

WGST 4860/ POLS 3860: Global and Transnational Feminism

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12:15-1:00pm, and by appointment

Course Description

This course offers an advanced survey of a field of theory and political activism called transnational feminism. We will examine women's efforts to create social change in a variety of international and transnational contexts, including political and economic forums such as the United Nations, as well as current grassroots social movements around the globe. Using case studies, theoretical literature, and literary texts, we will address the following questions:

When, why, and how have women reached across borders of nation to create change?

What factors hinder these border-crossings?

What have been the challenges and achievements in women's global organizing?

How have such matters as human rights, development policy, post/colonialism, and borders (both imagined and real) affected women's lives and activist commitments?

This class fulfills the core requirement for Global Citizenship.

Learning Objectives

Students should:

- Gain familiarity with the theoretical literature and history of global feminism, as well as the larger geopolitical context surrounding these developments
- Investigate how structural power relations affect women's lives and their activist commitments
- Reflect thoughtfully on relationships between the local and global, the cultural and political, and the public and private
- Apply critical analytical and research skills to the interpretation of global social issues and activist movements

Required Texts

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (eds.), *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (1998)

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (any edition)

Malala Yousafzai, *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* (2015)

Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1998)

The remainder of the readings, marked with a *, will be available as pdf files on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to gather materials from Blackboard and to pay attention to email announcements, as readings are subject to change. Please bring the readings to class for discussion; neglecting to do so may affect the participation grade.

Course Requirements

1. Participation (15%): You must attend class, show thoughtful engagement with that day's reading, and make informed contributions to discussion. May include short writings, quizzes, or group work. You may miss 2 classes without affecting your participation grade—you do not need to provide an excuse. Any absences beyond 2 will be deducted from the participation grade regardless of the

excuse. See the SLU attendance policy for more information about exceptional cases. As noted below, inappropriate phone and computer use will also affect the participation grade.

2. Quiz (5%): A brief in-class test covering social movement keywords. Sep 21.

3. Discussion question and reflection (10%): Over the course of the semester, you will choose 4 class sessions in which you (a.) submit a discussion question about the assigned reading the night before class; AND (b.) write an informal, page-length (double-spaced) reflection about the class discussion the question produced. Submit the reflection via email before the next class session. The discussion question should be designed to open conversation with your classmates, meaning its answer should not be yes or no, or the recitation of facts. In your reflection, explain your own response to the question and address your classmates' responses. What was interesting about the conversation—or what was wrong with it? What issues does it raise or clarify? You must submit at least two discussion questions and reflections before Fall Break (Week 9).

4. Reading and film responses (3 papers, 20% total): 3 times during the semester, you will be responsible for a 3-5 page response to assigned films or readings. More specific guidelines will be available, but in general, be prepared to provide summary of an author's arguments/narrative, an explanation of the critical concepts or insights developed in the work, and your own assessment of it. Due Sep 8, Oct 20, and Nov 15.

5. Current issues portfolio (25%): During the first part of the semester, in consultation with me, you will identify a topic related to contemporary transnational/ global feminism, and you will then research international news and academic accounts regarding the topic. By the end of the semester, you will compile the material into a portfolio and produce a 5-page response paper applying course concepts and readings your research. A proposal for the portfolio is due Oct 29. You will also make an informal class presentation of your findings during the last class, Dec. 7. Completed portfolio and paper due Dec 9.

6. Region report (25%): This final project will draw on a variety of academic resources to produce a report and analysis of social justice issues and activist responses at the regional level. Further instructions to come. Proposal due Oct 28, completed project due Dec 13.

Please submit all written assignments to me as a doc or docx file by email to izzoal@slu.edu.

Missed assignments will receive a grade of zero unless arrangements are made IN ADVANCE. Deadline extensions must also be requested in advance of due dates. Otherwise, late assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each day late (or portion thereof). After three days, they will not be accepted.

The grade scale is posted to Blackboard.

Academic Integrity statement

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from

another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. Possible sanctions for violation of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, assignment of a failing grade in a course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. Students should review the College of Arts and Sciences policy on Academic Honesty, which can be accessed on-line at <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml> under "Student Resources" or in hard copy form in the Arts and Sciences Policy Binder in each departmental or College office.

