

WOST 101: Introduction to Women's Studies

Fall 2006
Office: Comenius 104
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Class: T, Th. 5b (12:50-2:00 pm)

Office Hours: T, Th 2:00-3:30 pm and other times by appointment.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the issues and methodologies in scholarship about women. Because "Women's Studies" is interdisciplinary, the course employs aspects of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences to analyze gender relations. The course examines various approaches to understanding women's status in society, diversity, and multicultural facets of women's studies, government and politics, economics, health and beauty, mass media, religion, sexuality and reproduction, and women's organizing.

Goals and Objectives

- a) To learn basic factual data and information about women's lives in the past and the present.
- b) To critically think, discuss, and write about women's status and gender issues.
- c) To better understand women's and gender issues through course readings, films, and writing assignments.
- d) To examine various theoretical frameworks for understanding the different experiences of women.
- e) To investigate gender and women through an activism project.

Course Guidelines

1. All work must be submitted on due date for full credit. **Late assignments are NOT accepted.**
2. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, printed, stapled, use complete sentences, correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. All assignments must be personally handed to the instructor. No handwritten assignments will be accepted. No emailed assignments will be accepted **except in case of emergencies and not without prior permission of the instructor.**
3. Regular attendance is expected. Assigned work can only be made up 1) after an in-person discussion with the instructor and 2) in cases of **appropriately documented** family emergencies, extended leave, or school sponsored-commitments. **Health Center notes are NOT considered appropriate documentation.** If an emergency should arise, you must notify me prior to an assignment's due date and not after. If you plan to miss a class please notify me in advance. Students are allowed a maximum of three absences within this semester. If you miss class more than the allowed times, 5% will be deducted from your final course grade. Another 5% will be

deducted from your final course grade for each additional absence. Two late arrivals to class will be counted as an absence. Please be aware that absences are not divided into excused and unexcused. Regardless of the reason, an absence from class is counted as an absence.

4. In case of any crisis or emergency, or an extended absence from class, you must inform your professor through Learning Services or the Academic Dean's Office.

5. Learning disability accommodations: students who wish to request accommodations in this class for support of learning disabilities should contact Learning Services (x1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the appropriate disability support provider on campus.

6. These guidelines are intended for the benefit of the students as far as clarification of the instructor's expectations for the course; however, in exceptional circumstances the instructor reserves the right to exercise discretion in the application of these guidelines to individual cases or to refer a particular case to the Academic Dean if necessary.

Classroom Expectations

- 1) Respect for others' answers and views. Disruptive behavior during class will result in your dismissal from the class the first time, after that, disciplinary action will be taken.
- 2) Equal time for opposing opinions.
- 3) Please turn off cell phones in class. If yours rings during class, you will be dismissed from class and counted as absent.
- 4) Non-alcoholic drinks are allowed in class, other food is not.
- 5) Attention to course related material only.
- 6) Necessary breaks at the discretion of the instructor.

Required Texts: Available at the college bookstore-

- Sapiro, Virginia. *Women in American Society: An Introduction to Women's Studies*, 5th Edition (NY: McGraw Hill, 2003)
- Kesselman, Amy, et al. *Women: Images and Realities*, 3rd Edition (NY: McGraw Hill, 2003)
- Dowd, Maureen. *Are Men Necessary?* (NY: Putnam, 2005).

