

WMST 1110: Multicultural Perspectives on Women in the United States
Fall Semester 2006

Meeting Times: Tuesday & Thursday
12:30p-1:45p/ 3:30p-4:45p
Location: 154 Geography (12:30 class)
145 Park Hall (3:30 class)
Instructor: Jenna Andrews
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 4:45p-5:30p, or by appointment
Baldwin Hall, room G-33 (downstairs; use back entrance to the building)
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Course Objectives:

This course is intended as an introduction to women's issues in the United States. We will pay particular attention to the way constructions of ethnicity, race, gender, and class influence so-called minority women. We will look at the historical events that have contributed to contemporary issues women in this country face, and how feminist theory can help us understand the ideology underlying various forms of discrimination. Topics to be covered include discrimination, immigration, education and employment, language, religion, health and body image, stereotypes, sexuality and relationships, and, of course, culture. We will examine these issues using a variety of types of literature, along with media and film portrayals of women and plenty of in-class discussion.

Required Text:

McLemore, S. and H. Romo
2005 Racial and Ethnic Relations in America, 7th Edition. Pearson Education Inc.
(this book can be purchased at Off Campus Bookstore on Baxter St)

All other readings will be posted on WebCT (webct.uga.edu) or distributed during class.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation

You are asked to arrive on time and remain for the entire class period. Attendance will be documented by submission of discussion questions and daily sign-in sheets. Each student will be allowed two unexplained absences. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 5-point reduction in your total Attendance grade. If you miss a class due to illness or a family emergency, please provide a doctor's note or other appropriate documentation no later than the second day you return to class. If you miss a class for any reason, please remember that it is your responsibility to find out about any material you may have missed as well as any announcements made, including schedule changes. Six or more unexcused absences before the midterm will result in withdrawal from the class. All reading must be completed by the specified date. Please read carefully and reflect on your own experiences with the issues presented. Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions and activities.

Discussion Questions

After completing the reading assignments, students are to construct *at least* one thoughtful question that relates to the reading. These questions will be collected at the beginning of each class period and used to guide our classroom discussion. Please be sure to include your

name and the date at the top. Discussion questions are considered part of your class participation.

Quizzes and Exams

Six short quizzes will be administered over the course of the semester. These will cover general topics from the reading and/or class discussions and films. Your total quiz grade will be calculated by dropping your lowest score. The midterm exam will cover material from the first half of the course. The final exam will cover material primarily from the second half of the course, after the midterm, and will be administered during the final exam period. Both exams will consist of a combination of short answer and essay questions.

Assignments

1. Group Presentations

I will assign small groups to give short presentations (10-15 minutes per group) on reading assignments. Group members should provide a short review of the day's reading *and* formulate questions to encourage class discussion. Each member of the group will turn in a two-page (double-spaced) reflection paper on the day's reading(s).

2. Race/ethnicity/class/gender log

Part I. Seven-day log

During the specified week, keep a log of experiences you have (at least 5 per day) that make you aware of your race/ethnicity, your class, or your gender. These can range from simple experiences like walking through the bathroom door marked "women" or "men" to experiences in class, relationships, etc. to larger social and political issues that come to your attention during this period. Your log should be a journal-type list that includes the date, approximate time, and a description of each event, along with some notes about how the event made you feel.

**Log format: you may use any type of notebook or paper, but please ensure that all pages are stapled together or otherwise securely attached in order.

Part II. Log analysis and reflection

This is a short (2-3 pages, double-spaced) paper, in which you should reflect on the events you recorded in your log. Start thinking about *why* you experience things the way you do. Some issues and questions to consider include: how might someone else experience a certain event? would they ever even experience it? how do previous events influence you now? does the media or the legal system or the government affect the way you experience your race/ethnicity, class, or gender? Feel free to use any of these questions to examine your log, but you are not limited to these questions only. Be creative!

3. Final paper

This paper is a chance for you to more fully examine the variation within communities of women in the US that we have discussed (or not!) in class. Please choose a group that you are not familiar with, and remember to be very careful about making generalizations. In your paper you should examine some issue linked to women in the US that interests you and connect that issue to the broader social and historical themes that we have discussed in class. Your paper topic and approach are subject to the instructor's approval. Early in the semester, each student will turn in an

abstract and an outline, along with a working title and preliminary bibliography (see schedule for due dates).

