

ackage can be a lonely and over

confidence that got us through our undergraduate degrees quickly fades as we

ect an understanding of

academic women's studies.

- ¥ Strong applications include strong letters of reference that speak to a prospective student's intellectual capabilities and suitability for graduate study.

What role does fit play in determining graduate program admission?

- ¥ To find the right fit, really do some homework; use the web and this Guide to understand the mission, faculty, and application process for different programs and departments.
- ¥ Develop lists of attractions/drawbacks for comparative purposes in evaluating different programs.
- ¥ Fit is critical. We cannot offer all aspects of women'

What role does a student's activist work play in evaluating the overall application, if any?

- ¥ Evidence of involvement in activism is desirable. This is not a requirement or a top priority in assessing applications, but it is part of the whole picture. If you spent more time on organizing than on class work and it is reflected in your grades, then really say what you were doing and what you learned from those experiences.

What role do campus visits play in the graduate application process?

- ¥ Typically applicants do not visit campus prior to admission; most pre-admission review is through email and/or phone contact. Admitted students are invited to campus prior to making their final decisions about enrollment.
- ¥ We ask prospective students to study the FAQ portion of our website, and we answer many questions via email. Applicants are welcome to visit our campus at any time, but we do not encourage them to visit as part of the meet and greet process. Admitted students are invited to campus.

What general words of advice would you offer to graduate applicants in women's studies?

- ¥ Do not accept a letter of reference that is offered reluctantly.
- ¥ Be prepared to show why getting a graduate degree in women's studies fits into your career goals. Rather than "why women's studies," frame your application to show that because of women's studies you will accomplish your professional goals.

20012288 Responses contributed by (w) Tj 120012T86.9280120012169

An Introduction to the Graduate Essays

Olivia C. Smith, Editor

Half of the graduate school battle is actually getting accepted. The other half—actually surviving. And it is possible to survive graduate school, a point that many tenured faculty members can confirm. But graduate school would be so much easier to navigate if we just had some insider information. A couple of facts that I learned very early on in my graduate school years: 1.)

Always, always treat the office administrative staff with the utmost respect as they work very hard for very little; know everything there is to know about university and department politics; and usually control your paycheck; 2.) Posturing—a.k.a. talking without a clear or relevant point just so6.16 584.4 Tm(;)]

and obfuscates the confluence of the local and the global in the transnational (Eisenstein, 2004). These false divisions then limit in vision the urgent alliances that are possible across oppositional spaces literally Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies and Area/International studies. Having just come off the U.S. job market, I can vouch for my own marketability in transnational feminism-track as opposed to the woman of color-track albeit arguably the boundaries between these tracks are essentially fluid.

These divisions also influence the (re)production of women's studies constituencies who will be divided along lines of color, nationality and citizenship. They lead to the reductionism of U.S. feminism as liberal and Western, and its imperialism. 1.8 0 0 10.8 36.32 615.6 Tm(h)Tj30

Standing Alone: Disciplining Women's Studies through Freestanding Graduate Programs

Katherine Side

The development of undergraduate Women's Studies programs throughout the 1970s and 1980s in the United States and Canada often reflected three realities: faculty members received their education in and/or were appointed to programs and department0 10.8 348.72 618.961178 0 0 10.8 38108.Tj10.0A 0 C

Freestanding or stand-alone graduate programs in Women's Studies facilitate the integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines simultaneously into a distinct epistemology that confers a specific identity and community membership (Anderson 1996; Boxer 1998; Allen and Kitch 1998; Side 2001; Wiegman 2001, in Buker 2003). Freestanding graduate programs in Women's Studies typically stand alone within university structures and grant degrees in Women's Studies, not in combination with another discipline.

Collaborative graduate programs in Women's Studies examine scholarly topics from the combined disciplines (e.g., gender studies, women's studies, and social justice studies).

Finding the Program that's Right for You
As it originally appeared in the 1994 edition of the Guide

Karen Kidd and Ande Spencer

Any reference book is only as good as the use you make of it. Although the guide that follows is packed with information, we realize only too well that: (1) its list of programs is probably incomplete; (2) its information will be obsolescent before it leaves the printer's office, and even

and leaves to you the more important task of

Incorporating Women's Studies into a Traditional Social Science Doctoral Program

Kimala Price

There are many questions to consider when deciding to pursue a graduate degree. What are my intellectual interests? What are my future career aspirations? Academia? Public Service? Social Activism? Industry? What kind of graduate program is best suited to my needs and desires? What kind of financial aid is available? Why do I even want to go to graduate school at all?

