

WMST 2010: Introduction to Women's Studies

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:00-8:50, 103 Benson

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 10:10-11:00, SLC 147

Fall 2007

3 Hours

Instructor: Abigail Richardson, MA
Office: 109 Benson
Office Hours: 9:00-9:30 Monday & Wednesday,
11:15-12:30 Wednesday, or by appointment
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Course Description

As an introductory course, this class will familiarize students with the fundamental concepts and necessary tools of analysis in the study of women. The focus will be on the social practices, cultural representations, and institutions that shape women's lives in American society and how women have resisted these structures. Throughout the course, we will critically examine numerous themes such as the representation of women in the culture, body image, women's work, sexuality, and reproductive rights to name just a few. These themes have historically been of interest to feminists and are essential to understanding of the place of women in American society today.

It is often assumed that women share similar experiences determined by gender, but significant differences also exist between them; in fact, these differences may sometimes be greater than those between men and women. This course will recognize that power relations also arise from differences among women themselves in the various intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and local/global relations.

This course may challenge some of the ideas you now have about women, men, sexuality, and other issues. You will not be required to share the opinion of the instructor, but you may be asked to articulate views that you do not share. In other words, you cannot simply discount any perspective you disagree with. This course is about understanding the issues, concepts, and perspectives of women's studies. If you cannot participate in this sort of discussion, this course may not be for you.

Text:

- Taylor, Whitter, & Rupp. 2007. *Feminist Frontiers* (7th edition). McGraw Hill
- Packet of Readings available at Bel-Jean
- Selected readings located on Web CT
- Also required: Approximately 15 3x5 Index Cards with a hole in the top right corner

Structure of the Course

This course includes exams, journals, a group project, and other assignments. The papers and projects that you complete in this class will help you learn to think critically and creatively, deconstruct and integrate concepts, and work both independently and in collaboration with others. These skills have been highly valued in the feminist project and constitute the basis of the new liberal arts curriculum. However, this also requires that you put sincere effort into all of your assignments.

"Introduction to" does not equate to "blow-off." Nor does "Women's Studies." This course will require you to complete a fair amount of reading, writing, and thinking. As you enrolled in this class, it is my assumption that you are interested in the material and want to be here.

Therefore, I expect you to assume responsibility for your education. This means you

are to attend class regularly and on time, keep up with the readings, participate in the discussions, and come to me with concerns BEFORE they become big problems. It also means that you are responsible for the following things: checking your syllabus for information about readings, assignments, and exams; logging in to WebCT regularly to make sure you have not missed important announcements; letting me know as soon as possible if you have an emergency situation; making sure you attend class each day and have that attendance recorded; obtaining notes from another student when and if you miss class; saving all of your assignments in the event of a grade discrepancy.

Exams:

There will be two in-class exams during the semester, and one as a final. The exams will test your understanding of the concepts and issues discussed in the readings and in class. All readings, discussions, handouts, videos, group projects, and WebCT discussion posts are viable sources of test questions. I will give you more information on the format of the exams during the course of the semester. Each exam will be worth 50 points, and will be non-cumulative. The exams will be on Friday, September 28th and Wednesday, October 19th. The final will be on Monday, December 10th at 8:00 (Friday December 14th at 8:00). You **must** be present at the final exam. **There are no make up exams except in case of emergency.** If you are unable to take an exam, you must leave a message via phone or email *before* the exam begins. Additionally, the excuse must be verifiable (e.g. police report, hospital records). When allowed, make-up exams are done in my office, and may consist of all essay questions.

Assignments:

Women's Studies Journal (worth 48 points)

You will be asked to keep a reflection journal, in which you will write at least one entry a week. The purpose of the journal is for you to explore and work with the concepts for each topic, which demonstrates to me your understanding of the concepts. For most topics, I will provide a list of questions for you to **choose one to answer** in your journal. For other topics, I may ask you to reflect on the concepts on your own. You can expect to write a little more than **1 journal entry per week**. Journal entries should be **at least 1.5 pages** per entry, and there should be at least **12 entries**. Of course, you are more than welcome to write more than the required amount! The journal entries will be graded according to the following criteria: length, analytic/critical approach to the reading, answering the chosen question, and ability to make a connection between yourself and the reading. More information about the journal is posted on the Organizational Materials page.

Group Presentation (worth 45 points)

You will participate in one major group presentation, which will present a substantive topic for an entire class period. Each group will explore one Feminist Issue, all of which have a large effect on all women. Within the parameters set, the method of presentation is left to the individual groups. Creativity is encouraged. This cooperative learning experience will receive a grade from the instructor and from the individuals in the group through a confidential evaluation. This method is used to encourage full group participation. These presentations will be discussed further during the semester and held between October 29th and November 14th. More information about the Feminist Issues Group Projects is posted on the Organizational Materials page.

