

## **Psychology of Women - Psychology 208/WS 305, Spring 2005**

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**Office Hours:** MWF – 2-3 pm and by appointment

**Texts:** Selected readings (on e-reserve)

**About this class:** The Psychology of Women explores women’s experiences and issues in the context of psychological theory and research. Emphasis is placed on the critical examination, reanalysis, and reinterpretation of numerous concepts in psychology as they inform our knowledge of women.

There are two distinctive features to this class:

1. In-class dialogue and discussion will be a significant component. While I will lecture on a regular basis, I will also expect you to take some leadership and ownership of the class. This will ***not*** be a class where you can sit quietly, take notes, and then leave.
2. The most distinctive feature of the class is the Theory Practice/Service Learning (TPSL) format. What is “Theory/Practice?” A Theory/Practice component can deepen your understanding of the subject you are studying and develop your ability to reflect on, “practice,” and apply to a real life situation what you 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 you for real life experiences. Therefore, you will be expected to *reflect on what you 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.

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

1. 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 and the theory concerning the psychology of women.
2. To connect the psychological theory to the daily lives of girls and women. Our community placements will be one important venue for doing this.

3. To see the specific ways in which class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age intersect to influence female growth and development.
4. 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 views that are different from our own.
5. To enjoy this moment in time in our own journey of learning!

### **Requirements of the Course:**

1. **Attendance, class participation (including group facilitation), and Learn Link entries (10%)**: Since your individual voice is considered very significant to the integrity of the course, you should attend every class and actively participate in discussion. It is expected, therefore, that you will come to class well prepared for discussion. Designated groups of students will have the opportunity to lead one class discussion during the course of the semester. It is expected that each group will be prepared for this group facilitation. (Further information will be given in class regarding this component of the class).

Each student will also contribute *at least* 10 Learn Link entries during the course of the semester. Each entry should be a 3-4 sentence response or personal reaction to a concept presented in the lecture, the readings, a film, or to comments made by other students. It is hoped that these entries will serve as another way for you to converse with students in the class. I expect you to respond thoughtfully to one another on this conference and to evidence 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.

2. **Community Placement and TPSL Reflection Paper (30%)**: Each of you will work in a community social service agency at least two hours a week and have an on-site supervisor to whom you will report. This supervisor will evaluate your work at both 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.

At the end of the semester you will construct an 8 page paper that demonstrates how your community experience is related to, clarifies, or reflects what you have learned in this class. For example, if you are working with a woman at a Women's Shelter, you might want to consider how your interaction with her validates or raises questions about what you have learned regarding women and violence. (Detailed information about the construction of the final paper will be discussed in class). You are required to submit a working title for your paper and a complete outline several weeks before it is due. You are also required to construct an abstract of your final TPSL paper that you will post to our Learn Link conference for all of the members of the class to enjoy and learn from.

3 . **Key Statements and Questions (30%):** In place of a text book I have placed on electronic reserve a collection of articles significant to our study of the psychology of women. On specific dates following your reading of a particular group of articles (see course schedule for due dates) you will compose and submit a one page, typed paper that will consist of (1) 3-4 key statements and (2) one well-developed speculative question. “Key statements” are sentences that capture the basic points of the assigned readings. These statements get to the heart of a discussion in that they summarize and capture a critical point being made. “Speculative questions” go beyond the materials read in that they reflect your ability to think about integrative links among readings, extrapolations beyond the author’s points, applications to real-life settings or needs, etc. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage you to critically reflect on your readings prior to class discussions, question concepts, and go beyond the materials presented. They are not meant to elicit simple regurgitation of the materials. This will also assure that you are prepared for class discussion. We will do the first assignment together in class as a way of learning how to construct key statements and questions.

I will designate two-three students per reading assignment to facilitate the discussion of a reading set on a given date. All students at some point during the semester will have the opportunity to facilitate a class discussion. The designated facilitators may meet with me, should they choose, prior to the respective class to review appropriate ways to conduct this discussion. However, all facilitators are required to submit to me via email a list of questions that they will use to facilitate the class discussion at least one day prior to class discussion. A list of student facilitators and their respective dates for leading the discussion will be decided upon during the first few weeks of the course.

