



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Women's & Gender Studies Program

Fall 2022 Newsletter

Letter From the Director

Fall is a time of reflection and anticipation as we move toward the end of a calendar year and launch a new academic year. In Women's and Gender Studies both terms are resonant in Fall 2022. Looking back, it was fifty years ago that the first interdisciplinary course in "women's studies" was offered. That year—1972—was a significant moment in American cultural history. Shirley Chisholm became the first woman and African American to seek the nomination for president of the United States from a major political party. The Supreme Court was finalizing arguments in the *Roe v. Wade* case. And Aretha Franklin recorded "Amazing Grace," the best-selling gospel album of all time. At Ball State, a group of faculty launched the first women's studies course in 1972. In so doing, they planted a seed for the minor (approved in 1980) and for an expanded program that now has 30 students pursuing a major and 100 students pursuing a minor, and draws on the talents of 30 faculty at the University.

A leading member of the initial Woman's Studies Committee (and the chair for three years) was the late emerita history professor, Sharon H. Seager. A specialist in 19th century American history and American women's history, Dr. Seager was a co-creator and teacher of the augural women's studies course and later served as the Acting Program Director. In 2021, following her thirty-eight-year career at Ball State, she established an endowment to reward excellence in student research focusing on the history of women, gender and sexuality. A fine teacher and scholar, Sharon was a true Renaissance woman. She was a talented youth basketball player, equestrian, and bowler; later, she was a member of the National Organization for Women, the League of Women Voters, and Planned Parenthood; and in her retirement, she delighted in choral singing and became a talented potter. Throughout her life, she was an avid reader and enjoyed hiking and travel.



Sharon H. Seager, 1938-2022

Dr. Seager's vision for new women's studies courses and programs responsive to the times in which she lived remains a hallmark of the Women's and Gender Studies program. In 2022, as we look ahead, we anticipate officially joining with the program in African American Studies to form a new department in the College of Sciences and Humanities. We look forward to sharing more news about this development in future newsletters.

Dr. Elizabeth Agnew

Director of Women's & Gender Studies

News and Announcements

Faculty Awards



Dr. Courtney Jarrett, teaching affiliate and Director of Disability Services, was awarded a **Vivian V. Conley Recognition Certificate** from the Coalition of Women's

Organizations during their 30th annual Women's Equality Day program in August for Distinction in Civic Engagement and Inclusion.

Teaching affiliate, **Dr. Molly Ferguson** from the **English Department**, was awarded the **Outstanding Teaching Award for 2022** at the Fall Opening Convocation in August.



Ms. Cheri Madewell, teaching affiliate and Director of Instructional Consultation with the Division of Online & Strategic Learning, was **selected by the**

U.S. Department of State in May for a one-month English Language Specialist project focusing on Pride Month Conversations with Educators in Brazil.

Promotions

Program Director, **Dr. Elizabeth Agnew**, was promoted to *Professor of Religious Studies*. Teaching affiliate, **Dr. Emily Johnson**, was promoted to *Associate Professor of History*.

Published Work

Dr. Elizabeth Agnew, professor of Religious Studies and Director of Women's and Gender Studies, wrote an article "[On \(Not\) 'Humanizing' Muslims: Challenge and Opportunity in an Oral History Project with American Muslims](#)." The article, which draws on the award-winning Virginia Ball Center Seminar, "Muslims in Muncie," has been published in the *Oral History Review*, the leading journal in the field of oral history. It appeared online in August 2022 and will be in the print journal edition later this Fall.

Dr. Rachel Kraus, professor of Sociology and WGS Course-Linked Affiliate, had her article "[Examining religious/spiritual change among women with metastatic breast cancer](#)" featured as October's "article of the month," complete with a video abstract and free access by the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*.

Alumni Highlight

Betsy Kiel, Spring 2019 alumna and a former Graduate Assistant of ours, [accepted a position](#) as Assistant Director for Outreach with Disability Services at Ball State.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for our annual **Women's Week** programming that will take place **Monday, March 20 through Friday, March 24, 2023**. [More information on events](#) and the poster are coming soon!

Check out our [Spring 2023 course offerings!](#)

Gratitude

Donor Appreciation

The efforts of our program and awarded scholarships are largely made possible due to the continued generosity of our donors. We wish to thank the following donors 2021-2022:

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Make A Gift

It continues to be a critical time for funding in the humanities. For the Women's & Gender Studies Program to continue to offer the very best in undergraduate education it is essential that we are able to support innovative teaching, research, and special events. Please consider a gift to the Ball State Women's and Gender Studies Program.

To contribute by mail, send a check to:
Ball State University Foundation
2800 W. Bethel Ave.
Muncie, IN 47304
Memo Line: Women & Gender #044040

[Click Here for Online Donations](#) and select Women's Studies Fund

For more information contact:

[Tiffany Barnes](#)

Director of Development, College of Sciences & Humanities
765-285-7053

Students

Spring 2022 Scholarship & Award Recipients

Shawn Battleday – Muriel and Irene Goldman Scholarship

Shawn is a junior with majors in Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology. They are a Resident Assistant and served as the On-Campus Caucus Whip during the 20-21 academic year. They plan to apply to Ball State's Accelerated Master's Program in Sociology. Upon obtaining their graduate degree, they intend to work at a non-profit organization in the government, conduct research, or teach at a university.



London Farlow – Muriel and Irene Goldman Scholarship

London is currently a senior with a major in Social Work and a minor in Women's and Gender Studies. She maintains a perfect GPA while participating in extracurriculars and volunteering within the community. Her professional goals include a career as a medical social worker and working specifically with female populations who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault.

Lauren Szymczak – Anne Pieroni Szopa Scholarship in Women's Studies

Lauren is currently a senior with majors in Women's and Gender Studies and Psychological Science. From our first-hand experience, Lauren has been an incredible intern to have in the office. Last fall and spring they planned and hosted a Transgender Awareness Open Mic Night and a Feminist Trivia Night during Women's Week. Their hard work resulted in some excellent programming.



Emily Cole – Andrea Lauren Scamihorn Memorial Scholarship

Emily is currently a senior with majors in Legal Studies and Prelaw and a minor in Women's and Gender Studies. She is a founding member of Students Demand Action at Ball State, a group focused on activism to end gun violence in our nation. After establishing her career as an attorney, lobbyist, and victim advocate, Emily eventually plans to run for public office.

Mackenzie Cook – Outstanding Women's Studies Student Award

Mackenzie graduated last spring with her Bachelor of Science in Psychological Science with minors in Women's and Gender Studies and Interpersonal Relations. She did a stellar job on her senior capstone project while also continuing to volunteer and participate in two honor societies. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Ball State.



Upcoming Spring 2023 Scholarship Opportunities

Application & Nomination Period Opens February 2023. [Visit our website](#) to review criteria and processes.

Stay in Touch

Thanks for reading! Follow us on [Facebook](#) to stay up-to-date with us throughout the year.