Gender Experience Reactions (worth 18 points total: 3 reactions at 6 points each)

Three times during the semester, you must attend an event relevant to gender, feminism, or women's studies. This event may take place on campus or off and need not be an organized lecture, but could be any experience in which gender becomes salient. You will write a short paper (2-3 pages) about the experience and your reaction to it. You must discuss the logistics of the event (who put it on, what was it about, who was there), your reaction to it, and its relation to our course. The due dates are: October 9th, November 16th, and December 3rd. There will be many events to choose from throughout the semester, but there tend to be slim pickings toward the end of the semester- get them done early! You can always turn in these assignments early. More information about the gender experience reactions is posted on the Organizational Materials page.

Additional Assignments (worth 28 points total)

There will be some additional low-stakes assignments throughout the course of the semester, including exercise responses, movie guide questions, and similar assignments. There will also be in-class question responses. Once or twice a week, I will pose a question at the beginning of class and allow about 5 minutes for you to write an answer. These questions may refer to the topic or reading for the day, or to unfinished discussions from the previous day. They will provide a way for me to see whether or not you are "getting it", as well as a place to start the day's discussion. These in-class writings will be written on your 3x5 cards and collected at the beginning of the class. If you are late, you will not be able to participate, nor receive credit.

WebCT Usage (worth 11 points total)

This course will also include a Web CT component. In addition to copies of the syllabus and handouts, the Web CT page contains additional required readings, more detailed assignment information, and more. I will use the mail and grade functions on Web CT as the primary means of communicating with you outside of class. I highly encourage you to use the mail and discussion tools to communicate with each other and continue class discussions. As this is a survey course, we will cover many topics, but may not delve as deep as you may like. The Web CT is a place you can further explore any topics we miss, share current events, and seek your classmates opinions on any issues you like. Feel free to post any relevant questions, comments, or information. From time to time, I may also use the discussion tool to bring your attention to news items or issues I come across, and I encourage you to do the same.

If you are not on Web CT, or have not used Web CT before, please see me
immediately!

Since WebCT will be our primary mode of communication outside of class, it is very important that you check the site at least once weekly. As site designer, I can see how often you utilize the WebCT pages. Checking WebCT will count for 10 points. I will check on 10 random Fridays throughout the semester. If you have not logged in to WebCT within a week of the time I check, you will not earn that point. *You will also earn a webct point for printing, filling out, and returning the Info About You page on the Organizational Materials page.*

Grading (in points)

Exams	150
Journal	48
Group Work	45
Gender Experience Reactions (3 @ 6 pts.)	18
In-Class Writing	28
Web CT Usage	11

Total: 300

Grading Scale:

93%	280 – 200 = A
90%	270 – 279 = A-
87%	260 – 269 = B+
83%	250 – 259 = B
80%	240 – 249 = B-
77%	230 – 239 = C+
73%	220 – 229 = C
70%	210 – 219 = C-
63%	190 – 209 = D
	≤ 189 = F

Additional Information:

Following this Syllabus, there are five additional content pages. They should be considered as part of this syllabus. You are expected to read them as well. They lay out the course schedule, the attendance policy, and assignment format policies. The final content page is a form for you to tell me about yourself. You must print it, fill it out, and turn it in. You will notice that at the bottom of the page, there is a place for a signature. This form is like a contract- indicating that you have read and understand the policies outlined in all of these syllabus pages. This must be handed in by August 31!

Assignment Policies:

Format Information:

Every assignment you submit must be:

Typed

Double-spaced

Times New Roman 12 point font

One inch margins

Stapled!

I reserve the right to subtract points for any assignment that does not meet the format specifications. You can set Word to these fonts and margins now- if you don't know how, I'd be more than happy to show you.

Spelling and Grammar:

Your assignments should all be error-free and grammatically correct, including punctuation, spelling, etc. Word can be set to automatically check spelling and grammar- that's what those red and green squiggly lines are!

Printing:

Journals and Gender Experience Reactions must be printed out and handed in. I don't care what color ink you use, as long as its legible. There are plenty of opportunities to print around: roommates, neighbors, SLC the Library, etc. Be aware that there is not a computer lab in the Benson Building. If your printer dies, you get one free pass to email an assignment. After that I start deducting points.

A note about emailed Assignments:

In one of these RARE instances in which you email an assignment, please note: **I do not have Open Office**. If you send me assignments in this format, I will be unable to open them, unable to grade them, and you will get a **zero** for the assignment. Also, if you send it later in word, it will be **late**. Also, you should send assignments through the WebCT program, as there is less chance of it disappearing in to junk mail folders.