You must provide evidence to support your argument. Feel free to use any of the readings from class (and your reactions to them), but you must also use at least five outside sources. These can include journal articles, newspaper items, or books (other sources may also be appropriate depending on your topic – see me for approval of these). Please avoid using internet sites as sources unless they include text from published work.

Please be creative with this project. There are several approaches to a paper like this – find an approach that is interesting to you! Here are some suggestions:

- an historical approach that relates past events to the current issues women face
- look at feminist literature produced by or about a particular group of women
- link themes in women’s autobiographical essays or fiction to current events
- consider how and why women of a particular group are portrayed in the media
- research the various ways women cope with the experience of migration
- look at health issues or risks among a certain community

If you have trouble coming up with a paper topic, please see me! I’ll be happy to help.

** Abstract format: title, 300-350 word abstract, at least 5 subject headings, at least 5 sources. See WebCT for citation/bibliography style guide.

**Final paper format: 8-10 pages (including bibliography), title, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, standard 1-inch margins, stapled - no cover sheet or fancy binders please. *Please turn in your abstract/outline along with your final paper.*

Grading:

This course uses UGA’s new plus/minus grading scale, and the points for each letter grade are listed below:

A = 4.0 = 94	C+ = 2.3 = 77
A- = 3.7 = 90	C = 2.0 = 74
B+ = 3.3 = 87	C- = 1.7 = 70
B = 3.0 = 84	D = 1.0 = 65
B- = 2.7 = 80	F = 0.0 = below 65

Final grades for the course will be assigned according to the following distribution:

Participation & Attendance	20%
Quizzes (5 out of 6)	10%
Race/Class/Gender Log	10%
Group Presentation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Paper	
- outline and bibliography	5%
- final paper	15%
Final Exam	15%

Coursework will be graded according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of critical thought:

Responses should demonstrate analysis of the theoretical principles and historical issues, not summaries of the authors’ opinions. The best work will express your opinion

and engage the theories. You do not have to agree with the issues we discuss; you do need to show respect for the class and the authors and their work.

2. Support:

You must back up the arguments you make with legitimate sources (read: absolutely no Wikipedia). Your opinion is crucial to your argument, but you must also explain upon what it is based. You may use outside sources or class readings to support your case. Justifications should be explained and not just included as open-ended citations from the texts.

3. Factual correctness:

Responses should reflect an understanding of the facts as presented. You may agree or disagree with the texts; however, the facts should not change.

4. Length / Assignment:

Where there is a length requirement it should be respected. Additionally, the work should fulfill the requirements stated within the assignment. Please consult the instructor if you have any questions about your work. If you do not satisfy either of these requirements, there will be deductions from the grade.

5. Grammar / Style / Format:

Grammar and spelling errors that impede the comprehension of your work will affect the grade. Spell check is your friend. It is also important to make use of the MLA style format for both the bibliographic citations and the paper in general (appropriate titling, page numbers, etc.) where appropriate. It may be appropriate to use the first person, however, it is important to maintain an academic voice in your work.

Participation will be graded according to the following criteria:

- A** Consistent critical engagement with the material; active discussion in class; willingness to explore new ideas; application of theoretical constructs to everyday life; preparedness
- B** Frequent participation in class discussion; demonstration of thoughtful analysis; open-mindedness; clear preparation
- C** Frequent absences; lack of interest or effort; demonstration of preparedness though less than vocal; participation in small group exercises but less class-wide discussion
- D** Numerous absences; no demonstration of interest and/or effort; lack of preparation; negative attitude; no tangible proof of participation on any level
- F** Constant absence; sleeping in class; refusal to be open to new ideas; nonproductive aggression; no preparation

Honesty and Respect:

“The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and other members of the University Community. A policy on academic honesty has been developed to serve these goals. All members of the academic community are responsible for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty.” All work you turn in must be your own. Visit http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/culture_honesty.htm to view the entire policy.

Due to the nature of the topics discussed in class, conflicting opinions and thoughts are expected. All class discussions and projects should be conducted and presented with the utmost respect for others.

Policy on Late Work:

Work that is turned in late without prior notice or the proper documentation (i.e. doctor's note) will be subject to point deductions. For each day (*not* class meeting) an assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 30%. Presentations and quizzes cannot be made up. If you have a serious conflict with the midterm or final exam schedule, please see me at least two weeks prior to the exam date. Absolutely no work will be accepted by e-mail.

Special Needs:

Those students requiring special accommodations for learning should share these concerns with the instructor as soon as possible.

