

WOST 101: Introduction to Women's Studies

Fall 2012

Office: Reeves 102

Office Ph.: 610-861-1418

Office Hours: T, Th 11:45 am-12:45 pm; Fri. 9-10 am; and other times by appointment.

Professor Lisa Fischler

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Class: T, Th 5b (1:10-2:20 pm)

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to issues, themes, and methodologies of women's studies in a global context. Its scope encompasses the lives of women around the globe in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with particular attention to the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the West. This class fulfills the **M5 LinC** requirement, so given its interdisciplinary focus, the course compares the status, concerns, and activities of women around the world as regards such topics as economics, politics, religion, the family, culture, and education.

Goals and Objectives

By the end of the course, students should have improved their:

- ❖ understanding of how gender is socially constructed and the implications of this for different women;
- ❖ ability to evaluate the ways power differences within and between societies comparatively impact women;
- ❖ understanding of the various roles class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other modalities of difference and inequality play in shaping women's experiences of gender;
- ❖ comprehension of how cultural diversity influences women's lives and gender hierarchies;
- ❖ critical thinking, analytical skills, and reading and writing abilities concerning gender in non-Western contexts.^a

Required Texts: Available at the college bookstore:

- ❖ Burn, Shawn Meghan. *Women Across Cultures: A Global Perspective*. Third edition. NY: McGraw Hill, 2011.
- ❖ Kristof, Nicholas and Sheryl WuDunn. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

Course Grades, Policies, and Responsibilities

1. Participation-will include aspects of the course such as attendance, promptness, in-class participation, preparation, effort, and involvement in and contributions to the class. For assigned readings, you will be expected to read carefully, take notes, list questions, and come prepared to discuss (both verbally and in writing) in the session they are due. You can plan to spend two-three hours outside of class preparing for every hour spent in class. For class, participation includes active involvement in interactive lectures, substantive contributions to discussions, and engagement with in-class activities. Effort counts heavily. Attempting to answer a question, asking a question, or voicing an opinion and supporting it are all part of participation. I will evaluate your participation highly if you: a) attend class regularly and are there for the full class period; b) critically discuss the videos, materials, and readings I make available; c) raise relevant questions and offer thoughtful comments; d) demonstrate you understand the material by your full involvement during in-class activities; e) engage effectively in peer-review sessions in class. Every class session is counted toward your final participation grade. If you do not participate actively in each class, or are not there, your final participation grade will decrease because I cannot grade you when you do not participate.

-You are expected to attend all classes. **Please be aware that absences are not divided into excused and unexcused. Regardless of the reason, an absence from class will be counted as an absence.** Extended or excessive absences (three or more) are required to be reported to the Dean's Office and each absence after the third will lower your participation grade by 3 points per time.

-Arriving late or leaving early will lower your participation grade by 3 points per time. After the second instance of late arrival or leaving early, the disruptive classroom policy may be applied.

2. Exams-There will be two in-class exams in this course. These essay exams will strongly emphasize both basic knowledge of and critical reflection on course readings and discussions. The exams are closed book exams. **Rules governing academic honesty apply.** I expect that you will study with other students for the exam, and I encourage such study groups. However, making sure not to write answers that resemble those of the classmates with whom you

have studied will help you succeed in keeping your work your own and not borrowing someone else's. Check the syllabus for exact exam dates.

-No make-up exams will be given except in cases that qualify as extenuating, documentable and compelling circumstances. In such cases, criteria for accommodation are the same as detailed under "Accommodations" below.

3. Writing assignments: there will be two 3-4 page, double-spaced, typed (written) assignments in which you will be asked to expand on the knowledge you have gained about one of the chapters from the Burn book (paper I) and about one of the chapters (except chapter 14) from the Kristoff and WuDunn book (paper II). The assignments ask you to answer a set of analytical questions about the chapters you choose for your papers. I strongly encourage you to go to the Writing Center for help on these assignments as grading includes points for writing style and grammar. Check syllabus for exact due date.

4. "What Can I Do?" Project: inspired by chapter 14 in the Kristoff and WuDunn book, this assignment asks you to research the possibilities and opportunities that currently exist either on Moravian's campus or beyond it in terms of how students like yourselves can become part of the diverse efforts to help the world's women to solve some of the major challenges they face in the twenty-first century. The research done will be conducted over the course of the term, and your findings presented in a 5-7 minute power point presentation, which covers the following: 1) how the opportunity (e.g. organization, charity, funding agency, or student group) you researched goes about helping the world's women, 2) which women it helps and why, and 3) the ways in which your research results connect to the issues and themes covered in the course this term. As part of this assignment, you will be asked to turn in a two-page write up of your presentation that analyzes in further depth how your research results connect to the issues and themes covered in the course this term (formal writing style for this assignment is required).

-All assignments are due at the time, date, and place noted on the syllabus. There will be no late projects or presentations accepted. Late written assignments will be accepted with a five (5) point deduction for each full day late beginning just after the due time and date (e.g. from 4:00 pm on the due date to 4:00 pm the next day is a 5 point deduction), up to 7 full days late at which time late papers and other written assignments will no longer be accepted and students will receive a 0 grade on the assignment. No exceptions will be made for technical difficulties. I will only accept written work turned in by email if you have arranged with me beforehand to do so for that specific assignment. In the case of an assignment turned in via email, be aware that I must be able to open the attachment and email without a problem in order for the assignment to be accepted for credit.

