afghanistan

Spent COVID Summer: Biking, Jogging, and quality time with family

Fun Fact: Likes to run and go on long walks
Sedomda Kpikpitse | She/Her
From: Ghana
Thesis Track Student with an emphasis on the health of rural women due to agricultural activities in Ghana
Fun Fact: She likes to listen to music, read, and hike.

Bekah Bass | She/Her
From: Cedar Falls, IA
Year: A Senior Sociology major with minors in SWAG, Religion and Spanish.
After UNI: I believe that my course work in WGS will help me as I move on to law school to pursue civil rights law. It has also helped me better move through the world as an educated and empowered woman who can strive for and work towards justice in all areas of my life.
Fun Fact: when I studied abroad I got to try Guinea pig (cuy) in Cusco, Peru.
Noah Elias Andrew | He/Ze

From: Iowa
Track: Thesis
Study: Queer Studies with an emphasis in transgender studies
Hobbies: Drag, Hanging out with his dogs, and playing Nintendo Switch
Spent COVID summer: He got engaged, worked, and spent time in nature

Hasina Jalal | She/Her

From: Afghanistan
Track: Thesis
Study: Institutionalized Age-Based Discrimination Against Afghan Women at the Workplace.
Hobbies: Watching political shows and having philosophical discussions with friends and family
Spent COVID summer: Attended online conferences, researched for the Center of Violence Prevention, and delivered a speech on "The Role of Bystander in Domestic Violence Prevention" at the Women's Economic Forum's Global Digital Summit where she was recognized with the "Iconic Woman Creating a Better World for All" award.
SECOND YEAR COHORT

Melody Kosobucki | She/Her

From: Wisconsin
Track: Applied - Violence Prevention
Study: Sexual Assault Advocacy for the LGBTQ community
Hobbies: Enjoys playing various sports, gardening, researching theology & witchcraft.
Spent COVID summer: Worked as a theologian intern, got engaged, did a lot of biking & exploring nature with dogs and fiance.

Phalace Milimo | She/Her

From: Lusaka, Zambia
Track: Applied Track-Health and Wellness
Study: Exploring the Barrier To Healthcare Access Among American Refugee Women in IA
Hobbies: Traveling, spending time in nature
Spent COVID summer: Hiking, biking, and making friends.
SECOND YEAR COHORT

Rifat Siddiqui| She/Her

From: Bangladesh  
Track: Thesis  
Study: Gender and Intersectionality, Critical Race Studies, Literature  
Hobbies: Collecting sand and rocks  
Spent COVID summer: Grew plants, stayed home, and meditated

Keep up with our program and cohorts on our social media accounts!

UNI Women's & Gender Studies  
@uniwgs  
@uniWGS  
Women's and Gender Studies Program at UNI

Want to learn more about the program? Contact wgs@uni.edu
Adjusting to Teaching in a COVID World

We asked our affiliate faculty how they have adjusted and what they are doing differently this semester.

Dr. Danielle Dick McGeough | She/Her/Hers | Associate Professor in Communication and Media

This semester I am teaching COMM 2456 Communication and Popular Culture for the first time. I am also teaching via Zoom for the first time. We are learning about popular culture through popular culture texts. So, instead of reading a textbook or journal articles, students are watching videos, listening to podcasts, and reading web essays. My lectures are based on journal articles. Two weeks ago, for example, we listened and watched Beyoncé’s Lemonade album and read bell hooks and other Black feminist responses to the album. I taught Matthew Salzano’s article, Lemons or Lemonade: Beyoncé, Killjoy Style, and Neoliberalism. Each class begins with a fun question for students to answer in the chat. This week they answered, “What is a piece of clothing you have that communicates something about your identity?” We spend a lot of time in breakout rooms discussing the material. Teaching via Zoom is different but I’ve been so impressed with how engaged my students have been and the quality of work they have produced this semester.

Dr. Elizabeth Sutton | She/Her/Hers | Professor of Art History

I always enjoy teaching Honors Intro WGS. There are always opportunities for direct relation to students’ lives. We meet in person, and since we’re all wearing masks, we began by talking about how masking up was at first, like having a conversation about safe sex with condoms--- a conversation always necessary to have, even if awkward (at first). I am glad UNI took the onus off the students and normalized it by making mask-wearing mandatory. Would that condom-wearing (or birth control discussions) was as normalized!

We’ve zoomed in a couple speakers, but we’ll do a large Domestic Violence “In Her Shoes” role play scenarios with Susan Dobie-Roberts’ Public Health students in the WRC gym, to continue the experiential learning, but way spread out!!
Student Orientation
This year WGS organized a virtual orientation for our new students. With the virtual orientation, the GAs and staff joined in to have a mini-series of lectures on the program, life on campus as graduate students, and other necessary tools needed to equip new students on their road to success at UNI. “This is helpful because everything that has been discussed was exactly what I needed,” says Hakima, one of the new students. The new students were extremely well pleased with the orientation. A campus tour was also part of the orientation where the GAs walked our new students around places on campus.

