

## Syllabus and Schedule

### Women's and Gender Studies: Introduction to Women's Studies

Pittsburg State University, Fall 2018

Women's Studies 200-01 5-6:15 M/W room 114 Grubbs

**Instructor:** Allison Blevins

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Office:** 441 Grubbs Hall

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### Required Texts and Materials

1. Shaw and Lee: *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, 6th edition
2. You will occasionally be responsible for printing from internet sources.
3. You need a Netflix instant streaming account or the ability to rent/find several movies and documentaries.

### Course Description

Introduction to Women's Studies uses a multi-disciplinary approach to focus on women's lives and experiences to investigate connections between gender and race, class, nationality, sexuality, and cultural differences. As an academic manifestation of feminism, women's studies offers a range of perspectives but focuses, in general, on understanding the sources of women's oppression in order to eliminate these sources. In this course, we will explore the experiences, perspectives, and representations of women and the ways that their lives have been shaped by structures of gender inequality. This is a class that introduces definitions of "feminism" and "women's studies."

### Course Format

This will be largely a discussion based class. Be prepared to take more initiative in joining the classroom discussion than you have in your other classes. This is not optional or recommended but essential and required. We must all take responsibility for the activity of learning.

This class will blend multiple learning environments. We will complete our discussions face-to-face, but all of your work outside the classroom will be submitted on Canvas. This work will include feedback on other students' drafts. Be prepared to check-in on Canvas regularly.

### Course Requirements

1. Participation - 50 points or 25%
2. Activism Project - 55 points or 27%
3. Formal Writing - 95 points or 48%

### Pittsburg State University Pathway

This is a Milestone I course for the Essential Element **Global Understanding and Civic Engagement: Human Systems within a Global Context**. *Students will explore global systems conscientiously.* In this course, this means: ***Students will explain patriarchy using feminist***

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**perspectives.** Specifically, upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply an interdisciplinary approach and key concepts such as patriarchy to analyze gender and gender inequality;
2. Explain the structure of patriarchy and describe its development over time;
3. Assess the roles biology and social construction play in shaping gender and sexuality;
4. Discuss the ethical, social, and legal consequences of feminism and women's movements;
5. Critically analyze the ways gender intersects with race, ethnicity, sexuality, class and other power hierarchies at local, national and global levels.

Student competencies, with respect to the above learning outcomes, will be assessed through three formal writing assignments: a mid-term, a final exam and a final paper (see above).

This is also a Milestone I course for the Companion Element: **Social Responsibility within a Global Context.** In this course, *Students will explain the roles and responsibilities of citizens with respect to gender equity.* In particular, students will complete an activism project in which they:

1. Identify sources of oppression and effective activism to generate change;
2. Reflect on personal experience considering the diversity of women's lives and draw connections between the personal and the political.

### General Education Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Students should be able to communicate effectively.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Apply the principles of effective oral communication either in-group or individual presentations.
2. Apply the principles of effective writing and other forms of communication.

Goal #2: Students should be able to think critically.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information in problem solving.
2. Articulate a problem and develop a logical and reasonable response to it using appropriate sources.
3. Apply generalizations, principles, theories, or rules to the real world.
4. Demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize information.

Goal #3: Students should be able to function responsibly in the world in which they live.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of contemporary social issues.
2. Evaluate the impact of scientific, technological, economic, and intellectual change on social and political institutions.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of cultural diversity within the United States and in the world at large.

### Women's Studies at PSU

Minor in Women's Studies: The Women's Studies minor involves twenty-one credit hours, including a six credit hour core emphasizing collaborative learning and critical thinking in global, activist, and

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feminist contexts. The minor complements a wide variety of majors, including Business, English, Communication, Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, History, Justice Studies, Psychology, and Sociology, and it is an excellent preparation for careers in the non-profit sector or in private sector fields such as human resources, marketing, management, education, and law.

**Minor Requirements:** Twenty-one credit hours, including a six credit hour core (WOMEN 200 and 399), and 15 hours in Women's Studies electives. Electives are cross-listed with course offerings from other departments, such as History, Communication, Psychology, English, and Family and Consumer Sciences.

