

## Psychology of Women - Psyc 208/WS 385, Spring 2002

**Instructor:** Dr. Patti Owen-Smith

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**Office:** 317 Seney

**Office Hours:** I am available daily to meet with students; however, my schedule is unpredictable so it is best if you call or email to make an appointment

**Texts:** Unger, R. & Crawford, M. Women and Gender (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.)

Pipher, M. (1994). Reviving Ophelia. New York: Ballantine Books.

Gilligan, C. (1982). In A Different Voice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

**About this class:** The Psychology of Women focuses on the exploration of 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 several distinctive features to this class:

1. This class will be writing intensive and satisfies the sophomore writing requirement. This does not mean that you must be a "gifted writer" to do well in this course. However, it does mean that you will be expected to write often and revise.
2. 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.
3. The most distinctive feature of the class is the Theory/Practice 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:

1. exposure to current thought and research on issues concerning the psychology of women

2. development of a critical attitude toward the relationship between culture and knowledge, particularly where it concerns women
3. the understanding that "facts" change and develop from the context of cultural attitudes and values
4. an appreciation of the diversity, as well as the commonality, in women's lives

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

1. Attendance and class participation (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.
2. Learn Link (10%): Each student will 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. Think of this Learn Link assignment as a type of journal! 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.
3. Literature Review and Theory Practice Reflection Paper (30%): You will select a topic in the area of the psychology of women that is related in some way to your community work experience. You will then (1) construct a review of the empirical literature related to this topic and (2) reflect on how this literature clarifies or relates to your theory/practice community experience. For example, if you are working with an older woman in a retirement center, you might want to do your literature review in some area related to aging and women. In order to facilitate the research process you are **required** to make an appointment with me to discuss the literature review prior to your actual library research.. There should be a minimum of 10 primary references and the review itself should be approximately 10-12 pages in length. (Detailed information about the construction of the final paper will be discussed in class). You are also asked to construct an abstract of your Literature Review which you will post to our Learn Link conference for all of the members of the class to enjoy and learn from.
4. Community Placement and In-Class Discussion of this Placement (10%) – 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 both you and the respective agency. The supervisor will evaluate your work at the end of the semester and communicate those results to me. However, this supervisor will **not** assign a grade. You and I will meet together to discuss your work and to determine the grade on this particular assignment. 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.

5. Response papers to two books (20%): You are asked to read two significant books (in addition to the text), both of which address issues at the heart of female development: Pipher's Reviving Ophelia and Gilligan's In A Different Voice. You will then construct an 8-page response to this book. Detailed guidelines regarding these response papers will be discussed in class. You may write this paper collaboratively with other students (but not more than three students) or you may write individually. However, please be aware that should you write with other students, each member of the group will receive the same grade.

***All written assignments/papers are due at the beginning of class on the date designated. For each day that a paper is late, I will lower your grade on this assignment one letter grade.***

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:**

1/17	Introduction (Chs. 1&2)
<b>*1/22</b>	<b>Discussion of Community Placements</b>
<b>*1/24</b>	<b>No Class!</b>
1/29, 1/31, 2/5	Theoretical Perspectives (Ch.2)
<b>*2/7</b>	<b>Response paper to <u>In A Different Voice</u> due! Discussion</b>
2/12, 2/14	Prenatal development, infancy, & childhood (Chs. 5&6)
2/19, 2/21	Adolescence (Ch.7)
<b>*2/20</b>	<b>Last day for dropping courses without academic penalty!</b>
<b>*2/26</b>	<b>Theory/Practice Discussion</b>

<b>*2/28</b>	<b>Response paper to <u>Reviving Ophelia</u> due! Discussion</b>
3/5,3/7	Love Relationships & Sexuality (Chs.8&9)
<b>*3/11-3/15</b>	<b>Spring Break!</b>
<b>*3/19</b>	<b>No Class!</b>
3/21	Pregnancy & Childbirth (Ch. 10)
<b>*3/26</b>	<b>Theory/Practice Discussion</b>
3/28,4/2	Motherhood (Ch. 10 cont.)
4/4	Older Adulthood (Ch. 12)
4/9,4/11	Achievement Motivation & Achievement attitudes; women and work (Ch.11)
4/16,4/18	Women and Health (Ch. 14)
4/23,4/25	Violence Against Women (Ch. 13)
<b>*4/30</b>	<b>Literature Reviews Due and Abstract posted to Learn Link! Theory/Practice Discussion</b>