

WS 2013.10
Gender and Social Change:
An Introduction to Multicultural Women's Studies
Texas Woman's University
Department of Women's Studies
Fall 2010
M/W 1-2:20pm ASB 302

Instructor: Samantha Marconi

Office: HDB 307F

Contact information: (940) 898-2119, smarconi@twu.edu

Office Hours: Mondays: 11-1pm, also by appointment

Graduate Assistant: Allicia Nickerson

Office: HDB 307A

Contact Information: (940) 898-2119, anickerson@twu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays: 9:30-11:30am

Feminist politics aims to end domination, to free us to be who we are—to live lives where we love justice, where we can live in peace. Feminism is for everybody.
-bell hooks

Course Description

WS 2013, Gender and Social Change, offers students an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Women's Studies. Through topics such as body image, gender roles, women's health, race and racism, education, and activism we will explore interlocking systems of power and oppression that influence each of us as social beings. Though our conversations will often begin with the lives and experiences of women, we will include multiple perspectives and identities in our discussions. This course seeks to implement theory as a tool to examine our own identities and experiences, think broadly about hierarchies of power and privilege, and develop ideas for resistance and change.

The Core Curriculum

This course fulfills the core curriculum requirement for Multicultural-Women's Studies and a Global Perspectives competency graduation requirement.

This course fulfills the core curriculum requirement for Multicultural-Women's Studies and a Global Perspectives competency graduation requirement.

Multicultural-Women's Studies Objectives

<http://www.twu.edu/academic-affairs/multicultural-ws-objectives.asp>

The objective of courses in a multicultural-women's studies component of a core curriculum is to introduce students to areas of study which enlarge their knowledge and appreciation of the diverse, multicultural world in which they live. Such courses should also examine social institutions, norms, and practices for their impact on the status and roles of women. The courses

should approach these areas of study from a feminist/social-justice perspective which reflects women's experiences, ideas, issues, and needs as valid in their own right.

The term "multicultural," as it refers to the core curriculum, is defined broadly, to include disability, economic status, gender, nationality, 'race'/ethnicity, region, religion, and sexuality. Multicultural-women's studies may be interpreted as applying to courses focusing primarily on women's issues and including relational explorations of four or more cultural perspectives; at least two must be traditionally under-represented. Multicultural-women's studies courses assist students in understanding the responsibilities of living in a culturally diversified world.

Through courses within a multicultural-women's studies component of a core curriculum, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of culture (the acquired skills, beliefs, perceptions, behaviors, and practices specific groups of people employ) and knowledge of cultural domains: the norms, understandings, concepts of reality, values, and worldviews held by members of specific cultures.
- Develop basic multicultural understanding, empathy, and communication.
- Understand the responsibilities of living in a multicultural world.
- Demonstrate knowledge of some of the ways existing social inequalities develop, function, and change as well as an understanding of possibilities for social change.
- Understand gender (as culture) in relation to the larger world through examination of the similarities and diversities of women historically and multiculturally.
- Develop some understanding of the diversity in feminist and/or social-justice theories.
- Understand and be able to identify some of the intersecting dynamics of disability, economic status, gender, nationality, "race"/ethnicity, region, religion, and sexuality.

Global Perspectives Objectives

<http://www.twu.edu/academic-affairs/global-perspectives-objectives.asp>

Global perspectives refer to skills, knowledge, and attitudes in areas such as global dynamics, non-western worldviews, international systems and events, and global cultures. Ideally, it includes the ability to communicate effectively in a second language. The objective of the global knowledge and perspectives requirement is to increase students' understanding of people and cultures different from the native culture. Courses approved for this requirement must include a major focus on global perspectives and should enable students to demonstrate mastery of the majority of the following student learning outcomes. Students will

- Demonstrate the awareness that one has a view of the world that is not universally shared, that there is a distinction between opinion and perspective.
- Demonstrate understanding of cultural civilization complexities that can alter the interpretation of world events.
- Demonstrate understanding of prevailing world conditions, developments and trends associated with world issues such as population growth, economic conditions, inter-nation conflicts.
- Demonstrate the knowledge, values and skills needed to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future.

- Demonstrate knowledge of one's own political system, players, and events as well as international systems, leaders, and events.
- Demonstrate an increase in interest about international developments, ability to express empathy and/or feelings of kinship about others, and degree of comfort in foreign situations.
- Demonstrate the ability to alter one's communication and responses to reflect another's communication style and thus build relationships.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of concepts such as sex, gender, sexuality, oppression, sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism, androcentrism, privilege, and feminism.
2. Demonstrate understanding of interlocking systems of power and oppression.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the responsibilities of living in a multicultural world.
4. Demonstrate a greater understanding of identity categories.
5. Demonstrate the increased ability to read, think, and write critically.

