

INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES - WS 100/SOC.SCI 103

Fall 2006

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Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 3-4, and always by appointment

Required Readings: Necessary Dreams: Ambition in Women's Changing Lives
by Anna Fels

Weekly required readings are on line and can be accessed through library e-reserves

About this class: This course is an introduction to the study of girls and women. The primary purpose of the course is to position women and their contributions in historical context. We will give particular attention to the intersection of gender, race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation as it informs our study of females.

Our class will operate on the assumption that the teacher-student relationship is a partnership whereby we learn from one another and move together as in a dance. ***I make the assumption that we are all teachers and all learners.*** Therefore, each of us will actively participate in and assume responsibility for the class. The class format will emphasize discussion and responses to assigned readings, films, and lectures.

There are two distinctive features to this class:

- (1) Theory Practice-Service Learning - In an effort to provide a learning environment that "makes the world more rather than less real" (hooks, 1989), we will utilize a Theory/Practice-Service Learning (TPSL) format. A TPSL component can deepen our understanding of the subject we are studying and develop our ability to reflect on, "practice," and apply to a real life situation what we are learning in the classroom. I believe that knowing facts, reciting theories and concepts, and regurgitating back on an exam what you have memorized is not necessarily reflective of a "deep" understanding of the material nor does it prepare us for real life experiences. Therefore, you will reflect on what we are learning by working in a social service agency in the greater surrounding community at least two hours a week. I will provide you with a list of possible placements and times, and you then may select the placement based on your personal preferences and schedules. Detailed information will be given in class about this component of the class.
- (2) Writing Intensive - The class is writing intensive and satisfies the sophomore writing requirement. However, this does not mean that you must be a sophomore to take this course nor a gifted writer to do well. It does mean that you will be writing on a consistent basis and that you will need to devote time and effort to the writing process.

Course Goals: Each of us in this class should expect the following:

-To participate actively in class discussions and in Learn Link conversations on a regular basis and in a thoughtful manner. This means that each of us should be able to frame our conversations around the readings of the day and the theory presented and to listen respectfully and carefully to one another.

-To connect the theory of the readings, films, and lectures to our daily lives and the lives of girls and women throughout the world. Our community placements will be one important venue for doing this.

-To understand the ways in which all girls and women have been discriminated against, marginalized, and often treated as invisible in virtually every culture for which we have empirical research

-To see the specific ways in which class, ethnicity, sexual orientation and age intersect in defining girls' and women's lives and experiences

-To appreciate the gains made by the three waves of the feminist movement and acknowledge the work that still remains for the liberation of all women throughout the world

-To grow in heart and mind. This means that we will make a conscious attempt to develop a tolerance and appreciation of others' ideas and convictions, particularly those who are different from our own.

-To enjoy this moment in time in our own journey of learning!!

Requirements of the Course:

1. Question, Quotation, and Talking points (QOTP) (30%) - For many of the class periods a set of readings is assigned (see attached schedule). You are required to read these selections prior to the class designated for discussion of the readings and to submit a one-page, typed response to these readings. This response paper will consist of three parts: (1) a question prompted by the particular reading(s), (2) a quotation from the reading that you found particularly compelling or controversial, and (3) a brief outline of ideas prompted by the readings that you can use as "talking points" in class discussion. (Further information will be given in class)

Two-three students will be responsible for leading the discussion of these readings each week. It will be incumbent on the facilitators to submit to me a list of discussion questions that they will use to lead the discussion of the readings. *This should occur 2-3 days prior to the discussion.* A list of discussion leaders will be given out in class, but EVERY student will have the opportunity before the semester ends.

2. Attendance, Class Participation, and Learn Link Entries (10%) – Since your individual voice is considered very significant to the integrity of this course, you should attend every class and actively participate in discussion.

Each student will make at least 10 Learn Link entries during the course of the semester. Each entry should be a response or personal reaction to a concept presented in the lecture/readings, in a film, by another student, etc. and should be approximately 3-4 sentences in length (at least!). It is hoped that these entries will serve as a type of conversation among students in the class. Please respond thoughtfully and respectfully to one another on this conference and demonstrate careful reflection as opposed to an “off the cuff” reaction. I am interested in whether you are able to incorporate ideas from the class and then articulate them.

3. In-class Response to *Necessary Dreams* (30%) – You will read *Necessary Dreams: Ambition in Women’s Changing Lives*. Details regarding this assignment will be given in class.

