

WST 100
Women, Gender, and Society
Arizona State University
Fall 2015 (C Session)

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Course Materials

All materials for this course will be accessed **online**; students do not need to purchase a textbook.

Course Description

WST 100 is an interdisciplinary introduction to scholarship on women's studies and gender. With that said, please let me add that I am well aware this subject matter sometimes evokes anxious and uncomfortable reactions. Some folks assume the course intends to turn them into feminists; other folks assume that men will be made fun of, criticized, and/or ridiculed. Neither instance is true. Instead, we will examine and complicate popular notions about women, gender, and society. We will look at gender in this course as a product of cultural and personal interaction (its construction), and as a central force in shaping life as we know it. To that end, the course not only considers differences between men and women; it explores differences among men and women alike. In addition, we will pay special attention to how these issues and differences intersect with race, class, age, ability, and sexual orientation. We will then use the information that we uncover to explore and discuss the connections between and among these categories in order to evaluate ways in which these issues operate in contemporary society. To that end, the course will require at times that you engage in difficult subject matter. Please be open to the challenge.

Learning Outcomes

- To become familiar with basic knowledge of historical background associated with women's history, experiences, and achievements
- To learn key words and concepts of women's and gender studies (for example, feminism, sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, patriarchy, oppression, prejudice, privilege, etc.)
- To identify consequences related to intersecting identities, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, disability, and the like.
- To locate and understand your own gender identity
- To introduce and encourage support of feminist pedagogy, including an appreciation for the diversity as well as the commonality of our experiences and identities
- To develop critical reading, writing, thinking, listening, and other literacy skills through the study of issues related to Women's Studies 100

Student Involvement & Time Commitment

Student involvement is imperative to your success in this course. As this is an online course, please remember that online classes are not necessarily easier than classes that meet in-person. In fact, online courses tend to demand more self-determination, responsibility, and commitment in order for students to get the most from the course content. The social atmosphere of a classroom will be replaced with an online environment. To that end, I cannot estimate the amount of time you can expect to spend on preparing, reading, and responding to materials associated with the course, but I do know it ends up being more time than most folks expect.

Expectations

The controversial issues touched upon in this course will sometimes bring disagreement and debate. Be mindful that no such thing as “the” feminist understanding of issues exists; feminists are a varied and complex assortment of people. Hence, we would do better to think that ours is a shared goal of learning about, analyzing, and understanding phenomena related to women’s studies, and to help you develop a more critically informed perspective on these issues. The following guidelines are applied to all discussions in order to create a safe atmosphere:

- Hateful language of any type will not be tolerated.
- Discussion must relate to the classroom topic.
- We must remember that we do not all share the same perspectives.
- We must never demean or devalue others for their contributions to the discussion.
- We are allowed to disagree with each other.

Format

This course will be conducted fully online. All materials associated with the class – readings, videos, reading journals, quizzes, and other materials and assignments – will be available online through Blackboard. Students must have continuous access to the internet and the Blackboard site for the class. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard.

Computer Access

To complete the course, you will need, and be able to use, the following software packages:

- A web browser (Internet Explorer, Safari or Mozilla Firefox)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)
- Adobe Flash Player (free)
- Microsoft Office Suite: Excel, PowerPoint, Word, etc.

If you do not have access to these things at home, you will need to find a location that allows you access to the materials necessary for the course.

Blackboard and Email

Checking into the Blackboard site for the course on a regular basis is one way to keep up with the work, but I will also send emails and announcements as needed. I use your ASU email address. If you are not receiving emails at that account, it is up to you to update your email address. If you need assistance with this or many other issues, please go to <https://contact.asu.edu/>.

Participation

Active participation is a requirement for the course. The course work requires that you respond to issues generated by the materials in meaningful and thoughtful ways. Your work should demonstrate that you have fully “read” as well as attempted to understand assigned materials. Quizzes may include fact-based / objective-type questions, but the course as a whole is designed to promote critical thinking and analysis.