Course Requirements

A. Graded Requirements

Class Participation-20% of your final grade. Class participation includes coming to class on a very consistent basis, keeping up with assigned readings by thoroughly reading and thinking about the readings before coming to class, active involvement in interactive lectures, substantive contributions to discussions, and engagement with in-class activities. For class participation,

effort counts heavily. Attempting to answer a question, asking a question, or voicing an opinion are all part of participation. I will evaluate your participation highly if you: a) attend class regularly; b) discuss the videos and readings I make available; c) raise relevant questions/offer thoughtful comments; d) demonstrate you understand the material by your full involvement during in-class activities. Every class session is counted toward your final participation grade. **If you do not participate actively in each class, you will reduce your participation grade by 50% for each given day.**

Exams-There will be one in-class exam in this course. The exam is 25% of your final grade. This essay exam will strongly emphasize critical reflection on course readings and discussions, rather than memorization of names, dates, and places. Because the exam is an open book and open note format, exam questions will not be passed out in advance. **Rules governing academic honesty apply.** I expect that you will study with other students for the exam, and I encourage such study groups. Discussing answers to questions with fellow students can help you to think through class topics. However, make sure not to write answers that resemble those of the classmates with whom you have studied and expect to get credit. Writing up answers to the questions independently will help you succeed in keeping your work your own and not borrowing someone else's. The exam will be in the sixth week of the semester. Check the syllabus for exact dates. **Exam format:** the exam will consist of two long essay questions; it will be 50 minutes in duration.

Critical Reasoning Paper-20% of your grade. The critical reasoning paper will be due in week twelve. See the syllabus for the exact date. The paper will be based on material chosen from one of the book's assigned for this course, *Are Men Necessary?*. Notice that the course schedule below has one chapter from the book, either assigned or recommended (***) as reading for each week (from week two to week ten). These readings are scheduled so that you can finish the book well before the paper is due. The paper is to be 2-3 pages, typed, single-spaced, size 12 font. The paper must be at least two full pages and no more than three full pages, single-spaced type. The paper will consist of seven paragraphs and is designed to answer a set of critically analytical questions about the book in relation to the topic of the course, women's studies, as it is covered in the other assigned readings. Critical reasoning papers will be graded according to the rubric for written assignments provided below. Detailed instructions for the paper format and content will be passed out and discussed in class during the first several weeks of the term. On this paper, I encourage you to seek help from the Writing Center. Although short, the assignment asks you to think clearly and to write concisely about a given subject. Writing Center tutors can be very helpful in this process. You will also be expected to proofread the paper and use correct citations according to either MLA or *Chicago Manual of Style* formats. Points will be deducted for grammar errors, spelling mistakes, incorrect citations, and failure to cite material. While the topic of plagiarism and examples of correct quotation and citation format, paraphrasing, and summarizing will be covered in some class sessions, seeking help from the Writing Center can only improve your work.

Student lead discussions: 15% of your grade. Each student will lead discussion for part of a class session (20-25 minutes). Dates for leading discussion will be chosen in the first week of class from a list provided by the instructor. On the day you are to lead class discussion, you will need

to bring enough copies for each person in the class of a one page (maximum) handout that includes: the main thesis of the assigned reading in your own words; a statement of why a certain point of the author's is central to understanding women's issues, women's studies and gender; how and why you disagree with the conceptual or analytical approach taken in the reading; and three open-ended discussion questions (questions that ask "how," "why," or "in what ways") that you will use to begin and continue discussion. The second part of your leading discussion must be an activity designed by you, and involving the class and the instructor, that teaches the significance or importance of the reading for women's issues. You will need to meet with the instructor one week prior to your presentation to discuss your plans for leading discussion and to obtain the instructor's approval for your plan.

