

WOMEN'S STUDIES

SPRING 2009

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

The Women's Studies Department's curriculum explores how institutionalized sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism limit human achievement and dignity--and examines the changes necessary for society to eliminate these limitations. A major goal of the Department of Women's Studies is the reexamination and reevaluation of traditional disciplines in the light of insights provided by feminist thought. Students and faculty engage in an analysis of the extent to which a sexist perspective has determined the content, subject matter, research and theory of various disciplines. Participants in the program are, however, equally committed to moving outside the confines of traditional disciplines to develop new methodologies, new subjects and new theories based on a multidisciplinary approach to the study of women. Finally, the program seeks to encourage students to engage in a reexamination of their own lives and of the world around them. The B.A. in Women's Studies and a minor are available to undergraduates. Graduate opportunities include an M.A. in Women's Studies, a dual B.A./M.A. degree for qualified students, and a Graduate Certificate in Women and Public Policy. Other discipline-based concentrations in Women's Studies are also available. For more information, contact the Chair of Women's Studies, SS 341, at 442-4220.

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A WSS 101 (3572) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 8:45-10:05
BA 137

A WSS 101 (3573) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 7:15-8:35
ES 147

A WSS 101 (3574) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 1:15-2:35
SL-G12

A WSS 101 (4999) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 1:15-2:35
ES 245

A WSS 101 (5569) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 7:15-8:35
HU 132

A WSS 101 (7575) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 7:15-8:35
LC 14

A WSS 101 (9247) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 5:45-7:05
BA 213

A WSS 101 (9248) (3 crs)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 2:45-4:05
HU 133

A WSS 101Z (6141) (3 crs) (Writing Intensive Section)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 8:45-10:05
BA 130

A WSS 101Z (6142) (3 crs) (Writing Intensive Section)
Introduction to Feminisms
Staff
TTH 11:45-1:05
SS 116

A study of the origins and development of feminist thought and of feminist movements, with emphasis on the issues and problems of contemporary women's movements in the United States and abroad. Meets Diversity and Pluralism General Education requirement.

A WSS 202 (8974) (3 crs)
Introduction to Lesbian and Gay Studies
Staff
TTH 5:45-7:05
BA 212

Topics may include the history of lesbian and gay culture(s) in the U.S., lesbian and gay civil rights movements, questions of sexual identity formation in historical and cultural contexts, lesbian and gay literature, and how these communities have responded to societal issues such as racism, classism, sexism, healthcare crises, and anti-gay violence. A WSS 202Z is the writing intensive version of A WSS 202; only one may be taken for credit.

A WSS 240/AAS 240/LCS 240 (3575//2503) (3 crs)

Classism, Racism, and Sexism

Janell Hobson

TTH 2:45-4:05

HU 124

This interdisciplinary course will explore how classism, racism, and sexism intersect to shape what appear to be indestructible systems of oppression. Through our intellectual discussions and assessment of social, political, and cultural forces - including possible topics such as scientific racism, identity politics, migration and housing, globalization, literature, popular culture, and religion - we will question how social constructions of race, gender, and class give way to other factors, including ability, sexuality, nationality, etc. We will finally consider possible solutions that will dismantle our various "isms" and envision social change for social justice.

A WSS 240/AAS 240/LCS 240 (6137//6439) (3 crs)

Classism, Racism, and Sexism

Staff

MWF 9:20-10:15

ED 125

Analyzes the connections between and among classism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism and homophobia, their mutually reinforcing nature, and the tensions arising from their interrelations. Particular attention will be given to the ideological and personal aspects of these phenomena, as well as to their institutional guises in American society.

A WSS 241 (8186) (3 crs)

Science, Technology and Social Justice

Virginia Eubanks

TTH 1:15-2:35

HU 109

What does inequality look like in the 21st century? What part did American science and technology play in creating social categories like race, gender, class and sex/uality? Are science and technology used to naturalize oppression? And how do people appropriate or use science and technology to serve social justice? Through critical readings of science and technology reporting, popular media (including film, video, and the web), scholarly articles, and speculative fiction, Science, Technology and Social Justice explores how science and technology can serve to perpetuate—or challenge!—oppression in the information age. Feminist science and technology scholarship will be used as the framework for exploring topics such as new reproductive technologies, environmental racism, "mythological" measurements (from IQ tests to DNA samples), community informatics, the "digital divide," electronic surveillance, bio- and nanotechnology. Fulfills U.S. Diversity and Pluralism general education requirement.

A WSS 260X/HIS 259X (9164/9174) (3 crs)

History of Women and Social Change

Laurie Kozakiewicz

MWF 12:35-1:30

HU 124

This course looks at the social, political and economic forces that have shaped American women's lives from the colonial period to the present. The course highlights the class, race, and ethnic diversity among women. It explores the variety of ways women have participated in and often led important social and political movements. Meets U.S. Historical Perspectives General Education requirement.