A Note about Changes to Schedule:

This syllabus, including due dates, assignment requirements, and readings, is subject to change as necessary for the success of the course. All changes will be announced in advance in class and on WebCT.

Class Schedule

17 August	Intro to Feminism and Multicultural Perspectives, Defining respect	
22 August	- excerpt: Barbie Culture by Mary F. Rogers - Making Faces: The Cosmetics Industry and the Cultural Construction of Gender by Kathy Peiss (Unequal Sisters, ch. 21)	(drop/add deadline: Monday August 21 st at midnight)
24 August	- Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives, ch. 1	
29 August	-Introduction: The Varieties of Feminist Thinking by Rosemarie Tong (Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction) - Does A Sex Have a History? by Denise Riley (Feminism and History, ed. by Joan Wallach Scott (1996), 17-33)	
31 August	- Racial & Ethnic Relations in America chs. 1-2	
5 September <i>Native American Women</i>	- R&E ch. 10 - Geography: An Introduction by Linda Hogan (The Woman Who Watches Over the World pp. 14-16)	Presentation 1
7 September	- excerpt: Storyteller by Leslie Marmon Silko (pp. 130-137) - Waterlily by Ella Cara Deloria, ch. 14	<i>Begin ethnicity/race/class/gender log</i>
12 September	- Assimilation by Sherman Alexie - Changing and Diverse Roles of Women in American Indian Cultures by Teresa D. LaFromboise, et al. – Sex Roles	
14 September	- Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Culture by SE Bird – Journal of Communication	<i>ETHNICITY/RACE/CLASS/ GENDER LOG DUE</i>
19 September <i>African American Women</i>	- R&E chs. 6-7	
21 September	- To Catch the Vision of Freedom: Reconstructing Southern Black Women's Political History, 1865-1880 by Elsa Barkley Brown (Unequal Sisters, ch. 8) - Ain't I a Woman? by Sojourner Truth	Presentation 2

26 September	- excerpt: The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison	<i>LOG ANALYSIS DUE</i>
28 September	- Feminist Theory ch. 1 - excerpt: Home Girls by Barbara Smith	
3 October	Midterm review	
5 October		MIDTERM EXAM (October 9 is Midpoint Withdrawal Deadline)
10 October <i>Chicanas & Latinas in the US</i>	- R&E ch. 8 - “A Chambered Nautilus” The Contradictory Nature of Puerto Rican Women's Role in the Social Construction of a Transnational Community by M. Alicea - Gender & Society	
12 October	- R&E ch. 9 - Borderlands/La Frontera ch.2	Presentation 3
17 October	- ‘Star Struck’: Acculturation, Adolescence, and Mexican American Women (Unequal Sisters ch. 22) - excerpt: Latinas and African American Women at Work: Race, Gender, and Economic Inequality	Presentation 4
19 October	- excerpt: How the García Girls Lost Their Accents by Julia Alvarez - excerpt: Bridges to Cuba by Ruth Behar	Presentation 5
24 October <i>Migration</i>	- Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender by Sylvia Pedraza - Annual Review of Sociology - excerpt: Seeking Common Ground: Multidisciplinary Studies of Immigrant Women in the US by Donna Gabaccia	<i>FINAL PAPER ABSTRACT DUE</i>
26 October	No class – Fall Break	
31 October	Individual progress check meetings	
2 November <i>Asian American Women</i>	- R&E ch. 11 - excerpt: To Be the Poet by Maxine Hong Kingston	Presentation 6

7 November	- R&E chs. 12-13	Presentation 7
9 November	- excerpt: Who's Irish? by Gish Jen - excerpt: Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture by Robert G. Lee	
14 November	- Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery by E Kaw - Medical Anthropology Quarterly - excerpt: Masking Selves, Making Subjects: Japanese American Women, Identity, and the Body by Traise Yamamoto	Presentation 8
16 November	Film Screening - R&E ch. 14	
21 November	Finish film, discussion	
23 November	No class – Thanksgiving Day	
28 November <i>Women's Issues</i>	Issues in sexuality, relationships and marriage	
30 November	Representations of gender, race and beauty in the media *check out www.AdiosBarbie.com	Bring magazine images
5 December	Wrap-up and Course Evaluations	<i>FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS</i>
14 December		FINAL EXAM 12:30 section – 12:00-3:00pm 3:30 section – 3:30-6:30pm