Required Texts

It is important that students purchase the fourth edition of each required textbook

- Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings. 2009. 4th Edition. Edited by Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee.
- The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World. 2008. 4rd Edition. Joni Seager.
- Additional course materials to be handed out in class and/or posted in Blackboard

Course Web site on Blackboard (BB)

Everyone will utilize the course web site in Blackboard. Course materials, assignments, and announcements will be posted there. Some assignments will be completed through the Blackboard system. I will discuss the use of Blackboard in class.

Course Requirements

These requirements and assignments will be further explained in class. If you have any questions regarding these requirements or the course in general, please contact me and I will be happy to help you. I want you all to succeed.

Attendance/Participation (150 points, 15%)

Attendance (90 points)

Your attendance is essential to your success in this course. Each class session is worth 3 points. You will not receive attendance or participation points for the class sessions you miss. Please see the attendance policy on page five of the syllabus for more information.

Items of Interest (30 points)

We will devote the first few minutes of every class to announcements and current events that make connections between major themes of the course and the world around us. For one-half (30 points) of your participation grade you will share one item during the semester. Examples include news articles, an event you attended, or a popular media

representation that can be connected to the course. Please be sure to relate your item to something we have discussed in the course. Please keep your item brief and make the connection to the course clear. **All Items of Interest must be completed by 11/22.**

Class Participation (30 points)

Dialogue and discussion of the topics and material is an important component of the course. As such, students are expected to come to class having read the required materials, be prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion, participate in small group work, and complete all in-class assignments. Students will also be given the opportunity to earn participation points by contributing to the discussion board forums on the course Blackboard page. This will be discussed further in class.

Reading Journals (150 points, 15%)

Throughout the semester, you are required to submit five informal journal entries on your thoughts and reactions to the course material. The purpose of this assignment is to allow you to critically think and engage with the course reading in a way that might not be possible during class discussions. It is also a way for me to gauge how you are doing with the material and to address any questions or concerns that may not be brought up in class. It is my hope that these journals will provide a better understanding of the material and be useful when you write your formal paper for the course. The journal is a place for you to put your thoughts into words, experiment with your writing, and make connections between our class texts and your academic, activist, and intellectual interests.

You will complete five journals throughout the semester, each worth 30 points. Students may submit their journals at any time throughout the course, but **at least three of the five must be completed prior to the start of week 10. All reading journals must be submitted by Friday, 11/19 by 10pm.** The journals must be a minimum of 200 words. They should not be a mere summary of the material, but rather your reflections, opinions, questions, and observations directly related to the course materials assigned for that week. Your journals are expected to be well-written with few spelling and grammatical errors. Please proofread your entries before you submit them. You will be posting your journals on Blackboard. More details on this assignment, as well as a grading rubric, will be provided in class.

Quizzes (100 points, 10%)

There will be six short quizzes throughout the semester. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. The quizzes will be given at the beginning of class and will be based on course material. The quizzes are not cumulative but instead focus on the material we have covered since the last quiz. Each quiz will be worth 20 points. There are no make-ups for quizzes, so if you are absent or late to class on the day of a quiz, you will receive a zero for that quiz. The quizzes are not scheduled, so it is very important that you come to every class period.

Midterm Exam (150 points, 15%)

This exam will be taken in class on Monday, 10/18. More information regarding the structure of the exam will be provided in class.

Interaction Paper (200 points, 20%)

There is one formal paper required for this course. The paper will be a 3-4 page analysis of the course material. Students will be provided with 3-4 possible topics/discussion points and will choose one to be the focus of their paper. You must cite at least 2 course readings in this paper. Interaction papers must demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in the course by framing an argument and supporting that argument with examples and quotations from relevant articles we have read. Your paper must be in Times New Roman 12-Point font, with one-inch margins, double-spaced, and in MLA or APA format. **All papers must be stapled.** I will provide more detailed information about this assignment in class. Interaction papers will be due in class on Wednesday, 11/17.

