



← Fill out this form if you haven't already! (sent in an announcement earlier in the week)

# Welcome to WGS 220!

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Week 1 Discussion: Introduction and Overview

# excited

# stressed

content  
understood  
intrigued  
hopeful  
complete  
nerv-cited  
scared  
exciting  
optimistic  
terrified  
ready  
anticipatory  
overwhelmed  
butterflies  
bittersweet  
schedule  
prepared  
expecting  
motivated  
busy  
enthusiastic

# Ask your partner & listen deeply

1. How are you doing?
2. What's something amazing that happened to you this week?
3. What's something causing you to feel stressed this week?
4. What's something that disappointed you this week?

**5 minutes**

\*if you answer quickly, challenge yourself to ask your partner another thoughtful question. What do you want to be asked right now?

# Debrief

1. How do you feel after that?
2. What was it like to be asked these questions? To answer?
3. How could you implement this in your real life? Who would you ask these questions to?
4. What do you think the purpose of this exercise was?

A photograph of Bell Hooks, an African American woman with short dark hair and glasses, speaking into a microphone. She is wearing a patterned top and has her hands clasped in front of her. The background is dark.

One of the most vital ways we **sustain ourselves**  
**is by building communities** of resistance,  
places where we know **we are not alone.**

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*Bell Hooks*

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# Agenda

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- ❑ Introductions & establishing our classroom community, discussion goals
- ❑ Syllabus review
- ❑ What is feminism? (According to us? the readings? the world?)

# About you

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1. Name, pronouns
2. What brought you here?

# About me



## **Community discussion guidelines**

We are going to come up with some of our own!

For example: Listening respectfully, allowing everyone the chance to speak etc...

**astabnic@umich.edu**

# Community discussion guidelines

Understand that we are speaking ***in draft.***

Respect boundaries (our own and those of others). But, understand that we must talk about ***uncomfortable truths***, this is necessary.

Make an effort to know names! (with correct pronunciation and pronoun usage)

Affirm personal experiences & those of others, but be careful about disclosures!

Embrace challenging perspectives and biases. *Why is what we are talking about uncomfortable to me?*

Disagree with me, with your classmates, with the readings!

Come to this material asking yourselves: *How do we love the people more than we hate the system destroying them?*

Be a revolutionary optimist!

# The syllabus & other class technicalities

**Anna Stabnick (she/they)**

**My email:** [astabnic@umich.edu](mailto:astabnic@umich.edu)

**My office hours:** Wednesdays 2-4pm

**Office:** Zoom (default) OR G277 Lane Hall (email me!)

## **Attendance & Participation:**

**15%** of your final grade, **3 possible points** each section

Synchronous, in-person

*What does good attendance and participation look like?*

## **Attendance (1 point)**

Section attendance is **required**.

(1 unexcused absence permitted)

**Excused absences:** reach out to me in advance!

- Illness (physical, mental health issues)

## **Participation (2 points)**

I don't tally contributions.

You can only lose participation points by being disruptive, or perpetual lateness without speaking with me about it.

# Topics we will cover in this class

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- Female reproductive anatomy
- Sex and sexuality
- Racism and other forms of systemic oppression
- Pregnancy and childbirth
- Reproductive control including contraception and abortion
- The US healthcare system
- Gender-based violence
- Body image/size issues
- Disability
- Mental health
- Aging and lifespan health

# Alternative assignment

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Gives you full points for that week. Opportunities for an alternative assignment include missing section due to:

- Excused absence, but still want to make up the points (changes to 3/3 instead of an “E”)
- Unexcused, and you have used your one free unexcused absence (you can only do this twice!)
- Opting out of discussion due to triggering/potentially retraumatizing material - you do not have to disclose anything!!

***Due 1 week after missed section, form link is on my canvas page!***

# What is the purpose of discussion?

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## 1. Practice the **Feminist Strategies**

From the *Low & Bailey* reading. Will be used in all written assignments and may appear on quizzes/exams!

More on these next week...

## 2. Review upcoming written assignments

Critical analysis due **Sept. 26th, 5pm**

Research Topic due **Oct. 3rd, 5pm**

Thesis and Outline due **Oct. 31st, 5pm**

Infographic due **Dec. 5th, 5pm**  
(presentation **Dec. 7th**)

# What is the purpose of discussion?

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3. To discuss, clarify, and elaborate on 1-2 of the week's assigned readings.

**Prepare by taking notes on:** Main points, key words or phrases, what kind of evidence the authors use to support their argument, relevant strategies and why, what stands out to you and why...

## In discussion we will NOT:

- Discuss all of the readings
- Review lecture material
- Prep for quizzes/exams

# COVID-19 and the classroom

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- We will follow Washtenaw County guidance on masking and other protective measures based on community transmission level.
- PLEASE let me know if you need additional information, protections, have questions or concerns about this.

Canvas tour!

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**questions?**

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# **What do we mean when we say “women’s health”**

Who are we  
talking about?

Why do we call  
it “women’s  
health”?

Is this an  
inclusive term?  
Who might be  
left out?

# Feminism: Definitions and Overview

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# **What is feminism?**

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Think of two words that come to mind when you think of the word “feminism”.

## **Then, discuss with a group:**

- Similarities or differences in the words you thought of?
- Try to define feminism. What is difficult about trying to create a definition?
- What are your thoughts/feelings around calling yourself a feminist?

# Varying (conflicting?) definitions of feminism

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## Lifestyle/Choice

“the notion that there are as many versions of feminism as there are women.”

- hooks, 2000, p. 5

“feminism is really something that you define for yourself”

- Valenti, 2007, p.14

## Reformist

“belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes.”

- Valenti, 2007, p.13

## Radical/Revolutionary

“A movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.”

- hooks, 2000, p.1

**Are these definitions different from one another?**

**Do they have different implications for understanding women's health?**

**Why is a feminist perspective useful for learning about women's health issues?**

# Combahee River Collective - a new definition?

## Combahee River Collective:

- A group of Black lesbian socialist feminists formed in 1974.
- Founding/early members included: Barbara Smith, Beverly Smith, Demita Frazier, Cheryl Clarke, Akasha Hull, Margo Okazawa-Rey, Chirlane McCray, and Audre Lorde.

*"We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy."*

*"We believe that sexual politics under patriarchy is as pervasive in Black women's lives as are the politics of class and race. We also often find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are most often experienced simultaneously."*

**How is Black feminism similar or different to the feminisms we discussed on the last slide?**

Anonymous form for feedback, questions, comment, or anything else you'd like to share or have addressed without your name attached



## **Reading for next week (all posted on Canvas!)**

Our Bodies Ourselves Chapters 1 & 2

Watch: The Period Poem

Mintz: Becoming Cliterate (p. 31-35)