Internship Manual

Department of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

Western Washington University

updated Winter 2024

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**Introduction**

**Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies (WGSS)**at Western Washington University pursues praxis and critical inquiry through feminist and queer scholarship by teaching and activism that makes sense of how gender impacts our world and shapes social, political, and cultural formations. We are dedicated to teaching undergraduate majors and minors to use critical thinking to bridge feminist theories and social justice practice. Our program foregrounds interdisciplinary analyses of feminism, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and queer studies in transnational and multicultural contexts.

**Program Mission**

We are committed to students graduating ready to take vital professional and community roles. Our internship program is one of the ways we demonstrate this commitment. Students have the opportunity to gain direct field experience in trajectories including but not limited to intersectional food security, queer and transgender support, and reproductive justice. During their internship students gain practical skills in different arenas from gardening to workshop facilitation where they have the opportunity to apply WGSS course content to the community and bring community awareness skills learned in the field back to their classes.

**Student Eligibility**

WGSS offers 5 credit internships that can be completed as 20 hours a week over one term or 10 hours a week over two terms. The internship is open to WGSS majors who have completed the following:

* Two of WGSS 211, 212, and 213.
* WGSS 350.
* One other upper division WGSS course related to the proposed internship.

The upper division courses must be completed with a grade of a C- or better.

**WGSS Code of Conduct**

WGSS values intersectional social justice that takes seriously the work to build communities that do not perpetuate oppression. Student interns will represent the WGSS Department on the Internships and as such will need to strive to put these foundations into practice. Students’ professionalism in the field enables the WGSS program to build lasting and mutually supportive relationships with our community partners. Student Interns will need to demonstrate respectful engagement with their internship site and their assigned work. This includes:

1. Respectfully communicating with everyone at the field site.
2. Arriving on time and ready to work at the start of all shifts.
3. Complying with site needs for dress and other safety measures (e.g., hair nets, gloves etc.).
4. Being alert to not perpetuating racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, ableism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or all other forms of discrimination
5. Working to further unlearn their own areas of racial, gender, sexuality, class, ability, and other forms of privilege.
6. Welcoming feedback as to ways of improving job performance.

**Accessibility**

WGSS strives to provide opportunities across lines of diversity without systemic barriers barring students from full participation. Students have the right to non-hostile internships without racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, ableism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or other forms of discrimination that would create a barrier to their meaningful educational and work opportunities. Students should contact their Faculty Advisor for a meeting if they have concerns regarding their treatment on the site. During the meeting, they will decide the most appropriate course of action for their situation.

Students are responsible for security, communicating their disability access concerns on the Interest Form and working with Disability Access Services to secure accommodation: <https://disability.wwu.edu/>. The field site will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act: <https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/>.

**Grievances and Due Process:**

Students have a right to due process in the case of academic decisions. The details can be found in Appendix F of the WWU Academic Catalog: <https://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=600>

**Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid Recipients:**

Information on WWU policies from academic progress and financial aid can be found in Appendix J of the WWU Academic Catalog:

<https://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=604>

**Inability to Complete the Term:**

**Placement:**

When an intern placement is unable to complete the term for a reason unrelated to student performance, students will be given credit for hours completed and supported in a transition to an alternate site.

**Student:**

If a student has a health, family, or other unforeseen event that prevents that from completing the internship, they must immediately communicate with their Faculty and Field Site. In this case, students will receive credit for the hours already completed and may complete their internship credits another term.

**Termination:**

The field site can terminate an intern for unprofessional or unsatisfactory participation. Were this to happen, students would be offered a case conference to determine a fair way to move forward. A case conference will involve a meeting between the student, program director, and Faculty Advisor. Serious misconduct is referred to the relevant authorities.

**Absences:**

Students must notify their Faculty and Field Site Advisors in case of any absences. Any missed hours must be made up at an alternate time set by the Field Advisor and student. Needed time off for finals or other foreseen events should be communicated at the start of the term.

