

The MA Program in Gender and Development: Courses description and administrative requirements

The Master's degree program in Gender and Development has been offered by the Institute of Women's Studies since 1998. The program is a part-time, interdisciplinary course of study that brings together critical social science approaches to the study of Gender as it relates to central issues in Development theory and practice. Since its founding, the MA Program has successfully trained graduates who have gone on to find employment in various spheres of Development or have continued their PhD studies in various fields of the social sciences. The Institute's MA program in Gender and Development is widely recognized as a leader in graduate gender studies in the region and has been consulted by numerous universities in the Arab World when setting up their own academic degree programs in gender studies. The Program's curriculum has continuously evolved in dialogue with innovative global approaches in gender studies, development research and theory and in relation to critical knowledge production across the social sciences. As well it has constantly been adapted to remain relevant to emergent knowledge issues in Palestine and the region. Admission requirements

1. BA degree in a social science specialization from a university recognized by Birzeit University
2. A passing grade on an English examination.

Language of Instruction

Course readings are mostly in English, while class discussions are mostly conducted in Arabic.

Requirements for completion of the MA Program

1. Completion of no fewer than 36 hours, distributed as follows:

a. Compulsory requirements (18 credit hours) from the list below:

- (630) Concepts and Issues in Gender And Development
- (631) Historical and Theoretical Introduction to Gender and Development
- (632) Theoretical Approaches to Gender and Development.
- (633) Quantitative Research Methods in Gender and Development
- (634) Qualitative Research Methods in Gender and Development
- (635) Gender Analysis, Planning and Policy-Making

b. Electives (12 credit hours) from the list below:

- (636) Frameworks of Gender, Citizenship, and State Law .
- 637) Gender and Economic Relations
- (638) Special Topics in Gender and Development.
- (639) Development Policies
- (730) Gender and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations)
- (731) Applications of Modern Approaches to Gender and Development
- (732) Gender, Development, and Legal Issues in Arab and Palestinian Society
- (733) Theoretical Approaches in Law and Gender

For the above optional (elective) courses, a student may substitute electives from any of the postgraduate studies programs, provided that the choice is approved by the Program Council.

2. Successful completion of one of the two options described below:

Path (A): Thesis (860) (6 credit hours)

A student may apply for this option upon completion of a minimum of 18 credit hours.

OR

Path (B): Seminars and Exam, including:

1. Seminar in Gender and Development in Palestine (830)
AND
2. Seminar in Gender and development on the regional level (831)
AND
3. A comprehensive oral exam.

This option requires the successful completion of both seminars listed above, as well as a passing grade on a comprehensive oral exam.

Administrative matters:

Attendance Requirements

The Program requires regular attendance of the lectures and seminars.

Students are allowed to miss three classes per semester without excuse. Two additional absences are permitted in case of sickness, family problems, or other emergencies caused by Israeli military activities.

Course Identification by Number

The first digit in the 3-digit numeral used to describe each course denotes the course level. Numbers 6, 7 and 8 usually denote a post-graduate course. The middle digit denotes the number of credit hours a student receives for the course, as well as the number of hours the course will meet each week. Thus, a course labeled (630) indicates that the course is at post-graduate level, that it meets three contact hours (50 minutes = 1 contact hour) weekly, and that a student will receive 3 credit hours for successful completion of the course. The last number is the University's own serial identification number for the course.

Office Hours

Each faculty member allocates office hours for student help and consultation. These hours are included in the course outline and given to the student at the beginning of the semester.

Academic Counseling:

The head of the MA Program advises each student at the beginning of every semester and throughout the Program as needed.

Books, syllabi, course materials:

Books, syllabi and other required course materials are specified in the outline given to students by the professor at the beginning of the semester. The computer laboratory on the first floor is for the use of students and teachers. All written work submitted by students for course credit is required to be typed, as opposed to hand-written.

