


# WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION



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**Dr. Megan Morrissey, Program Director**  
(she/they)

**LJ Brooks-Hall, Program Coordinator**  
(she/they)

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## WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM



- **MISSION STATEMENT**
  - UNT's Women's & Gender Studies Program centers transnational feminist education, research, and advocacy through a multi-disciplinary, theoretically diverse curriculum.
  - Our program takes an intersectional approach to challenge unjust systems and practices of social control and knowledge production that disenfranchise people based on gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, geographic location, class and ability.
  - Our program serves students, faculty, staff, and community partners through interdisciplinary research and course offerings, engaging those audiences in discussions that spring forth from situated knowledges and lived experiences.
  
- **WHAT UNIFIES US ALL?**
  - Faculty, students, and partners of the program prioritize working toward an everyday praxis, politics, and pedagogy that materializes social, intellectual, and political transformation.

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## WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING HERE?



- **The Women's and Gender Studies Program strives to help students discover and hone the skills they will need to be successful after graduation. Some of these include:**
  - *Communicating and collaborating with team members to coordinate efforts to achieve academic, professional and personal goals*
  - *Being respectful of others' opinions and ideas*
  - *Identifying challenges as they arise, analyzing them, and developing creative solutions*
  - *Improving their written and oral communication skills, including public speaking*
  
- **Master's alums now work in a variety of capacities including:**
  - *Executive Assistant to the Director of the Texas Equal Access (TEA) Fund*
  - *Legal Assistant and Case Management Coordinator at Human Rights Initiative of North Texas*
  - *Global Citizenship Fellow at UNICEF Dallas*
  - *Survivor Advocate at the University of North Texas*
  - *Program Coordinator for the Women's and Gender Studies Program at the University of North Texas*

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## THE PROGRAM'S ADMINISTRATION



### ■ Program Director

- Dr. Megan Morrissey

### ■ Program Coordinator

- LJ Brooks-Hall

### ■ WGST Core Faculty

- Dr. Özlem Altıok and Dr. Serena Wilcox

### ■ Affiliated Faculty

- Faculty with aligned interests in WGST and LGBTQ Studies across the university

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## WGST PROGRAM DIRECTOR

### Dr. Megan Morrissey



- Megan is an associate professor in Communication Studies. In addition to this, she serves as Program coordinator for the WGST and LGBTQ Studies Programs
- Megan is responsible for overseeing all program administration from reviewing graduate applications, creating and approving new courses, and working with the college and university to promote our program.
- Some specific things Megan does relate to our graduate students include
  - *Advising all graduate students about courses to take and their degree plans*
  - *Supervises all internships,*
  - *Can serve as a major professor or advisory board member for a student's special problem or thesis committee*
  - *Oversees comps questions,*
  - *Oversees all program administration*



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## WGST PROGRAM COORDINATOR

### LJ Brooks-Hall



- Assists with all administrative program tasks
- Some things LJ can help with include
  - *Assisting students in registering for classes*
  - *Answering questions about credit hours and enrollment*
  - *Connecting students to important campus resources*
  - *Event coordinating*



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## WGST PROGRAM FACULTY

### Dr. Özlem Altıok



- Dr. Altıok is a principal lecturer with a joint appointment in WGST and INST. She teaches two classes a semester for our program including the following graduate courses:
  - WGST 5200 - Gender and Globalization
  - WGST 5800 - Gender and Sustainable Development
- Dr. Altıok's areas of research include:
  - *Gender; Middle Eastern studies; religion and politics; international migration; globalization; sustainable development; social movements; community and environmental sociology; qualitative research methods*
- Some specific things Dr. Altıok does related to our graduate students include
  - *Teach classes with a WGST prefix including some of the required classes for the program.*
  - *Serve as a major professor or advisory board member for a student's special problem or thesis committee, and oversee comps questions*
- Dr. Altıok will be on Faculty Development Leave in the Spring of 2023

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## WGST PROGRAM FACULTY

### Dr. Serena Wilcox



- Dr. Wilcox is our visiting lecturer for the 2022-2023 academic year. She will teach our classes a semester for our program including the following graduate courses:
  - WGST 5100 - Feminist and womanist theories
  - WGST 5300 - Feminist Methods
  - WGST 5800 - Queer Theory
- Dr. Wilcox's areas of research include:
  - *Global Studies in Education, Critical Race Studies, Social Movements and Resistance, Africana Feminism, Africana Diaspora Studies, Social Organization of Schools, Black Studies in Education, Youth and Carceral Studies, Childhood Gender & Sexuality Studies, Sociology of Education, Racial Thought in Social and Public Policy, Ethnography and Qualitative Methods, Social Inequality*
- Some specific things Dr. Wilcox does that relate to our graduate students include
  - *Teach classes with a WGST prefix including some of the required classes for the program.*
  - *Serve as an advisory board member for a student's special problem who comps before spring semester, and oversee comps questions for students taking feminist and womanist theories this fall.*