Final Project (250 points, 25%)

Women's Studies is an academic field, but activism has always been a major component of the discipline. For your final project, you will create an informative media project based on an organization working for social change. For this project, you may choose to work individually or in pairs. The organization you choose to focus on is up to you, but its connection to the major themes of the course must be clear. Your organization can be local, national, or international and does not need to focus exclusively on women. Some examples of past student projects include Darfur NOW, The Human Rights Campaign, Catholics for Choice, Girls Inc., and Class Action. When choosing an organization, reflect on what topics have most interested you in the course and conduct research based on those interests.

There is no formal paper due for this assignment. Instead, you will create a multi-media project that represents your organization and present it to the class. Past students have created posters, paintings, short films, and written poems and short stories. Be creative! You will be provided with a separate handout that specifically details the requirements and grading criteria for this project. I will also go over this assignment in class.¹

Grading

150 points	Attendance/Participation
150 points	Reading Journals (30 points each)
100 points	Quizzes (20 points each)
150 points	Midterm Exam
200 points	Interaction Paper
250 points	Final Project
1000 points	Total points possible

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

Course Grade	Percentage of Possible Points
--------------	-------------------------------

¹ Adapted from Johnny Stein's Syllabus

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

Late or Missing Work

Due dates are strictly enforced. Papers must be submitted in person on the date that they are due. I will not accept papers via email except in extreme situations and only with prior approval of the instructor. There will be no make-up opportunities for quizzes or reading journals. Be aware of when assignments are due and plan accordingly.

Accommodations for Students With Disabilities

If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the office of Disability Support Services (CFO 106, 940-898-3835, dss@twu.edu) in order to obtain the required official notification of your accommodation needs. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss approved accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken during each class period. Students are expected to be in class on time. You will not receive attendance or participation points for days that you are absent. I will only consider an absence excused if I receive verification from the Office of Student Life. After **four** unexcused absences, your final average will be lowered by one letter grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a classmate.

Do not email the instructor or Graduate Assistant and ask if you missed “anything important.”

For more information, see TWU Attendance Policy:

<http://www.twu.edu/student-life-office/attendance-policy.asp>.

Academic Integrity

This class assumes that all participants are doing the assignments with integrity. TWU’s policy on Academic Dishonesty states: “Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure or removal from a course, disciplinary probation, and/or dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, falsification, falsifying academic records and other acts intentionally designed to provide unfair advantage to the student and/or the attempt to commit such acts” (see <http://www.twu.edu/student-life-office/academic-integrity.asp>).

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with all of TWU student policies, especially those regarding academic dishonesty. “I didn’t know” is not an excuse. One of the most common problems in undergraduate classes is plagiarism, which occurs when a student copies, without proper citation intentionally or unintentionally, the ideas or words of another. The TWU library

has an on-line tutorial to help you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it:

<http://www.twu.edu/library/tutorial/plagiarism/player.html>

When in doubt, ask a librarian, a writing expert, a GA, someone at the Write Site, or an instructor.

Plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty defeat the purpose of the educational process and shortchange everyone involved. In this class, if you plagiarize, commit or attempt to commit another act of academic dishonesty, you will potentially receive a failing grade for the assignment, have your actions reported to the Office of Student Life, and risk failing the course.

Class Conduct

- You are expected to arrive on time and stay to the duration of the class. Excessive tardiness and/or early departures will negatively impact your grade.
- Cell phones should be turned off prior to coming to class. Please do not send or receive text messages during class.
- If you are sleeping in class, you will be marked absent for the day.
- Private conversations during class are unacceptable (except in the case of group activities). Direct all comments to the entire class.
- Please do not leave trash (water bottles, candy wrappers, misc. papers) behind.

Referrals

If you find any of the material covered in class to be emotionally distressing, you have immediate access to sources of professional support, counseling, and therapy services, including the **TWU Counseling Center, West Jones Hall, 940-898-3801 (free to TWU students); Project REV (Resources for Ending Violence), Jones Hall, 940-898-2744 (free to TWU students); and the Counseling & Family Therapy Clinic, 940-898-2600, HDB 114.**

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

All readings are to be completed prior to coming to class. The following is a tentative schedule. Some changes in this schedule may occur based on opportunities and obstacles that we may encounter. It is your responsibility to stay up-to-date with the schedule and to make sure that you are aware of changes, handouts, and other issues related to the course. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

WVFFV = *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*

Atlas = *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World*

BB = Readings available through Blackboard

Week 1

8/30: Introductions and course expectations

9/1: Women's Studies and Feminism

Read: WVFFV: Chapter 1 (1-24)

BB: Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" and Carrillo, "And When You Leave, Take Your Pictures with You"

Read Syllabus

Week 2

9/6: Labor Day: NO CLASS

9/8: Women's Studies and Feminism, cont.

