



# WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES



SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER



## A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM

*Date August 11, 2023*

*Dear WGST Community,*

I hope you are well and enjoyed a restful summer break. I am so excited to start this new academic year. It has been quiet in the new WGST suite this spring/summer and I am eager for your presence, and our students' energy to fill our space. As we prepare to start another semester, I wanted to take a minute to share some program news and updates with you.

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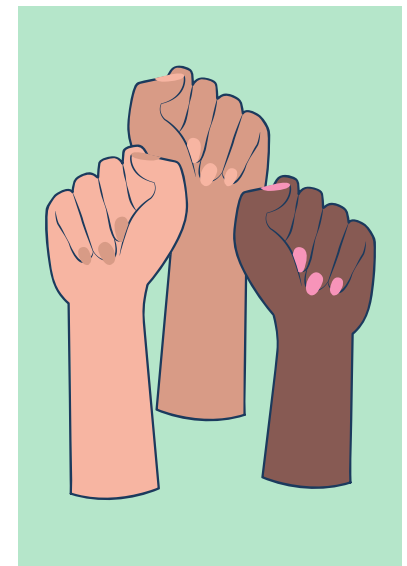
# A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)



Dr. Megan Morrissey,  
Program Director

Since January of this year, we have been comfortably relocated in our new office space (GAB 117). If you missed the open house or otherwise haven't made it by to say hello, we hope you will find some time to drop by this semester. To foster community among our WGST/LGBTQ students, affiliates, and campus partners, we coordinated a number of Fem Flicks screenings last spring, started weekly coffee hours in the space, and hosted our annual potluck picnic in my backyard. The energy at each of these events has been impressive, and we hope to continue doing these same events, and adding some new ones to our calendar. Keep a look out for emails inviting you to attend our events, or other ways for you to get involved this semester!

With the start of this new year, we also welcome a new faculty member to the WGST program. Dr. Katherine Ritter joins us from The Ohio State University where she recently completed her PhD in Women's and Gender Studies. We are excited to welcome Dr. Ritter on board and to have her begin teaching some of our most essential classes, as well as introducing new offerings based on her expertise in planetary crisis, apocalyptic imaginaries, and feminist interventions in scholarship on the Anthropocene. We are also excited to welcome back Dr. Özlem Altıok, who was on her faculty development leave during the Spring 2023 semester. We (students and faculty) are happy to have her back! Excited as we are to welcome Dr. Ritter and Dr. Altıok back, we also were sorry to say farewell to our visiting lecturer Dr. Serena Wilcox who worked closely with many of our undergraduate and graduate students last year. Most impressively, Dr. Wilcox spearheaded our inaugural research conference at the end of spring semester in which students from her methods classes presented in a conference style format for dozens of community members and campus partners. The positive response from this event was overwhelming and we hope to continue this tradition in the coming year.



(Continued on page 3)



# A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

This past spring semester we are also excited and proud to graduate one Master's student, Annie Heffley. We are sad to be losing such vibrant member of our community but are so very proud of her accomplishments and excited to see all of the ways she will make an impact. As we say goodbye to Annie, we also welcome one new graduate student this semester, Ghazaleh Ebnehasir will join returning graduate students Maddie Rodriguez and Courtney Bellamy as a Teaching Assistant for our program. I am looking forward to working with them and having them in my graduate class this semester.



I am ready and excited for this new year to start. I look forward to continuing to support our students and our program's mission, specifically to challenge social injustices and seek imaginative ways to collectively foster queer and feminist activism and to collaboratively build welcoming spaces that respect and celebrate differences.

Dr. Megan Morrissey  
WGST & LGBTQ Studies Programs, Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Megan Morrissey', positioned below the typed name and title.





# WGST EVENT SNAPSHOTS

## Campus Pride Week March 27-31

**Monday, March 27, 11am-1pm**  
**Tabling in the Willis Library Lobby**  
 We're kicking off Pride Week with table and information about the Library's LGBTQ+ offerings, so stop by for more information!

**Tuesday, March 28, 2pm-4pm**  
**Queers and Allies Zine Making @ Willis 2501f**  
 We will provide all the basic supplies and instructions for you to walk away with your very own zine, zine ready to be created and shared with friends and peers!

**Wednesday, March 29, 12pm-2pm**  
**Film Screening: But I'm a Cheerleader @ Chilton Hall Rm 111c**  
 Join the Media Library for a free facilitated screening of director Jaye Rabbit's queer comedy classic, 'But I'm a Cheerleader,' starring Melissa Lyonne. Popcorn will be served!