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## WGST AFFILIATED FACULTY

### Faculty members from across campus



- Affiliated faculty members are instructors from across the university who have submitted materials for our advisory board's consideration. If their research and/or pedagogy is consistent with our program's mission, they have been approved as affiliated faculty members.
- Affiliated faculty members can serve as major professors or advisory board members for a student's special problem or thesis committee, oversee comps questions
- We have affiliated faculty members across the university including in English, History, Communication Studies, Anthropology, and Art.

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## HOW IS GRADUATE SCHOOL DIFFERENT FROM YOUR UNDERGRAD EXPERIENCE?



- Smaller and more focused seminars
- Relationships with professors that are more personal and professional
- Theory building and integration is key to learning
- More responsibility for participating in classes and understanding material
- Attendance is critical
- Reading – there will always be more reading

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## EARNING A MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.)



- Students completing the WGST master's program will earn a Master of Arts degree.
- Students must complete the university's foreign language requirement (12 hours of foreign language on your undergraduate transcript or, pass a foreign language proficiency exam) or complete an alternative graduate-level methods course (most often, WGST Masters students enroll in WGST 5300: Feminist Methods and Methodologies) which is required.
- Please note foreign language courses taken while matriculating as a graduate student will not count toward the 30 hours of required degree coursework.
- *You will officially decide your degree plan in your second semester*

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## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS 30 HOURS REQUIRED for EVERYONE



- COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS TRACK
  - 27 hours of coursework + Comprehensive exams + one of the following
    - 3 hours Problem-in-lieu project OR
    - 3 hours Graduate Internship (150 hours internship work)
- THESIS TRACK
  - 24 hours of coursework + 6 hours of thesis credit
    - 3 thesis hours in 3rd semester (prospectus must be defended this semester)
    - 3 thesis hours in 4<sup>th</sup> semester (complete and defend thesis to complete degree)

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## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS HOW TO FILL-IN YOUR REQUIRED HOURS



- You must take these three required classes
  - *WGST 5100: Feminist and Womanist Theories*
  - *WGST 5300: Feminist Methods and Methodologies*
  - *WGST 5200: Gender and Globalization*
- At least one EXIT OPTION COURSE
  - *WGST 5900: Special Problems (3 hours)*
  - *WGST 5850: Internship Hours (3 hours)*
  - *WGST 5950: Thesis Hours (6 hours, spread across two final semesters)*
- The remaining courses you need to complete 30 hours are made up of electives offered by WGST core faculty or affiliated faculty

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## SEMESTER 1: LEARNING THE PROGRAM'S STRUCTURE



- Schedule advising meetings with Megan between week 6-8 of the semester to complete an advising worksheet
- Attend program events as you are able
  - *Professionalization Series*
  - *Graduate Student Coffee Hours*
  - *Program Social Events (Open Houses, Happy Hours, etc.)*
- Talk to others about classes they'd recommend and faculty they've worked with
- Reach out to faculty in your areas of interests and see if they are teaching classes you can take in future semesters

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## SEMESTER 2: SELECTING A MAJOR PROFESSOR AND COMPLETING A DEGREE PLAN



- Between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> week of your second semester (or after you've completed 9 hours of coursework):
- Select Major Professor (AKA your advisor)
  - This person will chair your advisory committee and complete a Major Professor Form
  - This should be based on research goals (e.g. "exit option," area of study, work style, long-term goals, and faculty availability).
- Create a Degree Plan
  - Complete a Degree in coordination with the program coordinator or with your major professor. This will include determining
    - Which exit option you will select (PIL, Internship, Thesis)
    - Selecting other members of your graduate committee
    - Determining what classes you will take during your 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semester

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## WAYS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR GRADUATE COMMUNITY



- [UNT Women's and Gender Studies](#)
- Graduate Student Coffee Hours in our WGST Library/Community Room (advertised via email)
- [Graduate Student Council](#)
- [Graduate School Workshops](#)
- [Thesis Bootcamp](#)
- [Weekly Writing Group](#)

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GOOD LUCK AND LET US  
KNOW WHAT YOU NEED!