

Women's and Gender Studies Program
Mission Statement and Learning Objectives
May, 2009

The Women's and Gender Studies program gives students the important tools, resources, and language needed for personal empowerment and civic engagement. Upon completion of this program, each PLU Women's and Gender Studies graduate is prepared to pursue social justice creatively and effectively in her or his own way. As teachers, scientists, volunteers, artists, writers, entrepreneurs, or family members, our graduates are making positive changes in the way gender and sexual identity are understood globally in the 21st century.

Students in the Women's and Gender Studies program will:

- practice gender-focused inquiry in a variety of academic disciplines, gaining an appreciation of how a focus on gender enriches and affects scholarly inquiry, and of how different academic disciplines provide specific tools and practices useful in such inquiry.
- understand gender-related social inequities and identify forms of active citizenship that can reduce such inequities.
- employ concepts and critical perspectives central to Women's and Gender Studies in order to gain and express a more sophisticated understanding of gender, sexual identity and feminisms.
- examine gender and sexuality as parts of multifaceted individual and group identity formations (alongside such factors as class, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and race).
- engage in thoughtful critical analysis (oral and written) of the ways in which traditional social institutions such as religion, arts, science, law, education, medicine, and the family have been shaped by, and reflect, specific understandings of gender and sexuality.
- utilize methods of dialogue and collaboration as modes of intellectual inquiry, and as models of community building and activism.
- apply ideas and methods of Women's and Gender Studies in a vocational context through designing a capstone project in which they will work on a service-project or internship with an organization whose work has an important bearing on issues of gender or sexual identity.