



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

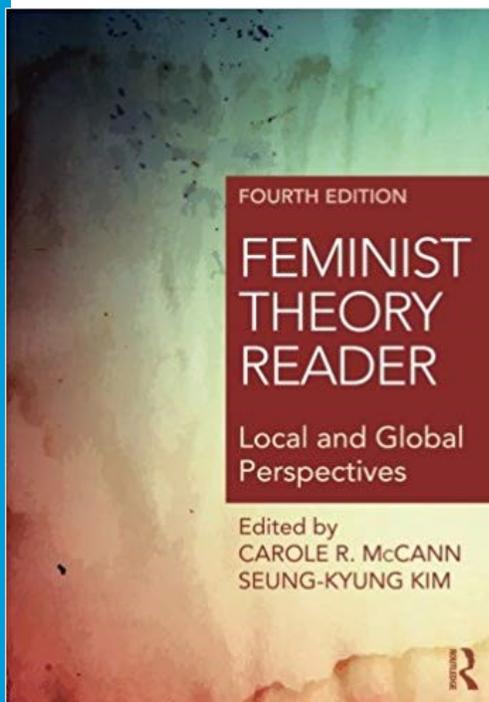
EST. 1818

Feminist Theories

POLS-5760-01/WGST-5010-01
Mon. 4:00-7:00PM
Beracha Hall 211

Marcia McCormick, Scott Hall (the Law School downtown), Dean's Suite, room 872A
314-977-4263
marcia.mccormick@slu.edu.
Office hours: Call or email to set up an appointment.

This course examines developments in feminist thought at the turn of the twenty-first century, highlighting core concepts and tensions accompanying the growth of the field of women's studies. Using an intersectional range of theoretical texts and cultural criticism, it explores both historical and recent perspectives on gender, sexuality. The readings, discussions, and written assignments are designed to highlight core concepts and tensions as feminist scholarship has grown since the emergence of the field of women's studies in the 1970s. Readings cover a range of topics and methodologies, and students will have opportunities to investigate areas of their own interest. The course will enable students to draw connections between the intellectual, the personal, and the political, using these theoretical innovations to engage contemporary social issues.



Readings:

Required text — Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives (McCann & Kim eds., 4th ed. Routledge 2016).

There will also be additional readings distributed through Blackboard.

The Deets

Course Goals As a graduate level course, this course seeks to increase knowledge and skills that students already have some foundation in, namely increasing

- Knowledge of key concepts and normative and theoretical commitments employed in feminist theories.
- Ability to use feminist theories to contextualize social relationships, organizations, and politics.
- Ability to critically appreciate and constructively criticize texts, structures, processes, and ideas.
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in discussion and writing in an audience-centered way.

Assignments and grading

- *Participation (10%)*: which includes attendance and constructive contributions to discussion
- *Discussion leading (15%)*: In groups of two or three, work together to lead the discussion for one of the classes. This can include bringing in outside materials (short texts, video, or audio) that relate to the reading. You must arrange a time to discuss your plan with me in advance of the class—the discussion can be in person, by phone, or by email.
- *Assigned Readings Synthesis paper (20%)*: **Due by 7:00 p.m. October 11.** For one of the first five classes (the Knowing unit), synthesize the readings in a 1000-1200 word paper. You might think of this as a literature review, and a nice [guide can be found here](#).
- *Reflection paper (20%)*: **Due by 7:00 p.m. November 8.** Using materials from class, reflect on an event you attend, a situation you encounter, an event in the news, or a piece of culture, art, or entertainment you see/hear/watch/read in a 1000-1200 word essay.
- *Final paper (35%)*: **Due by 10:00 p.m., December 17.** You have two options for the format of this paper. The first is a 5500-6000 word (not including bibliography) research paper in which you conduct original research to produce an argument-driven analysis of a topic of your choice. The second is a synthesis paper of the same length in which you synthesize 4-5 book-length texts on a topic of choice. More details and interim deadlines for topic selection, etc. will follow.

The Deets

Grading The University's letter grade [grading scale](#) will apply, along the following guidelines:

A = 93-100%

A- = 90-92%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C+ + 77-79%, and so on

Late papers will incur grade penalties of a 1/3 deduction per day late (or portion thereof). In other words, an A becomes an A-, an A- becomes a B+, etc.

Attendance/discussion/participation Graduate study means learning to learn from every possible source—assigned readings, your peers, your life experience, your professors, and your research. Discussion is one of the best ways to do that. You are expected to contribute your questions and insights to the class. Class is a guaranteed space to explain, debate, test arguments about, evaluate, and critique the theoretical approaches we will be reading. When you are in class, please minimize distractions that take you out of being present, particularly with devices that also can distract others. Sometimes remaining connected is unavoidable due to other responsibilities, but where it is avoidable, please avoid it.

Academic Integrity You are bound by the University's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found [on the Provost's website](#). In addition, we're going to be talking about some deeply personal matters. Think a bit about how you say things, but it's ok to be candid. Assume good faith when your colleagues speak (including me), but feel free to ask questions about people's positions and express a contrary point of view or set of arguments.