**Certificate Requirements:** Fifteen credit hours, including a six credit hour core (WOMEN 200 and 399), and nine additional credit hours of any other undergraduate course approved for Women's Studies credit.

### **Writing To Learn Statement of Intent and Philosophy**

Writing serves several important functions. Writing things down helps us remember information. Writing also helps us work through our thoughts which helps us to come to a clearer understanding of our beliefs and ideas about complex issues. In this course we will write frequently as a way to learn course material. The writing will range from short proposals to a more formal research essay. Expect to write about course content frequently. The philosophy behind these writing assignments is that you learn to write well by writing often about complex ideas. The philosophy is also that you will learn the major concepts in this course better by writing and by expecting to go through several stages of a process before coming to a final product. This is why you will sometimes be given the possibility of showing me a rough draft of an assignment, and this is why you are encouraged to take writing to the Writing Center. You will receive written feedback on all of your writing in the form of general comments in the comments section of Canvas or specific comments inside the paper. Feedback will also be given in the form of a detailed rubric for each assignment. When using sources, you will give credit for the words or ideas of others by documenting your sources using the MLA style of documentation. You will write a minimum of 10 pages of formal writing for the formal writing assignments listed in the syllabus. The due dates for all assignments are listed in the schedule.

### **Course Policies**

#### Academic Dishonesty

You are expected to give and receive help in this class, but all written work must be your own. If you plagiarize, in whole or in part, from the library, Internet, field sources, from other students' essays, or if you fail to document properly, the minimum penalty is a 0 for the assignment. You could also receive a F for the course, be placed on academic probation, or be dismissed from Pittsburg State University. If you have any questions about plagiarism, ask before you act.

#### Activism Project

Feminism is not just about ideas, it is about working with ideas. This project is designed to provide you with an outlet to practice what you have learned in class. This project will show you that you are

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capable of interacting with systems to affect change. A major goal of your project is for you to become an agent for change. This project is ongoing and culminates with a presentation.

#### Attendance Policy

1. You don't need to notify me if you will be absent — whether expected or unexpected. I don't need to know why you are absent, and you don't have to apologize for missing class. Your priorities are your business, but please use your absences wisely.
2. Please ask your peers for the notes from class on the days you were absent.
3. Tardiness - Please do not arrive late to class.
4. Excessive absences (4 or more) are grounds for being dropped from the class.

#### Canceling Class

If the university closes because of inclement weather, you will be notified by the university. If I need to cancel class, you will receive an email from me.

#### Community Involvement

You are encouraged to attend women centered events over the course of the semester. The event may be one of many cultural or educational events on campus or off that feature women in positive ways. I'll announce possibilities in class.

You should also log onto facebook and "like" the Women's Studies program page. The page can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Womens-Studies-Program-Pittsburg-State-University/269329289781490>.

#### Courtesy

1. Be on time. Bring your materials to class and use them. Do the reading.
2. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior can be a cause for dismissal from this course; except in the egregious cases, you will receive a warning.
3. Turn off your cell phones. Do not send or read text messages during class time. If your phone rings or you are texting during class, I may ask you to leave, and you will be counted as absent for the day.
4. Do not use your computer during class time. Do not use a Kindle, ipod, ipad, or any electronic device during class time. I expect you to work from paper copies of internet material during class time.
5. Do not use electronic cigarettes during class.

#### Extra Credit

You may earn up to 10 extra credit points. You can do extra community involvement activities. You can read any article from the textbook that we do not read for class and write a summary and response. Other opportunities for extra credit will be announced throughout the semester.

#### Fair Warning

Some of you may experience more than one uncomfortable moment in this class. We'll be watching

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some graphic videos. Some strong-held opinions and beliefs may be challenged. We may discuss subjects you'd rather not think about. You'll be expected to do a fair amount of work.

#### Grading Policy

1. This class is graded using the following scale based on total semester points: A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), and F (59% or less).
2. In case of grade appeals, students are responsible for saving all graded work.
3. **This is a Writing to Learn course, which means that in addition to earning an overall passing grade on other course components, you must also earn an average passing grade on the formal writing assignments to pass this course. If you do not earn an average passing grade on the formal writing assignments, you cannot pass this course.**

#### Late Work Policy

All assignments must be handed in by the due date and time. I do not accept late work. No exceptions will be made to this policy for any reason.