**Safety and Injury:**

Students will be informed of any workplace safety concerns and sign the Informed Consent form before the placement starts. If a student is injured during their internship placement, they must immediately tell their Faculty and Field Site advisors. Reports need to be made to WWU Environmental Health and Safety within 24 hours: <https://ehs.wwu.edu/incident-hazard-reporting>.

**Insurance:**

Students are responsible for checking in with their own insurance to ensure appropriate coverage if their placement includes the use of their vehicle. Internship placements will not provide care insurance for the use of personal vehicles as part of Internship work.

**Washington State Mandated Reporter Laws:**

Washington State Code <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=26.44>

mandates the reporting of all forms of abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation of minors. If a student encounters child abuse during their field placement, they may call local law authorities or call DSHS at 1-866-363-4276. This is a toll-free number that is answered 24 hours a day.

**Discrimination and Harassment:**

Students should report any incident of sexual harassment to their Faculty and Field Site Advisors, whether it happens to them, or they witness it. Sexual harassment is unacceptable and reports of harassment by student interns will immediately end the internship and result in possible university suspension or expulsions.

Racist, transphobic, homophobic, sexist, ableist, and all other forms of harassment are also unacceptable at all levels of the internship environment. This includes discriminatory remarks, restriction of movement (e.g., transgender people not being able to use the appropriate bathroom), stereotyping, and failure to allow full participation based on social location.

Concerns can be reported to the University’s Title IX Coordinator and more information can be found at: <http://www.wwu.edu/eoo/policies.shtml>.

**WGSS Internship Responsibilities**

**Student, Faculty Advisor, Field Site Advisor**

**Student responsibilities:**

**Prior to Commencement**

* Submit an Interest Form.
* Meet with your Faculty Advisor to discuss placement options from the list of sites that have a relationship with the WGSS Internship program (students may bring a site forward if they have a pre-existing relationship with the organization).
* Communicate access needs and work with Disability Access Services as needed: <https://disability.wwu.edu/>
* Work with the Career Centre to write a Cover Letter and Resume for the placement.
* Submit the Resume and Cover letter to desired Internship sites.
* Provide a criminal record search when working with vulnerable populations.
* Meet with faculty advisor to review and request changes to the Goals & Expectations (page 11).
* Meet with the Field Site Advisor for an orientation to ensure Internship readiness.
* Submit the Informed Consent form in case of workplace safety issue (page 12).
* Submit the signed contract.

**During Placement**

* Comply with the Student Code of Conduct.
* Follow the Grievance Procedure in the case of issues.
* Fill out weekly reflections.
* Meet with faculty advisor in the middle of the placement to review the Weekly Reflections and adjust Goals & Expectations as needed.
* Meet with the Field Site Advisor for mid-term review.
* Communicate with the Faculty and Field Site Advisors in case of unforeseen events preventing the completion of the placement.

**After Placement**

* Meet with the Faculty Advisor at the end of the placement.
* Send a thank you card to the Field Site Advisor.

**Faculty Advisor responsibilities:**

**Prior to Commencement**

* Overview the interest form and select potential WGSS sites.
* Meet with the Field Site Advisor and support an initial draft of the Goals & Expectations including securing the meeting of access needs according to the ADA: <https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/>
* Meet with the student to review and request any changes to the Goals & Expectations.
* Submit the signed contract agreement (created by the Field Site Advisor, Faculty Advisor, and WGSS Administrator).

**During Placement**

* Meet with students to review the weekly reflections, Field Site Advisor mid-term feedback, and make any needed amendment to the Goals & Expectations.
* Meet with the Field Site Advisor to discuss student reflections and Internship participation and to make any needed amendment to the Goals & Expectations.

**After Placement**

* Review Site Advisor feedback.
* Meet with students to review their final reflection and overview site feedback.
* Send a thank you email to the Field Site Advisor.

