

WOST 101 Introduction to Women's Studies
Course Syllabus: Spring 2015
MW 8:55-10:05, PPHAC 116

Instructor: Joyce Dougherty, Ph.D.

Office: PPHAC Room 310

Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 8:30 – 8:55 a.m. and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to be an introduction to women's studies; an academic field that focuses on the meaning of gender in such social spheres as family, education, work, and the law. It is interdisciplinary, with an emphasis on multicultural and global issues that impact the lives of women. There are two required texts: Women's Realities, Women's Choices and Gloria Steinem's Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, a successful student will be better prepared to participate in and intelligently contribute to the larger public conversation about the role of gender in the United States and around the world. Assignments are designed to build and/or strengthen all of the following:

- Analysis and Problem Solving Skills
- Interpersonal and Leadership Skills
- Project Management and Organizational Skills
- Research and Information Management Skills
- Self- Management and Work Habits
- Written and Oral Communication

ATTENANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

This course is structured in a format that blends lectures, discussions, and student presentations. As a student in this class, you become a part of an intellectual community actively involved in exploring the meaning of gender in society. While consensus on every issue may not be possible, the expectation is that the classroom will be a safe, supportive environment in which ideas and differences can be shared in a respectful and positive way.

It is essential that everyone faithfully attend and come to class on time and prepared. More than two unexcused absences (missing one week of class) and/or four late arrivals will impact the attendance portion of your final grade. For an absence to be considered "excused" an email must be received prior to the class with an explanation as to why you cannot attend (i.e., illness, family emergency, etc.) and proper documentation must be received upon your return to class. All notes from the college health center must be signed by a nurse or physician. Only students who have 100 percent attendance (with no absences at all and no late arrivals) will receive an A+ for attendance which is **worth 10 percent of the final grade.**

The participation portion of the final grade, also worth **10 percent of the final grade**, will be measured by active participation in class discussions, complete and thoughtful peer and self-evaluations, and by submitting assignments described in the extra credit section of the syllabus.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Short Papers and Class Discussions: You will be expected to write two (2) short papers (one to two pages maximum, double-spaced, 12 point font) and come to class prepared to discuss what you have written. The thoughtfulness of your written work and how effectively you express your thoughts in class will be considered when grading each paper. Each paper is **worth 15 percent of your percent of your final grade**. You will be expected to read all of the essays in the Steinem book according to the schedule below, and identify which essay meant the most to you and why, and which meant the least to you and why. Each paper will be due on the following dates via email no later than 6 a.m. and you will be expected to bring a hard copy with you to class on the following dates:

- Paper on the essays in “Learning from Experience” and “Other Basic Discoveries”: **February 9**
- Paper on “Five Women” and “Transforming Politics”: **March 18**

Readings:

In order to keep pace with the course curriculum, the following is the recommended reading schedule for the Women’s Realities, Women’s Choices text:

- January: Introduction and Section I (1-5)
- February: Section II (6-9)
- March: Section III (10-13)

Major Group Project: One of the issues brought to the forefront of our collective social conscience during the so-called “second wave of feminism” during the 1960’s and 1970’s was the call to end violence against women. The unfortunate reality is that violence, notably sexual violence, is still prevalent in the United States especially on university and college campuses. Working in groups of four, the goal of each group will be to present **a comprehensive document** that analyzes the problem and proposes ways to end sexual assaults on university and college campuses in the United States today. That document will consist of four key sections (no longer than 5 pages in each section, double-spaced, 12 point font):

- 1) Define the problem
- 2) Identify the causes
- 3) Outline strategies to end the violence
- 4) Describe how key strategies will be implemented

Each section will be worth 10 percent of the final grade for the person responsible for that section. The group paper as a whole will be worth 20 percent of the final grade.

A draft copy of each section will be **due on in class on March 4 (midterm)**. The drafts will be reviewed with particular attention paid to the organization of each section, the quality of writing, and scholarship. Proper citation of sources (using the APA style) will be critical. The expectation is that all group members abide by the established norms of academic honesty. Upon return from Spring Break, each group will be expected to set up an appointment with me to review the draft and any suggested revisions. **All final papers are due April 13.**

A one page **progress report** from each group (**worth 5 percent of the final grade**) will be due and presented in class on **February 9**. This report must identify who is responsible for which of the four sections of the document and why that person or persons is best suited for that assignment based on an assessment of each person's core skills. It will need to include a timetable that demonstrates the document will be completed on time and it will need to identify a creative name for your group.

Each group will be expected to **present their work in class** beginning April 20 through April 27. Each group will be given 30 minutes for their presentation which will be **worth 15 percent of the final grade**.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

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.

EXTRA CREDIT:

There will be two opportunities to earn extra credit during the semester. The first requires attendance to the **Women's Studies Conference** at the College on Saturday, February 21. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day. It will be your responsibility to be sure that your attendance is recorded. This will be worth 5 percent of your final grade (replacing the grade on the group progress report).

There also will be an optional final exam scheduled on May 4 at 1:30. As a part of your "active participation" you will be expected to submit two short-answer, multiple choice or true/false questions (and answers) for each identified class lecture, each documentary and each subsection (1-13) in the Women's Realities, Women's Choices text. These questions will make up the optional final exam which will be worth 20 percent of your final grade (replacing the group paper grade if the grade on the exam is higher than the group paper grade). While it is recommended that you write your questions in a timely manner throughout the semester, all questions (clearly identifying the date of the lecture, the name of the documentary, and the subsections of the text) will be due no later than April 15.