Graduate Programs in Women's Studies

Women's Studies Programs offering graduate degrees recently responded to the following questions:

1. What is the curricular shape and major emphasis of your program? How flexible is it? How many (and which) credits and other requirements must be completed for the degree? Name your degree(s).

2. What kinds of students are you interested in? What are your official (and unofficial) requirements and expectations of students? Provide relevant information about application deadlines, interviews, etc.

3. What is the cost of your program? Are forms of financial aid or teaching assistantships available? Is housing available or especially difficult or expensive to obtain?

4. Can you estimate the number of graduates of your program, as of Summer 1978, and can you describe what they have gone on to do?

Brief descriptions of other graduate programs will appear in forthcoming issues, as a service to prospective students and their advisors.

Department of History, State University of New York at Binghamton, Binghamton, NY 13901—Thadd E. Hall, Acting Chairperson

1. The History Department of the State University of New York at Binghamton offers a major in the History of Women within both the M.A. and the Ph.D. programs. For the M.A., a student must complete five courses or 20 semester-credits (including one 400-level seminar or its equivalent) in the History of Women. In addition, the student must take a course in historiography and eight credits of thesis or two courses (eight credits) in fields other than the specialization. The student, finally, must pass one foreign language examination and a three-hour written examination on the field of specialization. For the Ph.D., the student takes 56 graduate credits (excluding credit for the dissertation, but including credits earned toward the M.A.). Of these credits, 24 are to be in the major field (i.e., History of Women) and 24 are to be in two minor fields, one of which may be outside the discipline of history. The student must pass an examination in a second language or, with the approval of the student's faculty guidance committee, may substitute proficiency in another research tool as demonstrated by examination (e.g., quantification or statistics). A two-and-one-half-hour oral comprehensive examination tests both the major and the minor fields. Candidates for the Ph.D. degree must register for a minimum of 24 credits of dissertation prior to completion of all degree requirements.

At present the program in the History of Women emphasizes the history of American women, but it also provides for the comparative and interdisciplinary study of women's past through such graduate seminars as Women and the Family in the United States, Theory and Methods for the History of Women, Women in Modern China, and Women and Social Change in the Middle East. The number and variety of seminars in the field of History of Women are constantly being expanded, and in the near future the department hopes to add a specialist in the History of European Women. Several members of the History Department also regularly offer independent study courses and sponsor dissertations in the History of Women as it relates to their geographical, chronological, or topical fields of specialization. Other SUNY/Binghamton departments in the humanities and social sciences extend similar assistance to graduate students in women's history.

2. The department is interested in all students who meet our standards for admission to the graduate program. Students who apply are expected to submit transcripts, GRE scores, two letters of recommendation, and a sample of their written work (e.g., a paper written in an advanced undergraduate course or a graduate seminar). A sample of the student's written work is required for all students who apply for aid. Students may apply for admission at any time. The deadline for application for financial aid is February 15. Application forms for financial aid are sent upon request; there is a place to request such forms on the application form for admission to the program.

3. Students in the History of Women program pay regular tuition. The tuition charge is $700 per semester for full-time matriculated graduate students who are residents of New York State and $900 for non-residents. Stipends for teaching and graduate assistants are $3,350, plus waiver of tuition. A limited number of fellowships carry a stipend of $3,100-$3,200, plus waiver of tuition. Students who receive fellowships are not required to perform any duties. The department reserves one half of its fellowships and graduate assistantships for the support of women and members of minority groups.

4. There are presently ten graduate students in the History of Women program. It is too early to indicate what they have gone on to do after graduation. In a very real sense, the graduate program in the History of Women at SUNY/Binghamton is unique. It was the first, and may still be the only, graduate program to offer the M.A. and Ph.D. explicitly in the field of the History of Women. The program is developing very well indeed, and we are encouraged by the superior quality of both the faculty and the students in this program.

Women's Studies Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850—Sandra L. Bern, Director

1. Women's studies is an interdisciplinary graduate minor at Cornell University. This means that students must apply and be accepted in traditional fields and then may elect a minor in women's studies. The university grants a wide variety of graduate degrees ranging from professional master's degrees to the doctorate in some 83 fields...
of study. Students electing to minor in women's studies must be engaged in an interdisciplinary program of study in their major fields and select a member of the women's studies field to serve on their Special Committees. Twenty-seven graduate faculty members are empowered to supervise research related to women's studies in sixteen different fields: Africana studies, anthropology, communication arts, community service education, consumer economics, economics, education, government, history, human development & family studies, industrial & labor relations, linguistics, psychology, Romance studies, Russian literature, and sociology. Graduate study at Cornell is designed to give students maximum flexibility; there are few fixed requirements.

