



WGST 1900: Intro: Women's and Gender Studies (3 credits)

Spring 2018
T/R 12:30 – 13:45
Padre Rubio 1

Instructor: Roswitha Zahlner Casmier, Ph.D.

Classroom: Padre Rubio 1

Office Location: Padre Rubio 1st floor, Modern Language Office.

Office Hours: TR 14:00 to 16:00 (2-4 pm), MW by appointment

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Course Description

This course is an interdisciplinary introduction to feminist thought and Women's and Gender Studies scholarship. The course material and discussions will focus on the different institutions of Western society such as families, schools, workplaces, and the media, and the way they construct and view gender differences. The course emphasizes how communication creates and reflects gender in society. We will consider how sexism, racism, classism, and global capitalism limit and shape the lives and contributions of the denizens of the 21st century.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, through reading assignments, independent reflection and writing, watching films and videos, exams, and class discussions and presentations, you will have achieved an understanding of the following:

- The vocabulary, concepts, theories and methods of the social sciences as they relate to Women's and Gender Studies scholarship
- Feminist scholarship and the significance of Women's and Gender Studies as an academic discipline
- The socialization process and the learning of gender
- The various social institutions and their impact on gender
- Different impacts of race, class, ethnicity and sexuality as well as global issues and religion when discussing gender and social organizations
- You will have completed the first required course towards the Women's and Gender Studies' Major and Minor. Find more information about these programs on the university's website: <https://www.slu.edu/programs/undergraduate/women-gender-studies.php> (SLU Frost Campus)
- <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/departament-of-psychology-anthropology-and-sociology/programs/womens-and-gender-studies-minor> (SLU Madrid)

Required Texts

1) Online readings... (available on our Blackboard course site)

- 1- Slideshows: Chapter summaries and important concepts based on Julia T. Wood's *Gendered Lives*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009. International Student Edition. You can also read the book at the library.
- 2- Readings from Taylor, Verta et al. *Feminist Frontiers*. 7th ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2007. These readings will be posted on Blackboard. These are to be read attentively BEFORE class while taking notes.
- 3- Excerpts from hooks, bell. *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000.

2) Buy at the bookstore (or from any other bookseller):

4. Mukherjee, Bharati. *Jasmine*. New York: Grove Press, 1989.

Class Policies:

- Students are responsible for all assignments, hand-outs and announcements presented in class. If you arrive late, leave early, or have to miss class, it is your responsibility to contact another student and to find out what you have missed.
- Students must arrive in class prepared to participate *actively* in class discussions. This means that you *must have read the materials listed for that date* when you come to class. It is not sufficient to skim the texts while we are discussing them in class. They discuss complex ideas and you should have your questions and comments prepared before class. Skimming the texts in class will also prevent you from participating actively in the discussion.
- Respect your classmates and your instructor. Always use civil discourse in class. Please refer to the “*Guidelines for Civil Discourse*” section that follows.
- Please turn off all noisemakers, especially cell phones!

Attendance

There are no excused absences. All absences are your responsibility. That being said, as a courtesy, please contact me as soon as possible about any series of absences, especially if they have a medical reason. It is your responsibility to make up any missed work.

You must attend all exams and plan ahead in terms of travel.

More than 4 absences may result in the lowering of your final grade by one half-letter grade for the course and an additional half letter grade for each consecutive missed class.

Course Requirements:

- Class Participation

Students will be required to engage with weekly readings thoughtfully and critically. Class discussions are central to the course and classes should be attended faithfully. In preparation for classroom discussion and analysis, students are encouraged to respond to each reading with brief notes that can be used in class discussions.

In the spirit of learner-centered teaching, I will model various discussion-styles during the first third of the semester leading up to the first exam. I may present my own summary and analysis of a text and follow up with my own questions, I may ask each student to come up with questions to ask others, I may break the class into three or four groups and have each group write questions for the other groups, I may give each student two questions to work on, or break the whole class into two groups and have students debate a set of questions based on the text(s). We may also try a discussion-style inspired by bell hooks’ early consciousness-raising meetings where every student gets three “chips” and must use them in order to speak. If you have used all your chips, you must sit back and let the others speak. Everyone must use all their chips.

For the second and third part of the semester, I will ask each student to **sign up to lead the discussion** of a specific text in an approach of their own choice. This is simply a participation exercise and not to be confused with your final presentation.

