

WS 201 – SECTION 001
INTRO TO WOMEN’S STUDIES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2018

Class: Monday & Wednesday 12:40 – 2:00 p.m.
106A Berkey Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00 – 11:30 p.m.
& by appointment
Office: 206 International Center

Instructor: Dr. Tim Retzloff
(preferred pronouns: *he, him, his*)
Email: retzloff@msu.edu
Cell: (517) 402-3999

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Welcome! This course provides an introduction to the broad interdisciplinary field of women’s studies. The readings for the course will address theoretical approaches to the social construction of gender (with specific attention to women) and the contemporary realities of women’s daily lives resulting from the institutions of patriarchy, sexism, feminism and women’s movement(s). While most of the course content will focus on women’s studies and women’s positions within U.S. society, an international component has been included to broaden our scope and compare similarities and differences among women’s struggles throughout the world. Lectures, guest lectures, readings, films and videos will be used as bases for study and for generating lively class discussions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Students will become familiar with the wide range of issues, topics and disciplines women’s studies encompasses and has influenced
- Students will become familiar with and able to use concepts basic to feminist theories.
- Students will illuminate and discuss critically some of the main areas in which women suffer injustices and discrimination as a group and to investigate possible causes of and solutions to women’s oppression.
- Students will gain knowledge about the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality.
- Students will be invited think critically about our positions in the world and how our social spaces influence the ways we think about our gendered selves and other people’s.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Punctuality

You are expected to attend every class from start to finish. Attendance is mandatory and part of your participation grade. Only documented emergencies, medical circumstances, or officially school-sanctioned activities will qualify as excused absences.

Grading

Grading will be based on 500 points allocated as follows:

- 10% Reading Questions (10)
- 10% Team Presentation
- 15% Journal Entries (5)
- 20% Class Participation
- 20% Midterm Essay
- 25% Final Exam

Reading Questions = 5 points each/50 points (10% of grade)

For most units covered throughout the semester you will complete a set of questions in response to the readings (located at the end of each chapter in WVFV). You are expected to complete the questions prior to class the day they are due and bring a hard copy (typed, not handwritten!) to class to aid in the discussion and turn in to me for credit. These are meant to help you keep up with your readings so you do not find yourself drowning in readings before the midterm or final and so you are better prepared to participate in class discussions. The syllabus lists 12 due dates for Reading Questions. You need to turn in submissions for 10 of these 12.

Team Presentation = 50 points (10% of grade)

In Teams of 2 or 3, students will lead discussion of the readings for a designated date indicated in the syllabus. Within whatever Team you are assigned, you will be expected to help lead discussion on the date indicated in the syllabus. In doing so, each member of the Team should probe deeply into one specific reading, identifying the main argument of the author(s), highlighting key ideas, and posing questions generated by your assessment of the text. Each Team should come prepared to carry discussion for about 45 minutes.

Journal Entries = 15 points each/75 points (15% of grade)

Five times during the semester you will write journal entries in which you reflect on a reading, lecture, video, presentation, class activity, etc. Each entry should be submitted via D2L, should run 250 to 400 words, and should discuss how the information you learn in class has affected your life or will affect your life. This is your opportunity to share your personal thoughts about the topics we are covering in class. It may be helpful to start an entry with, "When we discussed ___ in class I felt ___ because..." or "When we read ___ for class it reminded me of..." Everyone is expected to submit a Journal Entry for the first due date. Which of the remaining due dates you submit for is your choice.

Class Participation = 100 points (20% of grade)

Because readings and supplementary visual and audio media will make up the backbone of our conversations, you are expected to come to each class prepared to explore, defend, and critique them. Your participation grade will be based on regular participation and engagement in classroom discussions, and any in-class writing assignments.

Attendance will account for half of your participation grade as follows: You will be allotted 50 points for attendance. You are allowed 2 unexcused absences without penalty. For each additional unexcused absence, you will be docked points on an exponential basis. For example, for a 3rd absence, you will lose 2 points; for a 4th absence, you will lose 4 points; for a 5th absence, you will lose 8 points; and so forth. Also, for each day you are late to class, you will be docked 1 point. Each time you are observed texting or otherwise using your cell phone, you will be docked 1 point.

Midterm Essay = 100 points (20% of grade)

In lieu of an in-class midterm exam, you will have a Midterm Essay assignment, due Monday, October 13th. You will be given a question/prompt and guidelines for the Midterm Essay one week prior to the due date.

Final Exam = 125 points total (25% of grade)

An in-class Final Exam will cover course material for entire semester and will consist of a mix of true/false, multiple choice, matching, and identifications. A study guide will be provided on the last day of class. All students must bring an exam book to class to write the examinations. The final exam will be held 12:45-2:45 p.m., Tuesday, December 11, 2018.

Grades

Final grades are based on 500 points and are tabulated on a strict percentage basis:
94% to 100% = A; 87% to 93.99% = AB; 84% to 86.99% = B; 77% to 83.99% = BC;
74% to 76.99% = C; 67% to 73.99% = CD; 64% to 66.99% = D; 60% to 63.99% = DE;
<59.99% = E

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The texts should be available at student bookstores as well as from most online retailers. Less expensive, used copies may be found from various retail websites. Be sure to purchase the correct editions.

