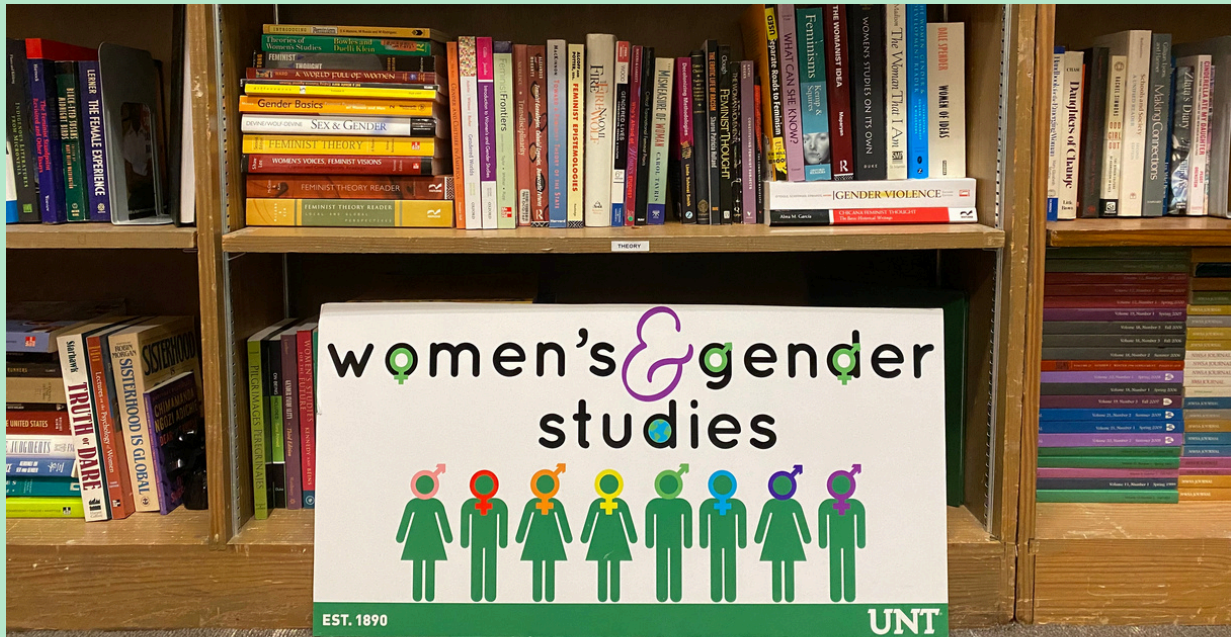




# WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES

FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER



## A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM

December 2024

*Dear WGST Community,*

As we prepare to put another semester behind us, I wanted to take a minute to share some program news and updates with you.

It has been a busy semester for the WGST program as we've worked behind the scenes to strengthen our minors and graduate degree. We've revised our process to approve affiliated faculty, updated the curriculum requirements for our LGBTQ Studies minor, made some updates to our graduate program requirements, and are preparing to offer two new courses next semester: Queer Ecologies (taught by **Dr. Katherine Ritter**), and Gender, Politics and Film in the Middle East (Taught by **Dr. Özlem Altıok**).

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# A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

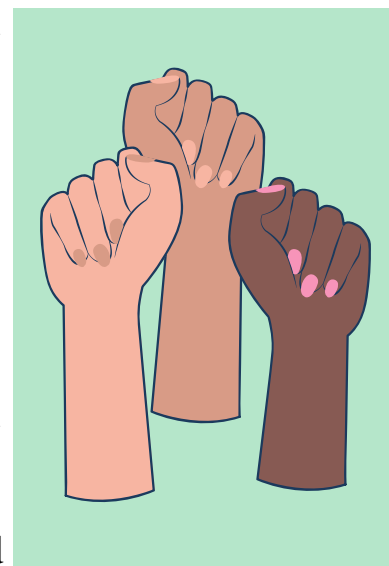


Dr. Megan Morrissey,  
Program Director

We are also exploring the possibility of expanding our online course offerings and hope to offer one graduate seminar: Feminist Methods and Methodologies online in the coming 2 years. This semester we welcomed six new affiliated faculty members: Dr. Sam Fullerton (History), Dr. Jakob Burnham (History), Dr. Jennifer Gómez Menjívar (Media Arts), Dr. Asaf Angermann (Philosophy), Dr. Denise Meda-Lambru (Philosophy), and Dr. Sarah Moore (Social Work). These folks are doing exciting work across the university and I am excited to be able to begin offering some of their courses to our students.

