

WMST 1080
Introduction to Women's Studies
Tuesday 6-9pm
Classroom Building 118

Instructor: Meggan Woodbury Bilotte

Office: History Bldg, Room 59

Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday, 10:00-11:00am, and by appointment

Email: woodm@uwyo.edu

REQUIRED READINGS:

- *Women's Voices: Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 4th Edition, ed. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2009)
- ***There will also be several articles that appear throughout the semester; these are required readings and will either be on e-reserve or found through JSTOR**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Introduction to Women's Studies! Women's Studies is very much an interdisciplinary field, and we will use varied approaches in order to consider the themes, questions, methodologies and findings of Women's Studies scholarship within the United States. This class utilizes readings, class discussion, and multimedia in order to examine various theories of gender in the United States. Although we will focus primarily on women, we will also look at perceptions of gender in general, investigating how it is shaped and how society dictates what is appropriate (or not) for gender norms. In all, this class will help the student come to a better understanding of how so-called "women's issues" fit within the larger social structures and will have an understanding of how to look at these issues with a critical eye.

Cultural Context-Humanities (CH)

This course fulfills the Cultural Context-Humanities (CH) requirement of the 2003 University Studies Program. Cultural Context-Humanities (CH) courses address ideas we have about our nature, our place in the world, and the ethical dimensions of our actions. Inherent in the humanities is a values driven examination of human life. Through the study of written, oral, performative, and visual texts, CH courses help us to understand and think clearly about human beliefs and imaginative ideas.

U.S. Diversity (D)

This course fulfills the Diversity in the U.S. (D) requirement of the 2003 University Studies Program. Diversity in the U.S. (D) explores the complexities of culture in the

U.S. both through history and contemporary experience. Diversity in the U.S. (D) courses examine the complexity of cultures in the U.S. and the interdependence of these cultures. Understanding influences such as race, class, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and age offer insight into how the diversity of the cultural traditions of the United States have shaped and continue to shape identity and national experience.

Attendance and Classroom Conduct:

Since this class meets only once a week, regular attendance and participation are **required**. Students will come to class with all readings/assignments prepared, and ready to participate in class discussion. **Students are allowed ONE unexcused absence. After that, you will LOSE A FULL LETTER GRADE FOR EACH UNEXCUSED ABSENCE FROM CLASS.**

Common classroom etiquette will be observed in this class. This means that cell phones must be turned off and put away and text messaging during class is strictly prohibited.

This class intended to challenge common assumptions, as well as to inform. While debate is expected and encouraged, differences in opinion should always be expressed respectfully.

Student Conduct:

This class follows university regulations regarding prohibiting Academic Dishonesty of any kind. You are not allowed to work on assignments, quizzes, tests or any other class material with other classmates.

University Regulation 802, Revision 4 (2007) ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: An action attempted or performed that misrepresents one's involvement in an academic endeavor in any way, or assists another student in misrepresenting his or her involvement in an academic endeavor. See UniReg 802 for examples of academic dishonesty.

Cheating on exams, assignments, and book quizzes will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Using material from other student's papers, buying or downloading papers from the Internet or failing to attribute material written by others is plagiarism and cheating. If you have any questions about these concepts please read the appropriate section of the University of Wyoming Student Code. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will be reported to the appropriate Department, the Dean and referred to the Academic Misconduct Committee for appropriated disciplinary measures, including censure, suspension, or expulsion from the university. Academic dishonesty is taken VERY seriously and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent.

Consultation:

Students are welcome to visit office hours or email me to discuss topics that are relevant to class. If you have questions regarding tests or assignments, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible. I will respond to your emails as quickly as possible and will do my best to respond within 24 hours. Please note, however, that I do have a life outside of class and therefore may not be able to respond after business hours or over the weekend.

University Disability Support Services:

It is the University's policy to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. If you have a physical, learning, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330, Knight Hall.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

A campus environment characterized by diversity, free inquiry, free expression, and balanced by interpersonal civility has always been, and continues to be, a top priority of the University of Wyoming. Civil discourse is an essential aspect of the search for and transmission of knowledge. Words and actions that promote and encourage self-worth, respect, and dignity are consistent with the University's mission. Conversely, words or actions that reflect prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination are antithetical to the mission of the University and cannot be countenanced. Specifically, racist and other discriminatory or harassing conduct based on gender, color, disability, sexual orientation, religious preference, national origin, ancestry, or age impair and disrupt legitimate University functions. Every effort, within the context and protection of First Amendment rights, will be expended to eliminate such conduct from the campus community. Teaching our students to live productively in a multicultural/multiethnic society is a process that must take place within a constructive and harmonious multicultural/multiethnic environment here at the University of Wyoming.