A WSS 262/SOC 262 (5086/3282) (3 crs)

Sociology of Gender

Kecia Johnson

MW 2:45-4:05

LC 23

This course examines how gender is socially constructed in contemporary U.S. society. We will examine how gender orders our everyday lives: our sense of self, our friendships, romances, conversations, clothing, body image, entertainment, work, sexuality, and parenthood. We will learn how conceptions about gender create and enforce a system of gender difference and inequality. We will examine the lives, experiences and representations of heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ) persons. We will reveal the "common sense" world of gender that surrounds us by exposing the workings of institutions such as family, the classroom, the workplace, and the media. Throughout the course we will emphasize the ways in which people experience gender opportunities and constraints differently according to their race, gender, class and sexuality.

A WSS 262/SOC 262 (9212/9216) (3 crs)

Sociology of Gender

Erica Hunter

MW 4:15-5:35

LC 22

This course will examine gender as an embodied process. Here, we will examine the social meanings of having a gendered body and the implications and limits of the body on our lives and in how we understand our social world. The intersection of gender, sex, and sexuality will be explored as a way of understanding masculine, feminine, and androgynous bodies. This course is taught from a contemporary feminist perspective and will combine participatory lecture, films, BLS, and discussion. Prerequisite(s): ASOC 115M or 115G; or permission of instructor. [DP, SS]

A WSS 308 (6274) (3 crs)

Global Perspectives on Women

Barbara Sutton

TTH 10:15-11:35

HU 128

This course examines the lives, struggles, and visions for social change of women around the world in local and transnational contexts. The course is organized around critical social issues shaping diverse women's experiences, including the legacies of colonialism, the globalization of the capitalist economy, the social control of women's bodies, environmental degradation, and increasingly militarized conceptions of security. We will look at how women cope with, confront, and challenge these social forces. Women's vibrant political organizing will be examined within local communities, at the national level, and in international arenas such as the United Nations' conferences, the World Social Forum, and street protests against international financial institutions. While the study of women's realities in different countries will allow us to make some comparisons, the emphasis of the course will be on *linkages*, on how social forces affecting women in one place are related to developments in other areas of the world. This lens will also help us to see inequalities based on class, race-ethnicity, gender, nationality, and sexuality as *relationships*, not just differences. By looking at political, cultural, and everyday expressions of women's activism globally, we will expand notions of what feminism is about and will de-center definitions rooted mostly on Western feminist concerns. As we follow women's struggles for global justice, I invite you to consider the idea that "another world is possible" as well as viable strategies to achieve it.

A WSS 320 (3576) (3 crs)

Feminist Pedagogy in Theory

Maia Boswell-Penc

M 2:45-5:35

BA 211

This course is a continuation of WSS 310, Current Issues in Feminism. Theory is discussed in the context of students serving as facilitators in sections of Introduction to Feminisms (WSS 101). Faculty and students, in class, work in a collaborative collective model of shared responsibility and leadership. Prerequisite: WSS 310 and 360, either 220 or 240, and permission of instructor. Taken concurrently with Feminist Pedagogy in Practice, WSS 322.

A WSS 322Y (3577) (3 crs)
Feminist Pedagogy in Practice

Maia Boswell-Penc

ARR

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With preparation from Current Issues in Feminism (WSS 310) and, concurrently, Feminist Pedagogy in Theory (WSS 320), students serve as facilitators (under faculty supervision) in sections of Introduction to Feminisms. This course can only be taken once for credit. Prerequisite: WSS 310 and 360, either 220 or 240, and permission of instructor.

A WSS 336Y / A MUS 336Y (8714) (3 crs)
Representations: Music, Gender, Race, and Class

Nancy Newman

TTH 8:45am-10:05am

PC 213

This course will examine portrayals of gender, race and class across a wide range of musical media, including film, opera, theater and song. Through a series of theoretical readings and listening/viewing assignments, we will investigate historical and contemporary issues concerning self-representation and the representation of others. Who has the right to speak, and for whom? How can music convey ideas about identity? The many ways music communicates meaning will be explored through lectures, discussion, small-group presentations, and independent writing projects. Prerequisite(s): AMUS100 or permission of instructor.

A WSS 342X (7511) (3 crs)
Electronic Publishing in Women's Studies

Vivien Ng and Janell Hobson

TTH 11:45-1:05

SL-G20

In our daily lives, we process thousands of messages: ads, TV, radio, movies, and websites; in other words, we live in an information-rich, digital media-driven society. In this course, we will edit and publish an e-journal. Additionally, we will study the impact of information technology on our daily lives. In the first part of the course, we study the impact of digital media on how we read, write, and access information. In part two, we edit and publish the fifth (Spring 2008) issue of *transcending silence...* (www.albany.edu/ws/journal).