Final Project: 20% of your grade. Projects will involve doing research and sharing information on a single women's issue through an in-class, interactive poster/discussion session. The presentation sessions for final projects will take place in week fourteen. These sessions will be 7 minutes (minimum) and 10 minutes (maximum). Use of allotted time will be a factor in the project grade. In addition, one page, single-spaced, typed progress reports will be due (by email) to me by 4:30 pm on the Tuesday of weeks four, eight, and twelve. See syllabus for exact dates. What to do: 1) Choose a women's issue on which you want to base your final project from the issues in the Sapiro or Kesselman books and get permission from the instructor to pursue research on that issue; 2) Collect factual data, debated information, published opinions, surveys, public polls, scholarly discussions, and moral or ethical perspectives on the issue from authoritative sources; 3) Find out-background information needed for you and the class to discuss and better understand the following: how the issue impacts women, which women are impacted, how women or society can be educated or helped in relation to this issue, debates related to the issue, how some women might be discriminated against based on this issue, community impact, how people in the community feel about this issue, how you would feel if you were a woman impacted by this issue, and how you could change the issue to improve it; 4) Turn in progress reports (when scheduled) that tell me: goals for the project that have been met and those goals remaining, how you met those goals, results of work in the preceding weeks, obstacles still facing you, how you plan to overcome them, and questions on the project you want me to answer; 5) In week fourteen, lead a session on your issue that: presents the results of what you have learned with the class, includes a poster on which your presentation is based, asks questions of the class that are the basis of a discussion, and keeps within the 7-10 minute time limits.

Pop quizzes-If class discussions do not yield evidence of careful reading and thought, I may administer unannounced ("pop") quizzes. These quizzes will be factored in as part of your participation grade (20 points each). These quizzes will help me determine if quiet students are keeping silent because they are shy or because they are not keeping up with the reading assignments. **There will be no make-up quizzes.**

B. Grade Components

Your final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

Exam	25%
Class Participation	20%

Paper	20%
Student lead discussion	15%
Final project	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Guidelines (Rubric) for Written Assignments

(Written by Ben Slote and modified slightly by Ann Bomberger)

- 1) Written work in the A range is based on an original, logical and coherently organized set of ideas; it makes a clear and persuasive argument (even if the reader disagrees with its argument); it brings in specific, relevant examples to back up its assertions; its points, at each turn, are clearly articulated: the words carry precise meaning, they don't obscure it; its sentences use only the words their ideas require, not any more; its paragraphs have distinct though related roles in the essay's cohesion as a whole, each holding one thoroughly asserted idea (not two competing ideas, not one idea half-asserted); if appropriate it accurately and thoughtfully uses other sources; and its sentences are without the grammatical, spelling, or typographical mistakes that exacting proof-reading would catch. (All of this takes a lot of work. If it is all very nearly accomplished, the essay usually earns an A-.)
- 2) Written work in the B range: a very good paper, the writing of which is clearly, thoughtfully, and effectively executed. What sometimes prevents an "A" is a lack of originality, thorough thinking or careful proofreading. If two of these virtues are absent and the other areas of the paper are strong, the essay will usually earn a B-.
- 3) Written work in the C range: some conspicuous flaw usually earns an essay a C; its argument is really underdeveloped, it contains only minimal textual support, it has problems with organization and/or sentence clarity, it is in dire need of proofreading.
- 4) Written D work either contains more than one of the large problems cited in the "C" description or finds another way to convince its reader that the author has not spent nearly enough time on the thinking or writing in the essay.
- 5) Written work that earns an F misses on all criteria (originality, articulateness, persuasiveness, organization, the absence of mechanical mistakes).

Final Grade Scale (in percentage, not points)

93-100	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
63-66.9	D

60-62.9 D-
less than 60 F

Note: It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignment and for the course final grade.

Academic Honesty Policy

All students are expected to follow the principles of academic honesty as set out in the policies of Moravian College. See the Student Handbook for details. Any and all written work must be done in your own words (with the exception of direct quotations which are clearly indicated as such), and written work must include proper citations indicating the sources for any ideas, concepts, facts, or other information derived from others, whether or not you have restated it in your own words. Any cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Affairs Office. Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade in the course.

Schedule and Assignments (Schedule may be changed at the discretion of the instructor; advance notice will be given)

****Readings marked with **** are assigned the date when I recommend you have them read. All other readings are due on the date assigned on the syllabus and will be discussed in class.