**Wednesday, March 29, 6pm-7pm**  
**LGBTQ+ Bingo @ Willis 2501f + Online**  
 Join us for LGBTQ+ Bingo. You can join in person or online. Your bingo card will be emailed to you if joining online.

**Thursday, March 30, 4pm-5pm**  
**Pride Storytime @ Sycamore Library**  
 Sycamore Library will offer a complimentary reading of LGBTQ+ children's literature geared to their audience, or bring your own to read aloud. So pull out some Capri, have some juice and cookies, and refresh your inner child!

If you need an accommodation to fully participate in these events, please contact Julia.Chen@unt.edu.

library.unt.edu

femflicks SPRING 2023

**SISTA IN THE BROTHERHOOD** January 7th

*Sista in the Brotherhood* is a Chinese narrative short film about a Black transgender ally's love relationship in a new life city and a white dual-threat teacher finding a friend in helping her job. The story follows an open-minded teacher finding a friend who struggles to find her job in a new city. The movie is a timely, deeply emotional, and story-driven to navigate the queer narrative to live. When someone asks, she receives questions from a surprising source. It may be difficult to either make a stand in the face of being recognized as the ally teacher she has become. There are also significant moments after returning to her. It's notable because the cinema director is being paid in a funding, but it's also because about the experience of workplace racism. In particular, the film addresses of racism, workplace culture, microaggressions, assault, and more.

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femflicks SPRING 2023

**SINS INVALID** April 11

Willis Library 2501f  
 Film screening begins at 6:00pm. Discussion begins at 6:45pm.

*Sins Invalid* advances a performance project that explores and celebrates of our world with its artists, examining issues of race, class, and gender across time. Since 2008, the performance has featured people of disability, trauma, and the disabled body, inspiring thousands through its performance. *Sins Invalid* is an entryway into the disability rights world of visibility and disability, including a new paradigm of disability justice.

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SPRING 2023 femflicks

**KUMU HINA** March 8th

Film screening begins at 6:15p  
 Discussion begins at 7:30p

*Imagine a world where a little boy can grow up to be the winner of his beauty and a young girl can grow to become a leader, proving man. Welcome to *Kumu Hina*! During a childhood year in the life of traditional Hawaiian, this young girl, a future Hawaiian, or transgender, teacher, was traditional culture to inspire a student to either her place as leader of the school or to make her own. But despite her success as a teacher, she longs for love and a moment of vulnerability. With her marriage in a heartbreaking, long-term battle for divorce, she's wondering about what she's in a marriage like, but she needs a side of her that's rarely seen or heard.*

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# ICONS

February 22  
 March 22  
 April 19th  
 12 pm- 1pm GAB 108  
 Pizza and Social Hour!

# OF QUEER HISTORY GALLERY WALK

UNT INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND UNT WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES

**APRIL 12TH 11AM-2PM GAB 117 UNT DENTON**

# OPEN HOUSE

COME HELP US CELEBRATE OUR NEW SUITES @GAB 117 & 119!  
 FOOD, BEVERAGES, & SWAG!

#UNTinst & #UNTwgst

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STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES

EMERALD BALL ROOM UNION 316A

APRIL 28TH 2023 8AM-3PM

RSVP AT THE QR CODE BELOW



# WGST & INST OPEN HOUSE



Dr. Sing Hui Lee, Dr. Dariiga Abilova, Scappy, Dr. Özlem Altok, Dr. Nancy Stockdale, and Ms. Joanie Smith



Dr. Özlem Altok, Dr. Megan Morrissey, and LJ Brooks-Hall

This April, we welcomed faculty, staff, and students across campus into our new suite at our Women's & Gender Studies and International Studies Open House. This inaugural event was a success - even Scappy made a special appearance and helped us celebrate! We look forward to holding more events like this in the future. If you haven't had the chance, make sure to stop by GAB 117 to check it out!



Dr. Megan Morrissey, LJ Brooks-Hall, and Dr. Jara Carrington




Scappy enjoying WGST and INST merch




Scappy enjoying the open house



 PAGE 5 Maddie Rodriguez, Scappy, and Courtney Bellamy



Ghazaleh Ebnenasir, Scappy, and Dr. Özlem Altok 



# 2023 STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

In May of 2023, we held our first research conference lead by Dr. Serena Wilcox. Students from her methods classes presented in a conference style format for dozens of community members and campus partners. The symposium showcased some of the exciting and critical work emerging from our discipline. Interested guests talked with students and with each other about the importance of interdisciplinary scholarship and ideas. The positive response from this event was overwhelming and we hope to continue this tradition in the coming year.