Communicating with Me

This course uses a “three before me” policy in regard to student/faculty communications. When questions arise during the course of this class, please remember to check these three sources for an answer **before** emailing me with your individual questions:

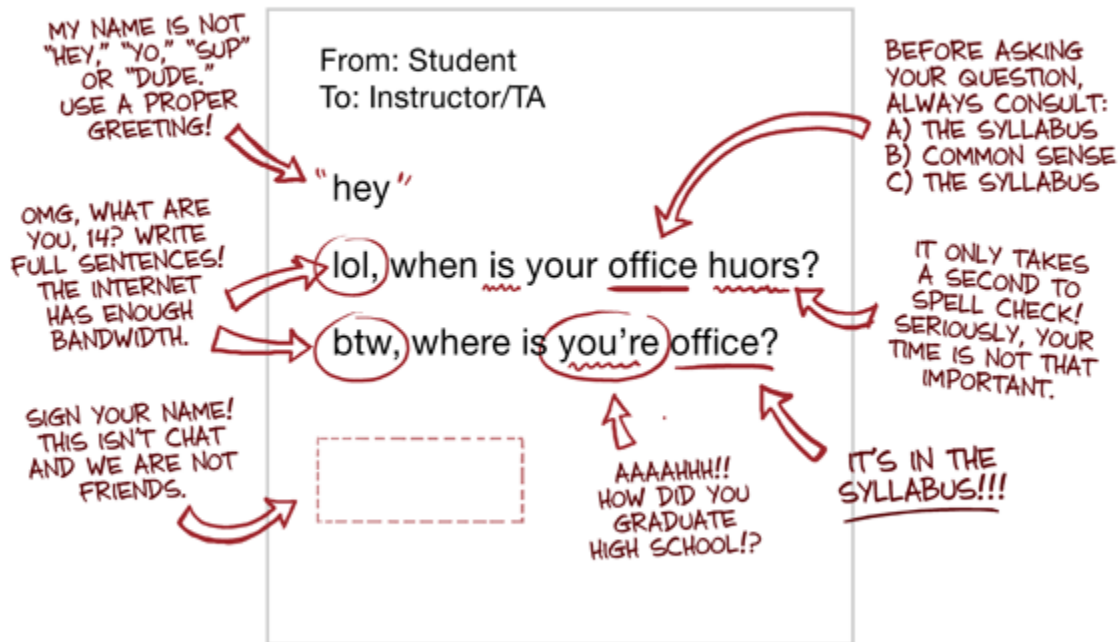
- 1) Course syllabus
- 2) Announcements on Blackboard
- 3) The “Hallway Conversations” discussion board on Blackboard

If you cannot find an answer to your question in the syllabus or Blackboard announcements, please first post your question to the “Hallway Conversations” discussion board (found in the discussion board folder on Blackboard). Here your question can be answered to the benefit of all students by either your fellow students who know the answer to your question or the instructor. You are encouraged to answer questions from other students in the discussion forum when you know the answer.

If you have questions of a personal nature such as relating to a personal emergency, questioning a grade on an assignment, or something else that needs to be communicated privately, you are welcome to contact me via email at karla.murphy@asu.edu. I will attempt to respond to emails within 24 hours Monday – Friday. Generally speaking, I am not online over the weekends.

Please Note: I welcome email communication from students, but I will not respond to emails that are less than professional. One line emails without a greeting (Hello, Dr. Murphy) or a proper closing will be received less than kindly.

HOW TO WRITE AN E-MAIL TO YOUR INSTRUCTOR OR T.A.



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Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

ASU expects and requires all students to act with honesty and integrity, and respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. For more information on academic integrity, including the policy and appeal procedures, please visit <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

A word on plagiarism...

One of the most valued attributes of taking part in any learning community is the exchange of ideas, both new and old. As a writer, your voice is enthusiastically welcomed into the academic community. However, please be aware that **any ideas which are not strictly yours and yours alone, either written or spoken, must give the individual or group proper credit**. To not do so is simply dishonest. In the university community, such dishonesty carries dire consequences.

The penalties for plagiarism in our class include but are not limited to a) non-credit for the assignment, b) failure in the course, c) referral to the Student Conduct Committee and d) possible expulsion from the University. Any of these consequences will be noted and kept on record with the appropriate University department(s). The rest of the code, which consists of several pages, is available at the following URL: <http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial/integrity.html>. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please let me know!

Help for Writing

Because this is an online course where discussions will take place in writing rather than with spoken words, you will be doing more writing than if you were taking the class face-to-face. The Student Success Centers at ASU offer one-on-one tutoring for all sorts of writing situations. Available at any of the four campuses or online, please visit a writing center tutor if you need assistance. You can access more information at their website: [Student Success](#).

Accommodations

Students wanting accommodations for a disability must contact the [Disability Resource Center](#).

Grading Scale

Grades in college are not like grades in high school. I don't enjoy saying that, but I have found this to be true in most cases. Just because you received all A's in high school does not mean you will receive A's in college. A C in this course means you have met basic requirements. To earn grades higher than a C, you will have to go above and beyond that basic work.

A	93-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D+	67-69
B-	80-82	D	60-66

NOTE

If you ever feel as if you are falling behind, experiencing difficulty, or feeling confused, please notify me immediately! Do not wait until the end of this shortened semester.