A WSS 368/ENG 368 (9166/2164) (3 crs)

Women Writers

Staff

MWF 11:30-12:25

HU 133

This course will examine the difficult, peculiar and brilliant poetry of five American women poets of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, paying particular attention to the relationship between poetics and social constructions of gender and sexuality. Poets under consideration will include Emily Dickinson, Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy, H.D. and Djuna Barnes, and students will read selected works from each poet and several critical and theoretical works. Course assignments will include a substantive critical essay as well as other, more peculiar writing assignments.

A WSS 397 (1-4 crs)
Independent Study
Staff

! Permission of Department Chair is required.

! See Department secretary for section key number and permission process.

A student may initiate an individually designed course of study on a topic relevant to women's studies. May be a reading course, small discussion group, community service, or other academic work. Prearrangement with a Women's Studies faculty member starts with the student's list of proposed readings and assignments. A-E grading. Faculty available for independent study are: Christine Bose, Maia Boswell-Penc, Virginia Eubanks, Janell Hobson, Vivien Ng, Marjorie Pryse, Bonnie Spanier, and Barbara Sutton.

A WSS 399/A ENG 343 (9165/7944) (1-3 crs)
Toni Morrison & August Wilson
Lisa Thompson
TTH 10:15-11:35
SS 255

The Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison and Tony award-winning playwright August Wilson are two of the most honored and prolific African American writers of the 20th century. Both Morrison's novels and Wilson's plays chronicle the black experience in the United States from the antebellum period to the Post-Civil Rights era. During the semester we will chart the artistic development of these two writers and compare their use of themes such as migration, identity, violence, redemption, memory, and family. We will assess African American cultural influences such as folktales, blues and jazz in their writing. By reading their essays, interviews and speeches we will also measure the reach and authority of Morrison and Wilson as public intellectuals.

A WSS 399 (2 crs) (9251) (8W2)
Topics in Women's Studies
Staff
T 5:45-9:45
SL-G12

Consideration of topics or issues in women's studies selected on the basis of faculty and student interest. May be taken more than once with different content. Consult fall schedule of classes for specific topics and prerequisites.

A WSS 492Y (3590) (3 crs)
Internship in Women's Studies
Staff
W 1:40-2:35
HU 115

Semester-long internship (8 hours minimum per week) under the supervision of a feminist mentor in a placement that promotes feminist social justice. Placement opportunities include government, advocacy and education, human services, legal, business organizations. Weekly (120 minutes) seminar connects community action with feminist theorizing and related academic work. Service learning prepares students for career development, lifelong work for social justice, and responsible citizenship. Prerequisite: one WSS course and permission of instructor.

A WSS 495 (5087) (3 crs)

Honors Project

Barbara Sutton

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Independent research project required for successful completion of Women's Studies Honors. In order to register for the course, students must present a written prospectus of their project to the Director of the Women's Studies Honors Program. Students complete their Honors Project under the supervision of the Director of the Honors Program and an Honors Project Advisor. Honors students may present their projects to Women's Studies faculty and students upon completion of their work.

A WSS 498 (8608) (3 crs)

Transmedia Storytelling

Vivien Ng

M 5:45-8:35

SL-G20

In this semester we learn how to use a variety of media--digital videos, interactive web pages, Google maps, 2-D animation--to create a set of short stories about the 1854 cholera outbreak in London. The main source is Steven Johnson's fascinating account, *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic--and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World*. In addition to this eminently readable secondary source, we tap primary sources in archives such as the Michigan State University John Snow Archive (<http://matrix.msu.edu/%7Ejohnsnow/>) and the UCLA Department of Epidemiology John Snow site (<http://www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html>). While we all learn how to make digital videos, interactive web pages, Google maps, 2-D animation, students may choose to hone their skills in one medium and apply those to create a compelling short story about an aspect of the cholera outbreak. At the end of the semester, all the stories will be featured in a website created for this course.

There are no prerequisites except for a curiosity to learn and willingness to work hard.

The course is taught in a workshop format.

AWSS 498 (9149) (3 crs)

Black Diasporas

Janell Hobson

W 5:45-8:35

FA 114

This course will explore in global perspective concepts of blackness and its relationship to feminist and other women-led and gender-based political movements that have shaped complex discourses on the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and nationality. We will also expand the geopolitical spheres of Europe, America, Africa, and the Caribbean to traverse different oceanic spaces that include Afro-Asia and, to a lesser extent, "Black Australia." Through these transnational lenses, we will question how blackness, and black femininity in particular, shift meanings in varied locations but also converge in formations of global identities, marginalized experiences, and political movements. Topics covered this semester include history-telling, sex trafficking and migrations, and articulations of "black feminisms" in politics, arts, and popular culture.

For more information, please visit the website: <<http://www.albany.edu/faculty/jhobson/diasporas>>