Courses description:

GADS(600): English Readings in Social Science

Readings in English through social science texts, in order to develop students' reading skills. Includes analysis of linguistic structure and learning how to guess the meaning of terms and other vocabulary from context. Students learn to distinguish main from supporting ideas and to recognize the difference between fact and opinion, as well as acquire a wealth of academic and scientific terms.

GADS (630): Concepts and Issues in Gender and Development

Recognition in academic texts in English of the concepts and types of cases related to the field of gender and development. Subjects include various aspects of society as it relates to development (state, family, and civil society; globalization; formal and informal work sectors; structural adjustment; legal reform and others). Reading and analysis develop and exercise advanced critical reading skills.

GADS (631): Historical and Theoretical Introduction to Gender and Development.

A historical review of the development of the field of gender (its social, educational, economic, legal, political and cultural aspects) and of various theories of development (liberal, Marxist/socialist, feminist, and postmodern). Introduction to the main concepts and to analysis of cases relating to gender, society, and development. Emphasis on developing the skills necessary for a critical and analytic reading of main texts in the field of the specialization and for undertaking scientific research .

GADS (632): Theoretical Approaches to Gender and Development

Review and analysis of the main theoretical directions and methodology in use in the field of development, including consideration of the theories that developed in recent decades for bringing women into development operations. Particular attention is given to the three main theoretical models: Woman in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), and Gender and Development (GAD) Different instruments are employed to analyze gender relations as they affect and are affected by development programs.

GADS (633): Quantitative Research Methods in Gender and Development

The course will seek to help students develop skills in quantitative research methodology. It will help students to learn to connect abstract ideas and theories with the practical concerns that arise when one has decided on a research problem and specific tools with which to study it. The course will consist of three parts: (1) developing the concepts and theories that will lead to a research design, through learning how to do a theoretical literature review; (2) analyzing and understanding quantitative data on gender in Palestinian society; and (3) understanding the stages involved in developing research instruments and samples.

GADS (634): Qualitative Research Methods in Gender and Development

An introduction to qualitative research methods that can be used in the study of different aspects of women's situation and her position in society. Qualitative research methods are employed to investigate the family, business enterprises, and contemporary Palestinian and Arab society. Cases involving fieldwork at both international and local levels are examined and analyzed.

GADS (635): Gender Analysis and Planning Frameworks

This course combines theory and practical application. It uses gender concept and gender analytical and planning framework to investigate development issues, policies and practices in the developing world in general, and the Palestinian context in particular. It focuses on four main areas: urban planning and housing, the environment, family planning and reproductive health, and education. Intersecting each of these is the realm of culture and media. After examining planning traditions and methodology, students will produce a case study using the gender concepts and the analytical and planning frameworks discussed in the theoretical part of the course.

GADS (636): Frameworks of Gender ,Citizenship and State Law

This course examines the role of the constitution and the major laws in the construction of a democratic country. It examines the international legal framework related to human rights and the citizen and its influence on the social and political rights of women

GADS (637): Gender and Economic Relations

The objective of this course is to introduce students to the roles that gender plays in the economy and in economics. Various economic theories are utilized to explain why gender differences lead to different outcomes, particularly in the areas of education, work, family roles and earnings. The focus will be on comparisons of gender-related outcomes over time and across Arab countries, including Palestine. The mainstream approach to household economics and gender roles will be critiqued. Topics will include the formal/informal labor sectors, micro-finance, and globalization and gender relations.

GADS (638): Special Topics in Gender and Development

This course deals with a specific topic relating to the field of gender and development. The professor selects and defines the topic with the approval of the Program .

GADS (639): Development Policies

This course discusses the main theoretical approaches and issues which are becoming widespread in the sub-fields of development policy. The course looks at the limits of the political agents, processes, institutions, and structures involved in assessing development problems and providing solutions to them. The course explores gender as an overlapping and intersecting dimension in each of these factors.