Accommodations Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact Disability Services, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at Disability_services@slu.edu or by phone at [314.977.3484](tel:314.977.3484). Once approved, information about a student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from Disability Services and within the instructor's official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact Disability Services. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

The Deets

More on equal educational opportunity

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, **that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator (or that person's equivalent on your campus) and share the basic facts of your experience.** This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX contact will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

For most students on the St. Louis campus, the appropriate contact is Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy, and for resources, please visit the following web addresses: <https://www.slu.edu/here4you> and <https://www.slu.edu/general-counsel>.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@slu.edu or 314-977-9378) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

Additional Resources

If you or someone you know is having trouble coping, there are many resources for help. Here are just a few contacts:

[University Counseling Center](#) 314-977-8255 (TALK)

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) 800-273-8255 (TALK)

[Crisis Text Line](#) text "HOME" to 741741

[RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline](#): 800-656-4673 (HOPE)

[The Trevor Project](#) — Serving LGBTQ people under 25: 866-488-7386

[The LGBT Hotline](#): 888-843-4564

The Plan

Date

Reading

Aug. 26 Introduction and discussion of our plans for the course

Knowing

Experiencing, knowing, speaking

Sept. 9

Intersectionality

- FEMINIST THEORY READER (FTR) pp. 161-212

Sept. 16

Standpoint Theory

- FTR pp. 351-437

Sept. 23

Reason, impartiality, power, hierarchy, and dyadic reasoning

- Iris Marion Young, *The Ideal of Impartiality*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 96-105 (1990)
- FTR 509-38

Speaking for others

- Linda Alcoff, *The Problem of Speaking for Others*, CULTURAL CRITIQUE, Winter 1991-1992, at 5-32
- Uma Narayan, *Essence of Culture and a Sense of History*, DECENTERING THE CENTER 80-100 (Uma Narayan & Sandra Harding eds., 2000)

Sept. 30

Naturalism, essentialism, and social construction: sex, gender, performativity, subjectivity, and identity

- FTR pp. 439-92

Oct. 7

Autonomy, agency, and identity

- Moya Lloyd, JUDITH BUTLER: FROM NORMS TO POLITICS 49-77 esp. 54-66 (2007)
- Iris Marion Young, *Five Faces of Oppression*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 39-65 (1990)
- Anthony K. Appiah, *Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction*, MULTICULTURALISM 149-64 (C. Taylor et al. eds., 1994)
- Melissa Wright, *Maquiladora Mestizas And a Feminist Border Politics*, in DECENTERING THE CENTER 208-25

The Plan

Valuing

Caring in the context of justice and injustice

Oct. 14

Ethics of care, autonomy, responsibility, and ethical structures for ethical action

- Joan C. Tronto, MORAL BOUNDARIES 61-156 (1993)
- Karen E. Peterson & Alice A. Weldon, *Motherhood Status and the Limits of Flexibility*, in FEMINIST ACTIVISM IN ACADEMIA 160-75 (2010)
- Stephen Marche, *The Case for Filth*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 7, 2013

Oct. 28

Justice

- Iris Marion Young, *Displacing the Distributive Paradigm*, and *The Ideal of Impartiality*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 15-38, 106-121 (1990).
- Nancy Fraser, *From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age*, NEW LEFT REVIEW, July/August 1995, at 68-93.
- Anna Marie Smith, *Missing Poststructuralism, Missing Foucault: Butler and Fraser on Capitalism and the Regulation of Sexuality*, in PRECARIOUS POLITICS: CRITICAL ENCOUNTERS 79-91 (2008).

Nov. 4

Relationships of intimacy: structural constraints, structures and acts of resistance

- FTR 88-149

Acting

Individual and collective action; political economic, and social structures of action

Nov. 11

Equality, difference, and human rights

- Iris Marion Young, *Social Movements and the Politics of Difference*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 156-191 (1990).
- Martha C. Nussbaum, *Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings*, in WOMEN CULTURE, AND DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF HUMAN CAPABILITIES 61-104 (Martha C. Nussbaum & Jonathan Glover eds., 1995).
- Susan Moller Okin, *Women's Human Rights, and Cultural Differences*, HYPATIA vol. 13, at 32-52 (1998).
- Karen Zivi, *Rights and the Politics of Performativity*, in PRECARIOUS POLITICS: CRITICAL ENCOUNTERS 157-169 (2008).
- Moya Lloyd, JUDITH BUTLER: FROM NORMS TO POLITICS 6-7 (2007).
- Andrea Smith, *Native American Feminism, Sovereignty, and Social Change*, FEMINIST STUDIES vol. 31, at 116-132 (2005).

The Plan

Nov. 18

Others, otherness, affinity, aversion, abjection

- Iris Marion Young, *The Scaling of Bodies*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 122-155 (1990)
- Moya Lloyd, JUDITH BUTLER: FROM NORMS TO POLITICS 74-77(2007).
- Anne Wilson Schaef, WOMEN'S REALITY: AN EMERGING FEMALE SYSTEM IN A WHITE MALE SOCIETY , xv-27, **read pages 10-21** (1992).
- Lisa S. Flores, *Reclaiming the "Other": Toward a Chicana Feminist Critical Perspective*, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS vol. 24, at 687-705 (2000).

Privilege and what to do about it

- Iris Marion Young, *The Myth of Merit*, in JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE 192-225, **read pages 192-206** (1990).
- Alison Bailey, *Locating Traitorous Identities*, in DECENTERING THE CENTER: PHILOSOPHY FOR A MULTICULTURAL, POSTCOLONIAL, AND FEMINIST WORLD 283-298 (Uma Narayan & Sandra Harding eds., 2000).

Nov. 25

Feminist approaches and activism

- FTR pp. 557-628

Dec. 2

Draft papers due to peer reviewer. Bring two hard copies of your double spaced draft; email one to me: marcia.mccormick@slu.edu

Dec. 9

No class—work on final paper, due Dec. 19