- Reading Responses

Spaced out evenly over the course of the semester, you will be required to turn in **five** reading responses. These response papers are similar to a journal entry in which you

reflect on what struck you about a specific reading covered in the preceding two weeks. Your papers should be typed, double-spaced, and between 1 and 2 pages in length. To help you develop your own responses to the readings, I suggest that you include two or three sentences in response to each of these three questions: (1) What is the writer's main point? Please refer to the **specific writer and reading** you are discussing. (2) What evidence does the author present to support their points? (3) What is your response to the article? Make sure you hand in response papers regularly. The first one will be due at the end of the third week of classes. From that point on, hand in a response paper roughly every two weeks. More than two response papers at once will not be accepted. The papers must relate to a reading that was covered **during the two preceding weeks** of class. Papers that are more than two weeks late will be marked down. Grades for any response paper handed in will range between A and C.

- Discussion forum: You may substitute **one** response paper by participating **twice** in a discussion forum posted on Blackboard. I will start a discussion there about once a month and you can post a comment and/or response to someone else's post.
- Exams 1 and 2: These will test your understanding of and your ability to explain key concepts presented in class. They will consist of identifications (giving 3 points of information on key terms) and short reflection questions. In-class discussions, films and guest speakers will be treated as course material and are included in these exams.
- Activism Day
This is a regular class period for which you will prepare handouts, short surveys, and visuals such as posters to get people on and around campus thinking about issues related to Women's and Gender studies, such as body image, gender violence, women and the media, and others, and to help you think about the meaning and importance of activism. We will spend roughly an hour talking to people on campus (courtyard, cafeteria, lounges...) and then meet again in the Padre Rubio Student Lounge to post any findings or visuals you would like to post. You will then write up your results in a one-page report. If you work with a partner, each person will hand in their own report and make it clear what their contributions were to the project.
- Final Presentations—Current Issue Analysis:
Each student must present an analysis of a current issue topic related to topics of gender which you became more acutely aware of as a consequence of our discussions. You will need to research and present an interpretation of a current issue or topic of your choice. Present your analysis in a coherent and concise way to the rest of the class (power point or presentation of online sources preferred) along with 2 follow-up discussion questions. 8 minutes + 2 for discussion.
- Final Exam
The final exam will consist of a multiple choice section, short essay responses, and one longer essays. I will be looking for your critical thinking skills, comprehension and application of concepts learned in the readings, and effective writings skills.

Weighting

- Participation and attendance (15% - see policy on unexcused absences above)
- Reading responses (15%)
- Two exams (15%, 15%)
- Activism project and report (10%)
- In-class presentation (10%)
- Final exam (20%)

COLLECTION OF STUDENT WORK FOR ASSESSMENT:

In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to accreditation requirements, SLU-Madrid regularly assesses its teaching, services and programs for evidence of student learning. For this purpose, SLU-Madrid keeps representative examples of student work from all courses and programs on file, including assignments, papers, exams, portfolios and results from student surveys, focus groups and reflective exercises. Copies of your work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes.

If you prefer SLU-Madrid not to retain your work for this purpose, you must communicate this decision in writing to your professor.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM:

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at: http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/learning-resources>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic

accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage. Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

TITLE IX STATEMENT:

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 faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator 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.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Guidelines for Civil Discourse:

- Be willing to examine and question your own beliefs, views and attitudes; explore why you hold them. Establish as comfortable an atmosphere as possible. Remember to always treat each other with respect and tolerance.
- Remember that learning requires occasional periods of discomfort.
- Don't make personal or derogatory remarks. Sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise intolerant remarks will not be tolerated. When you express yourself, try to ask yourself: Is this just my personal impression (possibly influenced by unreliable media) or is this a well-founded i.e. statistically based fact?
- Always actively listen to your classmates. Don't interrupt, and when you disagree, give criticism constructively. Try to imagine why the other person holds the beliefs they do.
- Work to resolve conflicts: recognize and accept difference through the practice of mutual respect and honesty.
- Develop an awareness of your own discussion style: Do you follow? Lead? Do you feel cut out of the conversation? Do you like to play devil's advocate? Can you let others take the lead once in a while? Can you push yourself to speak?

Office Hours/Extra Assistance:

Remember, we are discussing difficult issues. We need to work together to make this class the best it can be. If you encounter a problem you don't feel you can solve in class or if you are struggling with any aspects of the course including understanding key concepts and theories, completing assignments, writing effectively etc., please come see me. I will do my best to help. If you cannot come during my office hours, I am willing to schedule an appointment at a different time.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1

Thursday, Jan. 11: Getting to know each other.
Discussion of the syllabus, course system, and important assignments
Discussion of attitudes toward feminism and gender.

Week 2

Tuesday, Jan. 16: Discussion of bell hooks's *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, Introduction + Chapter 1.
Key concepts and arguments.

Thursday, Jan. 18: *Historical survey on women's movements*
Early feminists. The First Wave of Women's Movements.
Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

Jan 21st: LAST DAY for DROP/ADD, AUDIT or Pass/Fail options.

