

Realities of Women
WS 3377 and WS 5377: 2:00-3:15PM, Tues. & Thurs. HINE 203
Spring 2007

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Office: Psychology Room 111

*The best way to contact me is by email or visiting my office hours.

Course Description

This class engages students in a critical examination of prominent themes concerning the realities of women, with particular focus on current research on gender. We will consider perspectives on gender from multiple disciplines, including biology and psychology, as well as sociology, anthropology and political philosophy. We will also examine how gender impacts areas of our lives including, work, education, and family. In addition, we will explore gender in relation to friendship, love, and violence. All of these topics will be considered using five small texts plus several articles in E-reserve or handouts: written by interdisciplinary thinkers who are seriously engaged in gender studies.

Goals

My hope is that our thinking on the topic of gender will be stimulated and that lively debate about the issues mentioned above will ensue. A primary goal of this course is for students to become familiar with gender issues as they have developed since the 2nd wave of the Women's Movement. A secondary goal is that students will form meaningful connections with their classmates through small group discussions, extra-curricular study groups and presentations, and generally getting to know each other.

Texts

Required for all students:

1. Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982)
 2. Susan M. Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (USA: BasicBooks. Inc. 1989)
 3. Eva Feder Kittay, *Love's Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependency* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999)
 4. Jennifer Mather Saul, *Feminism: Issues & Arguments* (New York: Oxford University Press 2003)
 5. Lijun Yuan, *Reconceiving Women's Equality in China* (Lanham: Lexington Books 2005)
- Plus E-reserve at the Alkek Library: Chapter 2, from *The Gendered Society*, 2nd edition by Michael Kimmel 2004, Chapter 1 from *Theorizing Feminism: A Reader* edited by Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger 2006, etc)

Required for graduate students:

More readings for graduate students are in the E-reserve or handouts.

Course Requirements

Active participation will be crucial in this course and students will be evaluated by all the requirements including comprehensive readings and writings, regular attendance and positive participation in discussions and group project, and oral presentation at the end of the course. You will write two essays on the issues of women's reality and gender equality. Besides essay writings, there will be a team work in a group project and a presentation of the project (such as interviewing with a domestic carer, a volunteer in women's shelter, or a nurse in a hospital). For the comprehensive readings, you will write ten reaction papers assigned for each week. The ten one-page "reactions" will show your engagement with the readings. Ideally, these reaction papers will make you keep on thinking about the main issues in the contributions. The percentage assigned to each portion of your grade is as follows:

Reaction papers (one for each reading and for each week)	10 percent
First essay (February 22, 2007)	20percent
Mid-term exam (March 8, 2007).....	20percent
Second essay (April 21, 2007)	20 percent
Presentation (April 24-26, 2007).....	10 percent
Final exam (May 8, 2007).....	20 percent

Two essay topics and two review sheets for the exams will be distributed in the class. All assignments should be submitted on time and all assignments must be typed and double-spaced. Late papers may be penalized unless special arrangements are made in advance. No excuses will be accepted after the due for the paper. No email submissions but only hard copies are acceptable.

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Since more readings required for graduate students, the writing assignments will be different from that for undergraduate students, both in length and in depth. You need to make sure to read those articles for the enrichment of your discussions in essay topics.

General information

(1) Assistance in this course: Do not hesitate to see me in my office or after class if you have concerns and difficulties or if you have questions about the course and what is required of you. I am eager to help you learn philosophical analysis and do well in this course.

(2) Policy on make-up and missed assignments: There will be no make-ups beyond the due of all assignments. If you are sick and cannot make the class, I will accept written excuses only from the doctor who admitted you to the hospital.

(3) Academic honesty: Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of another representing the material so used as one's own work. If your submitted written work is not your own work, the submitted work will receive a score of zero and further disciplinary action will be pursued. Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Take this notice seriously. If you have any questions as to what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, you should ask the instructor right away.

(4) Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability, be sure to identify yourself to the University and the instructor so that reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation within the course can be made. Please contact to Office of Disability Services, Suite 5-5.1 LBJSC, at 245-3451.

Disclaimer

You are under NO obligation to agree with the author or the professor on any issues discussed in this class. Rather, your obligation is to demonstrate comprehension and thoughtful consideration of the ideas in the readings and lectures. I hope that at the end of the semester you will be able to articulate and effectively argue for your own position on any given topic. Although we may not agree on our interpretations of the various materials, we can agree on a commitment to encounter and engage the ideas in this course with openness, thoughtful consideration, and mutual respect.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Day Date Reading and Topic

Tue. 1/16 Welcome to Realities of Women. Introductions. (All readings before the class)

Week one: Giligan: Women’s Place in Man’s Life Cycle; Images of Relationship
 Jan. 18-23 Giligan: Concepts of Self and Morality; lecture and discussion

Week Two: Giligan: Women’s Rights and Women’s Judgment; group discussion, summary
 Jan. 25-31 Philosophical Critiques on Giligan (handout 1)

Week Three: Biology and Culture Kimmel Ch 2, 3
 Feb. 1-6 Social Constructivism; discussion and debate

Week Four: Hackett/Haslanger Ch 1, Theorizing Feminisms in E-reserve,
 Feb. 8-13 Okin, Justice, Gender, and the Family: Ch 1 &2

First Essay Assignment on Feb. 8 and Due on Feb. 22, 2007

Week Five: Okin, Justice, Gender, and the Family: Ch 5 & 6
 Feb. 15-20 Okin, Justice, Gender, and the Family: Ch 7 & 8

Week Six: Eva Feder Kittay, *Love’s Labor*: part one
 Feb. 22-27 Eva Feder Kittay, *Love’s Labor*: part two

Week Seven: Eva Feder Kittay, *Love’s Labor*: part three
 Mar. 1-6 Video (the Hours); Midterm Review

**Mid-term Exam in Class Tuesday March 8
 Happy Spring Break (11-18)!**

Week Eight: Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 1
 Mar. 20-22 Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 2

Week Nine: Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 3
 Mar. 27-29 Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 4

Week Ten: Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 5
 Apr. 3-5 Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 6

Week Eleven: Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 8
 Apr. 10-12 Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch 9

Presentation project assignment

Second Essay Assignment on April 10 and DUE on April 21, 2007

Week Twelve: Yuan, Ch1, & 2: Confucianism and Anti-Confucius
Apr. 17-19 Yuan, Ch3, & 4: Mao and Post Mao, and Women

Week Thirteen: Students Presentation (either team work or individual work)
Apr. 24-26 Students Presentation and Evaluation

The instructor will be available during the final exam preparations by appointments to help you do well in your final!

Final Exam will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 3:00-5:30PM (in Your Classroom).

Keep your syllabus handy for reference purposes.

One is not born a woman, but becomes one.

~Simone de Beauvoir