

# The George Washington University Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Practicum

## Practicum FAQ (updated Oct. 2021)

### Practicum (WGSS 6283) Spring

The Practicum combines hands-on field experience through an internship or volunteer work in advocacy, policy, service, community and social justice organizations concerned with issues relevant to the study of women, gender, and sexuality with weekly seminar meetings.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PRACTICUM

**WHAT does *practicum* mean?** It is a course “that involves actually working in the area of study and using the knowledge and skills that have been learned in a school” (according to Merriam-Webster.com).

### WHO may take this class?

Most WGSS MA students take the Practicum along with the new MA capstone to fulfill the degree requirements for the non-thesis option. You can be either in your first or second year of the MA program to enroll. WGSS MA students who are approved for the thesis option may also take the Practicum as an elective. Graduate students in other programs can also take the class.

### WHAT kinds of internships and other placements count?

The internship must be: substantive, professional level work relevant in some way to women's or gender or sexuality issues. Relevant paid jobs may count. Volunteer work and community activist work that is not a formal internship may count. You must have your placement approved by the Practicum instructor before classes start.

### HOW MANY HOURS are required for the internship or other placement?

WGSS has recently reduced the minimum hours we require to only 40 field placement hours for the 3 credit Practicum. This might be 4 hours per week for 10 weeks, 5 hours per week for 8 weeks, etc. The exact schedule is up to you and your placement supervisor to negotiate. Be warned however, that many organizations may not accept you unless you commit more hours. Your agreement should spell out the expectations for total hours and work schedule (days and times).

### ARE there regular class meetings and coursework?

YES. WGSS 6283 meets regular weekly seminar meetings (see registration schedule) in the Spring semester. The course requires active class participation, readings, and written assignments.

### HOW do I obtain an internship?

- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qo81vfiRcsJ-ETQVivNUbX9jsMqXZZQ9qi-OSdD4F04/edit#gid=0>
- In addition, try the following websites and newsletters:
  - <http://jobs.feminist.org/jobs/>
  - WIN Women's Information Network winlist  
<https://winonline.org/membership/winlist-google-group/> You need to join WIN to access the list.

- GW career services “handshake” platform <https://gwu.joinhandshake.com/login>
- The WGSS weekly digest lists internship and job opportunities organizations send to us. The WGSS office will make available a compiled list for students planning to take the Practicum.
- Sign up for the GW Global Women’s Institute newsletter. It regularly lists jobs and internships relevant for the Practicum.
- Most organizations list internship information on their websites. If they do not, find a relevant contact person and contact them.
- Contact organizations or follow instructions for internship applications on their website or announcements.
- Most internships require a cover letter, resume, references, and writing sample. GW career services can help you with these.
- It is very strongly recommended that you interview with a few organizations before deciding. Don’t feel pressured to grab the first offer.
- Once you decide on a placement, there is a contract for you, the Practicum instructor (Prof. Janine Moussa), and your placement supervisor to sign. You must have a signed contract before the 1st class meeting in January. Used the attached form sent with this email.

**CAN I talk with someone about the Practicum?**

Prof. Janine Moussa, the instructor, is available by email at [janinemoussa@gmail.com](mailto:janinemoussa@gmail.com).

Prof. Deitch, who previously taught the Practicum class for a number of years, is also happy to talk to you during office hours.