Women's and Gender Studies Student Research Symposium  
at UNT-Denton 2023

## Panel List

### Panel 1: 9:10am-10:00am

#### Intersectional Collisions: (Trans)formative Decolonial Crit Theory

Sar Fenske (them/they)- "(Trans)forming Crip: A Neuroqueer Autoethnography"

Master's student in Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

Ray Ishihashi (she/her)- "From Disabled to Revolted Body: Rupturing Colonial Construction of Disability"

Master's student in the Philosophy & Religion department at UNT

Ashley Escoto (them/they)- "Reconsidering Queer/Trans Academia: My Queer Autoethnographic Exploration of a Queer, Latine, Autistic Scholar"

Master's student in Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

### Panel 2: 10:05am-10:55am

#### Remembering Social Movement: Awakening Publics of Liberation as Pedagogy

Jessica Luther-Rummel (she/they)- "Transcendental Anarchism: Living Eco-Ethics in the Temporary Zone, A Participatory Action Research in the Weelaaner Forest to Stop Cop City"

PhD student and teaching fellow in the Philosophy & Religion department at UNT

Annie Hefley (she/her)- "Contextualizing Stonewall: An Analysis of the 'Rise Up! Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement' Special Exhibit"

Master's student in the Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

Emma Devers (them/they)- "The Threatened Dissolution of a Sacred Subculture: Lesbian Experience, History of Lesbian Bars, and the Efforts to Maintain Them"

Undergraduate student in the History department at UNT

### Panel 3: 11:00am-11:55am

#### Queer Ecologies of Pleasures: Exotic Community Formations of Healing and Belonging

Al-Vi Le (them/they)- "The Social Dynamics of Polyamory and Its Place in the LGBTQ+ Community"

Undergraduate student in the Mayhew School of Journalism

Maddie Rodriguez (them/they)- "(Trans)gressive Gender and Kink: Critical Consent and Creativity"

Master's student in the Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

Courtney Bellamy (she/they)- "Queerness in the Exotic Dance Industry: Looking Beyond the Male Gaze"

Master's student in the Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

Delaney Miller (she/her)- "Veganism and Vegetarianism: A Queer Ecofeminist Critique of Gender, Race, and Patriarchy"

Undergraduate student in the Psychology department at UNT

### Panel 4: 12:00pm-12:55pm

#### Belonging, Biopower, and Borderlands: Revolutionary Love as Praxis of Refusal

Casey Ramos (she/her/ella)- "Chicana Thriving Institutions: Exploring the Parallel Between Servingsness and Belonging"

Graduate student in the Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies program at Texas Women's University

Jackie Aazarate (she/her)- "The Interdependence and Intersectionality Between the Christian Faith and the Conservative Political Landscape in Regard to the Criminalization of LGBTQ+ Students in the Texas Public Education System"

Master's student in the Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT

Valeria Hernandez (she/her/ella)- "How S.R. 14 and S.R. 250 Can Affect Transgender DFW Residents"

Master's student in the International Studies program at UNT

Greta Diaz González Vázquez (she/her)- "Acompañantes, Spaces of Resistance Across the Mexico-U.S. Border"

Master's student in the Mayhew School of Journalism at UNT



# 2023 UNT SALUTE TO FACULTY EXCELLENCE

It is with immense pleasure we announce that prior to her well-deserved faculty leave, Dr. Özlem Altıok received the President's Council Teaching Award for the 2022-2023 school year. Her tremendous dedication to supporting her student's education in Women's and Gender Studies, as well as International Studies, does not go unappreciated. This award was established to recognize full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty members for a record of teaching excellence at the University of North Texas for at least a five (5) year period. Dr. Altıok states that she "prioritizes three goals in [her] teaching: *critical thinking, effective communication and community engagement* to empower students to work for social justice. [She] ensures that [her] students have substantive knowledge in [her] fields of expertise – gender, international development, migration, social policy, women's human rights and Middle East politics– and also that they feel empowered to use their knowledge to effect change." We are excited to see the continued excellence that Dr. Altıok brings to UNT and are ready to welcome her back this Fall semester.

Dr. Morrissey received the Piper Professor Award Nominee, a prestigious award, honors ten (10) professors from throughout Texas during the current academic year for their dedication to the teaching profession and superior teaching ability at the college level. Congratulations to Dr. Morrissey and Dr. Altıok - we are honored to have you representing our programs and as part of our WGST community!



