

GWS 150: INTRO TO GENDER & WOMEN'S STUDIES

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will use a multicultural and interdisciplinary approach in considering some of the questions, themes, methodologies, and findings of women's studies scholarship and the examination of gender studies. Simply put, my goal is to get each of you to think a little bit differently about what is going on right now in the world around you in respect to how people who identify as different genders are viewed, how they are treated, how they view themselves, how they act, and, most importantly, how the many different mediums of media teach us as a society how each gender should look, think, act and dress.

Through outside readings and projects as well as online posts and discussions, we will engage in a critical examination of theories of gender, sexuality, violence, and their social implications. Course work will include finding and reading outside articles each week and responding to them in required posts which will be graded on a weekly basis. It will also require an in depth look at how you personally view gender, how we treat both women and men in our society and in other cultures around the world, the struggle for feminism, social justice, gender equality and various other provocative questions you'll need to respond to each week.

You will get points for everything you do in this course - every question you respond to or post you make. There will be mandatory weekly graded posts that each student will have to complete as well as a few larger assignments worth more points. There will also be a number of YouTube clips you will be required to watch and comment on each week.

It is critical that active learning take place throughout the semester during this course. Students MUST read and respond to each other's posts. Gaining other students' perspectives is integral – especially in the forums. Otherwise the course load is just busy work.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of images and representations of gender in contemporary United States Life and describe their impacts and effects on modern day society through weekly reading briefs and bi-weekly 1,000 word assignments.
2. Students will be able to define and understand feminism as well as apply relevant concepts in order to understand what shapes their own personal view of the term by responding to weekly "In The News" forum posts regarding things that are occurring RIGHT NOW in the world around us.
3. Students will critically examine through a feminist lens the values, beliefs, myths, realities, research and writings about gender studies in modern culture and the impact these have on both female and male behavior.
4. Students will investigate the dichotomy between male and female views on health, sexuality, sex, communication, relationships, self, work, careers, entertainment, status and power as they relate to the social and cultural constructs of gender and understand how men and women are shaped differently by personal experiences.
5. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the social constructs of both feminism and masculinity and the link between gender and male violence -- that which is against women, against children, against other men, and against themselves, as well as links to alternative views of both boys' and men's lives.
6. Students will apply readings and online forum discussions to identify and summarize the spectrum of gender - including the ability to articulate the difference between femininity vs masculinity and why there is no counterpoint or antonym for feminism.

7. Students will acknowledge and understand the complexities of gender within a community and assess one's awareness of how race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, power and privilege impact gender.

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COURSE MATERIALS

Women's Voices: Feminist Issues, Susan M. Shaw & Janet Lee (Authors) , McGraw-Hill Education, 2015. (6th Edition)

http://www.amazon.com/Womens-Voices-Feminist-Visions-Contemporary/dp/0072822422/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1420817460&sr=8-1&keywords=Women%27s+Voices%3A+Feminist+Issues%2C+Susan+M.+Shaw+%26+Janet+Lee

Women's Voices, Feminist Issues: Classic and Contemporary Readings has been called the "gold standard for women's studies today." It is a compilation of case studies that presents a collection of new empirical research on gender and women's development in the various contexts of their lives.

This is not a beach read. I understand that and appreciate it. Not many textbooks are. However, I believe this book is useful because it is my opinion that most texts focused on the study of gender are "theory-heavy" and don't incorporate enough "testimonial -type, first person accounts" like creating a packet or binder with up-to-date magazine or online articles printed out as PDFs would do. This book is the best I've read that balances academic theory while still including "real-life" testimonials of human experience that students will take with them long after the semester has ended. My disdain for textbooks that students are required to buy and read just to complete an assignment in order to receive a grade is well documented. Hopefully this class (and reading this book) will change that. I want you to want to learn - for the sake of knowledge, NOT just to get a grade.

Each week I will assign a weekly reading brief from a section in the book that I want you to read and review, but more importantly, I want you to relate it to YOUR OWN LIFE. My goal is for this book and for this class to reshape the gendered way in which you've seen everything in the world around you - from the time you were born through grade school into your teenage years, from Disney movies to first dances, from magazines to movies, from family vacations to your favorite video games, your experience during college to your first salary... Chances are - EVERYTHING has been seen through a gendered lens. I want this class to question why? No longer will we simply accept blue for boys and pink for girls. No longer will we simply say, "boys will be boys." No longer will we continue to stereotype or generalize human beings based on their gender. Although there is no definitive counter-point to feminism, this class will examine societal effects on masculinity with the same rigor that has been given to the study of feminist theory.