In addition to these program developments and additions, our faculty and graduate students have been sharing their research and participating in disciplinary conversations at a variety of conferences. Dr. Katherine Ritter just returned from the National Women's Studies Association Conference where she presented on her research about *The Queer, Wild, Apocalyptic Hydroerotics of Asbury Park New Jersey*, and Dr. Özlem Altıok and graduate student Ghazaleh Ebzenasir presented their research at the Middle East Studies Association Conference where they presented on the politics of gender and religion in the Contemporary Middle East.

All of this has been done as implementation and enforcement of SB17 have loomed large. As I write this, there have been no changes to our courses or our curriculum. We are continuing to offer the same range of classes for our students that we always have. If you have students interested in exploring gender and sexuality, please continue sending them our way. Speaking of students, we will be graduating one MA student this December, Aubrey Escoto. We are sad to be losing such vibrant member of our community but are so very proud of their accomplishments and excited to see how they will make an impact. I look forward to finding ways to bring them back for networking events with our current students and finding other ways to keep them involved in our program, even though they have moved beyond completing coursework.



(Continued on page 3)



# A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

As we look toward spring, we will continue to host Coffee Hours (stay tuned for an email in early spring identifying dates and times for these events). As always, we will ask for folks who are interested in attending to please sign-up for a day/time. We are also hoping to start an Interdisciplinary Working Group cohered around the discussion of rotating themes in the spring. We will announce the topics for these events in early spring semester, and plan to host one lunch-time discussion with interested faculty and graduate students each month of the semester (February, March, April). We will also be hosting our WGST Research Symposium on April 21st. This event continues to be a wonderful opportunity for our students to present their research and for our faculty to engage them in conversations about their scholarship and their interests. Please mark your calendars for this event.



We are also excited to welcome one new graduate student this spring and are already beginning to receive applications for fall 2025. As you all know, it is never too early to start thinking about graduate school and I am happy to talk with students who might be interested in learning more about the MA in Women's and Gender Studies. Please spread the word that will begin reviewing applications for Fall 2025 in January. I wish you all a restful and restorative winter break and look forward to continuing the program's work in the spring semester. See you in January!

Dr. Megan Morrissey

WGST & LGBTQ Studies Programs, Director





# WGST SNAPSHOTS

This semester, several WGST classes had the opportunity to learn from Ms. R. Marshal, the former deputy director of the Afghan Women's Network in Afghanistan.



*Ms. R. Marshal and Dr. Özlem Altıok pictured with students in her Gender and Globalization class*



*Ms. R. Marshal pictured in Dr. Altıok's Gender and Globalization class*



*Dr. Morrissey and guests gathered at the annual WGST Winter Warmer*



*Dr. Morrissey and guests gathered at the annual WGST Winter Warmer*





# ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Dr. Özlem Altıok and student, Ghazaleh Ebnenasir, attended the 2024 Middle East Studies Association (MESA) annual meeting which was held virtually this year. In the second session, “Politics of Gender and Religion in the Contemporary Middle East,” Dr. Özlem Altıok presented “Authoritarian politics of gender: Turkey’s withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention & the feminist defense of the Convention.” Ghazaleh presented in the second session as well, and her presentation was titled: “Women’s Cycling and Public Space Rights” which will appear as a chapter in the book “Riding to Freedom: Women and Bicycling in the Muslim Context.”