All journal entries must be typed and printed unless you are writing in a journal book. Do not leave lots of space between entries in your journal. This wastes paper (and your \$\$ if you print on campus!). Please see the sample journal entry on the Organization page for the proper format. Staple all your entries together in one packet to hand in.

Late Policy:

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be accepted, but 1 point will be subtracted for each class an assignment is late. If you won't be here for class, get the assignment in ahead of time. The building will be open until at least 5 Monday-Friday. I can't guarantee anything later. "I came by, but the building was locked" is no excuse. Take responsibility, plan ahead.

Miscellaneous:

If at any time you are unclear about assignments or expectations, please contact me for clarification.

Please keep a duplicate copy of anything you turn in.

Attendance, Etiquette, Extra Credit and Miscellaneous Policies:

Attendance:

Needless to say, students are expected to be in class for every class meeting. As adults, you are able to make your own decisions about your time and obligations. We all get sick now and then, and we all have conflicting demands for our time. However, one must always be aware that those calculations may include the negative consequences. Attendance will be taken every class. **You are responsible for making sure you sign it.** Students in this class are allowed to miss four classes without penalty. It is the fifth absence, for whatever reason, that begins to affect one's grade negatively. **For every absence past four, 3 points will be removed from your final point total.** That may or may not sound like much, but in the end could make a difference.

I always presume that there is a good reason for any absence, therefore I have no interest in doctor's notes or excuses. It is up to you to manage your absences. If you attend class faithfully, there will be cushion if you get sick.

Attendance will not be taken until drop/add ends, but students who join the class **late** (i.e. after the first day of class), or skip class the first day to shop other classes, are responsible for catching up on their own.

Classroom Etiquette:

Please make every effort to get to class on time; late-comers are very distracting. If you know you will have to leave early, please let me know at the beginning of class, and try to sit near the door.

*** Note: entering class more than 10 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes early will result in a half absence***

Also, please refrain from getting up during class. This is a matter of respect and consideration for your own learning, myself, and your fellow classmates. As part of this consideration, please turn off cell phones, put away the newspaper, and don't be distracting with food or beverages. Engaging in side conversations, making disruptive and off-topic remarks, reading newspapers, using cell phones, sleeping and similarly rude behaviors are disruptive and I will not tolerate them. Engaging in such behaviors will lower your attendance grade.

Extra Credit and No-Whining Policy:

I rarely offer extra credit. Do not ask for it. I also do not take kindly to whining and complaining. I do respond well to open, honest, and objective feedback. I am a fair, reasonable, and challenging instructor. If you read your assignments, attend class, and do your work, you will get a good grade in this class. If you do not, you won't. I strive to be objective in my grading, and I will always attempt to explain to you what I am looking for in any given assignment, as well as why you have received the grade you have. Do not come to me with complaints of losing your HOPE scholarship. I know that it takes a series of events to put your scholarship at risk, and I will not assume all blame for your previous mistakes. I will treat each of you with respect and fairness, and I expect the same of you.

Miscellaneous Policies:

Incompletes:

The decision to assign an Incomplete is solely the prerogative of the instructor. An Incomplete is unlikely, and will only be considered when a student is doing satisfactory work, but for non-academic reasons beyond her/his control is unable to meet the full requirements of the course, such as taking a final or turning in a project at the scheduled time.

Withdrawals:

The midpoint withdrawal date is October 12th, after the first exam. Students who withdrawal before this date, will be assigned either a W or a WF based on their performance up to that point. Withdrawals after the midpoint withdrawal date must go through the office of Student Affairs.

Academic Integrity and Honesty:

All academic work must meet the standards in "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. Ignorance of these rules and regulations is not an acceptable defense of academic dishonesty. I expect all students to adhere to the University of Georgia's policy on Academic Integrity. All work that you do for this class must come from you and you alone with the exception of specific group work as determined by the instructor. All cases of academic dishonesty will be dealt with as outlined by the University. *I do not hesitate to report issues to the Academic Honesty Board.* For more information you may consult the University's Academic Honesty Policy at: http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm

Accommodations for Students with Special Needs:

Please see me to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. I take these requests very seriously and will make every attempt to accommodate reasonable requests. Before course accommodations will be made, you may be required to provide documentation to Disability Services (<http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu>, 542-8719).

Class Topic and Reading Schedule

(The syllabus is a general plan for the course, deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary)

Numbers refer to Readings in the textbook; Names refer to readings in the Bel-Jean Packet;

BI refers to the boxed inserts in the textbook M- refers to the magazine articles posted on WebCT.

