

WGS200-601

Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

Fall 2020

Welcome to WGS200 Section 601 - Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies! WGS 200 is an introduction to women's and gender studies as an interdisciplinary field spanning the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. We will study historical perspectives and contemporary understanding of women and gender. We'll also use theory, systematic analysis, and experiential accounts to explore the complexities of gender.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you, the student, will be able to demonstrate understanding in the unit assignment papers, forum discussions and the final project proposal of the following:

- Explain the complexities of gender as they relate to a spectrum of other identity determinants, such as race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality.
- Analyze gender-related mechanisms of interpersonal and institutional power and privilege.
- Place contemporary issues about women and gender within a larger historical framework and use that perspective to anticipate the future.
- Formulate and evaluate strategies for social change.
- Articulate the relation of the study of women and gender to your own life and chosen discipline.

Instructor Info

Dr. Rachel Gelfand – rgelfan@ncsu.edu

Email is best way to contact me. If needed, I am willing to set up a phone call or Google hangout upon request.

If you have questions about assignment feedback, please communicate with me directly.

Prerequisites

None. This course fulfills a US Diversity GEP.
<https://oucc.dasa.ncsu.edu/u-s-diversity/>

Required Texts

1) *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*, Lisa Wade and Myra Marx Ferree. Second Edition. W.W. Norton and Company.

2) Please obtain one of the following texts for Final Essay Assignment:

Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family, Pauli Murray

Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love, and So Much More, Janet Mock

Zami: A New Spelling of My Name, A Biomythography, Audre Lorde

Suggested Reading

bell hooks. (2014). *Feminism is for Everybody*.

Boston Women's Collective. (2011). *Our Bodies, Ourselves*.

C.J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges. (2015) *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change*.

Course Questions

There are nine topics of material organized into (sometimes multiple) course weeks. Each week in the semester has its own webpage accessible from Moodle. These units are:

- Introduction: What is Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies?
- What is the relationship between sex and gender?
- What was the women's liberation movement and how do we see feminisms as a social movement in the US?
- What is intersectionality? What is the relationship between gender, race, class, and socioeconomic status?
- What is privilege and oppression?
- What is cultural competence?
- How is the body gendered?
- What is the relationship between gender, work, and family?
- How do international feminisms connect to local movements?

Grading

This is an online course and most activities will be self-paced within a weekly schedule. You'll find the due dates and particulars for all of these assignments on your weekly schedule pages. Generally speaking, assignments will be due on Fridays at 11:45 p.m. Classroom participation will include weekly forum posts due on Thursday at 11:45pm and Replies due on Friday at 11:45pm.

Your grades will be assigned as follows:

- Class Participation on Moodle Forum-15%
- Unit Assignment Essays -60% (15 points each)
- Experiential Assignment (Movie Night)-10%
- Final Essay Assignment-15%

Your grades will be posted by their point value. For example, if you submit a weekly assignment that receives a "B-" grade, your grade will be "8" or

8/10 (80%). Final course grades 0.5 and higher will be rounded to the next whole number. For final course grades, I utilize the departmental grading:

A+ 97 to 100; **A** 93-96; **A-** 90-92

B+ 87 to 89; **B** 83-86; **B-** 80-82

C+ 77 to 79; **C** 73-76; **C-** 70-72

D+ 67 to 69; **D** 63-66; **D-** 60-62 **F** Below 60

Extra Credit: There is an opportunity to write a reflection essay on designated set of feature films, which can add 0-2 points to your participation grade depending on the quality of the essays.

Late Assignments

One good thing about an online course is that you may post assignments at any time 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I expect you to plan ahead for life's emergencies...If you finish assignments early, you should post it early. Computers crash, websites go down, we all get sick, etc. Taking an online course means taking responsibility for your own work. We are all adults and I trust you to get things in on time. I know you are busy, and I try to give you as much time as I can to complete your work... If you submit late work, it is my discretion whether I will grade it. Unit assignments that are even 30 seconds late will be graded with a late penalty of at least one letter grade. Some assignments (like your final project for example) I cannot grade late because of my quick turnaround time to get your grades in. Bottom line: try not to be late, and if you are, email me as soon as possible to let me know when I can expect it.

Attendance

As this is an online course, there are no policies on in-person attendance. However, I do expect you to participate weekly in Moodle Forum. Please note that you must participate in Moodle Forums the week they are assigned (not all at the beginning or end of class). I also expect that you will engage with other students and me (on instructor-facilitated posts noted in

course homepage). I send important class emails through Moodle so please ensure that you regularly check and respond to emails sent to your email associated with your Moodle account.

Academic Integrity

Don't cheat. Don't buy papers. Don't copy Wikipedia, change a few things, and then submit it to me. Don't take another person's work without citing them. Cheating is a personal insult to us academics. I will turn you in to the Academic Integrity Office and I don't want to have to do that. The NCSU Honor Pledge specifies that: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment." By simply turning in an assignment, you are indicating that you neither gave nor received unauthorized aid on the assignment. The University policy on academic integrity found here: Code of Student Conduct Policy (POL11.35.1)

Pronouns and Gender Inclusivity

Please contact me if you wish to be referred to using a name and/or pronouns other than what is listed in the student directory. I have supported students of diverse genders for many years as an educator.