I want you to explore the concepts of how, for example, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, class, ability, and sexuality all have profound effects on the study of gender. I want you to look at the male and female roles within your own family during holidays. I want you to deconstruct the difference in commercials that are shown during the Superbowl and Sex And The City. I want you to take it back to the books you read, cartoons you watched, video games you played, clothes you wore, sports you participated in, music you listened to, movies you liked, toys you got, posters you hung on the wall... I am willing to bet they were ALL heavily influenced by whether you were born a boy or a girl! This class will examine the structured gender boxes we were all placed in from the time we were born and will also look at the fact that simply being born in the US during this particular time in history affords women many more rights than if she was born 100 years ago or born in a country where women are bought, sold and traded as if they were livestock - as many women around the world are today.



<p>Class Preparation & Participation: Forum Posts</p>	<p>Everyone in this course is responsible for their own learning. Skipping forum posts will only hurt yourself and your final grade. Having everyone participate in class discussions and activities improves the quality of learning and allows each participant to read multiple perspectives on topics. Being inactive shows disrespect for your classmates and the work they put into the course. While I intentionally don't require a certain number of responses to other students' forum posts, the more forums you respond to, the better your grade will be. I am looking for smart, funny, insightful, and thought-provoking forum posts and responses – NOT just a ton of general, nonspecific, bland comments. I want quality over quantity and would like you to quote other people by copying their sentences that you agree (or disagree) with into your own forum and putting it in italics, bold, or underlining it. You MUST read every forum post in this course and mark that you have read it by clicking on the book icon.</p>	<p>50 pts or 10% of your final grade</p>
<p>In The News: Forum Posts</p>	<p>Students will write weekly forums from an out-of-class source you see “in the news” that week. Each week, I would like a brief (250-500 words) written description of your thoughts pertaining to a topic you saw THAT WEEK that relates to class. The assigned mediums include, but are not limited to, newspapers, online articles, magazines, Facebook posts, nightly news, movies, and television shows. Song lyrics may only be chosen once. Students are to write a synopsis of the article, show, advertisement, etc., which describes the issue pertaining to gender and explains how it relates to class. The second portion of the forum will be a reaction to the piece – including YOUR thoughts about it and how it relates to your life or what you have seen personally. You may also write about personal experiences for your weekly forum – if applicable. When possible, please attach a link to the article, advertisement, newspaper story, YouTube video, or printed song lyrics to your weekly forums. (You need to respond to 10 posts total over JTerm)</p>	<p>50 points or 10% of Your Final grade</p>
<p>Reflection Papers: Weekly Reading Briefs</p>	<p>Students will write reaction papers on weekly readings from the <i>Women's Voices</i> text that relate to feminism, gender, and masculinity. Each week, I would like a brief (500-word) written description of your thoughts pertaining to your required reading that week. The assigned reading and Weekly Reading brief description for each week can be found on the Assignments page. Students are to write at least two parts for each of their weekly briefs. The first will be a synopsis of the reading and a description of what you learned in regard to theories of gender identity. The second will be how the reading relates to your own personal life and not only what you learned, but especially what you think about the reading each week. Please be sure to answer each question in the assignment and incorporate at least one GWS 150 vocabulary word in each assignment you submit in this course.</p>	<p>10 points each or 20% of Your final grade</p>
<p>1,000 Word Assignments</p>	<p>There will be a total of 5 larger, bi-weekly, outside research assignments due every other Thursday that will require you to do some "out of class" exploration and investigation of gender identity issues on your own. They will include topics on feminism in your own life, in the socialization process, gender in children's movies, inequality in professional sports, and the sexualization of hip hop music. Please watch the YouTube clip that corresponds with each assignment, answer all questions associated with the paper and include a vocabulary word from the GWS Glossary.</p>	<p>20 points each or 20% of your final grade</p>
<p>Midterm Project: The Bechdel Test</p>	<p>For your mid-term assignment, worth 20% of your grade in this course, please examine gender inequality in film and discuss why more than 70% of the speaking roles in the top 100 grossing films belong to men. Explain the Bechdel Test and watch 42, American Beauty, American History X, Boyz 'N' The Hood, The Karate Kid I or II or Rocky I, II, III, or IV and write an in-depth character analysis (5 – 7 pages, 12 font, double-spaced) of three (3) characters in one of these or another movie pre-approved by me. In the past, students have selected Fight Club, Remember The Titans, Gran Torino, etc but you must be sure to follow the assignment specifications very closely if you choose another movie. Read the following article before you start: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/29/gender-inequality-in-film_n_4360012.html</p>	<p>100 points or 20% of your final grade</p>