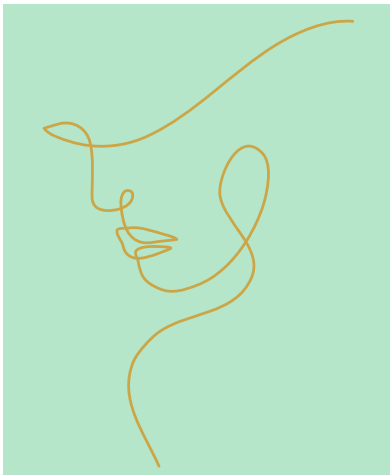
Dr. Özlem Altıok holding her President's Council Teaching Award and Dr. Megan Morrissey holding her UNT Piper Professor Nominee Award



# SAYING GOODBYE AND WELCOMING NEW FACULTY AND STAFF



We'd like to recognize the departure of our visiting lecturer, **Dr. Serena Wilcox**, and our program coordinator, **LJ Brooks-Hall**. We are so thankful for the time they spent with us and have enjoyed their dedication and contribution to our community and program throughout their time spent with us. Our WGST program will miss you and wishes you both well. We are so excited to see what you both do in the future.



**Dr. Katherine Ritter** will be joining our program as a lecturer this Fall 2023 Semester. She recently received her Ph.D in Women's and Gender Studies from Ohio State University. She will be teaching some of our most essential classes, as well as introducing new offerings based on her expertise in planetary crisis, apocalyptic imaginaries, and feminist interventions in scholarship on the Anthropocene.

**Rebecca Bearden** will also be joining us as our new Program Coordinator.

*"Hi, y'all! My name is Rebecca Bearden. I'm so excited to join as the Women's & Gender Studies and LGBTQ+ Studies Program Coordinator.*

*My background is primarily in student services and instruction. I completed both my undergrad and graduate degrees at UNT in the Department of Communication Studies. After graduating with my MA in 2022, I served as a full-time adjunct for Comm. Studies and knew I wanted to continue working with students, faculty, and staff. As a proud Dentonite, I enjoy spending my time at the many local coffee shops, stores, and green spaces in town. Looking forward to a great year here in WGST and LGBTQ+ Studies!"*







# WHO WE ARE



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WMST@UNT.EDU



Dr. Megan Morrissey,  
Program Director



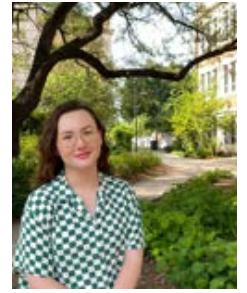
Dr. Özlem Altıok,  
Principal Lecturer



Dr. Katherine Ritter,  
Continuing Lecturer



Dr. Elisha Oliver,  
Adjunct



Rebecca Bearden, MA  
Program Coordinator



Courtney Bellamy,  
Graduate Assistant



Ghazaleh Ebzenasir,  
Teaching Assistant



Maddie Rodriguez,  
Teaching Assistant



Marija Ivanic,  
Undergraduate  
Program Ambassador



Mars Smietana,  
Undergraduate  
Program Ambassador



Claire Colgrove,  
Student Office  
Assistant

**Advisory Board Members:** Dr. Rachel Moran (History), Dr. Suzanne Enck (Communication Studies), Dr. Joanna Davis-McElligatt (English), Dr. Özlem Altıok (International Studies & WGST), Dr. Jara Carrington (Anthropology), Dr. Megan Morrissey (Communication Studies)

## OUR MISSION



The Women's and Gender Studies program at UNT promotes teaching, research, and outreach with a critical focus aimed at interrogating gender-related stereotypes, especially as our identities intersect with sexuality, race, and ethnicity in a global context. Our program's interdisciplinary scholarship supports and sustains campus-wide discussions in areas including, but not limited to: global contexts, feminist approaches, women's social movements, feminist activism, and explorations of the connections among gender, class, ethnicity and race in social and cultural constructs. The LGBTQ program is dedicated to UNT's mission of advancing educational excellence and by preparing students to become thoughtful, engaged citizens of the world. The minor provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary examination of the diversity of global gender and sexual identities, communities, practices, and politics. Courses explore Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + identified (LGBTQ+) individuals; their families and communities; their cultures and subcultures; their histories; institutions; languages; and literatures; their economics and politics; modes of representation; and their complex relations to the culture and experience of a heterosexual majority.