**Field Site Advisor Responsibilities:**

**Prior to Commencement**

* Create a Goals & Expectations form based on the needs of your organization (page 11).
* Review the Goals & Expectations with input from the Faculty Advisor and Student and make amendments as suits your organization’s needs and ensure the provision for relevant access needs according to the ADA: <https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/>
* Communicate any workplace risks on the informed consent form.
* Sign the contract agreement with the agreed details.

**During Placement**

* Fill out the mid-term student feedback form and meet with students to discuss strengths and areas for growth.
* Communicate with the student if there are concerns regarding their performance and with the Faculty Advisor were there to be a breath in ethical participation with the field site.
* Communicate with the Faculty Advisor and student if unforeseen events in the organization prevent student completion.

**After Placement**

* Fill out the end-of-term student and WGSS Internship Program feedback forms.
* Meet with students to provide feedback and with the Faculty Advisor (if desired).

**Internship Interest Form**

**Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Majors & Minors**

**[Adapted from Journalism]**

The WGSS Program offers the opportunity for a 5-credit internship for majors and minors. This will include 200 hours over 1 or 2 terms (20 hours a week over 1 term, 10 hours a week over 2). Students are responsible for first locating a faculty advisor to supervise their internship. They will then work with their advisor and the site supervisor to set up details of the internship.

**I am seeking an internship in (food security, queer youth support, reproductive justice etc.):**

**I plan to take my internship for credit in: (**Fall/Winter/Spring/Summer) of (20\_\_)

H**ave you declared your major?** Yes  No

H**ave you declared your minor?** Yes No

**To be eligible to take an internship for credit, each student must have successfully the following courses with a grade of a C- or better:**

**Two of:**  **Term Completed:**

WGSS 211

WGSS 212

WGSS 213

**Plus:**

WGSS 350

One other upper division course relevant to their site of interest

I have the following access needs: 

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pre-Internship Task Checklist** | Date Due | Completion Signature |
| Deadlines Checklist: |  |  |
| Submit a letter of interest to faculty. |  |  |
| Meet with the Faculty Advisor. |  |  |
| Resume and cover letter review signed by the Career Service Center. |  |  |
| Submit resume and cover letter to internship site. |  |  |
| Complete a Criminal Record Search (if required). |  |  |
| Meet with Faculty Advisor to review and request changes to the Goals & Responsibilities |  |  |
| Meet with the Field Site Advisor for an orientation and to ensure Internship readiness. |  |  |
| Meet with Student Access Services (if needed). |  |  |
| Submit the sign Informed Consent form. |  |  |
| Submit the signed contract. |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Western Washington University**

**Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**

**Students Internship Program: Goals and Expectations**

**(Attach additional sheet if needed)**

**Organization:**

**Field Site Coordinator:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**WWU WGSS Faculty Advisor:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Student Intern Name:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Term/s Selected:**  **Students will work the following days/s hours:**

**The student will be responsible for the following:**

**The student will be expected to:**

**The goals of this internship include the development of the following skill sets:**

**Informed Consent Form**  
  
**Internship Site:**

**Faculty Advisor:**

**Internship Site Coordinator:**

**Description of Internship Activity:**

**Projected Possible Risks:**

I understand that there can be dangers, hazards, and risks involved in my internship (described above). I understand the kinds of risks associated with my internship activity and knowingly and voluntarily assume responsibility for these risks. I am able to understand and undertake the activities involved in my internship. On behalf of myself, my family, heirs, assigns, and personal representatives, I hereby agree to indemnify, hold harmless, release from liability and waive any legal action against Western Washington University, its governing board, officers, agents, and employers (referred to as ‘released parties’) for any personal injury, death, or property damage I may suffer, due to any cause, including but not limited to the negligence of the Released Parties, arising out of or in any way connected to my participation in the internship or while in transit to or from where the activity is being conducted. I represent that I am covered by adequate medical/health/accident insurance for any injury that I may suffer at the internship site.

