



University Council

February 27, 2026

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2025-2026

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Graduate Student Representative – Yaw Buabeng

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences for an Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health will be an agenda item for the March 6, 2026, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost Benjamin Ayers

Dr. Marisa Anne Pagnattaro

PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Date: July 21, 2025

School/College/Unit: Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Department/Division: Institute for Women's and Gender Studies

Certificate Title: Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health

CIP: 05020700

Effective Term: Fall 2026

Which campus(es) will offer this certificate? Athens

Level: Undergraduate

Program Abstract: The goal of this undergraduate certificate is to provide students with an understanding of the interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching on gender and health. This certificate will foster theoretical reflection on historical, social, and physiological factors related to health and its connections to gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class. The 15 hours of coursework will prepare students to expand their knowledge of gender and health and to respectfully engage with diverse populations as they enter fields such as healthcare, law, and counseling. The proposed certificate incorporates the expertise of core and affiliate faculty of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies at UGA who do research and teach courses on gender, health, disability, sex education, environmental justice, and food politics. The proposed certificate adheres to the mission of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies and the WMST courses provide access to intersectional, transnational feminist scholarship and teaching in gender and health.

1. Purpose and Educational Objectives

State the purpose and educational objectives of the program. How does this program complement the mission of the institution?

The proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health focuses on an important area of scholarship and teaching that examines the role of physiological and social processes relating to gender and health. It is an academic inquiry into historical, physiological, and social factors related to gender, bodies, and health across a wide spectrum of different racial/ethnic and class/regional communities. The purpose of the Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health is to provide students an opportunity to examine health from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives in the humanities, social sciences, and life sciences. It is closely connected to the mission of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies to examine issues of gender, race,

class, and sexuality. This certificate is open to undergraduate students in all majors. Knowledge of issues of gender and health is pertinent to many fields such as healthcare, law, education, human resources, social work, and counseling.

2. Need for the Program

The Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health will provide a deep, interdisciplinary understanding of physiological and social processes related to health and wellbeing as they intersect with gender. This program of study establishes gender as a category of analysis in work on health in the sciences and humanities. As UGA builds its reputation as a health campus with the addition of medical and nursing schools, this undergraduate certificate will provide a strong interdisciplinary base for students pursuing careers in these fields as well as others. This certificate will encourage development of research and teaching in this field of inquiry at UGA.

The certificate is targeted at students who are already enrolled in a relevant major at UGA, such as Women's and Gender Studies (A.B.), or in the biological sciences, psychology, public health, social work, or any other major where students wish to establish an expertise in gender and health. The certificate will enhance these students' ability to secure employment and pursue a successful career in their chosen field by enhancing their key skills. For example, O*NET reports that the career group of social and community service managers is expected to grow faster than average, with 5-6% projected growth from 2024-2034,¹ and that careers in public health are expected to grow much faster than average, with a 7% projected growth from 2024-2034.² These career fields are especially looking to recruit candidates with key skills such as active listening, complex problem solving, and problem sensitivity (that is, the ability to recognize when there is a problem). In addition, the health professions are increasingly seeking to address a historical gender bias in the study of medicine that has at times contributed to misdiagnosis or delayed treatment for illnesses or environmental hazards especially affecting women and other underrepresented groups in medical history.³ The certificate will provide students with directly relevant knowledge and skills sought after in health-related professions through examination of common challenges and solutions related to gendered experiences in health.

- a. Semester/Year of Program Initiation:** Fall 2026
- b. Semester/Year of Full Implementation of Program:** Fall 2026
- c. Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded:** Spring 2027
- d. Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established):** 20
- e. Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program:** In two

¹ <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/11-9151.00>

² <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/19-5011.00>

³ <https://magazine.hms.harvard.edu/articles/how-gender-bias-medicine-has-shaped-womens-health>

years, it is likely to increase to 30 students. The projected increase in enrollment can be accommodated within existing class sections.

3. Student Demand

Provide documentation of evidence of student demand for this program, which may include a student survey.

For the past five or more years, many Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) students have been, and continue to be, interested in healthcare, often pursuing medicine or public health after graduation. This growing number of students are interested in pursuing interdisciplinary feminist research in health and medicine. Some Women's and Gender Studies students have worked in medical-related research with affiliate and core faculty members in Women's and Gender Studies. Students have also shared this interdisciplinary research on gender and health in the annual student research symposiums. Affiliate faculty in the life sciences also report demand for courses of study related to gender and health that come from an interdisciplinary perspective, i.e., including insights from the social sciences and humanities as well as the life sciences. The WGS courses included in the certificate meet this demand.