2. Criteria for judging applicants for admission vary according to the field of study. Although there are exceptions (for example, the Master of Professional Studies in Communication Arts, the Master of Industrial and Labor Relations, and other professional degree programs), preference is usually given to students who anticipate earning the Ph.D. rather than the Master of Arts or Master of Science degrees at Cornell.

3. A graduate student at Cornell pays either endowed or statutory tuition, depending on the college affiliation of the faculty member who serves as chair of her or his Special Committee. In general, most students in the humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences pay at the endowed rate (for 1978-79, $4,800); most in the biological sciences, the state rate (for 1978-79, $2,300). In addition the total expenses for a single graduate student are estimated at about $3,450. About 80 percent of the graduate students receive financial aid, typically in the form of teaching assistantships. Those least likely to be awarded aid are entering students.

4. Although Cornell has fewer than a dozen graduate students officially electing a women's studies minor, there are perhaps ten times that many who take women's studies courses each term and develop specialties in fields closely allied to women's studies. Graduates go on to teach women's studies; to edit journals related to our new interdisciplinary field; to contribute to texts; to administer affirmative action programs in business, education, and industry; and to work in women's programs in counseling, organizing, and lobbying.

Center for Women's Studies, Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67208—Dorothy Walters, Coordinator

1. Women's studies may be pursued on the graduate level as one of three areas in the Master of Liberal Studies program. In addition, students may pursue a women's studies emphasis (12-15 hours) in several areas, such as education (including student personnel and guidance, educational psychology, elementary education, and secondary education), sociology, and cross-cultural communications (through minority studies).

2. We are interested in all students who wish to pursue work in women's studies at the graduate level. Admission to the graduate school is the primary requirement.

3. This program is relatively inexpensive. Some financial aid and some graduate assistantships (classroom assistants and center assistants) are available. Students usually live off campus. Housing is fairly expensive, but available.

4. As of 1978, two students had completed programs with emphasis in women's studies. One is an assistant dean of student services in a midwestern university. The other is currently employed as a teacher of minority studies here at Wichita State.

Women's Studies, George Washington University, Washington, DC 20052—Phyllis Palmer, Director

1. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at George Washington offers an M.A. in Special Studies with a concentration in women's studies, which is administered by a Women's Studies Committee and an academic coordinator. The Program's emphasis is on developing theory, research, and policy options in three areas of concern to women: family, education, and work.

Thirty-six hours of credit are required, of which 18 are flexible. Six three-hour courses are standard: Policy Perspectives on Women, which critiques recent policy documents on work, family, and education from a feminist, interdisciplinary perspective; Feminist Theory; Women in American History; a graduate-level social science methodology course; and either six hours of thesis work or six hours of practicum-research project. The remaining 18 hours (six courses) may be taken in one or two other departments that offer specialized information on one of the three program foci: family, work, education. Students have taken courses in public administration, health care administration, psychology, sociology, economics, political science, and education.

2. The students who have benefited most from the program are those who are working in or intend to work in organizations that design and administer policy and programs related to women's situation in work, family, and educational settings, e.g., people who are interested in affirmative action issues, development of nonsexist school programs, improvement of job counseling and work opportunities, revision of childcare policies, etc. Practicum placements are designed to give students experience in working on such issues with various women's organizations in the D.C. area, such as the Women's Legal Defense Fund or the Women's Equity Action League.

3. Tuition at GWU is $100 per course credit, so that the total tuition cost is $3,600. Some tuition assistance is available, but not a great deal, and most students in the program are working part time while in school. Housing is not difficult to obtain, and there are still a number of reasonably-priced apartment buildings around the campus area.

4. As of Summer 1978, about 65 students have graduated from the program. A number have been successful in finding jobs working with women's organizations and on issues of social equality. They are employed at the National Council for Work Alternatives, the D.C. Department of Manpower, the Montgomery County Commission for Women, and as Federal Women's Program Coordinators.