In the event I require medical services due to an injury suffered during the internship, I understand and agree that Western Washington University does not provide medical services or medical personnel at the internship site and is under no obligation to provide transportation for me to obtain medical services. I understand and agree that this document shall be construed in accordance with the laws of Washington State. If any term or provision of this document shall be held invalid or unenforceable, the remaining terms and provisions shall remain in full force and effect. I understand that by signing this document I am representing that I have read and understand all of its terms and conditions and that I fully intend to be bound by the same. I also understand that I may wish to consult an attorney before signing this document.

Student’s Name: Student’s ID:

Student’s Signature: Date Signed:

**Western Washington University**

**Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**

**Students Internship Program: Mid Term Review**

**(Attach additional sheet if needed)**

**Organization:**

**Field Site Coordinator:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**WWU WGSS Faculty Advisor:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Student Intern Name:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Term/s Selected:**  **Hours Worked:**

**What skills or strengths is the student bringing to the internship?**

**What is one area where you see the possibility for more skill development:**

**Some overall feedback or reflection I would like to add is:**

**Western Washington University**

**Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**

**Students Internship Program: End-of-term Review**

**(Attach additional sheet if needed)**

**Organization:**

**Field Site Coordinator:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**WWU WGSS Faculty Advisor:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Student Intern Name:**

**Phone:**  **Email:**

**Term/s Selected:**  **Hours Worked:**

**For WGSS Faculty**

***We are a new internship program and are always looking to develop our strengths and improve our program. Having Field Sites have an excellent experience hosting our student Interns is tantamount to what we are doing.***

**In what ways could your experience as a have been strengthened (with WWU, WGSS engagement, student interaction):**

**What strengths did you experience working with the WGSS Internship program?**

**[Adapted from the Center for Community Learning]**

**Sample Weekly Summary and Reflection:**

The Weekly Summary and Reflection is to be turned in by the student to their faculty advisor.

**Summary:**

Where were you placed:

Which days and times did you spend there:

Provide a brief summary of your responsibilities and tasks:

**Reflection:**

How did you apply knowledge from your classroom learning in your internship site?

How did you bring your internship learning to your classroom/s?

How did you feel? How did it change you?

**Additional Questions for Weekly Reflections (to be compiled by the Faculty Advisor)**

**End of the year/end of quarter prompts:**

* In one, two, or three words reflect on how your experience in the community through this program made you feel?
* What are three new skills, ideas, knowledge of a new community, and/or connections did you develop through this program?
* Where have you used your new skills, ideas, knowledge of a new community, and/or connections either in your work, education, or personal experience?
* What changes, or tangible results, have you witnessed as a result of your work in your internship?
* Do you have any suggestions for the WGSS Internship program and/or any ideas of what you would like next year to look like?

**Prompts during the year:**

* *How has this work made you feel lately?*
* *Some new connections I have made during my internship are:**(Examples: Discovering a new neighborhood that you did not know existed before, working with someone who challenged your world view, or learning about a gardening technique.)*
* *My work in the WGSS internship program changed my experience as...**(This could be changing your experience in the community, at WWU, and/or as a learner?)*
* *I have been inspired to... .... (Examples: Attend community events, get outside more, or talk to someone older or younger than you.)*
* *Next year I would like to ... (Example: What would you like to explore more through your WGSS learning next year? What else would you like to do to make your education more meaningful for you?)*
* *I am now more familiar with... (Example: Where is a new place you explored that you are now more familiar with,* *as a result of your WGSS Internship?)*

**Internship Sites:**

**Children/Girls:**

**Common Threads Farm:** <https://commonthreadsfarm.org/>

A food security and education organization that has established gardens at almost every Bellingham school and beyond. They run “seed to table” education programs with students, provide food curriculum for faculty, and supports food distribution for families.

