

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
**Department of Women's
and Gender Studies**

— NEWSLETTER —



FALL 2025

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

The late theorist, scholar, and thinker José Esteban Muñoz wrote, “The here and now is simply not enough.” Muñoz encouraged all of us to dream of and enact our “desire for another way of being in both the world and time, a desire that resists mandates to accept that which is not enough.” In Women’s and Gender Studies at USC, we work hard to imagine the world otherwise, and to co-create with each other more just futures for everyone.

And we are making progress! The department is growing in every respect: we have more students taking WGST classes, more major and minors declared, more graduate certificate students, and more faculty. Our students are increasingly interested in research and service opportunities, and our Partnership Council is actively working on making community resources more visible for USC students. Our faculty publish world-class, award-winning research that both imagines and makes better worlds.

We invite you to get involved in imagining and constructing more just, livable futures with us.

Visit our website to learn more about our programs and faculty, attend our upcoming events and lectures, or [donate](#) to support scholarships and awards for our students. The here and now is not enough—so let’s keep going, together!

Leland



NEW AFFILIATE FACULTY

Dr. Angela Acosta

Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Dr. Acosta's research on twentieth-century Spanish women writers lies at the intersection of Iberian literary and cultural studies, women's, gender, and sexuality studies, global modernism, and archival studies. As a feminist modernist, she investigates the aesthetic traditions of avant-garde modernist literature, the material conditions under which writers produced their work, and ongoing cultural preservation efforts in Spain. As a creative writer, Dr. Acosta writes bilingual speculative poetry and flash fiction as well as poems about the lives of the Spanish women writers she researches.



Dr. Rachael Jordan

English Language and Literature

Dr. Jordan is an Assistant Professor of Technical and Professional Communication.

She publishes on queer rhetorics' application to technical communication, ethics, and social justice. Though the theoretical lens and object of study may differ, she aims to study how the "mundane texts," such as infrastructural documents like terms of service, we both use and create impact writing and communication in digital spaces. For Humanities, she aims to answer: What are the rhetorical needs of and tools for various users in digital spaces? How can we challenge value neutrality in technology? How does technological infrastructure influence various groups, and how can we intervene?



NEW STUDENT ASSISTANTS

Sage Braddock

Majors: WGST and Psychology

“One of the opportunities I’m most excited about is sharing how the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies has shaped my academic, personal, and professional journey. The faculty, courses, and resources have supported my growth not only as a student but also in my role as a Resident Assistant, and in the development of my personal values and belief systems. My WGST journey began thanks to a recommendation from a close friend who encouraged me to take WGST 112 with Dr. Nima Yolmo. I had no idea how significant that decision would be. Since then, I’ve become actively involved in the department by helping with Novel Nook and currently serve on the WGST Partnership Council as one of the student representatives. I’m excited to continue connecting with other majors, minors, and students curious about WGST.”



Amiya Ramkisson

Majors: WGST and Political Science

“I am extremely excited to be a part of the department and to further my experience and connections within it. Women’s & Gender Studies is a topic that I hold close !

to my heart and strive to learn about every day. After taking Intro to WGST with Dr. Delay, this field of study became even more important to me, and I knew that this was a path I want to continue to work on. I am looking forward to more learning experiences and growth opportunities from this department.”



FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Nia Baker

- “Black Women and Sex Work: Gender, Respectability, and Sensual Critiques of Power” [[link](#)]

Dr. Kaitlyn Boyle

- “Disparities in Street Harassment Exposure and Mental Health Consequences: Elevated Risk for Marginalized Women” [[link](#)]
- “State Divorce Laws, Reproductive Care Policies, and Pregnancy-Associated Homicide Rates, 2018-2021” [[link](#)]
- “The Endorsement of Violence Against Women as Compensation for Strained Masculinity: A Test of General Strain Theory” [[link](#)]

Dr. Cara Delay

- “Collaborate, Innovate, Advocate: The Women’s Health Research Team as a Model of Engaged Pedagogy” [[link](#)]
- “Exploring Barriers To Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare for Latina Women in South Carolina” [[link](#)]

Dr. Rachael Jordan

- “Queer Potential in Professional Communication: 'Queer Use' & Terms of Service” [[link](#)]

Dr. Ed Madden

- “Babble” in Handbook of Poetic Forms [[link](#)]
- “Queer Literature in Ireland” [[link](#)]

Dr. Flora Blanchette-Oswald

- “Cultural Stereotypes and Personal Beliefs About Thin People: A Form of Fat Resistance” [[link](#)]
- “GLPIs and Antifatness: On the Medicalization, Social Construction, and Future of Fatness in the Ozempic Era” [[link](#)]
- “Intersectional Perspectives on Technology-Facilitated Sexualized Violence: A Mixed-Methods Investigation of Post-Secondary Materials in British Columbia” [[link](#)]
- “Organizational Norms and Gender Identity Contexts Shape When Pronoun-Sharing is Perceived as Disingenuous Allyship” [[link](#)]