***You will be expected to spend 2 1/2-3 hours on work outside of class for every hour in class.**

***Be sure to bring assigned readings to class each day. On days when chapters in the Dowd book are recommended (**), but not assigned as readings, I will still cover some of the material in the chapters in class and take any questions you have.**

Class Session Date	Topic	Assigned Readings and Assignment(s) Due
1: Tues. 8/29	Introduction	None
1: Thurs. 8/31	Women's Studies	Sapiro, Ch. 1
2: Tues. 9/5	Gender in Our Lives	Kesselman, pp. 7-35 (#1-4; 6-8) Dowd, Ch. 1
2: Thurs. 9/7	Women in Society: Conceptual Approaches	Sapiro, Ch. 2
3: Tues. 9/12	Women in Society: Lived Experiences	Kesselman, pp. 41-67 (#9-16) **Dowd, Ch. 2
3: Thurs. 9/14	Gender and Difference	Sapiro, pp. 77-88 and 112-135 Critical Reasoning paper chapter choices due

Class Session Date	Topic	Assigned Readings and Assignment(s) Due
4: Tues. 9/19	Learning Gender	Kesselman, pp. 68-96 (#18-23) Dowd, Ch. 3
4: Thurs. 9/21	Women and Education	Sapiro, Ch. 5 Progress report I due
5: Tues. 9/26	Differences and Diversity	Kesselman, pp.355-366; 371-375; 387-393; 394-398; 402-406; 423-442 (#89, 90, 95, 98, 99, 101, 103, 109-112) **Dowd, Ch. 4
5: Thurs. 9/28	Normalizing Gender: Health, Fitness, Beauty	Sapiro, Ch. 6
6: Tues. 10/3	Gender and Women's Bodies	Kesselman, pp. 117-129 and 133-143 (#30, 31, 36, 37, 38) Dowd, Ch. 5
6: Thurs. 10/5	Women and Religion I	Sapiro, Ch. 7 Exam
7: Tues. 10/10	Fall Break	No class
7: Thurs. 10/12	Women and Religion II	Kesselman, pp. 281-297 (#71-74) **Dowd, Ch. 6
8: Tues. 10/17	Gender and the Media	Sapiro, Ch. 8 Progress report II due
8: Thurs. 10/19	Women's Images	Kesselman, pp. 96-110 (#24-28) Dowd, Ch. 7
9: Tues. 10/24	Gender and Sexuality	Sapiro, Ch. 11
9: Thurs. 10/26	Sexuality and Relationships	Kesselman, pp. 149-172 (#42-48) **Dowd, Ch. 8
10: Tues. 10/31	Women and Economics	Sapiro, Ch. 14
10: Thurs. 11/2	Women and Work	Kesselman, pp. 179-202 and 207-212 (#50, 53, 56) Dowd, Ch. 9

Class Session Date	Topic	Assigned Readings and Assignment(s) Due
11: Tues. 11/7	Women and Violence	Sapiro, Ch. 12
11: Thurs. 11/9	Violence Against Women	Kesselman, pp. 447-456; 464-477; 481-495 (#114, 115, 119, 120, 121, 124, 125)
12: Tues. 11/14	Gender and Government	Sapiro, Ch. 9 Critical Reasoning Paper due
12: Thurs. 11/16	Women, the Law, and Social Policy	Kesselman, pp. 215-242 (#59-62) Progress report III due
13: Tues. 11/21	Reproductive Rights	Sapiro, Ch. 13
13: Thurs. 11/23	Thanksgiving Break	No classes
14: Tues. 11/28	Health and Reproductive Freedom	Kesselman, pp. 305-312 and 323-336 (#79, 80, 81)
14: Thurs. 11/30	Feminism and the Future	Sapiro, Ch. 15 Final Projects due
15: Tues. 12/5	Feminism as Social Movement	Kesselman, pp. 503-518; 530-550 (#129-138)
15: Thurs. 12/7	Globalizing and Localizing Feminisms	Kesselman, pp. 550-569; 570-606 (#139-141; 143; 145-149)
Dec. 13-16; 18-19	Finals Week	