Final Project: SHERO	In ten (10) pages or more, interview a feminist in your life that you consider to be the strongest person you know. Use information that you've learned in this class to recreate his or her life, spirit, passion and determination through a thorough examination of her gender identity. See below for full details.	100 points or 20% of your final grade
Extra Credit	Extra credit opportunities will be assigned throughout the semester that promote gender equality.	TBD

GRADING RUBRIC

Grades will be determined by adding the number of points earned in this course throughout the semester. You will get points for everything you do in this course - every question you respond to or post you make. There will be mandatory weekly graded posts that each student will have to complete as well as a few larger assignments worth more points. There will also be a number of YouTube clips you will be required to watch and comment on each week. The total number of points will be translated into a letter grade according to the following:

GRADE	POINTS	GRADE	POINTS
A	460 - 500	B-	400 - 419
A-	450 - 459	C+	390 - 399
B+	440 - 449	C	370 - 389
B	420 - 439	C-	350 - 369

COURSE POLICIES

Expectations: Before we begin, I'd like to clarify a few things about the nature of this course. First off, this is class will take place completely online – it is **NOT** a lecture course. It is one in which your learning will occur through reading, exploration of the materials, and active discussion with your classmates and me. You must read the entire syllabus! You are responsible for everything listed in this syllabus as well as all weekly assignments that are posted.

According to URI Policy, professors are technically able to drop students who fail to participate in the first two (2) classes of the semester. No one in this course will be dropped before the first week of classes, however, students who do not participate in this course before then may be dropped in order to make room for the many students who are waiting to enroll in GWS 150. (This course typically has a waiting list of over 25 students wanting to get in). Please begin participation in this course immediately, if not sooner.

Participation: Active participation is integral to your grade in an online course. The way I will take “attendance” is to track participation by grading 2-3 forum posts each week. Please keep in mind that Brightspace tracks how many times you've posted an original forum response, your number of responses to someone else's post, and how many forums you've read. All of these statistics will factor into your final grade. I will open new forums every Monday morning and close them the following Sunday night at midnight. However, I do understand that circumstances may arise that are beyond our control such as sickness, family and personal issues, sporting events, traveling out of the country without Internet access, etc. If extenuating circumstances arise and you are going to miss any assignment please notify me as a courtesy, either by Brightspace message, email or phone.

Assignments: All Weekly Reading Brief and 1,000 Word Assignment grades will drop by 10% for each day they are late. I expect all forum posts and papers to be quality work. Please do yourself a favor and put in the time and effort- it is for your benefit. All assignments should be attached as a Word Document with correct grammar and spelling. While one benefit of an online course is that you can do the work at any hour of the day or night (as long as it's submitted on time), this course will **NOT** be less work than an in-class section and, in fact, is likely to be even more demanding. Each of you is required to contribute to our discussions via the posts at least 2-3 times per week **in addition** to the regular course assignments.

There will be a multitude of assignments and posts throughout the semester where you will be able to earn a total of 1000 points (not including Extra Credit). Obviously, attendance will not be taken, but your responses to other student's weekly reading briefs and other YouTube clip discussion points on the Forum Posts Page will determine your class participation and will be worth 10% of your final grade. You may submit any assignment late for partial credit, however, please note that you will lose *5% of the grade for each day that it is late*.

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Special Needs: Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, you are encouraged to contact Disability Services for Students, Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098, www.uri.edu/disabilityservices. Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me as early in the semester as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with Disability Services for Students office at 330 Memorial Union or call them at (401)874-2098.

The Academic Enhancement Center houses the University's existing Writing Center and Learning Assistance Program, as well as many other academic support service areas such as tutoring, study groups and multiple forms of academic assistance workshops. The Center serves students who are seeking academic support as well as those with more advanced academic ability who are interested in helping others. In this interactive learning environment, students can enjoy a cup of coffee, get help or help others with schoolwork, and find individual or group assistance as needed. The Center is located on the 4th floor of Roosevelt Hall in University College.

Academic Integrity: Written assignments are to be the work of individual students. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and what are a professor's explicit duties relative to student cheating, please read sections 8.27.10-8.27.20 of the URI Academic Regulations at: <http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html> or refer to sections 1.4 through 1.6 of the University's Student Handbook.

Please read and review the "Student Resource" material listed on the Gender & Women's Studies website at <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/StudentResources.html>. You will find information on this page that will help you in all URI classes and specifically GWS classes. Information includes expectations for discussion, reading, writing; use of Sakai; formatting papers and works cited; research procedures, etc. "I haven't read the Student Resources" will not excuse you from following the information and formats presented there.