4. **Biography (15%):** In an effort to find lost or overlooked female psychologists **AND** to, thereby, acknowledge their contributions to Psychology you will work in groups of three but each student will be responsible for one psychologist’s biography. Each of you will write a 3-4 page typed biographical sketch of a psychologist chosen in class in which you will present briefly the life events of your psychologist,. In discussion with the other members of your group you will then compare your psychologist’s life with the other psychologists in your group and discuss this comparison in one of your final paragraphs. You will then present your respective biographies to the class . Further details will be given in class.

5. **Journal (15%):** Keeping a journal is a useful way to reflect on class readings, discussions, and your TPSL placement and to relate these to your own experiences. Record and type your entries on 8 ½ x 11 paper that you keep in a report cover (no spirals, plastic, or 3-ring binders!). Make at least one entry per week, each approximately one page long (of course, feel free to make a longer entry if you so wish). Date your entries. I will collect them according to the schedule below. Journal materials will be kept strictly confidential; I will be the only one to read them. Your journal is a place where you can freely write about your reactions and thoughts. Some ideas that you might include in your journal are:

- reflections on the material you have read or that has been discussed during a recent class

- discussion of emotional reactions to issues raised in class (in other words, did anything make you angry or sad, excite you, make you want to take action, etc?)
- conversations that you have had with friends, family members, etc. regarding something that we discussed in class
- memories or current experiences that relate to materials covered in class
- descriptions of a recent movie, TV show, ad, cartoon, etc. that related to something discussed in the course, etc. etc. etc.

There are endless possibilities to your journal entries.

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

***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 and/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!!!***

## **Course Schedule:**

1/19	Introduction
1/21, 1/24, 1/26	Theoretical Perspectives
1/28	Discussion of TPSL Community Placements
<b>*1/31</b>	<b>Journals due!</b>
1/31, 2/2, 2/4	Prenatal development, infancy, & childhood
<b>*2/7</b>	<b>Film</b>
<b>*2/9</b>	<b>READING SET 1 – Key Statements and Question Discussion</b>
<b>*2/11, 2/14</b>	<b>No Class! Library and group work on Biographies</b>
<b>*2/16, 2/18, 2/21</b>	<b>Individual/Group Presentations of Biographies</b>
2/23, 2/25	Adolescence
<b>*2/23</b>	<b>Last day for dropping course without academic penalty</b>
<b>*2/28</b>	<b>READING SET 2 - Key Statements and Question due! Discussion</b>
<b>*3/2</b>	<b>Journals Due! TPSL Discussion</b>
3/4, 3/7	Love Relationships and Sexuality
<b>*3/9</b>	<b>READING SET 3 - Key Statements and Question due! Discussion</b>
<b>*3/11</b>	<b>No Class!</b>
<b>*3/14-3/18</b>	<b>Spring Break!</b>
3/21	Pregnancy and Childbirth
3/23, 3/25	Motherhood
<b>*3/28</b>	<b>READING SET 4 - Key Statements and Question due! Discussion</b>

3/30, 4/1	Women and Work
<b>*4/1</b>	<b>Journals Due!</b>
<b>*4/4</b>	<b>READING SET 5 - Key Statements and Question due! Discussion</b>
<b>*4/6</b>	<b>TPSL Discussion</b>
<b>*4/8</b>	<b>TPSL Paper title and <u>complete outline</u> due!</b>
4/8, 4/11	Women's Leadership
<b>*4/13</b>	<b>READING SET 6 – Key Statements and Question due!</b>
4/15, 4/18	Women and Health
<b>*4/20</b>	<b>READING SET 7 – Key Statements and Question due!</b>
4/22, 4/25, 4/27	Violence Against Women
<b>*4/27</b>	<b>Journals due!</b>
<b>*4/29</b>	<b>READING SET 8 – Key Statements and Question due!</b>
<b>*5/2</b>	<b>TPSL Reflection Papers Due and Abstract Posted to Conference; TPSL Discussion</b>