GADS (730): Gender and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

This course will examine the rise of NGOs from within the framework of political economy. It will explore the implications of their prominence for the understanding of development, democracy, and women's empowerment. While the course will look

broadly at the NGO phenomenon across the South and within North-South relations, it will have a regional focus on the Middle East in general and Palestine in particular. It will explore conceptual terms, as well as the history and contemporary significance of NGOs. It will also look at some of the issues and questions raised by their presence in the Third World and the Middle East.

GADS (731): Applications of Recent Approaches to Gender and Development

This course deals with the application of new approaches in the analysis of gender in major development issues, such as poverty, income generation, fertility and population, political participation and representation, agriculture, and readjustment policies.

GADS (732): Gender, Development and Legal Issues in Arab and Palestinian Society

This course considers issues related to development and social justice, the main challenges faced by Arab and Palestinian society, under prevailing regional agreements and the legislative policies affecting them, such as the Cairo Agreement and agreements of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

GADS (733): Theoretical Approaches in Gender and Law.

The course examines theoretical approaches in legal science and social understanding of the various branches of law (constitutional and administrative) in areas such as work, family, property, and citizenship. The course investigates the practical applications and effects of law in developing societies, especially in the area of gender, and examines how the law might be used as a mechanism for social change.

GADS (830): Seminar in Gender and Development in Palestine

This is a research-oriented seminar. The main goal is to get an overview of theory and the practical use of theory in undertaking field-based research on various aspects of gender and development. The course will deal with research issues and methods necessary for undertaking advanced research into issues in gender and development. The seminar will be organized around students' own research projects.

Pre-requisite: the student must have concluded at least 18 approved contact hours in the Program and have completed both the quantitative and qualitative research methods courses (633, 634).

GADS (831): Seminar in Gender and Development on the regional level

This is an advanced study of the subject of gender in one of the development sectors or in a Palestinian development planning and policy institution, as decided upon by the Program. The course requires the student to produce a 40-page research paper or an academic report, the results of which are to be presented orally to professor and students before the work is submitted to the professor.

Pre-requisite: The student must have completed at least 18 approved Program hours, including courses on both types of research methodology -- the quantitative (633) and the qualitative (634).

GADS (860): Thesis

Writing a thesis on a topic in the field of gender and development. The thesis plan must have Program approval. Pre-requisite: the student must have completed 18 approved hours in the MA Program. Courses taken must have included those in both quantitative and qualitative research methods (633 and 634).

Application process:

Download and fill out the application form available through the Birzeit University website: <http://www.birzeit.edu>. The application form should be available under the heading "Admissions" on the website by end of March, 2007. If it is not, please be sure to contact me again.

The completed application, along with:

- 1 photograph,
- 2 letters of recommendation regarding your academic qualifications, AND

A transcript of your grades from the high school you attended, AND
A transcript of your grades from the university you attended

should be sent via Internet to the Registration Office at Birzeit University (not to the Institute of Women's Studies). These **documents should be received by the Registration Office sometime during the month of December, 2007, to apply for admission for the fall semester, which will start in early September, 2008.** Check on the Birzeit University website for exact dates.

Full/part time:

Students may enroll in the MA program for either full-time or part-time study.

Language:

Course readings are written mostly in English, while class discussions are conducted mostly in Arabic. Exams and papers may be written in either Arabic or English.

Simultaneous study of the Arabic language may be undertaken through the Palestine and Arabic Studies Program (PAS), which is housed in the same building as the Institute of Women's Studies and accessible through the Birzeit University website.

PAS offers a summer program in addition to the two regular semesters.

Cost:

The cost of each credit hour of instruction in the MA Program is 125 JD (Jordanian dinars), which equals about \$ 176.46 US dollars, or about 164.88 Euros (EUR). Each course contains three credit hours. A minimum of 36 credit hours are required for graduation. Additional registration fees for each semester are 45 JD(\$65 US dollars or about 49 EUR) and 10 JD (about \$15 or 11 EUR) for internet use.