

Women's Studies 391W: Writing for Women's Studies Majors

Fall 2007

Alix Paschkowiak, Instructor

apaschkowiak@complit.umass.edu

Office Hours MW 12:15-1:15 in Bartlett 7 & by appt.

Course Objective: □The goal of this class is to improve students' writing skills for success in college and beyond. Since this is a course geared specifically to Women's Studies majors, we will focus on a variety of genres and writing styles important to feminist work. As we interrogate the importance of language and the written word to feminist studies, we will also work on professionalization skills and materials in order to help students prepare for graduate school and/or for careers in women's studies and feminist-related fields. In class discussions and in our own work for the semester, we will consider how language -- whether written or oral -- works as a tool to create notions of identity/identities as well as how it is utilized to create personal, social and political change.

Required Texts and Materials:

Diana Hacker, ed. *A Writer's Reference*, 6rd Edition. St. Martin's Press, 2007

Daisy Hernández and Bushra Rehman, eds. *Colonize This!* Seal Press, 2002

An online journal at www.livejournal.com and membership in our class community: WOST391.

Students who require accommodations for successful completion of this course should notify both LDSS and the course instructor by no later than the end of the first week of classes so that the necessary accommodations can be made.

Course Requirements: Assignment sheets will be distributed in class

25 % Journal

The journal consists of entries responding to prompts announced in class. Entry length may vary with prompt. Prompts will vary depending on class activities, but may include personal writing, responses to class readings, world news or events, and evaluations of communities on livejournal.com. Journal entries will be posted online at livejournal.com as part of the student's online journal. Additionally, students will respond to each other's online journal entries and explore communities on LJ relevant to the course.

10% Personal Statement

This is a professional autobiographical document that may be utilized for a graduate school application, for scholarship/fellowship applications, or one which may be edited in the future as part of a grant or job application. 1.5-2 pgs.

10% Autobiographical Essay

In this creative, self-reflexive essay, students will consider gender, language, and

the construction of identity. This essay will be edited from a series of in class and out of class writings. 3-4 pgs.

5% Curriculum vita or Resume

This is a summary of your work or academic life to date. 1-2 pgs. We will also have a short field trip to Career Services. There, students will open a recommendations file and will be encouraged to start filling it.

10% Cultural Review

We will be watching the film *Fire* in class. This essay will review the film from a feminist and gender-centrist point of view, taking as well into consideration all the ways in which identity and narrative is constructed.

30% Research Essay (topic, abstract, annotate bibliography, drafts, and delivery)

Students may choose any topic relevant to Women's Studies. I encourage all students to choose something that is not only interesting to research and analyze, but also something practical. What I mean by this is that:

- * this is an excellent opportunity for those of you who will be working on an honors/senior/BDIC thesis project to get a jump start on it.
- * for those of you considering grad school, you might consider writing something that you can use as your writing sample, so tailor it to your intended/future interests.
- * no matter what, be brave! This is an opportunity to write on an research anything that interests you.

After beginning your research, you will write an abstract introducing and outlining the topic of your project. The annotated bibliography will be the written compilation of your scholarly sources. The final essay will present your topic, your arguments based on the research in the field and conclude with pointing to areas of future research related to your topic. This essay will be delivered in December at a one day Colloquium (with practice sessions beforehand).

10% Attendance and Participation

Since this class is run as a workshop, it will best function when all students are present. Regular attendance is expected and missing more than 5 classes will affect the final grade. Why you miss class is your business; except in the case of emergencies, I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences.

Course Policies:

Late Essay Policy

Please talk to me if you think your assignment will be late BEFORE the due date. All late papers will be subject to a grade reduction. If you turn your paper in more than a week late, your paper will be returned to you with a grade of "F."

Extra Credit

I will occasionally announce literary and artistic events which students may wish to attend. Students who attend and write a 1-2 page response will receive extra credit.

Academic Honesty

The Undergraduate Rights & Responsibilities distributed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and the Provost states: "Intellectual honesty requires that students demonstrate their own learning during examinations and other academic exercises, and that other sources of information or knowledge be appropriately credited. Scholarship depends upon the reliability of information and reference in the work of others. No form of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating of dishonesty will be condoned by the University community" (32). In short, plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course.