**Terms:** Winter and Spring.

**Overview:** Interns are needed during the school day and for after school clubs focused on cooking and gardening. CTF are looking for people who will be reliable to show up for the kids and who are excited to learn more about young people, human growth, and development. Interns will need to be solution focused and jump in to support everyday tasks in running programs. 2024-2025 Interns can seek funding through WWU Climate Leadership Americorp positions. Interns will be invited to participate in workshops for their skill development in career, children’s education, gardening, and cooking.

**Contact:** Emily Hie [Emily.hie@commonthreadsfarm.ord](mailto:Emily.hie@commonthreadsfarm.ord) and Sarah Wheatly[sarah.wheatly@commonthreadsfarm.org](mailto:sarah.wheatly@commonthreadsfarm.org)

Drop-in information: <https://commonthreadsfarm.org/get-involved/>

**Girls on the Run:** [**https://www.whatcomymca.org/girls-run**](https://www.whatcomymca.org/girls-run)

**Multiple Internships Available**

**Organization:** “Meeting in small teams after school, trained volunteer coaches inspire girls to build confidence and other important life skills through dynamic, interactive lessons and physical activity. Girls on the Run reaches girls at a critical stage, strengthening their confidence at a time when society begins to tell them they cannot. Underscoring the important connection between physical and emotional health, our program addresses the whole girl when she needs it the most. After 9 weeks of team building, goal setting and lots of FUN, teams from all over Whatcom County come together to challenge themselves in a 5K event and celebration!”

**Terms:** Two terms over Winter and Spring, one term in Spring, or Summer Camps

**Overview:** GOTR is looking for interns who are passionate about working with kids and able to bring creativity and reliability to the programs. Interns will act as coaches for Bellingham and East County (if they have transportation) programs on weekday afternoons with flexible hours for administrative support. Girls on the Run welcomes coaches of all genders, they include trans and cis girls and non-binary children. They affirm the need for diverse role models from queer, trans, and non-binary communities.

**Contact:** Sharon Stone [sstone@whatcomymca.com](mailto:sstone@whatcomymca.com) and Tifanie Treter [ttreter@whatcomymca.org](mailto:ttreter@whatcomymca.org)

**Food Justice:**

**Birchwood Food Desert Fighters:** ​​<https://www.facebook.com/groups/birchwoodfooddesertfighters>

A group dedicated to bringing food justice to a Bellingham neighborhood that has been systematically denied a grocery store. Dedicated to intersectional issues surrounding food insecurity.

**Overview:** Set up, drop off, and food distribution at a weekly food share, holding vigils and petitions to allow a grocery store in the neighborhood, helping with community gardens.

**Contact:** Tina McKim [birchwoodfooddesert@gmail.com](mailto:birchwoodfooddesert@gmail.com)

**Community to Community/Communidad y Communidad:** <https://www.foodjustice.org/>

An eco-feminist, farm worker’s rights coalition with many projects and sub-organization (e.g., Familias Unidas por Justicia, Labor Rights Education, Dignity campaign).

**Overview:**

**Internship 1: Agro-ecology and Farm Management**

Intern tasks will be as varied as researching permits, organic certification steps, and stopping coyotes eating chickens. Interns will participate in the life of the co-operatively run berry farms including picking blueberries and providing administrative support. Interns must follow the lead and needs of the worker/owners. This is ideal for people who may have experienced corporate exploitation in the food industry who would like the opportunities to understand what it looks like when workers run the farm.

**Internship 2:** **Civic Engagement**

Interns will work with voter registration, voting analysis, policies, and upcoming races. This will include research and preparing reports and registering high school youth in Whatcom and Skagit counties. The position is focused on Latinx voters and will work with the Immigrant Resource Center, collaborating on local, state-wide, and national initiatives. This position includes advocacy around police profiling, border control, and other issues concerning dis-enfranchisement.