I remember wrestling with these questions in the mid-1990s. I had taken a four year educational break. During that time, I worked for a number of feminist advocacy groups in Washington, DC. After a while, I grew restless, as I missed the intellectual stimulation of academe. I wanted to find a way in which I could connect my work experience in reproductive justice and social policy with feminist social and political theory. I wanted to be a **scholar** as well as an **activist**. It was a question of how best to go about this.

At the time, there were only a handful of doctoral programs in women's studies, including joint Ph.D. programs. Furthermore, I was interested in studying public policy and really wanted to be grounded in a traditional social science discipline in order to do so. Besides, I had been a political science major as an undergraduate. I eventually narrowed my choices to universities that had strong graduate programs in political science as well as strong women's studies programs where I could

other departments, and other pertinent information. Consult graduate guides such as NWSA's guide, the various Peterson's Guides and guides produced by the professional association(s) of your social science discipline, such as the American Political Science Association's **Guide to Graduate Programs in Political Science**. It also helps to call departments/programs directly with specific questions. While it is good to talk with faculty, don't forget to talk to graduate students as well.

Learn about financial aid options for support in your first year through the dissertation stage.

One advantage to being interdisciplinary is that you expand your financial aid options. G.8 Tm(ro)Tj10.8 0 Tm(y)Tj1

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Focusing on Fit: Finding the Right Graduate Program for You

Brandy L. Simula

Determining a program's fit before entering that program can strongly influence your happiness there. By fit, I mean how well a program's philosophy, goals, and climate mesh with your own needs, goals, and personality. It is relatively easy to find program rankings, determine whether there are faculty members present with whom you would like to work, and whether the program offers the concentration you are interested in. However, it can be quite difficult to determine whether a program is a good fit for you. Although it is unlikely that you will find a program that meets your preferences in every way, it is likely that you will find that certain programs meet your academic goals more than others. The key is to determine the factors that are important to you.

A variety of factors influence whether a program will be a good fit for you. Which facto

Seeking a Vocation: A Journey Beyond the Ivory Tower

Katerine Rodriguez

As a Colombian immigrant, attending graduate school had always been a dream. When I was considering graduate school, my parents were undergoing a divorce, and leaving behind my mother who was financially and emotionally devastated was not an option. I had a part-time job at a community college, so I decided to enroll part-time at Florida Atlantic University and help support my family. I applied to the Sociology Masters program because it was a more “respected” discipline than Women’s Studies; however, within the first semester, I felt the subtle, androcentric attitude of professors who made disparaging remarks about Women’s Studies. With courage, I finally pursued my passion by decamping to the Women’s Studies program.

In retrospect, when I entered graduate school I was clueless. As the first in my family to go to graduate sch

skills, such as presentation, written/oral and research skills, I gained in my Masters program. I truly believe that graduate school is as real world as it gets, and various skills are highly transferable to the non-academic industries.

The other place that I interviewed was the Renfrew Center of Florida, a trailblazing treatment facility for women with eating disorders, for a positiofo

hurt him.² We continue to wonder how this focus on inclusivity and emotional safety in women's studies affects our ability to examine the workings of social privileges and oppressions within our relationships. Grateful for the camaraderie of other feminists, it can be both harder to recognize the operation of power

Surprises: Maternity, Scholarship, and Politics in the c

Myth #3: Your body has nothing to do with your mind. Keep the personal and private separate and you and the academic will flourish.

I was reminded of the impracticality of this notion the morning I awoke late for the eight o'clock class I teach. The clock was ticking, and I had to perform my usual breakfast rituals I usually perform, I still needed to get ready to go to campus and walk to my class. As Daniel gathered up his things, I frantically bundled Owen and put him in his car-seat, trying to ignore the fact that he was swollen to three times its normal size—needing to feed Owen—and that my son was crying for a few hours to come. In addition to the physical discomfort in my breasts and the discomfort resulting from what seemed like cruelty (and the confused stares at my body), I had sat on a wet baby wipe the whole way to school, and my backside was completely soaked. It was time to face my 126 students.

Reality #3: Your mind and your body are intertwined, and, if you opt to nourish your child from said body, the mind of your child, and the body of another are codependent in and out of the classroom every day.

There was no hide

as he grows: my concerns as a feminist have changed as my life changes. School, scholarship, mothering and loving have merged together into an identity: the life of the mind/body with all its tensions and exhaustions and fears and joys. Mothering has become theory in practice; scholarship has become mothering in dialog. And the forces in my life will continue to negotiate an identity of welcomed surprises, at home in the academy.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

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