A survey was administered to determine interest among Women's and Gender Studies majors and minors, as well as other undergraduates taking WGS classes in Spring 2026. A total of 164 students completed the survey. The survey respondents showed very strong interest. In response to the question, "A Gender and Health Certificate would be a valuable potential option for undergrad students at UGA," 98.8 percent (162 students) marked either "strongly agree" or "agree" (with 65.9 percent—108 students—marking "strongly agree"). In response to the question, "If I had room in my coursework, I would consider adding a Gender and Health Certificate," 78 percent (128 students) marked either "strongly agree" or "agree" (with 32.9 percent—54 students—marking "strongly agree").

An additional survey was administered in spring 2026 to determine student interest amongst the broader campus community. The survey was shared with students in relevant courses in the biological sciences, psychology, women's and gender studies, public health, and social work. A total of 184 students completed the survey. The survey results showed very strong interest. In response to the question, "A Gender and Health Certificate would be a valuable potential option for undergrad students at UGA," 98.9 percent (182 students) marked either "strongly agree" or "agree" (with 68.5 percent—126 students—marking "strongly agree"). In response to the question, "If I had room in my coursework, I would consider adding a Gender and Health Certificate," 80.4 percent (148 students) marked either "strongly agree" or "agree" (with 36.4 percent—67 students—marking "strongly agree"). Together, the results of these surveys demonstrate the widespread appeal of the proposed certificate program.

Provide evidence that demand will be sufficient to sustain reasonable enrollment.

Students from across campus, including those pursuing STEM majors, have regularly registered for the electives that will count towards the certificate including WMST 4120, Sex, Politics, Science and Reproduction; WMST 4170S/6170S, Environment, Gender, Race, and Class; and WMST 3270S, Gendered Politics of Food.

4. Program of Study

The curriculum for the proposed certificate includes one required course and four elective courses. One of the options for the required introductory course is WMST 2500, Introduction to Gender, Women, and Health, which will provide students with an overview of common topics and questions that arise at the intersection of gender and health, including anatomy and physiology, reproduction, disability, gender-based violence, the healthcare system, public health, sexuality, embodiment, and differences across cultural contexts. The other option, WMST 2060, Ethics, Bodies, Gender, and Sexuality in a Changing World, will provide students with an overview of human decision-making and questions of ethics that arise at the intersection of gender and health including bodily autonomy, interdependence, and access to resources. The elective courses will offer students deeper insight into the broad range of important issues affecting gender and health, such as gender, race, and class norms around food production and consumption, reproductive health politics, environmental hazards and impacts on population and personal health, sexual education for youth, and more. These elective courses include insights from the social sciences, humanities, and life sciences.

The program of study requires 15 hours of coursework.

Required Course (3 hours)

WMST 2060, Ethics, Bodies, Gender, and Sexuality in a Changing World (3 hours) **OR**

WMST 2500, Introduction to Gender, Women, and Health (3 hours) – **NEW**

Elective Courses (12 hours)

Select a minimum of six hours from the following courses:

WMST 3270S, Gendered Politics of Food (3 hours)

WMST 4120/6120, Sex, Politics, Science, and Reproduction (3 hours)

WMST 4170S/6170S, Environment, Gender, Race, and Class (3 hours)

WMST(EDUC) 4400/6400, Bodies, Gender, Sexuality, and Sex Education for Children and Youth (3 hours)

WMST 4650, Reproductive Health in the U.S. and the World (3 hours) – **NEW**

WMST 4770/6770, Women, Gender, and Climate Justice (3 hours)

Other courses as approved by the certificate advisor

The remaining six hours may draw from the offerings listed above OR courses approved by the certificate advisor. The certificate advisor will consider courses offered by affiliates of the Institute across the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, as well as other relevant schools (e.g., the College of Public Health, the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Mary Frances Early College of Education, and the School of Social Work).

The two new courses above have been created and will be taught by current faculty, therefore there are no additional budgetary needs associated with these courses.

5. Model Program and Accreditation

Identify any model programs, accepted disciplinary standards, and accepted curricular practices against which the proposed program could be judged. Evaluate the extent to which the proposed curriculum is consistent with these external points of reference and provide a rationale for significant inconsistencies and differences that may exist.