Students with Special Needs - Disability Services

Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course—as outlined in the syllabus, due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Disabilities Services. Please telephone the office at 314-977-8885, or visit Room 331 in the Busch Student Center.

Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Please contact the professor as soon as possible regarding accommodations.

Other guidelines

Please, no distracting or disrespectful behavior. Turn off phones. Personal laptops and tablets may be used **only** to take notes and consult readings, but do not use the classroom's computers. Inappropriate computer or phone use—texts, web, email, outside work, etc.—will result in automatic deductions from your participation grade without any notice from me. No material from this class may be redistributed or posted to the web.

Course schedule and themes

Week 1

Aug 24 Introduction

Unit 1: Defining Transnational and Global Feminisms

Aug 26 *Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood Is Global*, introduction

Week 2

Aug 31 Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, chapter 1

Sep 2 Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, chapter 2
*Historical documents

Week 3

Sep 7 **No class Labor Day**

Tue. Sep 8 Reading response #1 due 11:59 pm

Sep 9 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*

Unit 2: Women's Rights as Human Rights

Week 4

Sep 14

Local to Global

*Adrienne Rich, "Notes toward a Politics of Location"

*Charlotte Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-vision of Human Rights"

Sep 16

United Nations

*Margaret Snyder, "Unlikely Godmother: The UN and the Global Women's Movement"

*UN documents

Week 5

Sep 21

In-class quiz

Global to Local

*Naihua Zhang and Ping-Chun Hsiung, "The Chinese Women's Movement in the Context of Globalization"

*Beijing Platform for Action

Sep 23

Postcolonial Critique

*Chandra Mohanty, *Under Western Eyes*

Week 6

Sep 28

Women's Rights in the Twenty-First Century

Yousafzai, *I Am Malala*

Sep 30

Cultural Politics of the Veil

*Charles Hirschkind and Saba Mahmood, "Feminism, the Taliban, and the Politics of Counter-Insurgency"

*Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others"

Week 7

Oct 5

Film: *The Education of Auma Obama*

Unit 4: Violence against Women

Oct 7

Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, chapter 5

Deadline: at least 2 discussion question/reflections must be completed by Week 8

Week 8

Oct 12 *Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"

Oct. 14 Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, chapter 3
Film: *Seniorita Extravida*

Week 9

Oct 19 No class Fall Break

Tue. Oct 20 Reading response #2 due 11:59 pm

Oct 21 *Uma Narayan, "Cross-Cultural Connections, Border-Crossings, and 'Death by Culture'"

Week 10

Oct 26 *Margarita Palacios, "War and the Politics of Sexual Violence"
*Case studies

Oct 28 Proposals due before class: current events portfolio and region report
Readings: TBA

Unit 5: Sexuality, Family, and Reproduction**Week 11**

Nov. 2 *Sexuality readings

Nov. 4 *Jessica Horn, "Not Culture but Gender: Reconceptualizing Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting" in *Where Human Rights Begin*

Week 12

Nov 9 *Pirette Hondagneu-Sotelo, "I'm Here, but I'm There: The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood"
*Arlie Hochschild, "Love and Gold"

Nov 11 *Health case studies

Sun Nov. 15 Reading response #3 due 11:59 pm

Week 13

Nov 16 Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*

Unit 6: Economics and Labor

Nov 18 Globalization and Development Policy
*Valentine Moghadam, *Globalizing Women*, selection

Week 14

Nov 23 Jobs and Justice
*Gender and wage economy readings
Film: *Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night*

Nov 25 No class Thanksgiving

Week 15

Nov 30 Migration
*Grace Chang, "Global Trade in Filipina Workers"
*Laura Agustin, "Migrant Sex Work and Trafficking" in *New Sexuality Studies*

Dec 2 Women's Labor and the Environment
*Case studies

Dec 7 Last class: Current events portfolio presentations

Dec 9 Current events portfolio and paper due 11:59 pm

Sun. Dec 13 Regional report due 11:59 pm

Final exam period TBA