

**PS 345**

*Psychology of Women*

**Spring, 2015**

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Office: Room 229 PPHAC  
Class time: T & TH 10:20 – 11:30

**Office Hours:**

Monday	2:00 – 3:00
Tuesday and Thursday	11:45 – 1:00
Wednesday and Friday	by appointment only

If none of these times are convenient for you, other times may be arranged. Please feel free to call or email me to set up an appointment.

**Course Description**

This course has as its central focus an examination of the research on gender differences and female gender development from a variety of perspectives. Special emphasis will be placed on critical analysis of the assumptions about human nature and science that are embedded in our approaches to these issues. The approach will be interdisciplinary, with attention to biological, cognitive, behavioral, and social factors, which influence the emergence of an individual's gender. Topics include gender role development, achievement and motivation, women and their work, women of color, health issues, sexuality, adjustment, and victimization.

# Psychology of Women

## Course Goals

1. To gain knowledge of the Psychology of Women, the history of this field, and its contemporary state.
2. To understand the research processes and findings in this area.
3. To learn about the psychological experiences of women of diverse backgrounds.
4. To understand the feminist critiques of science in general, and psychology in particular.

## Course Requirements

### 1. Discussion Leaders:

Each student will lead a class discussion. You **must** present your topic in a way that is interactive with the class as a whole. The discussion leader dates and topics are listed on the outline below. (See the *Format and Tips for Leading a Discussion* document in your class folder for additional details regarding this assignment).

Since you are presenting with others-- it is important to be well coordinated and non-overlapping. Your topic should be well defined and you should read beyond the assigned readings as you prepare for your role as discussion leader.

Each group member will receive an individual grade for their portion of the presentation, as well as written feedback from your classmates. Your grade will also reflect the quality of your discussion questions.

### 2. Response Journal:

Each student will keep a response journal during the semester. The journal should contain your responses to the weekly reading assignments as well as your thoughts and feelings about our class discussions as well as other aspects of the course. There will generally be two - three journal entries required each week. Some of your entries are based upon the required readings (R) and the other entries will be an open entries (O). An open entry can include anything related to the topic of the Psychology of Women—reactions to the class discussions, thoughts about a current event, a personal experience, etc. A *Psychology of Women Journal Assignment* sheet can be found in your folder and describes the assignment in greater detail. Your journals must be brought to each class session. Journals will be collected on a random basis throughout the semester. Make sure to date and label each and every journal entry.

### 3. Class Participation

Your attentive presence and prepared participation in the classroom are important both for a successful course and for your successful completion of the course. It is assumed and expected that you will attend class, complete the readings in advance of class, and come prepared to participate actively and thoughtfully in class. You will receive a class participation grade for each and every class session. Students will help to determine their class participation grade by completing a class participation assessment form at the end of each class session.

### 4. Reading Circles at the Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem

You will have the opportunity to lead a Reading Circle at the Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem. In a Reading Circle children and volunteers get together to enjoy books and stories. Reading Circles generally last for an hour. The goal of a reading circle is to foster a love of reading in children. Our specific purpose is to expose children to books about gender and racial diversity issues.

Book Selection: You will be asked to select a book to read to the children and design discussion questions that will get the children to think about the core issues the book demonstrates.

Final Write Up: The final paper involves: a. A three page review of the literature on the coverage of either gender/race in children's literature, and b. 1-2 pages covering your reaction to your experience at the Reading Circle.

### 5. Woman in Psychology: A Biographical Sketch

Students will pick a woman known in the field of Psychology, from a list provided to you, to research and learn more about her life. You may write about a woman who is still alive, or can be a person of historical significance. You may use online sources in addition to traditional empirical sources, but not Wikipedia. You should be able to gain access to a list of this person's publications through PsychInfo, and ideally, you should read/summarize some of this person's most important works.

There will be two sections of this paper. First part is to summarize pertinent, interesting, and relevant details of the woman's life. To summarize from your source: this may sound easy, but often it is more difficult to write a short, concise summary than it is to ramble on for paragraphs about what you read. Try to digest the main ideas and not just re-state them in the order in which they appeared. Write as if you are telling someone the information.

Cover: basic biographic info (when and where she was born, basic childhood and family). Where attended school and college—and what impact did school have on her life; what was adult life like for her—discuss may relevant historical information; what were/are her contributions to the field of psychology—what is she known for.

The second part of this paper is a short summary of your observations and opinion relating to her life. Briefly compare/contrast to life today. Example: think about the choices she made in that historical time; could you have lived through those same obstacles? Are you at all surprised by what you learned? How would her life have been different today?

Your report must be typed, double-spaced with pages stapled together. Length of 1-2 pages for the biographical information, approximately one page for your own thoughts. In addition to the paper you will be responsible for creating an artistic expression of the women you studied that will be on display in the Psychology Department Lounge for Women's History month in March. More details to come!

## Evaluation

Your grade will be based on the following items;

Discussion Leader	20 %
Biographical Sketch	20 %
Reading Circle	20 %
Response Journal	25 %
Class Participation	<u>15 %</u>
	100 %

### Policy on Plagiarism:

Evidence of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the College policy on academic honesty.