There are several peer and aspirational universities with certificate programs in the field, including Rutgers University, University of Missouri, Johns Hopkins University, and Ohio University. The certificate at Rutgers University requires coursework in Women's Global Health Movements and Gender, Economic Inequality and Health, and electives such as Gender, Environmental Justice and Health, and Global Food Politics.⁴ The certificate at Ohio University is administered by the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and offers courses such as Gendered Bodies and Gender, Sexuality and Healthcare. It aims to equip students with an understanding of best practices in serving all populations in healthcare and related fields, such as social work or other helping professions.⁵ The curriculum of this proposed certificate is consistent with these programs in aims and type of coursework. Unlike these comparable programs, the proposed certificate is aimed at residential undergraduate students, rather than remote full-time professionals, to equip UGA students with key skills that are sought in the workplace.

If program accreditation is available, provide an analysis of the ability of the program to satisfy the curricular standards of such specialized accreditation.

Not applicable.

6. Student Learning Outcomes

A graduate of the Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health should be able to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of historical and cross-cultural perspectives on gender and

⁴ <https://womens-studies.rutgers.edu/academics/undergraduate/online-certificate-in-womens-global-health-leadership>

⁵ https://www.catalogs.ohio.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=97&poid=31600&returnto=10014

health.

- 2) Explain and compare central philosophical and political issues that characterize theories and histories of gender and health.
- 3) Articulate an intellectual understanding of debates surrounding the physiological and social processes related to gender and health.
- 4) Apply an interdisciplinary scholarly framework to examine the role of health and gender, sexuality, race, and class.

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>This outcome will be especially practiced in:</i>
1) Demonstrate an understanding of historical and cross-cultural perspectives on gender and health.	Activities and assignments in the required course: WMST 2060 , Ethics, Bodies, Gender, and Sexuality in a Changing World; or WMST 2500 , Introduction to Gender, Women, and Health.
2) Explain and compare central philosophical and political issues that characterize theories and histories of gender and health.	Activities and assignments in elective courses. This can apply to all approved elective courses, but special mention may be made of: WMST 4120/6120 , Sex, Politics, Science, and Reproduction; and WMST 4650 , Reproductive Health in the U.S. and the World.
3) Articulate an intellectual understanding of debates surrounding the physiological and social processes related to gender and health.	Activities and assignments in elective courses. This can apply to all approved elective courses, but special mention may be made of: WMST 3270S , Gendered Politics of Food; WMST(EDUC) 4400/6400 , Bodies, Gender, Sexuality, and Sex Education for Children and Youth; and WMST 4770/6770 , Women, Gender, and Climate Justice.
4) Apply an interdisciplinary scholarly framework to examine the role of health and gender, sexuality, race, and class.	Activities and assignments in elective courses. This can apply to all approved elective courses, but special mention may be made of: WMST 4170S/6170S , Environment, Gender, Race, and Class.

7. Assessment and Admissions

Describe how the learning outcomes for the program will be assessed. Describe the process and criteria for how students will be admitted to and retained in the program.

Students from the required introductory courses in the certificate will be asked to provide

responses to questions developed by faculty members teaching those courses to assess individual learning outcomes and examine how well the student recalls, interprets, and applies course concepts using a rubric. These assessments will provide a sense of student knowledge early in their program.

In addition to this written data from the required classes, students will be sent an online survey upon completion of the certificate to assess learning outcomes. This survey provides faculty with data to indicate areas of strength and areas needing improvement for the certificate. Survey data can also be compared to the responses to the earlier assessments to understand student growth over the course of pursuing the certificate.

Students will be offered the opportunity to be admitted to the certificate during their enrollment in one of the required courses, WMST 2060 or WMST 2500, or after their completion of one of these courses. Any student at UGA may enroll in either of these two courses, which have no prerequisites. Once students are enrolled in the certificate, they may count courses taken prior to WMST 2060 or WMST 2500 toward their certificate hours if the courses fulfill the criteria in the certificate's program of study. The certificate will also be advertised to students via flyers sent to the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences advising office and at orientation fairs, etc.; students recruited through this route will sign up for the certificate directly with the WGS undergraduate advisor.

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Undergraduate Certificate in Gender and Health

College: Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Department: Institute for Women's and Gender Studies

Proposed Effective Term: Fall 2026

School/College:

- Director of the Institute for Women's and Gender Studies, Dr. Patricia Richards, 9/23/2025
- Franklin College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean, Dr. Paula Lemons, 12/16/2025