URI Cornerstones: We respect the rights and dignity of each individual and group. We reject prejudice and intolerance, and we work to understand differences.

Each member of the URI community has the right to exist in an environment of acceptance, mutual respect, and understanding. If you are a target or a witness of a bias incident, you are encouraged to contact the URI Bias Response Team where you will find people and resources to help.

*www.uri.edu/brt
874-2101*

Expectations

Introduction: Welcome to Intro to Gender & Women's Studies online!

Before we begin, I'd like to clarify a few things about the nature of this course. First off, this is **NOT** a lecture course. It is one in which your learning will occur through reading, exploration of the materials, and active discussion with your classmates and me. You must read the entire syllabus! You are responsible for everything listed in this syllabus as well as all weekly assignments that are posted.

According to URI Policy, professors are technically able to drop students who fail to participate in the first two (2) classes of the semester. No one in this course will be dropped before the first week of classes, however, students who do not participate in this course before then may be dropped in order to make room for the many students who are waiting to enroll in GWS 150. (This course typically has a waiting list of over 25 students wanting to get in). Please begin participation in this course immediately, if not sooner.

Additional information:

Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me as early in the semester as possible so that we may arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with Disability Services for Students office at 330 Memorial Union or call them at (401) 874- 2098.

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Academic Integrity:

All written work must be your own. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and what our duties

relative to a student cheating are, please refer to sections 1.4 through 1.6 of the University's Student Handbook.

Please read and review the "Student Resource" material listed on the Gender & Women's Studies website at <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/StudentResources.html>. You will find information on this page that will help you in all URI classes and specifically GWS classes. Information includes expectations for discussion, reading, writing; use of Sakai; formatting papers and works cited; research procedures, etc. "I haven't read the Student Resources" will not excuse you from following the information and formats presented there.

Instructor Information

Name: Keith Labelle

Email: klabelle@uri.edu, URIBSB4@aol.com, or via Facebook - please only email me outside of Brightspace unless if it is an emergency!

Office hours: By Appointment Only

Phone: 401-874-5222

Biography: First of all, I go by Keith, not Mr. Labelle, Professor, or any other subtitles. I am an Assistant Director in the Division of Community, Equity & Diversity and Director of Bystander Intervention Programs at URI. My job is to supervise the URi-STANDers and assist them in providing education and awareness of sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking on campus as well as to create and promote active bystanders to prevent these crimes. I am not a psychologist or a therapist, but I have provided one-on-one crisis counseling services for students dealing with any type of relationship violence for the past ten years.

In addition, I conduct violence prevention trainings all over campus, supervise the NCAA Student Athlete Orientation presentations, provide training to every Athletic team, to Greeks and other Student Organizations, guest lecture in a number of academic classes, and have taught HDF 417, HDF 298, CSV 302, GWS 360, GWS 351, GWS 300, and GWS 150. I am also the Founder of and advisor for WOWW - "We're Offering Women Wisdom" - which is a mentoring group for first year women on campus.

Course Requirements

Introduction: While one benefit of an online course is that you can do the work at any hour of the day or night (as long as it's submitted on time), this course will **NOT** be less work than an in-class section and, in fact, is likely to be even more demanding. Each of you is required to contribute to our discussions via the posts at least 2-3 times per week **in addition** to the regular course assignments.

Requirements: There will be a multitude of assignments and posts throughout the semester where you will be able to earn a total of 500 points (not including Extra Credit). Obviously, attendance will not be taken, but your responses to other student's weekly reading briefs and other YouTube clip discussion points on the Posts Page will determine your class participation and will be worth 10% of your final grade. You may submit any assignment late for partial credit up to 7 days after the due date, however, please note that you will lose *5% of the grade for each day that it is late*.

Textbook

Required reading:

Women's Voices: Feminist Issues, Susan M. Shaw & Janet Lee (Authors), McGraw-Hill Education, 2015. (6th Edition)

https://www.amazon.com/Womens-Voices-Feminist-Visions%20Contemporary/dp/0072822422/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1420817460&sr=8-%201&keywords=Women%27s+Voices%3A+Feminist+Issues%2C+Susan+M.+Shaw+%26+Janet+Lee

(Your best bet would be to order the book used online from Amazon.com as it will be much cheaper that way).

Women's Voices, Feminist Issues: Classic and Contemporary Readings has been called the "gold standard for women's studies today." It is a compilation of case studies that presents a collection of new empirical research on gender and women's development in the various contexts of their lives.