Week 3

Tuesday, Jan. 23: "The Second Wave of Women's Movements in the United States" (from Julia T. Wood, *Gendered Lives* p. 72-87, Ch. 3).
S. Watkins, "Liberal Feminism," Betty Friedan I and II.

Thursday, Jan. 25: Wood: Third Wave of Women's Movements in the United States, and Anti-Feminism: The Backlash.
Chapter 4: Men's Movements in the United States.

Fr., Jan. 26. Holiday, university closed.

Reminder: First response paper due! Email attachment or share on Google docs.

Week 4

Tu., Jan. 30: *Textbook intro. Getting Acquainted with the Field.*
Julia T. Wood, Chapter 1: "The Study of Communication, Gender, and Culture." Slideshow on Blackboard. Read before class!

Th., Feb. 1: Wood, Chapter 2: "Theoretical Approaches to Gender Development"
Slideshow on Blackboard.

Week 5

Tu. Feb. 7: *Gender Development*
Julia T. Wood, Chapter 7: "Becoming Gendered: The Early Years."
Slideshow on Blackboard.
"What Are Little Boys Made Of?" + "Night to His Day"
Read before class.

Th., Feb. 9: *Oppression and privilege*
Online readings: "Oppression"
"White Privilege and Male Privilege"
"The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"

Sign up to lead class discussion for one of the readings scheduled for the rest of the term.

Reminder: 2nd reading response due!

Week 6

Tu., Feb. 13: Women in Science Activity. Presentations and posters.

Th., Feb. 15: **First Exam**

Week 7

Tu., Feb. 20: *Gender in communication*
Wood, Chapter 5, "Gendered verbal communication: names, games, communication styles." Chapter 6, "Gendered Non-Verbal Communication."
Summaries and key terms on Blackboard.

Winter break: Feb. 22-23. No classes!

Week 8

Tu., Feb. 27: *Body image and hormones*
Online articles: "Cosmetic Surgery"
"A Way Outa No Way: Eating Problems"

Feb. 27: Mid-term grades on Banner.

Th., Mar. 1: "Hormonal Hurricanes"
"The Myth of the Perfect Body" (short article on disabled women)
Education
Wood, Chapter 8: Gendered Education: "Communication in Schools."
Blackboard slideshow.

Reminder: 3rd reading response due.

Week 9

Tu., March 6: *Gender at Work*
"Shortchanging Girls: Gender Socialization in Schools."
Wood, Chapter 10: "Gendered Organizational Communication."
Blackboard.

Th., Mar. 8: *International Women's Day March 8th!*
Activism Day and Consciousness-Raising on campus! Prepare a questionnaire and/or poster/visual to use around campus and exhibit in Padre Rubio Student lounge after class. Write up an analysis of your results and experience to hand in on Tuesday.

Friday, March 9: Last day to withdraw with 'W'

Week 10

Tu., March 13: *Activism Project Report due*
"The Penny Pinch"
"Sex Segregation in the US Labour Force."
bell hooks, Ch. 9, "Women at Work."

Th., Mar 15: *Reproductive Rights*
bell hooks, Chapter 5: "Our Bodies, Ourselves"
"Beyond Pro-Choice Vs. Pro-Life..."

Week 11

Tu., March 20: *Sexist Violence:*
Julia T. Wood, Ch. 12: “Gendered Power and Violence,” Slideshow on Blackboard.
Introduce *Jasmine* (read first half by that day).

Th. March 22: **Second exam** (identifications and short essay questions)

Reminder: 4th Reading response due!

March 26 to 30: SEMANA SANTA Spring break. No classes.

Week 12

Tu. Apr. 3: *Global Women’s Issues*
“It’s Not an Oxymoron...” (Arab Feminism)
“Maid in L.A.”
Discuss *Jasmine*, entire novel.

Th., Apr. 5: *Women and Globalism.*
Online articles, “The Globe Trotting Sneaker,”
“From the Third World ...”

Week 13

Tu., Apr. 10: *Atlas Week- Current Issues*
Gender in the Media.
Viewing *MissRepresentation. Or Speaker. Tba.*

Sign up for final presentations!

Th., Apr. 12: “Enlightened Sexism, Enlightened Feminism.”
“Top Girls.”

Week 14

Tu., Apr. 17 Wood, Ch. 11, “Gendered Media.” Slideshow.
“Moral Dilemmas”
T. Wood, Ch. 9, “Gendered Close Relationships.” Slideshow.

Reminder: 5th Reading response due!

Th., Apr. 20: Final presentations

Week 15:

Tu., Apr. 25: Final presentations

Th., Apr. 27: Final presentations.

May 1st and 2nd are holidays in Madrid.

Th., May 3: Final presentations. Last class. Conclusions.

Please remember to complete the evaluations for this course!

∕ **FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 10th, 12:00 to 14:00 (15:00)**

∕ May 13: Final Grades on Banner.

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