

WGST 393: Guidelines

Please note that WGST 393 is now only offered in the Fall semester!

The Department of Women's and Gender Studies Internship Program (WGST 393) allows students the opportunity to receive course credit while gaining practical experience in a variety of fields concerned with feminist issues. The internship has two components: (1) work in a local agency and (2) a weekly class taught by a WGST faculty member. Students learn first-hand about legal, policy, and counseling work in many fields, including reproductive health; child development; sexual assault; domestic violence; and substance abuse and recovery. See the testimonials below for more!

- 1) Work in a local agency: under the supervision of qualified professionals, interns complete a minimum of 84 hours (not including training) directly contributing to the work of their chosen organization by planning programs, researching, interacting with clients, and completing other projects.
- 2) While gaining practical, hand-on, experience at an organization, students also meet once a week with other interns and a WGST faculty member to discuss their work. As part of the course, students think through the possibilities, strategies, and ethical issues associated with service learning and the significant power inequalities that often emerge in "the field." Students will gain an understanding of feminist ethics, organizing, and activism and of how structures for feminist work are implemented and supported over the course of an organization's life.

The three-credit course fulfills the general education "experiential education" (EE) requirement and, for WGST majors and minors, can replace one "perspectives" course. Students must arrange the internship with the organization and secure the permission of the faculty member prior to registering for WGST 393.

Offered Fall semester only. Prerequisites: WGST 101 and instructor permission. (EE)

Agencies currently accepting WGST interns:

- Adolescent Parenting Program
- Carolina Hunger Initiative
- Child Care Services Association
- Compass Center for Women and Families (formally The Women's Center and FVPC)
- El Pueblo
- IPAS
- Orange County Rape Crisis Center
- Orange County Sheriff's Office/Crisis Intervention Unit
- UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention*
- UNC Horizons Program*

*We encourage students to consider off-campus internships first, before considering these on-campus or UNC-affiliated off-campus sites

Guidelines for work in an approved agency

Credit for WGST 393 requires at least the following commitment of time (excluding training periods) to substantive work at an approved agency:

6-9 hours per week for a total of 84 hours during the semester

The student's supervisor at the agency will complete a final evaluation of the student's work (see the pdf: "WGST 393: Required Forms"). Students are responsible for giving the supervisor the correct form.

Before you register for WGST 393:

1. Take WGST 101
2. Download and read thoroughly a copy of these guidelines
3. Discuss with the WGST 393 instructor (contact [Prof. Susan Harbage Page](#)) the procedures for setting up an internship and your agency preference(s).
4. Make an appointment with the agency representative(s) to discuss goals, interests, and the availability of internship positions. Interns may wish to talk with more than one agency before making a decision.
5. Make a final selection of internship site. Meet with agency representative to outline projects and time involved weekly
6. Register for WGST 393 (instructor permission required)

The internship agreement:

The student, agency supervisor, and the instructor of WGST 393 must complete the internship agreement *before the end of the second week* of the fall semester in which the student is taking WGST 393. See the "WGST 393: Required Forms" for this agreement.

Intern/supervisor/faculty meeting:

The intern is responsible for seeing that the agency representative and the instructor of the course meet together with the intern at least once during the semester to evaluate the intern's progress. This meeting should take place at the internship site.

Agency supervisor's evaluation of the intern:

1. Before the end of classes, the student should ensure that their agency supervisor has a copy of the intern evaluation form.
2. The completed agency evaluation will be sent to the WGST 393 instructor to be used in assigning the final grade.
3. The intern must also turn in to the faculty instructor a completed evaluation of their experience at the agency (see WGST 393: Required Forms)
4. The instructor of WGST 393 will determine the final grade based on both the student's course work and the agency's evaluation of the student's internship.

The role of the agency supervisor:

1. Assist the intern in determining purpose, objectives and activities involved in the internship (to be stated on Internship Contract). This includes the time frame for the number of hours to be worked and when.
2. Provide on-site supervision for intern.

3. Meet with the intern mid-semester to evaluate progress. At this time, the intern should be made aware of her/his strengths and weaknesses and recommendations should be made for improvement. No written evaluation is required by the Women's Studies office at this time.
4. Meet with the intern and faculty sponsor together at least once during the semester to evaluate the intern's progress and provide feedback.
5. Complete the final evaluation of the intern.
6. Conduct an exit interview with the intern and share final evaluation.

Guidelines for course-work in WGST 393

The student must enroll in WGST 393 and attend the weekly class meeting. The instructor will provide course syllabus and further information at the first class meeting. Course materials, assignments, and grading criteria may vary by semester. Please note that the course, and therefore the internship, is offered only in the fall semester. The instructor of WGST 393 will determine the student's final grade.

Course description:

Increasingly, service learning and internships are becoming integral components of a liberal arts higher education. However, students are often faced with the challenges of integrating their applied experience outside the classroom with classroom-based learning experiences and knowledge. As well, many students still seek classroom-based courses that will help them think through the politics, history, and debates surrounding the implications of an experiential learning experience. Such issues are especially pressing when we consider global and regional inequalities in access to resources, as well as gender, class and race-based hierarchies of power. This course will teach students to think critically and reflect upon the possibilities and strategies associated with service learning and field-based learning. Above all, it will help students identify, understand, and situate the ethical dilemmas of power relations that emerge within many service-based and field-based learning experiences, while gaining practical experience in a variety of fields concerned with women's or feminist issues. Under the supervision of qualified professionals, interns are able to directly contribute the work of their chosen organizations by planning programs, researching, interacting with clients, and completing other projects.

Please recognize that you will be exposed to ideas, themes, and language that may be explicit and challenge your position/s in terms of race, sexuality, gender, nation, and class. Throughout the semester we will discuss difficult and sometimes traumatic issues. If you, or someone you know, are dealing with these issues, these units may be especially hard. Please thoroughly review the syllabus so you will know in advance if you need extra support and can take the necessary steps to prepare yourself for each class.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester students should be able to: demonstrate an understanding of feminist ethics, organizing and activism; understanding how structures for feminist work are implemented and supported over the course of an organization's life. Additionally, students will intern with an organization and produce several written products analyzing that experience. Finally, students will complete a minimum of 84 hours (not including training) at the internship site over the course of the semester.

Please download the pdf "WGST 393: Required Forms" and complete the "internship agreement" before the end of the second week of classes