I. General Purpose

The collections of Iowa State University library support research and instruction for the Women’s & Gender Studies Program at Iowa State University. This includes materials for students taking women’s and gender studies courses to meet the university’s diversity requirement, those minoring and majoring in women’s studies, and faculty.

II. History

The Women’s Studies Program at Iowa State University has been in existence since 1977. From a few cross-listed courses offered by only four departments, and a handful of students and affiliated faculty, the program had grown by the late 1990’s to include twelve core and over twenty cross-listed courses, with hundreds of students enrolled each semester, an undergraduate major and minor, a graduate minor, over sixty affiliated faculty, five core faculty (two in joint positions and two in Associate positions), a half-time director, and active Advisory and Steering Committees composed of faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students.

III. Iowa State University Program

The Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Iowa State University offers both a major and a minor in Women’s and Gender Studies. Students who choose to do a major must declare either a second major or a minor. Interdisciplinary Master’s and Doctoral Students may also minor in Women’s and Gender Studies. Women’s and Gender Studies may be defined as the critical and scholarly pursuit of knowledge about women and gender from feminist and interdisciplinary perspectives.

This program focuses on the study of issues and scholarship relevant to women, gender, and identity. The goal is to challenge existing systems of knowledge, and create new scholarship based on the centrality of gender as a category of analysis. Women’s and gender studies fosters an awareness of the varied theoretical approaches to the study of women, feminism, and gender, and recognizes that there is a great diversity among women and people, not only in the United States but worldwide. Women’s Studies creates an understanding that interrelated factors – e.g., race, ethnicity, class, age, disability, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation-inform knowledge of
women’s history, culture, and social roles.

IV. Subject Boundaries

Women’s studies materials can be found in virtually every subject area. The Conspectus (a tool to enable libraries to measure their existing collection strengths and current collection interests) breaks out many call number ranges representing “women” as a subcategory under various larger topics.

V. General Collection Guidelines

A. Linguistic

ISU collects chiefly materials in the English language. Aspects of women’s studies are sometimes covered in Special Topics courses in the foreign language department, and we occasionally purchase non-English editions of materials in support of these specific courses.

B. Geographical Areas

The original emphasis in ISU’s women’s studies collections was the English-speaking world, with the strongest collections in U. S. and British titles. Current emphasis is spread more into international coverage.

C. Types of Materials Collected

ISU Library collects books, serials (journals and magazines), yearbooks, reference materials, e-books, DVD’s, videotapes, and audiotapes in support of the women’s studies program. The current collections program does not include zines (alternative publications usually regarded as artifacts of popular and/or underground culture).

D. Format of Materials Collected

Materials are collected in most formats, including print, electronic, video, audio, and electronic files. We do not collect newsprint-based publications, though these are purchased from time-to-time in micro-format.

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VI. **Specific Collection Guidelines**

In general, materials that are about women’s and gender studies specifically, and materials that fall into the core call number range, are purchased by the women’s studies fund. Materials with a high amount of women’s studies content, presented from within another discipline, may be purchased with these funds if the disciplinary bibliographer involved does not believe the material fits her/his discipline’s collection development goals. Materials with low to moderate women’s studies content, presented from within another discipline, are recommended and referred to the appropriate bibliographer for the other discipline involved. A high amount of collaboration is necessary to ensure that all significant works for women’s studies scholars are purchased for the library. Materials created by women, or written for women, are not necessarily women’s studies materials, and are not covered in this policy. Materials including coverage of lesbians are purchased under this fund; however, materials that are strictly lesbian studies only are most usually covered by the collection development policy for Sexual Diversity Studies.

VII. **Detailed Subject Areas**

The current Women’s Studies faculty at ISU represent almost all colleges and a wide set of disciplines. ISU has a long history of Women’s Studies faculty in the departments of English and Sociology, as well as in the College of Education. Engineering, Foreign Languages and Literatures, and Design have also been steadily represented over the years. This history is reflected in the existing collections. The interdisciplinarity of the Women’s Studies faculty and the courses they teach makes it impossible to list detailed subject areas for collection development. The bibliographer must stay aware of the current year’s course offerings, as well as incoming and outgoing faculty on a semester-by-semester basis. Recent newer offerings have included courses on women and sexuality, and men’s studies. The topics of globalization and women in science continue to be of central interest in the program.

VIII. **Other Resources Available**

Special Collections and University Archives collect and maintain many materials relevant to Women’s Studies. Of particular note is the Archive of Women in Science and Engineering (the WISE Archive) which included papers of women scientists and oral histories of their lives.

IX. **Cross-reference to Collection Policies**

For additional relevant information, the reader may wish to consult the General Diversity collection development policy, or the Archives of Women in Science and Engineering website ([http://www.add.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/wise/wise.html](http://www.add.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/wise/wise.html)).
X.  Creation Date

Created September 1997

XI.  Revision History

Updated August 2000
Updated October 2005
Updated November 2007
Updated December 2013

XII.  LC Class(es), if applicable

The core materials are classed in HQ 1101 – 2030.7. However, women’s studies materials may be found throughout the entire classification system.

XIII.  Bibliographer Name

Rita Marinko (2003 -2012)
Tobie Matava (2012-present)