Dr. Leland Spencer

- “Autobiographical Epistemology: Legitimate(d) Knowledges in Life Narratives” [[link](#)].
- “Identifying Factors Associated with Intention to Recommend HPV Vaccination Among US parents with vaccinated children” [[link](#)]
- “NCA editor reflection forum” [[link](#)]

Dr. Suzanne Swan

- “Domestic Violence Involving Firearms: The Infrequent Inclusion of Full Firearms Prohibitions Within Civil Protection Orders” [[link](#)]

STUDENT PODCAST:

WGST: UNBOXED

Fall 2025 Episodes:

Bringing Women from Antiquity to USC: Discussing Classics and Women's and Gender Studies

Guest: Dr. Hunter Gardner

Foundation Stories and the Women of Pre-Roman Italy

Guest: Dr. Parrish Wright

The Afterlife of American Slavery & Systemic Violence

Guest: Dr. Shannon C. Eaves, 2025 Adrenée Glover

Freeman Lecturer

Feminism and Identity in American Politics

Guest: Carolina Bermejo Goodwin

Upcoming: Friends United for the FUTURE of Community

Guest: Brooklyn Brown

Listen Here:

<https://spoti.fi/4h7Zhsr>



Future Topics Include:

Mental Health in the
LGBT+ Community

Book Bans & Libraries

Women in Business

Feminist Theory in Film

WGST IN THE MEDIA

Dr. Julia Elliott

- USC Professor Holds Horror Fans Spellbound

Dr. Kathryn Luchok and Elizabeth Collins

- Study Finds Many Women Who Give Birth At Home Feel Empowered

Dr. Kathryn Luchok

- Best & Worst States for Women's Equality (2025).

Dr. Ed Madden

- Carolina Trustees Professorship award: Ed Madden

Dr. Allison Marsh

- Why Engineers Still Need the Humanities
- This 1945 TV Console Showed Two Programs at Once
- A Cold War Kit for Surviving a Nuclear Attack
- The First Inkjet Printer Was a Medical Device
- This Microscope for Chipmaking Started as a Home Video Wannabe
- The Internet Under the Sea (Podcast)
- In 1953, the Ford X-100 Concept Car Had It All

Dr. Leah McClimans

- Map Shows States With Best—and Worst—Quality of Life

WGST-Produced Media:

- WGST Presents: Novel Nook
- 2025 Adrenée Glover Freeman Lecture
- Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Allison Marsh

Catch up on all the latest features via our
News & WGST in the Media web pages!

FALL HIGHLIGHTS:

Dr. Deborah Billings

- 2025 recipient of the Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health (JMWH) Best Research Article Award for “The Effect of Centering Pregnancy Group Antenatal Care on Maternal, Birth, and Neonatal Outcomes Among Low-Risk Women in the Netherlands: A Stepped-Wedge Cluster Randomized Trial”.
- In September, she led a talk titled “Understanding Public Health in Gaza: A Story of Healthcare Erasure and Ecocide” with Lisa Falta through the Carolina Peace Resource Center.
- Dr. Billings also served as the Master’s Committee Thesis Chair for Sergio Orihuela García, who received their Master’s in Public Health in September.
 - Thesis title: MenteTrans*: Iniciativa educativa digital para fortalecer las habilidades socioemocionales y conocimientos sobre el manejo de riesgos y daños del consumo de sustancias psicoactivas en juventudes trans en México (MenteTrans*: Digital educational initiative to strengthen socio-emotional skills and knowledge about the management of risks and harms from the use of psychoactive substances among transgender youth in Mexico)

Dr. Hyunji Kwon

- Dr. Kwon’s team (PI: Hyunji Kwon, co-PIs: Fenice Boyd and Bret Kloos) received the National Endowments for the Arts's (NEA) Research Grants in the Arts for the project titled: “The Role of a Visual Arts and Creative Writing Summer Program in Developing the Social and Emotional Characters of Urban Children: A Mixed Methods Research Study”, in the amount of \$80,000. The team is currently recruiting two local artists who will co-develop and teach social emotional learning-infused arts curriculum to elementary school students attending Title I schools in Columbia, SC in Spring 2026.

FALL HIGHLIGHTS:

Dr. Ed Madden

- On November 15, Dr. Madden joined USC music faculty Greg Stuart and David Kirkland Garner and USC music students for a performance of Robert Ashley's quirky experimental opera Perfect Lives.

Dr. Allison Marsh

- Presentations:
 - “Ladies will be Present” at the Linda Hall Library
 - “Women of the AIEE, IRE, and IEEE” at the International Congress for the History of Science & Technology in New Zealand
 - “Examining the Past: A Few of My Favorite Things” and “The Pioneering Women of Electrical Engineering” web events for the as part of IEEE History Week
 - Participated in a roundtable discussion, “Current Politics of Research” at the Society for the History of Technology annual meeting
 - “The Pioneering Women of Electrical Engineering” speaker for Alpha Chi Omega USC chapter
 - “The Electrifying World of Benjamin Franklin” at the South Carolina State Fair

McCausland College Faculty Committee Representation:

- Dr. Dawn Campbell – Undergraduate
- Dr. Cara Delay – Strategic Engagement
- Tristan Johnson – Strategic Engagement
- Dr. Ed Madden – Strategic Engagement
- Dr. Leland Spencer – Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Congratulations to our December Graduates: Faith Clarke, Emma Galluccio, Ash Leland, Kayla Pressley, and Julia Smith!