4. Community Placement and Theory/Practice Reflection Paper (30%): Each of you will have an on-site supervisor to whom you will report each week. I will maintain regular contact with this supervisor so as to be certain that this experience is working well for you and the respective agency. The supervisor will evaluate your work at mid-semester and at the end of the semester and communicate those results to me. However, this supervisor will not assign a grade. Periodically during the course of the semester we will have in-class discussions regarding experiences with these placements. You will be expected to talk about your placement in terms of concepts learned in class. *Since the TPSL format will require more time from you, I have compensated you with several “days off” from lecture class (see schedule below).*

You will write an 8-10 page paper that demonstrates how your theory/practice community experience is related to, clarifies, or reflects what you have learned in this class. For example, if you are working with an adolescent girl in one of the placement sites, you might want to consider how your interaction with and/or observation of one or more of these girls validates or raises questions about female body image as described in our readings, lectures, or films. Please be aware that this paper must be connected in a concrete manner to specific information from class. This assignment serves as a type of final examination in that it encourages you to see how the theory of the classroom is linked to the actual experiences of girls and women in the real world. (Detailed information about the construction of this paper will be discussed in class). You are also asked to construct an abstract of your TPSL paper that you will post to our Learn Link conference for all of the members of the class to enjoy and learn from. In many ways this final assignment serves as a type of “final examination” in that you are required to synthesize what you have learned in this class and reflect this understanding in this paper.

The Student Honor Code of Oxford College applies to every member of the class. Please review this code carefully giving special attention to plagiarism. Remember that plagiarism occurs when one uses the words or ideas of another person without quotations and without adequate referencing. Please note also that the use of former students' papers may not be used in any form; to do so is to violate the Honor Code!!!! Should you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult with me.

Please make certain that your cell phones are off and that I do not see nor hear them in the classroom at any time!!!!!!

The plus-minus system will be utilized in the calculation of final grades.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

8/30	Introduction to course
9/1	What is Women's Studies?
*9/4	No Class – Labor Day Holiday!
9/6	Discussion of Community Placements
9/8, 9/11	What Is Women's Studies? (continued)
*9/13	Reading Set 1; QQTP draft due! Peer Review
*9/15, 9/18	Reading Set 1 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! Women's Studies as a Growth Process Finding My Latina Identity Through Women's Studies What Women's Studies Has Meant to Me Why Women's Studies? Women's Studies: A Man's Perspective Fear of Feminism – Why Young Women Get the Willies
* 9/20, 9/22	Reading Set 2 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Convention What Really Happened at Seneca Falls Speech at Akron Women's Rights Convention Address to the First National Conference of Colored Women The Solitude of Self

*9/25, 9/27	Reading Set 3 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! The Yellow Wall Paper Annie Oakley 1855 Marriage Contract The Problem That Has No Name On Being a “Good Girl”: Implications for Latinas in the Outrageous Acts and Bad, Bad Girls
*9/27	Last day for dropping without academic penalty
*9/29	No Class!
*10/2, 10/4	Reading Set 4 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! The Double Standard of Aging Barbie Doll A Doll is Born Madonna Madonna the Feminist Gender Equity in the Classroom: The Unfinished Agenda Homophobia and Sexism
*10/6	No Class!
*10/9, 10/10	Fall Break!
10/11	Film: I am Beautiful
*10/13	No Class!
10/16, 10/18	Reading Set 5 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! On Being Black at Yale Salad Jewish and Working Class The Birthday Party White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Madonna: Plantation Mistress or Soul Sister
*10/20	TPSL Discussion
*10/23, 10/25	Reading Set 6 & Discussion; QQTP paper due! The Turbid Ebb and Flow of Misery Roe V.Wade Thoughts on Abortion for our Sisters The Diary of Anais Nin Lusting for Freedom Living My Life: Thoughts on Sexual Identity

- *10/27, 10/30** **Reading Set 7 & Discussion; QOTP paper due!**
 Impressions of an Indian Childhood
 I Stand Here Ironing
 My Daughter and Me: Déjà vu Over and Over Again
 Separating Mom from the Concept Called Mother
 Family and Women's Lives
- *11/1, 11/3** **Reading Set 8 & Discussion; QOTP paper due!**
 Comments on Genesis
 Public Effort Excommunication
 Power, Authority, and Mystery: Ecofeminism and Earth based Spirituality
 Reactions to a Woman Rabbi
 In Her Own Image
- 11/6 Film: The Burning Times
- *11/8, 11/10** **No Class! Collaborative Preparation for In-Class Response to *Necessary Dreams***
- *11/13** **In-class Response to *Necessary Dreams***
- *11/15, 11/17** **Reading Set 9 & Discussion; QOTP paper due!**
 Violence in Intimate Relationships
 Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
 A Letter from a Battered Wife
 Toward a Black Feminist Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse
 Sexual Harassment: An Overview of Its Impact for Women
- *11/20** **TPSL Discussion**
- *11/22-11/24** **Thanksgiving Break!**
- *11/27, 11/29** **Reading Set 10 & Discussion; QOTP paper due!**
 Blame It on Feminism
 Black Women and Feminism
 A History of Feminist Movements in the US
 The Female Academic in the American Imagination
- *12/1, 12/4** **Reading Set 11 & Discussion; QOTP paper due**
 The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse
 Thoughts on Indian Feminism
 Women and Islam: An Interview with Lila Abu-Lughod
 Reading 'Lolita' in Tehran

- *12/6** **Complete *draft* of TPSL Reflection Paper Due!**
Peer Review
- *12/8** **Final TPSL Reflection Paper due!**
Discussion
- *12/11** **Closing Remarks**