### Disability Statements:

"Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic & Disability Support, located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall (extension 1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic & Disability Support office."

### A Request Regarding General Classroom Etiquette:

Now that we are in the age of cell phones, pagers, and laptops, I have found that the use of these pieces of technology can be both positive and negative. They certainly make life easier, but they are not necessarily helpful in the classroom. I would ask that all cell phones and pagers be turned off or placed in a silent mode prior to the start of class. Having cell phones and pagers go off during class is disruptive both to me and my train of thought (which can be easily derailed at times!) as well as to your fellow students. If there is an emergency situation where you need to be reachable during class, place your cell phones or pagers in vibrate mode. If they go off, please leave the class to take the call. Please only respond to cell phones or pagers if there is a true emergency. If you use laptops for note-taking, this is fine as long as that is truly what you are doing with your laptop. Please do not check email, check facebook, write letters, or surf the web—just so you know, it is quite easy to tell when students are using laptops for purposes other than note-taking. **If you use your cell phone in class it will lower your class participation grade by ½ a letter grade!**

**Required Course Reading:**

(MWM) Matlin, Margaret, W. (2012). The Psychology of Women. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thomson/Wadsworth.

(RR) Reserved readings will be distributed in class or placed on reserve in the library.

## **Psychology of Women**

### **Course Outline**

(Schedule subject to  
change due to  
weather)

#### **Week 1 (1/20 & 1/22)**

*Organizational Meeting & Syllabus Review (1/20)*

*Value Clarification Exercise and Introduction to  
Psychology of Women (1/22)*

(MWM) Chapter 1

#### **Week 2 (1/27 & 1/29)**

*Feminism, Privilege, and Oppression (1/27)*

(MWM) Chapter 1

(RR) MacIntosh Peggy. White Privilege: Unpacking the  
invisible backpack.

*Video: Privilege and Oppression (1/29)*

#### **Week 3 (2/3 & 2/5)**

*Diversity of Women - Inequalities (2/3)*

Latina, Black, and Asian Women: Special Issues

(MWM) Chapter 1

*A Case in Action: A Feminist Approach to Agoraphobia (2/5)*

(MWM) Chapter 12 (pages 406 – 417)

(RR) McHugh, Maureen. A feminist approach to agoraphobia.  
Challenging traditional views of women at home.

#### **Week 4 (2/10 & 2/12)**

*Reading Circle Organizational Meetings (2/10)*

*Library and Research Time (2/12)*

**Week 5 (2/17 & 2/19)**

*Representations of Women in Religion, Language, and History (2/17)*

(MWM) Chapter 2

*The Biology of Sex (2/19)*

(MWM) Chapter 3

**Week 6 (2/24 & 2/26)**

*Variations on the Binary System of Sex (2/24)*

(MWM) Chapter 3

(RR) Preves, Sharon. Medical Sex Assignment & Stigma, Secrecy and Shame.

Biographical Sketches of Female Psychologists Due (2/26)



**Week 7 (3/3 & 3/5)**

*Miss Representation – Women and Media Representations (3/3 & 3/5)*  
Video & Discussion

(MWM) Chapter 2 pgs. 48 – 72

**Week 8 (3/10 & 3/12)**

Recess – No Class – Enjoy and Stay Safe

**Week 9 (3/17 & 3/19)**

*Puberty and Menstruation DL(3/17)*

(MWM) Chapter 4 (pages 113 – 122)  
(RR) Gloria Steinem If Men Could Menstruate

Video: Period (3/19)

**Week 10 (3/24 & 3/26)**

*Reading Circle Updates (3/24)*

*Women and Work DL (3/26)*

(MWM) Chapter 7

**Week 11 (3/31 & 4/2)**

*Women's Sexual Response & Sexual Attitudes – Assuming Heterosexuality DL (3/31)*

(MWM) Chapter 9  
(RR) Allison & Risman A Double standard for “Hooking Up”  
How far have we come toward gender equality?

*Lesbianism and Bisexuality DL (4/2)*

(MWM) Chapter 9 (and Lesbian section of Chapter 8)  
(RR) Rust, Paula. Bisexuality: A contemporary paradox for women.

**Week 12 (4/7 & 4/9)**

Attend the Take Back the Night March and Rally (4/7)

*Violence Against Women: The Abuse of Women DL (4/9)*

(MWM) Chapter 13  
(RR) Rozee, Patricia. Women's fear of rape.

**Week 13 (4/14 & 4/16)**

*Pregnancy and Childbirth DL (4/14)*

(MWM) Chapter 10

*Work on Reading Circle Projects (4/16)*

*No Class – Attending NCUR*

**Week 14 (4/21 & 4/23)**

*Video or Guest Speaker: Motherhood (4/21)*

(MWM) Chapter 10

Share Reading Circle Experiences (4/23)

**Reading Circle Papers Due**

**Week 15 (4/28 & 4/30)**

*Community Journal Discussion (4/28)*

*An Attempt at Closure and Evaluations (4/30)*