FALL HIGHLIGHTS:

Dr. Agnes Mueller

- Dr. Mueller was awarded the prestigious Carol Kahn Strauss Fellowship, at the American Academy in Berlin, for Spring 2025. She had 10 media appearances while there, and finished her book, *Holocaust Migration in German Jewish Literatures* which is forthcoming with Cambridge University Press in 2026.

Dr. Sarah Rogers

- Dr. Rogers received a promotion to Senior Instructor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice.
- She also received a SCoer Track One Faculty Award, recognizing the use of no-cost course materials.
- Dr. Rogers is member of the inaugural cohort of the Transforming Conflict Through Dialogue Learning Series, hosted by the Office of Access and Opportunity.

Dr. Federica Shoemann

- Dr. Schoemann has started a podcast companion to “South of My Dreams: Finding My American Home”, her memoir. The podcast, “Take on Life” is described as that special space where imagination meets expatriation.

Dr. Nima Yolmo & Dr. Julia Elliott

- Drs. Julia Elliott and Nima Yolmo co-curated the annual feminist horror film series, Spooky Spawn: Reproductive Body Horror and Perverse Parenthood. The series explores how parent-child relationships, often idealized as nurturing and selfless, can become horrifying. Spooky Spawn lays bare the hidden dread that haunts life’s most joyous milestones, rendering horrors the mind can barely conceive. This film series builds upon the success of the SCHC service-learning feminist horror course that Julia Elliott has developed with various community partners, including the Nickelodeon Theater, Columbia Museum of Art, & Richland Library.

SAVE THE DATE:

9th Annual Dr. Mary Baskin Waters Lecture

SURROUNDED AND BESET BY ENEMIES:

Eighteenth-Century Catawba Women's Responses to War

MARCH 24, 2026



In the 1700s, Catawba women responded to the world around them by reshaping their lives in response to the crises occurring near their villages. However, they did not sit by complacently, waiting for history to happen to them. Instead, Catawba women pivoted in response to the profound societal upheavals and contributed their physical and emotional labor in caring for their people. Bauer will discuss how Catawba women reassessed foodways production, burial practices, and self-defense strategies because their families' lives and the Nation's survival depended on such measures.

Dr. Brooke Bauer is a citizen of the Catawba Nation in South Carolina and an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Time: 6:00 pm, Reception to follow Location: Lumpkin Auditorium, Close-Hipp



Novel **nook**

Book Hangouts

We seek to create space for conversations on creativity, empathy, learning, and contemporary social and humanistic perspectives on science, AI, and governance.

Unlike a traditional book club where everyone reads the same book, Novel Nook hangouts allow for members to talk about books they are already reading or want to read. The objective is to bring people together for open conversations that sustain empowering atmospheres for self-expression and collective curiosities.

The Novel Nook Lending Library

Lending Library is housed in the WGST office suite, Close-Hipp 503. Its objective is to encourage freedom of thought and sociality in this modern age of digital media.

Monthly Hangouts

The Novel Nook group meets the last Friday of the month at All Good Books from 5-6:30PM.

Each gathering will be broken into three half-hour parts: silent reading, group conversation, and social time. Join us for part or all of the event.

Email rdobson@mailbox.sc.edu to join the listserv or GroupMe.

SPRING 2026 COURSES:

WGST 112: Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies

WGST 113: Women's Health

WGST 300: Sex & Gender

WGST 301: Psychology of Marriage

WGST 304: Race, Class, Gender & Sexuality

WGST 305: Sociology of Families

WGST 307: Feminist Theory

WGST 308: African-American Feminist Theory

WGST 315: Gender and Labor

WGST 321: Sexuality, Gender, & Power in Ancient Rome

WGST 333: Sex, Gender & Religion

WGST 352: Gender & Politics

WGST 388: Cultures, Pregnancy & Birth

WGST 398-002: Sociology of Sexualities

WGST 398-003: Anthropology of Sex

WGST 398-004: African American Women in History

WGST 398-005: Gender, Sexuality, & Sports Media

WGST 432: Men & Masculinities

WGST 437: Women Writers

WGST 445: LGBTQ+ Literature

WGST 454: Women & the Law

WGST 499: Community Service Internship

WGST 515: Race, Gender & Graphic Novels

WGST 551: Adolescent Mentoring

WGST 554: Women, Gender, & Crime

WGST 555: Language & Gender

WGST 598:A History of Women's Health

WGST 621: Maternal & Child Health

**WGST 796: Service Learning & Social Justice:
The Art of Grant Writing**

WGST 797: Seminar in Women's Studies

CONNECT WITH US!



[@uofscwgst](#)



linktr.ee/uofscwgst



spoti.fi/4h7Zhsr



[facebook.com/](https://facebook.com/wgstuofsc)
[wgstuofsc](#)



[tinyurl.com/](https://tinyurl.com/uofscwgst)
[uofscwgst](#)