This is not a beach read. I understand that and appreciate it. Not many textbooks are. However, I believe this book is useful because it is my opinion that most texts focused on the study of gender are "theory-heavy" and don't incorporate enough "testimonial -type, 1st-person accounts" like creating a packet or binder with up to date magazine articles printed out as PDF's would do. This book is the best I've read that balances academic theory while still including "real-life" testimonials of human experience that students will take with them long after the semester has ended. My disdain for textbooks that students are required to buy and read just to complete an assignment in order to receive a grade is well documented. Hopefully this class (and reading this book) will change that. I want you to learn-for the sake of knowledge, NOT just to get a grade.

Each week I will assign a weekly reading brief from a section in the book that I want you to read and review, but more importantly, I want you to relate it to YOUR OWN LIFE. My goal is for this book and for this class to reshape the gendered way in which you've seen everything in the world around you - from the time you were born through grade school into your teenage years, from Disney movies to first dances, from magazines to movies, from family vacations to your favorite video games, your experience during college to your first salary... Chances are - EVERYTHING has been seen through a gendered lens. I want this class to question why? No longer will we simply accept blue for boys and pink for girls. No longer will we simply say, "boys will be boys." No longer will we continue to stereotype or generalize an entire gender. Although there is no definitive counter-point to feminism, this class will examine societal effects on masculinity with the same rigor that has been given to the study of feminist theory.

I want you to explore the concepts of how, for example, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, class, ability, and sexuality all have profound effects on the study of gender. I want you to look at the male and female roles within your own family during holidays. I want you to deconstruct the difference in commercials that are shown during the Superbowl and Sex And The City. I want you to take it back to the books you read, cartoons you watched, video games you played, clothes you wore, sports you participated in, music you listened to, movies you liked, toys you got, posters you hung on the wall... I am willing to bet they were ALL heavily influenced by whether you were born a boy or a girl! This class will examine the structured gender boxes we were all placed in from the time we were born and will also look at the fact that simply being born in the US during this particular time in history affords women many more rights than if she was born 100 years ago or born in a country where women are bought, sold and traded as if they were livestock - as many women around the world are today.

Weekly Reading Briefs

Due every week:

Worth 10 points each or 100 points total (20% of your final grade)

All students are required to complete reading assignments on their own from the required text that relates to the study of gender. Each week, I would like a brief (500 word) written description of your thoughts pertaining to what you read that week. The assigned reading for each week can be found on the Assignments page. Students are to write at least two parts for each of their weekly briefs. The first will be a synopsis of the reading and a description of what you learned in regards to theories of feminist thought. The second portion will be a reaction to the piece; i.e. what your thoughts were, how it relates to the class, and, most importantly, how it relates to YOUR everyday life outside of class - the social impact it may have on society, what YOU thought about the reading, etc. I want to get to know you better through these weekly reading briefs - not simply for you to reiterate what you read. I want to know your thoughts, feelings, and whether or not you agreed with the authors. I want you to relate the reading to things you see in everyday life or experiences you've had in your personal lives. Please also thoroughly read each assignment and answer ALL questions associated with posts, reading briefs and assignments and, again, relate it to YOUR OWN LIFE!!! I don't want to read 25 of the same overviews of the same chapters - I've read the book - I

know what it says! I want to know what YOU THINK, whether YOU AGREE and how it relates to YOUR life experiences. Give me real life examples of people you know or things you have gone through.

1,000 Word Assignments

Due every other week:

Worth 20 points each or 100 points total (20% of your final grade)

There will be a total of 5 bigger assignments due every other Thursday that will require you to do some "out of class" research and investigation on your own. They will include topics on gender in your own life, in the socialization process, in children's movies, in professional sports, and in hip hop music. Please watch the YouTube clip that corresponds with each assignment.

1. *The Socialization Process*

2. *Gender Identity Crisis*

3. *Disney & Gender*

4. *Gender in Sport*

5. *Gender in Music*

For these assignments, I would like you to reference sources outside of class - The Class Glossary contains an extensive list of key concepts and at least one GWS 150 Vocabulary word should be incorporated into every assignment you submit in this course..

Each assignment should be, at minimum, 1,000 words in length. At least one vocabulary word should be referenced whenever possible in each assignment.

"In The News" Forum Posts

Due every week:

Worth 20% of your final grade

In addition to all of your required readings, postings, journals, and other discussions, there will be a mandatory forum post each week where you will need to write about something you have seen in your daily life during the past week that relates to this class.

You must have seen the event within the past week! This assignment may require you to do some research on your own if you typically don't watch TV or read online news articles on a weekly basis. Consider everything you see throughout the week - including commercials, Facebook articles, magazine advertisements, video games, local news stories, billboards, music lyrics, .

