REQUIRED TEXTS:
- Many readings will be available through JSTOR or distributed online.

"Over the past three decades, feminist scholars have rocked the foundation of academia by challenging long-established beliefs, contesting dominant research paradigms, and identifying new strategies of analysis. How are we to understand these feminist interventions? Do they capture a truth about race and gender that mainstream scholarship has missed? Do they provide important insights into the politics of knowledge? How do feminist uses of traditional research methods differ from their deployment by nonfeminist scholars? What is distinctive and innovative about feminist research?" – Hawkesworth

This course addresses four sets of questions, and the connections between them: (1) What are the implications of feminism for academic research (who/what we study, how we study it, what we do with the findings)? (2) What implications does feminism have for epistemology (what counts as knowledge/ignorance, how one learns, who knowers are, what barriers to knowledge are connected to gender and race, etc.)? (3) How does Women’s & Gender Studies as a discipline incorporate, honor, and continue to explore feminist methodologies and epistemologies? (4) How can you further incorporate feminist methodologies and epistemologies into your own research and writing practices?

Objectives:
- Understand the bases of feminist critiques of non-feminist social science and humanities epistemologies and methodologies;
- Be familiar with a range of alternative feminist research models and practices;
- Have an understanding of the impact of feminism on various disciplines;
- Reflect on the character of Women’s & Gender Studies as an academic discipline, including how it connects with other disciplines; and
- Develop skills to appreciate, use, assess, and critique feminist scholarship.

Course requirements and grades:
Attendance: Come to class having completed and reflected on the reading assignments.

Participation (30% of your course grade): Participate regularly, vigorously, sincerely, and collegially. Most of the course will involve discussion among the entire group, but there will be some small group work, too.

WGS events (15%): Attend two Women’s & Gender Studies talks, focusing on the ways in which feminist perspectives inform the research. Turn in 1-2 page summaries of each.

Research paper (55%): Write a research paper that pays particular attention to feminist epistemology and methodology. The topic is flexible, but we expect it to be something related to your primary field of study. It can be a revision or expansion of a previous paper you have written, or it can be a new paper. It should be approximately 20 pages long. We want you to be more-or-less continually writing/revising this throughout the semester, so we have established a general timetable as follows:

- September 23: Turn in a 1-2 paragraph proposal for the paper. Include your research question (you can change this later), why it is interesting or important to you, and how you expect to go about answering it.
- October 21: Turn in a rough draft of your paper.
- December 2: Turn in the final draft of your paper.
- December 9: Make a 10-minute presentation of your paper.

- Additional dates throughout the semester: We will ask you to exchange your drafts with the other members of your small group and give each other feedback in class.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

August 26: Introductions to one another and to feminist epistemology
Asking questions about gender and knowledge; the nature of the course; your research interests.
- Donna Kate Rushin, “The Bridge Poem”
- Marge Piercy, “Unlearning to Not Speak”
- “A body of knowledge” exercise
- Your research interests

September 2: The Tales We Tell: Knowledge, Culture, Curiosity, Re-Interpretation, etc.

**Reading reflections:** What kind of quality or capacity is “curiosity”? What influences it, and what does it affect? How are the examples of science in the Terry and Martin readings influenced by curiosity, ignorance, culture, and fact? How do we leave ourselves open to new ways of conceiving? What other forms of knowledge or conversation are (like gossip) associated with women? Do any of these need rethinking? Overall, for each reading, be prepared to discuss 1) the issues and questions it raised regarding feminist epistemology and 2) its relation to the other readings.

**September 9: SOME HISTORY OF FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY**
- Frances Wright (1834), Lecture 1: “On the Nature of Knowledge” and Lecture 2: “Of Free Inquiry.” [https://archive.org/stream/courseofpopularl00wrigrich/courseofpopularl00wrigrich_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/courseofpopularl00wrigrich/courseofpopularl00wrigrich_djvu.txt) (Note: this contains all 5 lectures—you need only read the assigned two!)
- John Stuart Mill (1869), *The Subjection of Women*, chapter 1 only. [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/27083/27083-h/27083-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/27083/27083-h/27083-h.htm)

As you read or watch these authors from different time periods, list what you see as the questions they are trying to address. This will enable us to track both tradition and evolution in the field of feminist epistemology over the course of the semester. Also track your responses to their questions—do they surprise you? Ring a bell with you? Etc. Are there core epistemological questions among early feminist thinkers?
September 16: RETHINKING THE DISCIPLINES: Sociology & your home departments

- Read two additional articles that you locate that speak to the impact of feminism on your discipline or field of specialization.

EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE
September 23: A. Testimonial injustice


September 30: B. More on Credibility and Authoritative Knowledge

- Anita Ho, “Trusting Experts and Epistemic Humility in Disability.” *The International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* 4, 2 (Fall 2011): 102-123.

October 7: C. Hermeneutical injustice


D. Invisibility


October 14: TRUTH
• Hawkesworth, 36-75 (“Twentieth Century Debates in Philosophy of Science” and “Grappling with Claims of Truth”).

October 21: OBJECTIVITY

October 28: EPISTEMOLOGY OF IGNORANCE

November 4: STANDPOINT EPISTEMOLOGY
• Hawkesworth, Chapter 7, 176-206.
• Alison Wylie, “Feminist Philosophy of Science: Standpoint Matters”

November 11: INTERSECTIONALITY
• Hawkesworth, Chapter 8, 207-248.
October 11: Intersectionality


November 18: WAYS OF READING, WRITING, AND REASONING and FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE


December 2: WHAT IS FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY?


- Pick an encyclopedia article/overview of the field of feminist epistemology that seems most helpful to you. Options here include: Janack's piece on the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, and Anderson's on the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy site.

Think back to the list of epistemological questions posed by historical feminist thinkers. What queries seem to travel across time, what are unrepresented here, and what new ones have emerged? How do these overviews compare with the subjects we have covered this semester overall?