

WMST1110 – Multicultural Perspectives on Women in the United States – Spring 2008

Section A: MWF 10:10-11:00 - Room 101 Dawson Hall

Section B: MWF 1:25-2:15 Room 103 Benson Building

INSTRUCTOR

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:20-12:20pm and by appointment, Dawson Hall Room 103

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the study of women of diverse racial, ethnic, sexual and class backgrounds. The course focuses on contemporary concerns and issues affecting women's lives, and seeks to familiarize students with major theoretical and practical debates within women's studies scholarship across various disciplines. While women may often be assumed to share similar experiences determined by their sex, significant differences also exist between them. Therefore, this course is a study of power relations within society arising not only from differences between men and women, but also arising from differences among women themselves. We will reflect on these differences and explore their significance for women's studies, feminist activism, and the broader "feminist movement."

REQUIRED READINGS

Kesselman, A., McNair, L., & Schniedwind, N. (2006). *Women Images and Realities: A Multicultural Anthology*, 4th ed. McGraw Hill. (Listed as WIR in syllabus)

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*, Routledge. (Listed as hooks in syllabus)

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

COURSE POLICES

I. Class Format, Governance & Classroom Climate

This class is organized to highlight class discussion based on the assigned texts. Previous careful reading of these texts will be vital to active participation and comprehension in class. Your attendance and active participation will be a critical part of this course. Some topics will be more sensitive than others. However, a climate of respect is expected during all course interactions. Respect includes honoring our right to agree and to disagree without injuring the humanity of others. *Under no circumstances will I tolerate language or behavior (written or spoken) that demeans or threatens another by virtue of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical appearance, religion etc.*

II. Academic Honesty

All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. For a copy of the Regents policy on academic honesty, go to http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm

III. Service to Students with Disabilities

In this class, all students, including students with disabilities, will receive guidance to foster his or her academic success. Students with documented disabilities seeking accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor no later than 3 days after the first day of class.

IV. Grading Scale

No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Failure to turn in an assignment results in a "0" on that assignment. In accordance with University policy this course will use the plus/minus system.

A = 500-475	B+ = 449-425	C+ = 374-350	D = 299-250
A- = 474-450	B = 424-400	C = 349-325	F = 249 and below
	B- = 399-375	C- = 324-300	

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

Assignments are to be turned in on the assigned due date, at the beginning of class. Turn in hard copies of your written assignments only. No assignments emailed or posted on WebCT unless instructed otherwise. I do not allow make up examinations or other assignments.

I. Attendance & Participation (20%)

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a crucial part of the learning process. Regular attendance assumes presence *and* participation during class discussions. Three absences (3) without penalty are allowed. Additional unexcused absences including being late to class by more than 10 minutes also will result in a 25 point deduction from your final grade for each absence.

WEBCT DISCUSSION POST

WebCT discussion board will be used in this course. Postings should address the assigned week's readings, class session, presenting your position on issues raised by the various authors. You may summarize concepts, arguments, or debates, although the objective of your writing should be to raise questions, respond to issues you identify, and otherwise provide a critical positioning with relation to the readings. A minimal of six postings is expected from each student and is due by noon the day prior to class discussion. Postings must be at least six sentences and at least three must be written in response to another classmate's comment. **50 points**

POP QUIZZES

Reading class material prior to class is important for class discussions. Pop quizzes will be administered throughout the semester on assigned readings. Students will not be informed which days pop quizzes will occur. Absent students cannot make-up quizzes. **40 points**

CURRENT ISSUE CASE

To give students the opportunity to explore and discuss current issues, each student must pair with another student to present one current issue that relates to weekly topics. Cases may cover a broad range of topics that have relevance or implications for multicultural women's issues. Cases must be timely (i.e. related to an event or issue occurring within the last 6 months) and have some presence in the local or national media. **10 points**

II. Group Participation (10%)

The class will be divided into groups. Collaborative learning exercises will provide opportunities for students to share analyses in a smaller group setting. The group will be responsible for class presentations. Members in the group will also be responsible for all course material in order to participate in class discussion. Your unexcused absence and/or non-participation could cost your group valuable discussion points. **Subjective 50 points**

II. Mid-term (20%)

The mid-term questions will be derived from assigned readings, guest lectures, class activities, audiovisuals, etc. The format for the exams will *more than likely* be essay and short answer. **100 points**

III. Race/Ethnicity/Gender/Sexual Orientation Log(20%)

PART 1. 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, class, gender, and/or sexual orientation. 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 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. **60 points**

PART 2. LOG ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION

This is a short (3 page, double spaced, times new roman font) 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, gender, or sexual orientation? Feel free to use any of these questions to examine your log, but you are not limited to these questions only. Be creative! **40 points**

IV. Group Presentations (10%)

Each group will be responsible for leading one class discussion on a week of their choice. In the week you lead discussion you will be required to report on both the required and recommended readings assigned for that week. Your presentation should include an analysis of a current media event (such as a news article or show, an advertisement or commercial, a magazine, song/album, or a film or television show) that relates to the weeks reading. Your analysis must have a feminist/womanist and multicultural focus. Be creative and incorporate class discussion. Each group will turn in a three-page (double spaced) reflection paper on the day’s reading(s). **50 points**