Separate from the "In The News" posts, each week there will be topics posted under the Forums link that I would like you to read and respond to. Each forum post will be worth 5 points. For every topic, I will pick out a particularly insightful quote and post it on the homepage as the "Quote of the Week." If I choose your quote, you

will receive 5 extra credit points on your grade for that assignment.

Please complete all forum posts in a timely fashion - by each due date listed on the document make sure that they are posted or *you will lose points*. As is the case with all assignments in this course, you may submit late forums for partial credit up to a week after their due date. After two weeks, the forums will close and you will no longer be able to access them. Please also keep in mind that Brightspace tracks how many times you've posted an original forum response, your number of responses to another student's post, and how many forums you've read. All of these statistics will factor into your final grade.

Please don't feel overwhelmed by the forums -they are simple to complete if you allow yourself adequate timing. Due to the limited time we have together during J-term, strict due dates are in place. The replies to these posts however are flexible because you only need to reply to 10 of them throughout our few weeks together.

Keep in mind that the forums are an opportunity for students in the class to debate and discuss topics with each other - think of them as attendance and class participation in an in-person class. As a reminder, forum posts will close at the end of the semester but late posts will only be permitted if there is a predetermined, valid reason. . In an online class, you should be "attending" or logging in just like a regular course - for 50 minutes 3 times a week (or M, W, F classes) or an hour and 15 minutes 2 times a week (T/TR classes). New forums will be open from the start of the semester because of the limited time we spend together.

And while you certainly don't have to comment on every single person's post, if there's a forum response that is particularly insightful, thought-provoking or one that you vehemently disagree with, I'd love to see students respond, discuss and debate with each other. I feel that most learning - especially in online classes - takes place by learning from each other and hearing what feminism means to everyone else. I especially want to hear everyone's opinions in the forums and hope that people learn life lessons from this class, not just regurgitate facts or stats from some article. Plus, you get credit for every post you respond to - not just your own forum responses. Brightspace tracks the number of posts you make, and read and even the number of times and length of time you log onto the site.

You have the opportunity to earn a minimum of 500 points in this course (even more with extra credit and additional comments/responses to other people's posts) so everyone has the chance to do really well in this class. Usually, people either get an A or an F - they either do the work or they don't.

But my intention with these forums is not simply to assign busy work - it's to spark discussion, debate, and truly get a sense of different people's perspectives on feminism, masculinity, and the study of gender - from jocks to sorority sisters to older, non-traditional students - all of whom come to the class with a different set of life experiences, different career aspirations, and different definitions of what it means to be male or female.

Gender in Film: A Character Analysis

Worth 100 points or 20% of your grade

Mid-Term Paper:

For your mid-term assignment, worth 20% of your grade in this course, please watch 42, American History X, Boyz 'N' The Hood, The Karate Kid I or II or Rocky I, II, III, or IV and write an in-depth character analysis (5 – 7 pages, 12 font, double-spaced) of three (3) characters in one of these or another movie pre-approved by me. In the past, students have selected American Beauty, Fight Club, Meet the Fockers, Remember The Titans, Gran Torino, etc but you must be sure to follow the assignment specifications very closely if you choose another movie.

Please read the full Wikipedia page regarding the Bechdel Test and incorporate its definition and analysis into your paper. The **Bechdel test** asks if a work of fiction features at least two women who talk to each other about something other than a man. The requirement that the two women must be named is sometimes added.

Originally conceived for evaluating films, the Bechdel test is now used as an indicator of gender bias in all forms of fiction. Less than half of all contemporary films fail any given test, which has been attributed to the low proportion of women in the film industry, or professionals' assumptions about the audience's preferences. Critics

have noted that the test is most informative when applied in the aggregate, because individual works may pass or fail the test for reasons unrelated to sexism.

The purpose of this assignment is for you to examine gender in one of these movies and the way three characters exhibit stereotypes regarding their femininity or masculinity. (As aforementioned, you may use a different movie if you wish, but you must get it approved by me beforehand.) You MUST watch the movie again - even if you've already seen it - from the perspective of examining gender and how and why the male and female characters act the way they do based on the following factors.

Utilizing material you have learned in the text, discuss the societal impact each man or woman would have on his or her family, on friends, on co-workers, and on community were the character a real-life person. Please use what you have learned in this class to discuss in detail each person's contributions to the stereotypes and misconceptions regarding what it means to be a certain gender. I want you to recognize the societal institutions that occur within patriarchal cultures. Thoroughly define each character's role in society and provide specific examples of how gender relates to each character's cultural identity.