Late Work

Late assignments or make-up exams are allowed only in cases of a documented emergency. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Course Requirements

Introduction (5 points):

Students enter Women's Studies courses for a variety of reasons, and with just as many – if not more – expectations. To that end, the course begins with a discussion board post that allows you to share those expectations within the context of two introductory essays. See the assignment in Blackboard for more instructions.

Final Reflection (10 points):

The final reflection is a self-assessment of your work in the course. In lieu of giving students a final exam over course concepts I feel are important, the final reflection allows students the opportunity to reflect and write about issues they found significant. See the assignment in Blackboard for more instructions.

Reading Journals (70 points)

One of the hallmarks of a women's studies class is dynamic discussion. Though we are engaged in a class that meets online instead of face-to-face, we can still create a similar energy by discussing ideas and concepts through the use of reading journals. Sharing different points of view, interpretations, and analyses will therefore remain aspects of our course. To that end, students are expected to post weekly reading journals over materials addressed in the course. The dates and topics are listed in the individual learning modules, as well as in the larger schedule. Please follow that information carefully.

In general, the Reading Journals assignment asks you to reflect on and write about the course materials. The general idea is for students to end each week by reflecting and evaluating those materials. In addition to sharing those ideas with one another, the goal is to use writing as a way to think about the ideas and concepts you are experiencing. To that end, students will write a weekly journal entry that responds to these 3 prompts:

1. Identify 3 things you have learned this week AND briefly describe that learning
2. Talk about 2 things that you didn't quite understand or that puzzled you
3. Share 1 "A-HA!" moment

And while I am not putting a word limit on this assignment, please don't mistake this freedom as an opportunity to throw words on a page without much thought or effort. Strive instead for clarity, specificity, and analysis. The Reading Journal is a way for me to evaluate your engagement with the materials as well as a mechanism for you to practice and present ideas that may help prepare you for quizzes.

My main concern is that the journal entries provide specific evidence that you have tried to think critically and analytically about the material. Do not simply summarize. Do not copy and paste what someone else has said and written about the source. Tell me what you think. And finally, **procrastinate at your own risk.**

Reading Quizzes (125 points): You will take 5 quizzes over the course of our class. The dates and times for the quizzes are noted in the Course Schedule. These quizzes are open book and open note; however, the quizzes will be delivered through Respondus Lockdown Browser. You may use your notes, but you won't be able to surf the web. Additionally, the quizzes are also timed. You will have a set amount of time to complete each quiz and you will have to answer each question as it appears before moving on to the next question. (Total of 25 points for each quiz: 125 points total)

Reflection Papers (20 points): Because discussion and reflection go hand in hand, students will also write two short reflection papers. The topic of the reflection is up to the student, but the reflection should address in detail a position you have taken regarding a particular reading and/or issue. In short, the paper should demonstrate critical thinking skills, apply terms and ideas discussed in a particular article, for example, and be between 500&600 words. The paper will be double spaced, in font no larger than 12 points, and include your name, date, course information, and a works cited page. **Students will complete two (2) Reflection Papers total.** Please see due dates in the Course Schedule. (Total of 10 points for each paper: 20 points total)

Use the following list of questions to help guide your responses:

- What point/concept/idea intrigued you? Discuss.
- How did this idea prompt further questioning?
- What point/concept/idea troubled you?
- Reflecting on a particular essay, what was your overall reaction?
- How does a particular point/concept/idea impact your life as a student at ASU?
- What would you have liked us to discuss and/or explore?

Women's Herstory Project (20 points)

The Women's Herstory Project asks that you create an encyclopedia/web-type-page that highlights the accomplishments of an American woman of your own selection. The person does not have to be famous; however, you should be able to identify and address specific contributions and accomplishments within your page. Moreover, the woman you choose should be of direct interest to you. Use your own interests to guide you. If you are an artist, use that context to direct your inquiries. If you are an architect, learn more about the women in that field. If you already have a person in mind, go in that direction.

After deciding upon the subject for you assignment, you will create a single page entry that includes biographical information, a photograph or other representation, and a summary of the woman's contributions. What that ends up looking like is up to you. In addition to this one-page entry, you will also submit a short reflective essay (300 – 500 words) about the project. In your reflective essay, explain why you chose the person that you did, what you would want others to know about this person, and why you find her achievements worth celebrating.

Grade Distribution

Introduction Final Reflection	15 points
Reading Journals	70 points
Quizzes	125 points
Women's Herstory Project	20 points
Reflection Papers	20 points
Total Points	250 points total