It is the obligation of the faculty, staff, students, and the administration of the University of Wyoming to provide this environment.

Breakdown of Assignments:

Class Participation: 150 points total

Class participation is essential in this course. Each class is worth 10 points each. **To get full participation points you must participate in class discussion every week.**

Class Reflections: 120 points total (Due Weekly)

Class reflections should be brief (250-350 words) of your thoughts on the topics covered in this class. You will have a Class Reflection for every week that we meet. Exceptions are Week 9 (Midterm) Week 14 (No Class) and Week 15 (Class Presentations). This means that you will have a total of 12 Class Reflections by the end of the semester.

Each week's class reflection will be due Friday by 5pm to the appropriate dropbox on eCompanion. They should be dated, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman, and have one

inch margins. Class reflections will be graded on content and quality. This means that you must use complete sentences and cite any information that is not an original thought.

Current Event Assignments: 30 points

Throughout the semester, all students will be required to give informal presentations on two current events topics that relate to the concepts and themes in this class. You may draw from any printed news source including newspapers, blogs, and magazines. You will be expected to summarize the article, raise important questions, and suggest how the piece relates to the class. You will sign up for these dates on the first day of class.

Midterm Exam: 100 points (In-class 10/20/09)

Each test is worth 100 points.

The midterm exam will contain multiple-choice, short answer and essay questions. Exam questions will be drawn from lecture material, discussions, films and the readings.

Research Paper / Presentation: 100 points total (See Schedule for Due Dates)

Students will complete a 5-7 page research paper on a pre-approved topic, and present their findings to the class. Presentations will be scheduled for the last day of the semester.

Final Exam – 100 points (12/08/09)

The final exam will appear in the same format as the midterm exam and will contain lecture, discussion, film and reading material covered since the midterm.

Total Points Possible: 600 points

A= 540-600

B= 539-480

C= 479-420

D= 419-360

F= Below 359

Grading Policy:

YOU MUST HAVE AN OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY EXCUSE TO TURN IN LATE ASSIGNMENTS. Assignments must be turned in the first day back, unless you have made prior arrangements with me.

******Please keep in mind that changes in the schedule may occur in order to make necessary adjustments.******

Class and Reading Schedule (Subject to Instructor Change)

Woman / Gender as a Social Construct

Week 1 – 8/25/09

Introductions, What is Feminism?

Week 2 – 9/01/09

Political Activism

- Readings:
 - *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch.1
- Film: "Iron Jawed Angels"

Week 3 – 9/08/09

Gender Privilege

- Readings:
 - *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch.2,3

Women, Work and Family

Week 4 - 9/15/09 RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE TO ECOMPANION BY 5PM

Women and Historical Ties to the Home

- Readings:
 - *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 7
 - Selma James, "A Woman's Place" (on eReserve)

Week 5 - 9/22/09

Paid and Unpaid Work, the "Second Shift"

- Readings:
 - *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 8
 - Film: "Chore Wars"

Week 6 – 9/29/09

Marriage Promotion / DOMA and TANF

- Readings:
 - Gwendolyn Mink, "Violating Women: Rights Abuses in the Welfare Police State." (JSTOR)

Diversity and Religion

Week 7– 10/06/09

Critiques of Feminism

- Readings:
 - *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch.11
 - bell hooks, "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Between Women" (on eReserve)

Week 8 – 10/13/09

Women and Religion, Global Feminism

- Readings:
 - Elaine H. Pagels, “What Became of God the Mother? Conflicting Images of God in Early Christianity” (on eReserve)
 - Fatima Mernissi, “Conclusion: Women’s Liberation in Muslim Countries” (on eReserve)

Week 9 – 10/20/09

MIDTERM EXAM

Health and Sexuality

Week 10– 10/27/09

Gender and Social/Cultural Impacts on Women’s Health; Eating Disorders

- Readings:
 - *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 4

Week 11 – 11/03/09

The Women in Popular Culture and Advertising

- Readings:
 - *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 6
- Films: “Killing Us Softly” and “Beyond Killing us Softly”

Week 12 – 11/10/09

Motherhood, Reproductive Rights and Control

- Readings:
 - *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 9

Violence Against Women

Week 13– 11/17/09

- Definitions of VAW: Who, What and Why

- Readings:
 - *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 5

Week 14 – 11/24/09

- ROUGH DRAFT UPLOADED TO ECOMPANION BY 5PM – NO CLASS

- Readings:
 - *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, ch. 10

Week 15 – 12/01/09

******STUDENT PRESENTATIONS THIS WEEK******

Finals – FINAL EXAM TUESDAY DECEMBER 8, 6PM

- **FINAL PAPER UPLOADED TO ECOMPANION BY 5PM**