I especially want you to recognize the intersections between gender in terms of each character's social and cultural identity - including race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, class, ability, socioeconomic status, and sexuality. In doing this, provide a comprehensive understanding of why YOU believe each character thinks and acts the way that they do. Define each character's gender in relation to where they come from, the color of their skin, personal beliefs, standing in society, family relationships, how much money they make, and especially the romantic relationships in which they are. Provide specific examples from the movie for each character and relate their behavior to case studies from the text. You must use at least one character from each gender!

Be sure to describe your feelings and what you personally think about each character as well. I want you to identify the intersection of gender identity and your own personal experiences. In other words, who do YOU most relate to? Cite specific examples from your own personal life to identify with a character in the movie. I want you to make reference to your own personal gender ideal- what do YOU consider to be the ultimate examples of a "real" man or woman in terms of strength, power, toughness, ability, relationships with others, ability to nurture, care taking, nurturing and what messages are sent about what it means to be a real man or woman? Relate your own ideals to your character's behavior by citing specific examples from the movie.

Most importantly, please use three (3) sources from outside your text in addition to your references to the Shaw & Lee text for your mid-term. Please also use three (3) terms, key concepts or GWS vocabulary words from your Sakai glossary in context and explain how they relate to not only your character analysis, but also everything that has been discussed thus far in this course.

Interview A Feminist/SHERO Final Paper

Objectives or Goals:

Please watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0Gu7KZEWy4&NR=1>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmHseDOu7EI&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7t773pb65xQ&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsIE5DpXN9o&feature=related>

In ten (10) pages or more, interview a woman in your life that you consider to be the strongest you know. Use information that recreates her life, spirit, and determination and write an essay that helps both you and the class get to know this person on a personal level. The paper should include your subject's thoughts on being a woman as well as the ups and downs of feminism. Use vivid detail and honest, evocative, unclipped language. Make this essay yours. How you decide to shape the essay is up to you.

From the perspective of GWS 150, I would like you to determine the scope of material you have learned in this course and integrate it into your SHERO assignment. Within this paper, I would like you to determine the relevant key concepts from this class and discuss not only WHAT you learned, but also WHY Gender & Women's Studies is important not only to you, but especially to your SHERO. Are the key class concepts important to your SHERO? Why or why not? Does your SHERO see a need for a Gender & Women's Studies Department or even see a need for a class like this one? Has she ever taken one? Would she?

Please appropriately define and identify intersectionality to your SHERO as well as all aspects of the spectrum of gender. Get her perspective on this course and the relevant key terms and concepts you've learned throughout the semester. Think back to all of your assignments on gender expression in advertisements, comedy, sports, music and Disney movies and relay to your subject the lessons you've learned from this class. Please define the continuum of gender, evaluate privilege within gender and understand the complexities in which people of all genders are shaped by their experiences. Ask your SHERO to do the same. Describe to your subject how images and representations of gender in contemporary United States Life impact and effect people's lives - especially your SHERO's - in modern day society. In short, how does this class relate to her life?

It is integral in an ever-changing and increasingly global world that people gain awareness of how race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, power and privilege impact gender. Discuss this with your SHERO. Explain her perspective regarding this in your paper. Does she understand the questions, themes, methodologies, and findings of women's studies scholarship and the examination of gender studies? What does she know about it? More importantly, discuss what she needs to know about it! What does she think about it? Teach your SHERO what information you have learned in this class and share it in your paper. Discuss whether or not you look at the world differently as a result of taking this course.

In light of the recent election, please evaluate what is going on right now in the world around you and your SHERO in respect to how people who identify as different genders are viewed, how they are treated, how they view themselves, how they act, and, most importantly, how the many different mediums of media teach us as a society how each gender should look, think, act and dress. Does your SHERO agree with the current political rhetoric and discourse regarding people from marginalized or underrepresented groups?

You might:

*Start with a vivid scene you think captures the essence of your subject and then go on to explain and show more about her, emphasizing key traits and nuances as you proceed, including the ups and downs she's experienced in life.

*Start by focusing on the central trait that makes her a strong woman, and then go on to show how this trait recurs in several different scenes and places in her life and so yours. *Decide to narrate her life, emphasizing the most significant moments and interweaving that narration with what she thinks were the high points and the low points, or the formative moments in her life.

*Start with a really strong quote from her and then go on to show her full character, using her answers to your questions to shape a full portrayal of her life.

*Start with the first time you met or knew her and go from there to discuss how your relationship deepened and changed over time.

*Focus on the interview and what you learned about her in the process.

*Do something totally different and creative!