Date	Readings:	Topic:
August 17		Intro
Unit 1: Central Concepts in Women's Studies		
20	Feminism (on WebCT)	What is Women's Studies
22	-- 6,	Construction of Gender
24	-- 7, 33, M-1	
27	-- Friedan, M-2	Constraints on Women
29	-- 2, 1	
31	-- 11, Henly & Freeman, M-3	
September 5	-- "Patriarchy"	Constraints on Men
6	-- M-4	
10	-- M-5	
12	-- Gilman, Higginbotham, M-6	Learning Gender & Femininity
14	-- "Portrayal"	
17		
19	--Ponzer, M-7, Weisstein, 14	
21	-- Wolf, 13, M-8	Beauty and Bodies
24	-- Worchester, 12	
26	-- Chernik, 34, M-9	
September 28	Exam 1	
Unit 2: Social Positions		
October 1	-- 29, BI p.152, 32, M-10	Heterosexuality
1 st	1st set of Journals Due (5)	
3	-- Pharr, Deilh & Ochs, M-11	Bi and Homosexuality
5	-- 3, Tatum, M-12	Race

	-- Optional: 30, 4	
8	-- Langston, Albelda & Tilly	Class
10		
12	-- Older Women's League, Wendell, BI p.119, M-13	Age, Ability, and Intersections
15	-- M-14	
15th	1st Gender Experience Due	
17	-- 42, 44, Dwyer, Human Rights	Global Issues
19	Watch, BI p.483 -- 45, Lazreg	
22		Catch Up and Review
October	24 Exam 2	

Unit 3: Feminist Issues

	29	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Work
	31	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Marriage & Family
November	2	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Religion
	2nd	Journals Due (4)	
	5	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Reproduction, Contraception, & Sex Ed
	7	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Abortion: Both Sides & Beyond
	9	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Violence Against Women
	12	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Health
	14	TBA – Feminist Issues Group Project	Rape
	16	-- Boswell & Spade	Rape on Campus
	16th	2^d Gender Experience Due	

Unit 4: Feminism

	19	-- 47, Sarachild	History of Women's Movements
	26		
	28	-- Fem-Types (on WebCT), BI	Types of Feminism
	30	p.93 -- Optional: 8, 9, 50, 49, 5	
December	3	-- Faludi, M-22	Backlash & Controversy
	3rd	3rd Gender Experience Due	
	4	-- Baumgartner and Richards, 48, M-23	Contemporary Feminism
	5	-- BI p.532, M-24	The Future of Feminism
		Journals Due (3)	Wrap Up and Review
December		Final Exam	

The Women's Studies Journal

This analytic journal, in which you write every week, makes up a major part of your grade. Journaling has always been central to feminist pedagogy: it is designed to further familiarize you with the material and to make connections between your personal life and the analytical methods used to study it. The journal's emphasis is not on the finished product of writing, but on the process of thinking and writing. I expect you to be self-reflective, but engage with the material critically.

A lot of journal writing is required for this class; approximately 20 pages for the semester. This means that your journals do not have to be as polished as the formal writing assignments required for this course. Your entries will be evaluated on coherence, whether they address the questions, whether they refer to the readings and material presented in class, your understanding of the material, and the depth and creativity of your thinking.

Journals will be read only by myself. If you desire to share, please feel free to share amongst yourselves, or in class discussions. Remember that journal entries may be private and personal, so be respectful of each other.

Due dates for the journals are listed in the syllabus. I expect to receive at least 12 journal entries. For every topic, questions can be found on the Web CT Organization Materials page. Usually they range from two to four questions pertinent to the readings. You are to choose one of the questions for each bold heading and write an answer at least 1.5 typed pages (double-spaced). Sometimes it may seem that you don't have enough to say, but that only means you need to think a little more deeply about the concepts involved.

Remember: This Journal is not only, or even mostly about your opinion. It is to be your critical reflection on the readings and topics we cover in class. Be sure to incorporate discussion of at least one reading in each entry.

You may write the entries in an actual book (if your handwriting permits), or type them on the computer. Think of these journal entries as an ongoing journal. You do not need to put a complete heading with your name, class, and date on each entry. Rather, put your name on the first entry, and indicate a new topic with an Indented, *italicized*, **bold**, or underlined title. DO NOT write out the question before writing your answer- that only needlessly takes up space.

You may complete up to three more extra journal entries (4 pts. each) by answering other journal questions I have posed, or by discussing particular readings that inspire, upset, or otherwise spark your creative juices. However, before you devise your own topics check with the instructor. Also, any extra journal entries should also be labeled as such. This is the only extra credit possible in this course.