National Coming Out Day
This year’s circumstances did not stop us from standing up for the matters that are dear to us. The National Coming Out Day is a day set aside to commemorate the coming out of individuals belonging to the LGBTQ community. This year marked it’s 33rd anniversary. This celebration seeks to enlighten society to accept people for who they are and allow the LGBTQ members to live openly and have equal rights. Stories and testimonies are shared to advocate for the struggle some people have to go through when revealing their identities. The WGS program wanted to put together a montage of videos from supporters for National Coming Out Day.

We see you.
We acknowledge you.
You are wonderful.
You have meaning.
You have a safe place here.
Thank you to Rod Library, Student Wellness and everybody else that participated in the video

National Coming Out video
The Clothesline Project

This October, as we have done in the past, we hosted the Clothesline Project. KWWL news channel stopped out to interview Noah Andrew about it. Every year, the Clothesline Project is organized to create awareness about violence and relationship violence. It is anticipated that violence rates are increasing during the pandemic. As we are observing social distance and keeping in mind the safety of the UNI community, we chose to have t-shirts created virtually this year. All 2020 submissions were submitted and then compiled to make a video. We took the opportunity to hang previous year's t-shirts in Sabin hall for a week of Bearing Witness. The last day of the Clothesline Project week we released a Bearing Witness video.

(For Clothesline Project Video- click here!).
**Q: What was it like finding a job in a COVID world?**

A: "I was prepared for a year or more of job searching, and was expecting having to get a few part-time jobs outside of my preferred industry to support myself. With all that in the back of my mind, I was very lucky to find a full-time temporary summer job at a local nonprofit, and then a full-time position at my local United Way following the end of the summer program. The reality is, the pandemic hasn't stopped the needs that nonprofits provide; in fact, the needs have been amplified. The work continues, and they need employees to do that."

**Q: How did your degree assist you in securing the job?**

A: "My MA degree in Women’s and Gender Studies provided me with an intersection of knowledge and experience that secured me both of the positions I have held since graduating. In the summer, I worked with low-income youth in a jobs program, and the hiring manager wanted someone who understood the barriers these youth were facing. My education on intersectional issues of identity provided me with that knowledge. At United Way, the situation was similar: I had an in-depth understanding of why the work is needed in our community, which allows me to assist in finding realistic and workable solutions to systematic issues."

**Q: What is your role at your job?**

A: "I am the Community Impact Coordinator at the United Way of Erie County. My role is to provide supports and organization to the Community Impact team, which manages our collective impact strategies within Erie. Our biggest project is the Community Schools initiative, which is a strategy that seeks to remove barriers by bringing in a hub of resources for families and students into schools."

**Q: What helped you find a job during the pandemic?**

A: "What helped me find a job during the pandemic was the confidence that my expertise, passion, and work ethic were needed in the nonprofit industry. Despite all of the anxieties about employment during the pandemic, I tried my very hardest to apply to each job with a level of confidence that communicated my ability to do the job with enthusiasm and integrity. I also made sure all hiring managers knew how proud I was of my MA degree, and how I strongly believed in its ability to guide my work!"
Agathon Fellowship
This fellowship supports students, (graduate and undergraduate) who have demonstrated a strong commitment to, and have had active roles in, supporting the LGBTQ+ community. Preference given to WGS MA students. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA and will be full time at UNI in the 2021-2022 academic school year.
Deadline: March 1st, 2021

Francis L. Webster Scholarship
The Francis L. Webster Scholarship seeks to support any declared WGS graduate student or 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 2021. Applicants must have six completed hours of WGS or cross listed courses by the end of spring 2021 semester.
Deadline: March 1st, 2021

Outstanding Graduate Paper Award
This annual competition is designed to encourage and reward graduate scholars (within or outside of the WGS program) on their research in the area of gender issues. The prize includes a $100 cash award and being spotlighted as our final SWAG Forum presenter for the academic year. Applicants must submit a paper, identified as but not limited to the following: a chapter from a graduate thesis; a paper submitted for a course at UNI as a graduate student; a conference paper; or a creative project focusing on any of gender identity intersections. *Author of the winning paper must be willing and available to present at the SWAG Forum on Monday 6th, 2021*
Deadline: February 15, 2021

Yang Travel Award
This fund is to be used to provide travel support for undergraduate and graduate students of the Women's and Gender Studies Program. The award is to be used for study and research in China and is to be awarded annually. The recipient(s) must have a GPA of 2.5 or above, and will be used during the 2021-2022 academic school year. The amount of the award is to be determined, and financial need shall be a consideration.
Deadline: April 15, 2021

For more information on any applying for any of these awards, please e-mail wgs@uni.edu or visit https://csbs.uni.edu/womenstudies/scholarships-and-awards
NOTABLES & QUOTABLES

Rosa Sat
So Ruby could Walk
So Kamala could Run

Created by Joanne Ciluffo

Transgender Day of Remembrance
Candlelight Vigil
Friday, November 20, 2020 at 7pm
Campanile

Cedar Valley Women’s March
Saturday, January 30, 2021 10:00am
Waterloo

For more information contact:
wgs@uni.edu