WHATEVER YOU DO: - Be particular, probing, and vivid as you try to recreate the strongest woman you know in such a way that we come to know and admire (or not admire) her too. Remember that good writing involves EXPOSURE (taking vivid pictures of a person, scene, or moment) and REFLECTION (taking time to think out loud, to let us see and feel the depth of your thought and presence as you reflect on her).

Do NOT use a question and answer format. Write an essay, using full paragraphs with a purposeful sense of progression. I am sure most of you will be tempted to use your mother as the subject and that is perfectly

acceptable, however, I think it may be interesting to get to know women outside of your immediate family or strong women from another generation - such as grandmothers or even professors.

I also want you to ask her a number of interview questions, including who her female role model was, what her definition of feminism is, and what she believes it means to be a real woman. Please also inquire about the following 10 things and include all of these answers, anonymously if you wish, in the SHERO post:

1. Have you ever worried you were not pretty enough?
2. Have you ever changed your diet or exercised to change your body size, shape or weight?
3. Have you ever felt less important than a man?
4. Have you ever been called a bitch, slut, cunt or whore??
5. Have you ever been afraid of a man's anger?
6. Have you ever been lied to by a man so he could get something that he wanted?
7. Have you ever stopped yourself from showing affection, hugging, or touching another woman because of how it might look?
8. Have you ever drank or took other drugs to cover your feelings or hide the pain?
9. Have you ever felt completely responsible for birth control?
10. Have you ever been pressured by a man to say yes when you wanted to say no? Now reflect on what you have learned about YOUR strongest woman and how her answers to these and other questions you asked made you feel. Do these answers explain anything about her personality or about her behavior?

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Following your interview and discussion with your SHERO, I'd like you to reflect on whether your SHERO thinks differently about this class, this project, gender, etc than she did prior to your discussions about it. What section of this class taught you the most? Where did you get your best information regarding the material you learned throughout the semester. Remember, I said at the beginning of this course that an online class requires you to do significant learning "on your own" from a variety of different sources, in different ways, from various formats. What taught you the most? Was it the textbook? The forums? In the News posts? The YouTube clips? The 1,000- word assignments? Where did the majority of your information come from?

As I previously stated about this course, my goal was to get you to think a little bit differently about the world around you. Did I accomplish that goal? Please discuss this with your SHERO. There are a variety of quotes on education that I really identify with in terms of this class. One of my favorites is "Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know." Does that resonate with you? What about with your SHERO? Another is: "There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live." Einstein said: "Education is not the learning of facts, the the training of the mind to think." Did this assignment accomplish this for you or for your SHERO? "The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see." "The true purpose of education is to make minds, not careers." MLK, Jr said: "Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education." "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what they have learned in school." And my favorite: "I never teach my pupils. I only provide the conditions in which they can learn." Please sum up what you have learned in this class and about your SHERO. Which quote about education - of these or any other you find - best sums up not only this course, but especially this process of interviewing your SHERO.

Most importantly, please tie this paper in with everything you have learned in this course as it relates to the textbook. This project should also contain a minimum of three (3) citations from outside your text. Please also use three (3) glossary terms you have not previously used for your mid-term project to explain how they relate to not only your SHERO, but also everything you have learned in this course throughout the semester.

Feel free to incorporate your own questions and exclude any you feel may not be appropriate!

Outcomes Assessment

Extra Credit:

There has been a recent push in higher education to assess not only how much students enjoy the classes they take, but also how much they learn from them. Please thoroughly answer the following questions for maximum credit.

What, if anything, did you learn in this course?

What was your favorite part? Least favorite?

Would you recommend this course to another student? Why or why not?

What would you change about the course for next semester?

Most importantly, do you believe the course goals were met?

I want to know if this course made you redefine gender or, at the very least, think a little bit differently about both the standard textbook definition of gender and your own definition of what it means to be a feminist.

Key vocabulary and concepts for GWS 150

Patriarchy

Feminism

Essentialism

Social construction of gender

Sexism

Racism

Classism

Ageism

Homophobia

Oppression

Empowerment

Activism

Able-bodyism

Identity politics

Intersectionality

Privilege

Discrimination

Backlash

Dominant culture
Structural violence
Stereotypes
Liberal feminism
Socialist feminism
Radical feminism
First wave, second wave, third wave feminism
ERA
Objectification
Commodification
Consumerism
Gendered division of labor
Capitalism
Productive and Counterproductive labor
Affirmative action
Sexual harassment
Glass ceiling
Misogyny
Androcentrism
Ethnocentrism
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
Feminization of poverty
Compulsory heterosexuality
Heteronormativity
Cross-dressing
Queer theory
Transgender
Transsexual
Medical/Military Industrial Complex
Militarized prostitution
Human trafficking
Honor killing