V. Final Group Debates (10%)

Each group will participate in a controversial issue debate. There are several controversial issues regarding women in the United States. While society may hold different opinions, it is important to know the facts and primary arguments of each viewpoint. In an effort to be more knowledgeable of controversial issues, students will be exposed to literature that details both sides of women and gender centered controversial issues. It is intended that students develop critical thinking skills by analyzing opposing viewpoints and reach considered judgments. Issues are taken from *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Sex and Gender* and *Taking Sides Clashing Views in Race and Ethnicity* and are available on WebCT. **50 points**

SUMMARY OF GRADE CALCULATION

Midterm Exam	20%	100 points
Race/Class/Gender Log	20%	100 points
Attendance & Participation	20%	100 points
Group Reading Presentation	15%	75 points
Group Debate	15%	75 points
Group Participation	10%	<u>50 points</u>
Total Point Value		500

Tentative Course Outline

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

**The date you see the article on the syllabus is the date we will discuss it in class.

SCHEDULED CLASS/ ASSIGNMENT DUE	READING
Introduction and Overview of Women's Studies... Defining Race and Ethnicity	
WEEK 1	
1/7	Course Overview, Introduction
1/9	The Social Construction of Gender–WebCT, p. 20-23
1/11	Identities and Social Location –WebCT, p. 49-58
WEEK 2	
1/14	Teaching and Living in Hope – hooks, preface
1/16	Defining Racism –WIR, p.380-385
1/18	White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack –WIR, p. 388-392
WEEK 3	
1/21 MLK Holiday 1/23	Talking Race and Racism – hooks, chpt. 3
1/25	<i>Group Meeting</i>
WEEK 4	
1/28 1/30	The Struggle to Define and Reinvent Whiteness: A Pedagogical Analysis – WebCT
2/1 Group Presentation 1	Perspectives on Native American Women on Race and Gender –WebCT, p. 60-67 I Am Not Your Princess –WIR, p. 387-388 Thoughts on Indian Feminism –WIR, p. 573-575
WEEK 5	
2/4 Group Presentation 2	Introduction to Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology: -WebCT, 7pgs. Talking Back –WIR, p. 15-18 <i>Recommended Reading:</i> The Black Church – WIR, p. 15-18
2/6 Group Presentation 3	The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse –WIR, p.565-572 <i>Recommended Reading:</i> Chicana/Latina - Race and Ethnic Relations in America, Chapter 8 –WebCT, p. 233-246
2/8	<i>Log Project</i>
WEEK 6	
2/11 *LOG DUE* Group Presentation 4	Rethinking Women's Issues in Muslim Communities –WIR, p. 295-298 Boundaries: Arab/American – WIR, p. 464-468
2/13 2/15	What Happens When White People Change – hooks, chpt. 5

Deconstructing the Natural: Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation	
WEEK 7	
2/18	Men and Women's Studies: Premises, Perils, and Promise –WIR, p. 24-28
2/20 *ANALYSIS DUE*	Homophobia and Sexism –WIR, p. 416-419 Straight Privilege –WebCT, 2pgs.
2/22	Film: <i>Jumping the Broom</i>
WEEK 8	
2/25 Group Presentation 5	Chicana Lesbians: Fear and Loathing in the Chicano Community –WIR, p. 423-427 Bisexuality, Feminism, Men, and Me –WIR, p. 165-167 <i>Recommended Reading</i> Loving Another Woman –WIR, p. 156-161
2/27	Categories of Sex and Gender: Either/Or, Both/And, and Neither/Nor –WIR, p. 25-31
2/29	<i>Class Diversity Activity</i>
Deconstructing the Natural: Beauty in America	
WEEK 9	
3/3	<i>Group Diversity Activity and Midterm Preparation</i>
3/5 *MIDTERM EXAM*	<i>Group Reports</i>
3/7	Film – <i>Dream Worlds</i>
WEEK 10 3/10-3/14 Spring Break	
WEEK 11	
3/17	Teen Mags: How to Get a Guy, Drop 20 Pounds, and Lose Your Self-Esteem –WIR, p. 93-96 When I Was Growing Up –WIR, p. 125-126 To Other Women Who Were Ugly Once –WIR, p. 126
3/19	Film – <i>Hip Hop, Beyond Beats and Rhymes</i>
3/21	
WEEK 12	
3/24	No Respect: Gender Politics and Hip-Hop –WIR, pp. 99-105 Video –WIR, p. 108
3/26	
3/2 Group Presentation 6	Barbie Culture – WebCT, 13pgs. Klaus Barbie, and Dolls I'd Like to See –WIR, p. 72-75

Deconstructing the Natural: Women, Work and Families	
WEEK 13	
3/31	Progressive Learning: A Family Value – hooks, chpt. 10
4/2	The Price of Motherhood –WIR, p. 191-194
4/4	Film: <i>Real Women Have Curves</i>
WEEK 14	
4/7	Family and Women’s Lives –WIR, p. 244-249 On Being a Good Girl: Implications for Latinas in the United States –WIR, p. 63-66 We Don’t Sleep Around Like White Girls Do –WIR, p.144-151
4/9	
4/11	The Politics of Housework –WIR, p. 188-190 A Marriage Agreement -WIR, p. 271-274
WEEK 15	
4/14	Living in a Gay Family –WIR, p. 427-429 Working at Single Bliss –WIR, p. 265-271 Why We’re Not Getting Married
4/16	Spiritual Matters in the Classroom – hooks, chpt. 15
4/18	<i>Group Debate Meeting</i>
WEEK 16	
4/21	<i>Group Debates</i>
4/23	<i>Group Debates</i>
4/25	<i>Group Debates</i>
WEEK 17	
4/28	*FINAL GROUP PAPER DUE* <i>Group Debates</i>