**Internship 3: Farmworker Rights**

This internship focuses on preparing for the Farm Worker Tribunal in January in Olympia and the Farm Worker march in Skagit. The position will include organizing childcare, carpooling, coordinating volunteers, making phone calls, presenting material, and writing press releases. Experience with farm work or as a child of farm workers is an asset.

**Internship 4: Youth Worker**

The Youth Worker Intern will provide programs for and mentorship to youth in all areas of the organization including agro-ecology, civic engagement, and farmworker rights.

**C2C is Looking for:** Interns with good research capacity and writing skills, an ability to use software and provide IT support is an asset. Interns will need to be able to follow existing leadership and respect the structure of the women of colour led organization with respect to culture. C2C is not a charity, it provides resources and backing for community organizing. People need to be aware of their privilege, be eager to learn, and provide everyday support. Individuals who are bi/multilingual, LGBT, BIPOC, and who have family histories of farm work are encouraged to apply.

**Contact:** (360) 738-0893 [C2Cinfo@foodjustice.org](mailto:C2Cinfo@foodjustice.org)

**LBGTQ+ Support:**

**Northwest Youth Services:** [**https://www.nwys.org/**](https://www.nwys.org/)

Supports youth through housing, employment, queer community building, drop-in services, and other programs.

**Internship 1: Needs Assessment**

Queer Youth Services is developing a program for “needs assessments” with health providers who offer queer and transgender affirming care. The intern will work with providers to develop the needs assessment and survey service users regarding their experiences. This will be a two-term position. Interns with experiences navigating LGBTQ healthcare are preferred.

**Internship 2: Radical Intervention**

This is an internship for BIPOC students looking for experience, training, and recording in art, music, and writing.

**Contact:** Eve Smason-Marcus [eves@nwys.org](mailto:eves@nwys.org)

**Whatcom Youth Pride:** [**https://www.whatcomyouthpride.com/**](https://www.whatcomyouthpride.com/)

An organization supporting LGBTQ+ young people in the county. WYP puts on parades, festivals, shows, meals, educational events, and supports middle-school and high school Queer Straight Alliances.

**Internship 1**: Whatcom Youth Pride Coordination

The student intern will work with the board to support all aspects of producing Whatcom Youth Pride: e.g., securing permits, booking spaces, recruiting, and coordinating volunteers, booking workshop leaders and entertainment. Interns will be excited to support queer and transgender youth and have a personal stake in supporting LGBTQ communities. Solution oriented people who will jump in to solve problems and collaborate will do well in this role.

**Internship 2:** Queer Straight Alliance Facilitator

This intern will work with the Bellingham School District Office to overview existing QSA curriculum and select programming for middle and high school QSAs. The position includes leading QSA meetings at a variety of schools throughout the district at a variety of times with differing age groups. Applicants with disabilities, native Spanish speakers, LGBTQ, and BIPOC students are encouraged to apply.

**Contact:** Bethany Barrett [bethany.barrett@bellinghamschools.org](mailto:bethany.barrett@bellinghamschools.org)

**Shelters:**

**Sean Humphrey House:** <https://www.seanhumphreyhouse.org/>

Sean Humphrey House provides permanent homes for people with HIV as well as other chronic health conditions. They are a secular model of housing support that is currently expanding through Bellingham.

**Overview:** SHH is open 24/7 and welcomes Internships for a full variety of shifts. Interns may provide support in administration, food prep, grant research, and 1:1 work with residents. Resident support can range from supporting people in walking their dogs, playing board games, and going shopping. Interested students are encouraged to bring forward their ideas for activities. SHH will pay for needed a TB test, First Aid/CPR training, a Food Handler’s Certificate, and a Background Check. Background checks are to screen for relevant abuse or theft. Students with civil disobedience and other non-assault-based records are welcome to check with SHH and continue with an application. People who have experienced houselessness and housing insecurity are encouraged to apply.

**Email:** Elizabeth Page [director@seanhumphreyhouse.com](mailto:director@seanhumphreyhouse.com)