Dr. Altıok's Presentation Title Slide



Ghazaleh's Presentation Title Slide



National Women's Studies Association 2024 Conference Banner

Dr. Ritter presented her paper “The Queer, Wild, Apocalyptic Hydroerotics of Asbury Park, New Jersey” at NWSA in Detroit, Michigan this November on the panel “Rethinking the Potentialities of Queer Theory and Critique.” This paper is part of Dr. Ritter’s broader body of work exploring planetary precarity, queer kinship with more than human worlds and beings, and the specificities of the Northeast coast of the U.S. as indicative of broader conditions shaping ocean-proximal life in the Anthropocene. In her work, Dr. Ritter considers queer kinship with horseshoe crabs, sea foam, and water itself to recast framings of shared vulnerability between Human and more-than-Human actors alike during times of planetary transformation and upheaval.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The students of Dr. Özlem Altıok's Gender and Globalization course worked closely with Opening Doors International Services (ODIS) and Refugee Support Network to apply what they are learning and reflect on their service experiences in a classroom setting. Through this instructional design, students gain preparation for careers in the non-profit sector as well as law while engaging in important community service work.

Additionally, ODIS recognized Dr. Özlem Altıok with their Community Engagement Scholar Award. Congratulations, Dr. Altıok, for the recognition of your meaningful community-engaged pedagogy and service.



*Dr. Özlem Altıok pictured with some of her INST and WGST students in front of the community engagement scholar award recognition slide*



*Dr. Özlem Altıok's Gender and Globalization course enjoying pizza in the WGST library*





# FALL 2024 GRADUATING STUDENT



## AUBREY ESCOTO

*“Being in the Women’s and Gender Studies program at UNT has been such a formative experience. I am so thankful to all of the professors, staff, and my fellow students for the camaraderie and conversations we’ve shared. You all have shaped how I approach life and scholarship in unimaginable ways. In the words of a maligned green lesbian and her bubbly pink gal pal, “who can say if I’ve been changed for the better. But, because I knew you, I have been changed for good!”*”

*Aubrey pictured at the Lavender Graduation ceremony*

**CONGRATULATIONS**



# SAYING GOODBYE TO PROGRAM STAFF



*Dr. Nancy Stockade, Dr. Megan Morrissey, Claire Colgrove, Dr. Özlem Altıok, and  
Rebecca Bearden at celebratory lunch*

We would like to recognize the departure of our student office assistant, Claire Colgrove, and express our appreciation for her contributions to the program. After 7 semesters in our office, she will be turning her focus to her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling and her career in play therapy. In addition to reliably assisting with regular office functions, Claire has carefully crafted the semesterly newsletters, created program flyers, provided event support, and always welcomed folks into the office with a friendly face. We will miss her and look forward to hearing updates of her accomplishments in the future. Wishing all the best to you, Claire!







# WHO WE ARE



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WMST@UNT.EDU



Dr. Megan Morrissey,  
Program Director



Dr. Özlem Altıok,  
Principal Lecturer



Dr. Katherine Ritter,  
Continuing Lecturer



Rebecca Bearden, MA  
Program Coordinator



Ghazaleh Ebzenasir,  
Graduate Teaching  
Assistant



Maria Mazvimavi,  
Graduate Teaching  
Assistant



Kai Fetterman,  
Graduate Student  
Assistant



Marija Ivanic,  
Undergraduate  
Program Ambassador



Mar Vargas,  
Undergraduate  
Program Ambassador



Claire Colgrove,  
Graduate Student  
Office Assistant

**Advisory Board Members:** Dr. Katherine Ritter (WGST), Dr. Suzanne Enck (Communication Studies), Dr. Joanna Davis-McElligatt (English), Dr. Özlem Altıok (International Studies & WGST), Dr. Jara Carrington (Anthropology), Dr. Megan Morrissey (Communication Studies)

## ABOUT US



UNT's Women's & Gender Studies Program centers intersectional feminist education and research through a multi-disciplinary, theoretically diverse curriculum. Housing a master's degree program in WGST and undergraduate minors in WGST and LGBTQ studies, the Women's and Gender Studies program educates students to think critically and take a global approach to their environments and themselves. Our program serves students through interdisciplinary research and course offerings, engaging them in discussions that critically address the lived experiences of individuals and communities. The WGST program collectively seeks imaginative and progressive ways of seeing the world, investigating the opportunities and challenges of living in a global diaspora, and collaboratively building welcoming spaces that respect and celebrate differences.