#### Midterm and Final

You will be tested not only over the reading and videos but also over information presented in class, whether through presentation, lecture, video, or any other media. The final will be comprehensive and cover material presented throughout the semester. Both exams will be completed at home and turned in on Canvas. Both exams will require some research and reference to materials we have worked with over the semester.

#### Participation

I expect you to be able to actively participate in every class discussion. As you read, you need to write down questions you are interested in discussing, problems you have with the reading, and issues you want to cover in class. I expect you to engage with the material outside of class.

You should bring 5 typed discussion questions with you to class each day. I will randomly collect these questions for participation points. The questions should help lead the class to a deeper understanding of the material.

Points will be assigned at the beginning of class time. If you are late, you will not receive points unless you contact me via canvas on the same day you were late to notify me that you were in class (but late). I will not remind you. This is your responsibility. If you are late, you will only receive 1/2 points. If you are late more than 3 times, you will stop receiving points when you are late.

#### Special Concerns

Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations.

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**The syllabus and schedule are subject to change at instructor's discretion.**

#### Week 1

##### **Monday 8/20 - Introduction to the Course**

Tasks for today:

1. Women's Studies quiz in class.
2. Discuss the syllabus and schedule.
3. Discuss Canvas.
4. Print the schedule.

##### **Wednesday 8/22 - Women's Studies**

Reading for today's discussion: Chapter 1 (1-27), "A Day Without Feminism" (34-37), and "Fear of Feminism" (717-720).

Tasks for today:

1. Look over the directions for the project and paper.

#### Week 2

##### **Monday 8/27 - Systems of Privilege and Inequality**

Reading for today's discussion: "Toward a New Vision" (72-79), "White Privilege and Male Privilege" (86-93), "Opening Pandora's Box" (95-99), "Tired of Playing Monopoly" and "I'm Not Political" (on Canvas)

##### **Wednesday 8/29 - Gender**

Reading for today's discussion: "The Five Sexes, Revisited" (136-140), "The Social Construction of Gender" (141-143), and "Unraveling Hardwiring" (144-149).

#### Week 3

##### **Monday 9/3 - Labor Day**

##### **Wednesday 9/5 - Masculinity**

Reading for today's discussion: "If Men Could Menstruate" (209- 210), "Feminist Men" (715-717), and "Butch is Beautiful: Exploring Female Masculinity in Photos" (on Canvas). Watch the videos *American Male* (on Canvas) and *The Mask You Live In* (on Netflix).

#### Week 4

##### **Monday 9/10 - Race**

Reading for today's discussion: "There is No Hierarchy of Oppression" (85-86), "Through the Lens of Race" (160-169), and "How Women's Studies Erased Black Women" (on Canvas). Watch *White Like Me* (on Canvas).

##### **Wednesday 9/12 - LGBT Issues**

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Reading for today's discussion: "Cisgender Privilege" (93-95), "Bodies and Bathrooms" (245-246), "Equality's Brutal Backlash" (579), and "Homophobia" (on Canvas). Watch *Headspace* and *When We Rise* (on Canvas).

#### **Week 5**

**Monday 9/17 - Sex, Power, and Intimacy**

Reading for today's discussion: "The Cult of Virginity" (334-338) and "Lusting for Freedom" (on Canvas).

Tasks for today:

1. Activism project proposal due by 11:59 PM.

#### **Wednesday 9/19 - The Body**

Reading for today's discussion: "Breast Buds and the 'Training' Bra" (205-209), "Beating Anorexia and Gaining Feminism" (211-213) and "Is Fat a Feminist Issue?" (233-241). Watch *The Menstruation Story* (on Canvas) and *To the Bone* (on Netflix).

#### Week 6

#### **Monday 9/24 - Health and the Environment**

Reading for today's discussion: "Color Me Nontoxic" (522-523), "Virtuous Valentine?" (524-525), "Principles of Environmental Justice" (709-710), "Fracking Is a Feminist Issue" (720-722), and "Ecofeminism" (on Canvas). Watch *The Story of Cosmetics* and *Toxic Baby* (on Canvas).