4. Accommodations, Expectations, and Responsibilities

-Requests for accommodation on these policies will only be made in extenuating, documentable, and compelling circumstances; will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; require immediate notification be given to the instructor; and can be referred to Learning Services. 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

-Cell phones-cell phones need to be turned to OFF and put away in a purse or bookbag during class. Use of cell phones in any way during class will result in dismissal from class and will lower your participation grade by a full grade for each time over the course of the semester. If you have a crisis, please notify me BEFORE class begins. I will allow you to leave the room to take the call upon prior notification.

-Food, drinks, breaks-drinks are allowed in class, other food is not. Unless there is an underlying and documented medical issue, students are asked not to leave the class for "bathroom" breaks. If you do have such a medical condition that requires you to leave class for such breaks, I will need to get an official notice from Learning Services. If no documentation exists, then leaving class for such breaks will be counted as an absence and will lower your attendance grade (see above).

-Email and other expectations- disruptive behavior during class will result in your dismissal from the class the first time, after that, disciplinary action will be taken. For email, students can expect email to be answered within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends, provided that email is correctly addressed (to Dr. Fischler or Professor Fischler), signed by the student, and civil in content. For assignments handback, I will insist on a 24 hour waiting period after each assignment is passed back before I will discuss it with you. After that, I am happy to engage in a reasonable, rational discussion about your assignment or exam with you. 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.

-Learning Disability accommodations: Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center

-The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

-Academic Honesty-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.

-Inclusive Language Policy-the use of inclusive non-discriminatory language in all college writing and communication is strongly encouraged due to the college's goal of a tolerant and inclusive campus community. Use of inclusive language might mean using "he/she" or "they" instead of "he" in reference to a generalized person; or it might mean using "chairperson" instead of "chairman" to reflect the progress women have made in some countries to improve their status.

B. Grade Components

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

Exam I	150 points
Exam II	150 points
Paper I	150 points
Paper II	150 points
"What Can I Do?" Project	100 points
Participation	<u>100 points</u>
	800 points

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.

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

**Be sure to bring assigned readings to class each day. We will use them for in-class assignments, some of which may be graded. Two points will be deducted from your participation grade per instance of not bringing the assigned readings to class.

Class Session Date	Topic	Assigned Readings and Assignment(s) Due
1 T 8/28/12	Introduction: Women, Sex, and Gender	None
1 Th 8/30/12	Gender as Socially Constructed Category	Burns, Ch. 1; <i>Half the Sky</i> , introduction
Sept. 3, 2012	Labor Day	No classes
Sept. 4, 2012(Tues.)	Last Day for course changes	
2 T 9/4/12	Women’s Status Globally	Burns, Ch. 2
2 Th 9/6/12	Women and Slavery in the 21 st Century	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 1

3 T 9/11/12	Women and Work	Burns, Ch. 5
3 Th 9/13/12	Summing Up	Exam I
4 T 9/18/12	Women, Economics, and Microcredit	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 11
4 Th 9/20/12	Women and Politics	Burns, pp. 206-234
5 T 9/25/12	Women, Activism, and Subordination	Burns, pp. 234-240; <i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 4
5 Th 9/27/12	Women and Development	Burns, Ch. 6
6 T 10/2/12	The Axis of Equality	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 12
October 3, 2012 (Wednesday)	Written Assignment	Paper I due in Reeves 102 by 4 pm
6 Th 10/4/12	Women's Movements Nationally and Locally	Burns, Ch. 10
Oct. 6-9, 2012	Fall Break	No classes
7 Th 10/11/12	"What Can I Do?"	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 14 Guest Speaker and Workshop
8 T 10/16/12	Women and their Bodies: Attitudes and Violence	Burns, Ch. 4
8 Th 10/18/12	Prohibition and Prostitution	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 7
9 T 10/23/12	Women and Reproductive Issues	Burns, Ch. 3
9 Th 10/25/12	Women, Infant Mortality, and Childbirth	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 7
10 T 10/30/12	Summing Up	Exam II

10 Th 11/1/12	Learning to Speak Up	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 3 (Suzy Moyer project)
11 T 11/6/12	Women and Religion	Burns, Ch. 8; <i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 9
11 Th 11/8/12	Women and Education	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 10
12 T 11/13/12	Women and Globalization	Burns, Ch. 7
November 14, 2012	Written Assignment	Paper II due in Reeves 102 by 4 pm
12 Th 11/15/12	Grassroots vs. Treetops	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 13
13 T 11/20/12	Shame and Honor	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 5
Nov. 21-25, 2011	Thanksgiving Break	No classes
14 T 11/27/12	Women and Families	<i>Half the Sky</i> , Ch. 6 and 8
14 Th 11/29/12	Transnational Women's Movement	Burns, Ch. 11
15 T 12/4/12	Presentations	
15 Th 12/6/12	Presentations	
December 10-15, 2012	Final Exams	

^a The syllabus is adapted from previous WOST 101 syllabi.