Disability

If you have special needs, please let me know and I will do my very best to accommodate them. If you are visually impaired, you may change the font size on the website and/or contact me for further assistance. If you have other needs, I will try to address them. The university also wants you to know this: "Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the following link:

<https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-01/>

A Final Word

Most students have found this class interesting if not a bit fun. Much of the material is thought-provoking and I try to present different sides to controversial issues. Sometimes people misunderstand WGS so let me say right away that you will likely not personally agree with everything you read in this class. Again, I try to present different sides to the issues and the women's movements (like all other social movements) are not monolithic. The selected readings are intended to give you a well-rounded perspective on some of today's controversial issues. They don't necessarily reflect my own political views nor do I expect that they will always reflect yours. Students from many different ways of life, political affiliations, viewpoints, etc have and will succeed in this class. What I ask of you is that you keep an open-mind and critically reflect on what you read. By all means, I welcome a professional, academic deconstruction of an argument and I invite you to engage the readings, me, and your peers in this kind of debate. Still, I want you to keep it academic and not personal. Ultimately, I don't grade you on how much I personally agree with you nor whether you are/are not a feminist, an activist, etc. I grade you on how well you understand the course material and can apply it in a thoughtful way.

Respecting Other's Privacy

Students may be required to disclose personally identifiable information to other students in the course, via email or web-postings, where relevant to the course. Examples include online discussions of class topics, and posting of student coursework. All students are expected to respect the privacy of each other by not sharing or using such information outside the course.

DE Virtual Orientation

Review the Virtual Orientation to distance education to help you become familiar with the online course environment. You will find a wealth of

information here, from Getting Started to Tips for Success, lots of "how to's", examples of DE courses as well as other helpful information.

NCSU e-Reserves

Make sure to have an updated version of Adobe Reader installed on your computer. Some of your readings will be available through the NCSU e-reserves. You will see the link located on the right-hand side of the home page. You will then be taken to the e-reserves page for your course where you will login with your Unity ID and Password.

Course At-A-Glance

Unit 1: The Big Questions

Week 1: What is Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies?

Read: "Critical Introduction to the Field" Miliann Kang, Donovan Lessard, Laura Heston, and Sonny Nordmarken

"Feminist Politics: Where We Stand" *Feminism is for Everybody* bell hooks

Assignments: Post Introductory Bio

Week 2: What is the gender binary? How do we "do" and "see" gender?

Read: Ideas (Ch. 2 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

[Genderbread Person](#)

And for some fun: [Cakes](#)

Week 3 What is the relationship between sex and gender?

Read: Bodies and Performances (Ch. 3 & 4 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

Terms and Concepts (from *Transgender History*, Susan Stryker)

*Unit 1 Assignment

Unit 2: Historical Perspectives and Intersections

Week 4 US Feminisms in the 19th Century

Read:

["Why I Became a Women's Rights Man" Frederick Douglass](#)
["Marriage Protest"](#) (click on linked article on coverture)

Explore: [Sojourner Truth's 1851 Speech](#)

Watch: [The Surprising Road to Women's Suffrage](#), Lecture by Ellen DuBois (Give yourself time to watch)

Optional: ["Declaration of Sentiments"](#)

Week 5 US Feminisms in the 20th Century

Read: "Overlooked: Ida B. Wells," *NYT*

"The Problem with No Name" *Feminist Mystique*, Betty Friedan

Combahee River Collective Statement (including interview with Barbara Smith)

"How Anita Hill Woke A Generation of Feminists" Rebecca Walker

Week 6 What is intersectionality? What is the relationship between gender, race, class, and socioeconomic status?

Read: Intersections (Ch. 5 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

"A Question of Class," Dorothy Allison

"Age, Race, Class, and Sexuality: Women Redefining Difference"
Audre Lorde

“Building an Asian American Feminist Movement” [Zine](#)

*Experiential Movie Assignment Due

Week 7 Privilege and Oppression

Read: "Heterosexual Privilege, " Judith Katz

"White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Peggy
McIntosh

Pick 2 of Listed COVID Readings

*Unit Assignment 2

Unit 3: Debates and Dimensions of WGSS

Week 8 Masculinities

Read: Inequalities: Men and Masculinities (Ch. 6 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

"Making Masculinity: Adolescence, Identity, and High School" C.J.
Pascoe

Week 9 Rethinking the Family

Read: Families (Ch. 11 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

And Choose 2 Articles: “The Invention of Heterosexuality;”
“Millennial Men Aren't The Dads They Thought They'd Be;” “What
Happened to All Those Frozen Eggs?;” “You might not care about
‘Modern Family’ anymore, but it helped change TV”

Week 10 Gender and Work

Read: Work (Ch. 12 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*)

Beyond Wages: Effects of the Latina Wage Gap

“‘I Just Put Koreans and Nails Together’: Nail Spas and the Model
Minority” Miliann Kang

Explore: <http://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/>

*Unit Assignment 3

Unit 4: Bodies in Feminist Practice

Week 11 Reproductive Politics & Gendered Violence

Read: "A Black Feminist Reflection on the Antiviolence Movement"
Beth Richie

“Reproductive Justice as Intersectional Feminism” Loretta J. Ross

“College Hookup Culture” (pgs 275-285 in *Gender: Ideas, Interactions,
Institutions*)

Week 12 Redefining Realness and the Body

Read: *Hunger*, Roxane Gay (excerpt)

“The Unbearable of (In)visibility of Being Trans,” Chase Strangio

Watch: Janet Mock, video discussions of *Redefining Realness*

Week 13 Science, Technology, and Cultural Competence

Read: "Why we need to understand each other. Effective Cross Cultural Tools"

"The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles" Emily Martin

"When Winning is Losing: Why the Nation that Invented the Computer Lost Its Lead" Marie Hicks

Activities: Implicit Bias Test

*Unit Assignment 4

Week 14

*Final Essays Due