Women's Voices, Feminist Visions, Sixth Edition (McGraw-Hill, 2015) ISBN 978-0078027000

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Mariner Books, 2007) ISBN 978- 978-0618871711

All other required readings can be accessed through the course's D2L website.

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS:**Course Ethics**

Cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices may not be used in class except for class-related activities.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any use of the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment of credit, or cheating on an exam, will result in serious penalties up to and including a failing course grade. All students should be familiar with the university's Policies, Regulations and Ordinances Regarding Academic Honesty and Integrity (<https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html>).

Email Policy

Contacting me by email is the best way to get in touch with me. Please be advised, however, that while I check my email regularly Monday-Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., I check it more sporadically in the evening and on weekends. So, if you email me at 11:30 p.m. the night before class, for example, please do not expect an immediate or timely reply.

Special Needs

Students who require special assistance with any aspect of this course are encouraged to see me as early in the semester as possible to make necessary accommodations.

Behavior and Expectations

During any interactions with instructors or classmates, students are expected to behave in a respectful and courteous manner. Disrespect toward your student colleagues or instructors will not be tolerated. Your instructor is committed to fostering a student-centered learning environment where ideas and opinions can be expressed and exchanged freely and civilly.

**WS 201 – SECTION 001
FALL 2018
COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week 1

Wednesday, August 29: INTRODUCTIONS

Week 2

Monday, September 3: **LABOR DAY
NO CLASS**

Wednesday, September 5: WOMEN AND THE MIDTERM ELECTION

Read prior to class: Yglesias, “Democrats Are Nominating an Unprecedented Number...”
Yglesias, “Trump’s Enduring Political Strength with White Women”
Steiger, “9 Women to Watch from This Year’s Midterms”
Nilsen, “Democratic Women Are Picking up Momentum...”
Zhou, “It’s Official: Women Have Been Nominated for a Record...”
Coaston, “Why Conservatives Love to Hate Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez”
Deckman & Shames, “Will Young Women of Color Shape the Democratic Party?”

Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Week 3

Monday, September 10: WOMEN’S & GENDER STUDIES I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 1-27

Wednesday, September 12: WOMEN’S & GENDER STUDIES II

Read prior to class: Rich, “Claiming an Education”
Guy & Sheftall, “Forty Years of Women’s Studies”
NY Radical Women, “No More Miss America”
Baumgardner & Richards, “A Day Without Feminism”
hooks, “Feminist Politics”
Cody, “The Power and the Gloria”
Harquail, “Facebook for Women vs. Facebook Designed by Feminists”
Quindlen, “Still Needing the F Word”
Piercy, “My Heroines”

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 4

Monday, September 17: SYSTEMS OF PRIVILEGE & INEQUALITY I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 49-71

In class viewing: *Lorraine Hansberry: Sighted Eyes/Feeling Heartr*

Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Wednesday, September 19: SYSTEMS OF PRIVILEGE & INEQUALITY II

Read prior to class: Collins, “Toward a New Vision”

May, “Intersectionality”

Orde, “There Is No Hierarchy of Oppression”

McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege"
Taylor, "Cisgender Privilege"
Yeskel, "Opening Pandora's Box"
Mamber, "Don't Laugh, It's Serious, She Says"
Wendell, "The Social Construction of Disability"
Jordan, "Report from the Bahamas"
Angelou, "Our Grandmothers"

Team 1 Leads Discussion

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 5

Monday, September 24: LEARNING GENDER I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 116-135

Wednesday, September 26: LEARNING GENDER II

Read prior to class: Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes, Revisited"

Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender"

Fine, "Unraveling Hardwiring"

Blackwood, "Trans Identities and Contingent Masculinities"

Kimmel & Hoff-Sommers, "What's Up with Boys?"

Wong, "When I Was Growing Up"

Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, & Buchanan, "Through the Lens of Race"

Brake, "Wrestling with Gender"

Team 2 Leads Discussion

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 6

Monday, October 1: INSCRIBING GENDER ON THE BODY I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 181-204

In-class viewing: *Killing Us Softly 4*

Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Wednesday, October 3: INSCRIBING GENDER ON THE BODY II

Read prior to class: Brumberg, "Breast Buds and the 'Training' Bra"

Steinem, "If Men Could Menstrate"

Mullins, "Prosthetic Power"

Grossman, "Beating Anorexia and Gaining Feminism"

Greenwood & Dal Cin, "Ethnicity and Body Consciousness"

Weitz, "What We Do for Love"

Miya-Jervis, "Hold That Nose"

Fikkan & Rothblum, "Is Fat a Feminist Issue?"