Read: WVFFV: "Claiming an Education" (25-27), "Denials of Inequality" (54-57), "Still Needing the F Word" (56-57)

Atlas: "In Their Place" (18-19)

Week 3: Privilege and Inequality

9/13: Read: WVFFV: Chapter 2 (59-75), "Oppression" (84-86)

9/15: Read: WVFFV: "Something About the Subject Makes it Hard to Name" (99-101), "Toward a New Vision" (76-84), "White Privilege, Male Privilege" (87-91)

Week 4: Privilege and Inequality

9/20: Read: WVFFV: "Homophobia" (87-91), "Voices" (106-109), "Tired of Playing Monopoly" (101-106)

BB: Wade poem

9/22: Film: *Class Dismissed*

Week 5: Social Construction of Gender/Sex

9/27: Read: WVFFV: Chapter 3 (124-139), "The Social Construction of Gender" (142-145)

Atlas: "Sports" (50-51)

9/29: Read: BB: “Trans on Campus” and “Intersex Society Website”
Film: XXXY and “Trans 101”

Week 6: Social Construction of Sexuality/Inscribing Gender on the Body

10/4: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 4: (175-185), “Romance: Sweet Love” (193-197), “La Guerra” (204-208)

10/6: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 5 (223-243), “If Men Could Menstruate” (254-255)
 Atlas: “Beauty” (52-53), “Under the Knife” (54-55)

Week 7: Inscribing Gender on the Body

10/11: Read: *WVFFV*: “Body Ethics and Aesthetics” (255-266), “Love Your Fat Self” (280-284), “Phenomenal Woman” (284-285)

Midterm Review

10/13: Film: *Killing Us Softly IV*

Week 8: Health and Reproductive Rights

10/18: Midterm Exam

10/20: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 6 (296-325), “The Tolling of the Bell” (329-335)
 Atlas: “Breast Cancer” (46-47), “HIV/AIDS” (48-49), “Maternal Mortality” (40-41)

Week 9: Family and Labor

10/25: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 7 (378-395), “Cheaper than a Cow” (398-402)
 BB: “A Lesbian Family”
 Atlas: “Motherhood” (34-35), “Marriage and Divorce” (24-25)

10/27: Read: *WVFFV*: “A Brief History of Working Women” (451-464), “Politics of Housework” (448-451), “Power Plays” (483-485)
 Atlas: “Working for Wages” (62-63), “Unpaid Work” (70-71)

Three of your Five Reading Journals Must be Completed Before Monday

Week 10: Gender and Culture

11/1: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 9 (498-514)
Film: *Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*

11/3: Read: *WVFFV*: “If Woman Ran Hip Hop” (534), “Pop Culture Gone Wild” (549-554)

Week 11: Gendered Violence

11/8: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 10 (555-577)
 Atlas: “Domestic Violence” (28-29)
Guest Speaker: Stephanie Jordan, Program Coordinator for Project REV

11/10: Read: *WVFFV*: “Betrayed by The Angel” (590-593), “Lisa’s Ritual” (600), “Deaths that Cry Out” (587-589), “Beyond the Politics of Inclusion” (578-580)
Atlas: “Rape” (58-59), “Global Sex Trafficking” (56-57)

Week 12: State, Law, and Social Policy

11/15: Read: *WVFFV*: Chapter 11 (611-632), “What this Nation Really Thinks of Motherhood” (641-649)

Atlas: “The Vote” (94-95), “Women in Government” (96-97)

11/17: Read: *WVFFV*: “She Who Believes in Freedom” (650-656)

BB: “Real Soldiers Wear Lipstick”

Atlas: “Women in the Military” (102-103)

Due: Papers

Due: All Reading Journals must be completed by Friday 11/19 by 10pm

Week 13: Activism

11/22: Read: *WVFFV*: “A Day Without Feminism” (28-30), “Real Men Join the Movement (729-733)

BB: Audre Lorde Poems

Atlas: “Feminisms” (104-105)

Last Day to turn in Extra Credit

Last Day for Items of Interest

11/24: Film: *Crash*

Week 14

11/29: Film: *Crash*

12/1: Wrap-Up

Final Project Presentations

Week 15

12/6: Final Project Presentations

12/8: Final Project Presentations

Week 16

12/13: Final Meeting 1-3pm