

Research Assistantships provide students with the opportunity to earn credit and gain research experience by assisting with faculty research projects. Many Women's Studies faculty are engaged in ongoing research (for information on our faculty's areas of specialization, please consult our departmental website: <http://www.womenstudies.psu.edu/directory/faculty.shtml>). Undergraduate research assistants earn credits by helping a faculty member with various tasks related to their research. In addition, research assistants may be expected to complete assignments and write a paper at the conclusion of their assistantship.

Students should not undertake a research assistantship assuming they will automatically receive a "good" or even a passing grade; evaluations will be based on performance, and our faculty take their research very seriously, so evaluative standards will be rigorous. RAs are participating in a learning experience; occasional clerical work (such as retrieving materials from the library) may be necessary but should not comprise the RA's primary duties. Faculty research assistantship directors are expected to serve as mentors to their RAs, to explain the broader functions and implications of their research, and to provide opportunities for presentation of the student's research as appropriate. In order for a research assistantship to be approved, the student's workload must be commensurate with that of other 400-level Women's Studies courses. Thus, students should anticipate that a research assistantship will be at least as demanding as a regular 400-level course and be prepared to devote the necessary time and energy to the project.

Research assistants are selected entirely at the discretion of faculty. If a professor agrees to take on a research assistant, then s/he and the student will negotiate a specific work plan, as well as a standard for evaluating the student's work. Formal approval is required *prior to* registering for WMNST 494. Students should meet with the Undergraduate Director in order to discuss research assistantship responsibilities and requirements and to be registered for WMNST 494 credits. ***The forms in this packet must be submitted prior to registration for a research assistantship.***

University guidelines dictate that for each credit of WMNST 494 a student must work 3 hours per week; thus, in order to earn 3 credits of WMNST 496 a student is expected to work a minimum of 9 hours per week for each of the 15 weeks of a fall/spring semester, or 18 hours per week during a 6-week summer session. (The minimum time commitment includes any writing or other assignments required by the faculty mentor.) Students must register for credits the same semester in which they serve as a research assistant. (For instance, students cannot complete the research assistantship in the summer and earn the credits in the fall or spring). Students can count only 6 credits of any *one* independent learning experience towards Women's Studies degree requirements, even as elective credits.

All work assigned by the faculty research assistantship director is due by the final day of regular classes for the term in which the student is completing the assistantship. No late work will be accepted without prior permission.

name

expected date of graduation

Please list your major(s) and minor(s) below:

Have you served as a Research Assistant before? If so, describe the assistantship(s) below:

Please indicate (below or on a separate sheet of paper) your reasons for pursuing a research assistantship, how you see the experience aligning with your educational and/or professional goals, and the characteristics that you believe will make you a good research assistant

Please attach a copy of your transcript for verification of your eligibility to serve as an RA.

The following information must be provided (either on this form or on a separate sheet of paper) and submitted with the attached Signature Form before a student can be registered for WMNST 494.

Number of credits _____

To be completed (semester/year) _____

■ **Work Plan**

Describe in as much detail as possible the student's workload

■ **Method of evaluation**

On what criteria will the student's final grade be based?

I have read and understand the Rules and Procedures for Women's Studies Research Assistantships, and I agree to the terms established for this assistantship. (Registration will not be permitted without the signatures below.)

Student

student's name (please print)

PSU ID#

phone number(s)

e-mail

student's signature

date

Faculty

faculty director (please print)

PSU ID#

phone number(s)

e-mail

faculty director's signature

date

Undergraduate Director

I approve this student's registration for _____ WMNST 494 credits in _____.
semester/year

undergraduate director's signature

date