Frosch, "Bodies and Bathrooms"

Pham, "If the Clothes Fit"

Team 3 Leads Discussion

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 7

Monday, October 8: SEX, POWER, AND INTIMACY I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 313-333

Midterm Essay Assignment Distributed

Wednesday, October 10: SEX, POWER, AND INTIMACY II

Read prior to class: Valenti, "The Cult of Virginity"

Bass, Gate C 22"

Rupp, "A World of Difference"

Allen, "Some Like Indians Endure"

Cerankowski & Milks, "New Orientations: Asexuality"

Smith, Dismantling Hierarchy, Queering Society"

Springer, "Queering Black Female Heterosexuality"

Team 4 Leads Discussion

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 8

Monday, October 15: MEDIA AND CULTURE I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 250-275

In-class viewing: *It*

Midterm Essay DUE in class

Wednesday, October 17: MEDIA AND CULTURE II

Read prior to class: Woolf, "Thinking About Shakespeare's Sister"

Dickinson, "The Wife"

Watson, "Rush Limbaugh and the New Networked Feminism"

Lorde, "Poetry Is Not a Luxury"

Douglas, "Enlightened Sexism"

De Leon, "If Women Ran Hip Hop"

Happel & Esposito, "Vampires and Vixens"

Havrilesky, "Don't Act Crazy, Mindy"

Weiner, "Beyoncé: Feminist Icon?"

Radsch, "Cyberactivism and the Role of Women in Arab Uprisings"

Piepmeier, "Bad Girl, Good Girl"

Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 9

Monday, October 22: HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE I

Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 362-394

In-class viewing: *Maude*, season 1, episodes 9 & 10, "Maude's Dilemma"

Wednesday, October 24: HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE II

Read prior to class: Edwards, "The Gender Gap in Pain"

Gaines, "Southern Discomfort"

Fugate, "A Global Health Imperative"

Parks, Rethinking Radical Politics in the Context of Assisted Reproductive..."

Luna, "From Rights to Justice"

Koerth-Baker, Ginty, & Joyce, "Freedom to Choose?"
Team 5 Leads Discussion
Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 10

Monday, October 29: FAMILY SYSTEMS, FAMILY LIVES I
Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 433-451
Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Wednesday, October 31: FAMILY SYSTEMS, FAMILY LIVES II
Read prior to class: Goldman, "Marriage and Love"
Miya-Jervis, "Who Wants to Marry a Feminist?"
Warner, "Family Way"
Bilger, D'Addardio, & Vijayakumar, "Marriage Equality"
Harris, "Singled Out"
Schwartzapfel, "Lullabies Behind Bars"
Kahf, "My Grandmother Washes Her Feet in the Sink of the Bathroom at Sears"
Team 6 Leads Discussion
Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 11

Monday, November 5: WORK INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOME I
Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 470-499
In-class viewing: *Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter*

Wednesday, November 7: WORK INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOME II
Read prior to class: Heath, "Will Marriage Equality Lead to Equal Sharing..."
Hesse-Biber & Carter, "A Brief History of Working Women"
Coontz, "The Triumph of the Working Mother"
Ehrenbreich, "Maid to Order"
Chang, "Color Me Nontoxic"
Levintova, "Virtuous Valentine?"
Burk, "Power Plays"
Drexler, "The Sexist Truth About Office Romances"
Richter, "Sex Work as a Test Case for African Feminism"
Team 7 Leads Discussion
Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 12

Monday, November 12: RESISTING GENDER VIOLENCE I
Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 537-564
Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Wednesday, November 14: RESISTING GENDER VIOLENCE II
Read prior to class: Smith, "Beyond the Politics of Inclusion"
Lockwood, "She Said"
Chinapen, "Sex Trafficking in the U.S."

Davis, *Betrayed by the Angel*
Atherton-Zeman, "How Some Men Harass Women Online and What Other Men..."
Bridges, "Lisa's Ritual, Age 10"
Hobday, Signorile, & Gillette, "Anti-LGBTQ Violence"
Team 8 Leads Discussion
Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 13

Monday, November 19: IN THE FIRST-PERSON
Read prior to class: Bechdel, *Fun Home*

Wednesday, November 21:
NO CLASS

Week 14

Monday, November 26: STATE, LAW, AND POLICY I
Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 582-605
Journal Entry DUE on D2L

Wednesday, November 28: STATE, LAW, AND POLICY II
Read prior to class: Anthony, "Constitutional Argument"
Smeal, "The Feminist Factor"
Larris & Maggio, "Name It. Change It."
Burroughs, "Too Poor to Parent?"
Neustadt, "Looking Beyond the Wall"
Hugmeyer, "Delinquent Girls"
Brown, "Struggling to Find a Home"
Diajic-Horvath, "First Morning in Exile"
Team 9 Leads Discussion
Reading Questions DUE in class

Week 15

Monday, December 3: ACTIVISM, CHANGE, AND FEMINIST FUTURES I
Read prior to class: WVFV, pages 692-714

Wednesday, December 5: ACTIVISM, CHANGE, AND FEMINIST FUTURES II
Read prior to class: Hurt, "Feminist Men"
Hogeland, "Fear of Feminism"
Clarren, "Fracking Is a Feminist Issue"
Merchant, "Wonder"
Petrou, "What Pussy Riot Taught the World"
Bailey & Gumbs, "We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For"
Joseph, "Warning"
Reading Questions DUE in class

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 11, 2018, 12:45 – 2:45 p.m., 106A Berkey Hall