#### **Wednesday 9/26 - Health and Reproductive Justice**

Reading for today's discussion: "Think Before You Pink Toolkit" (on Canvas). Watch *PinkRibbons, Inc* (on Canvas).

Tasks for today:

1. Begin working on your product review report.

#### Week 7

#### **Monday 10/1 - Health and Reproductive Justice**

Reading for today's discussion: "Freedom to Choose?" (424-431). Look at the 1-in-3 website (on Canvas). Watch *Trapped* (on Netflix).

#### **Wednesday 10/3 - Health and Reproductive Justice**

Reading for today's discussion: "What Does Feminism Have To Do With Breastfeeding?" (on Canvas). Watch *The Business of Being Born* (on Canvas) and *Breastmilk* (available to rent on Amazon).

Tasks for today:

1. Product review report is due at 11:59 PM.

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#### **Monday 10/8 - Marriage**

Reading for today's discussion: "Marriage and Love" (452-454), "Who Wants to Marry a Feminist" (454-456), "Marriage Equality" (459-464), and "Why I Want A Wife" (on Canvas)

Tasks for today:

1. Begin working on the midterm. The midterm is due in 1 week.

#### **Wednesday 10/10 - Work day**

Tasks for today:

1. Midterm is due by 11:59 PM.

#### Week 9

#### **Monday 10/15 - Housework**

Reading for today's discussion: "Will Marriage Equality Lead to Equal Sharing of Housework?" (500-503), "The Triumph of the Working Mother" (515-517), and "Maid to Order" (517-522).

Tasks for today:

1. Your activism project midway report due by 11:59 PM.

#### **Wednesday 10/17 - Violence**

Reading for today's discussion: "Sex Trafficking in the U.S." (568-571) and "Betrayed by the Angel" (571-574). Watch the "Tea Video" and "Our Story of Rape and Reconciliation" (on Canvas) and *The Hunting Ground* (on Netflix).

#### Week 10

#### **Monday 10/22 - State, Law, and Social Policy**

Reading for today's discussion: "Lullabies Behind Bars" (466-467), "Delinquent Girls" (624-628), and "She Who Believes in Freedom" (on Canvas). Watch *13th* and *After Innocence* (on Netflix).

#### **Wednesday 10/24 - State, Law, and Social Policy**

Reading for today's discussion: "Too Poor to Parent" (617-619) and "What This Nation Really Thinks of Motherhood: Welfare Reform" (on Canvas). Watch *Welfare* (on Canvas) and *Requiem for the American Dream* (on Netflix).

#### **Monday 10/29 - Religion**

Reading for today's discussion: "The Prophet's Daughters" (666-669), "Feminist Questions of Christianity" (673-681), and "The Non-Religious Patriarchy" (682-689).

Tasks for today:

1. Sign-up for a conference. The sign-up sheet is posted on my office door.

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2. Your paper rough draft due by 11:59 PM. You need to complete 2 peer reviews by Wednesday at 11:59 PM. Rough drafts will be randomly assigned to you.

#### **Wednesday 10/31 - Halloween**

Tasks for today:

1. Your peer reviews over the paper rough draft are due by 11:59 PM.

#### Week 12

#### **Monday 11/5 - Conferences**

#### **Wednesday 11/7 - Conferences**

#### Week 13

#### **Monday 11/12 - Mother Culture**

Watch *Miss Representation* in class.

#### **Wednesday 11/14- Mother Culture**

Reading for today's discussion: "Enlightened Sexism" (283-287) and "Vampires and Vixens" (288-292). Watch *Killing Us Softly* (on Canvas).

#### Week 14

#### **Monday 11/19 - Conferences**

#### **Wednesday 11/21 - Thanksgiving Break**

Tasks for today:

1. Presentation due by 11:59 PM.

#### Week 15

#### **Monday 11/26 - Presentations**

Tasks for today:

1. Paper due by 11:59 PM.
2. All extra credit is due by 11:59 PM.

#### **Wednesday 11/28 - Presentations**

#### Week 16

#### **Monday 12/3 - Presentations**

#### **Wednesday 12/5 - Presentations**

Tasks for today:

1. Begin working on the final exam.

#### Week 17

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**Monday 12/10**

Tasks for Today

1. **Final exam due by 11:59PM.**