

WOST 201 Critical Perspectives  
MWF at 10:10-11:00am  
Spring 2007  
Room: Bartlett Hall 109  
Instructor: Angelica Whitmal  
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Office Hours: 9:00-10:00 (MWF—room 387 Bartlett Hall) and by Appointment

### **Description of Course**

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Women Studies. In this course we will examine the status of women both in the United States and globally from social, economic, historical, political, philosophical and literary feminist perspectives.

### **Required Texts**

Shawn Meghan Burn. Woman Across Cultures: Global Perspectives. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004. (WAC)

Amy Kesselman, Lily D. McNair, and Nancy Schniedewind, editors. Women: Images and Realities, A Multicultural Anthology. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006. (WIC)

### **BOOKS ARE FOR SALE AT: FOOD FOR THOUGHT BOOKS**

**Course Format:** The class will be conducted as a seminar, although I may lecture during the beginning of the session to provide historical or background information. You are expected to arrive having completed the reading for each session. Your active participation is essential to your success in this course.

### **Course Assignments**

The assignments will consist of an introduction paper, response papers, group projects, and a final paper.

**Introduction paper:** Each student is *required* to write a 2-3 page paper describing yourself and your academic areas of interest, and your perspectives on gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, and sexuality. This assignment will not be graded.

### **Response papers:**

These papers will be 2-3 pages (typed, 12-point font, and double-spaced) each entry will be divided into two sections.

- The first section of the response paper will contain a concise, original summary of the work you are addressing. The aim of this section of the response is to make it clear to the reader that you understand what the author is saying. It is best to stay

as close to the text as possible: if necessary, you should quote from the author's exact words. You should also cite page numbers for any such quotations.

- The second section of the paper will contain your reaction to what you think the author is trying to do or say. You are strongly encouraged to express your opinion, whether it agrees with the author's assessment, criticizes the work, or points out any contradictions or complexities of the author's argument. Feel free to take issue or disagree with the work in this section. Disagreement is warranted after careful reading and studying.

**Response papers are due at the beginning of every class.**

**Group Action Projects:** This group project involves students participating in an activity outside the classroom (on or off campus) that raises awareness of some dimension relevant to women's lives. I will provide a list of possible projects and guidelines. The completed group action projects (along with a typed description and analysis of the project) will be presented during the last two weeks of class.

**Final paper:** A typed, 12-point font, double-spaced 10 page research paper on a topic of your own choosing (subject to my approval) that was examined in this course. Students must submit (On April 6<sup>th</sup>) an abstract and a working bibliography before writing the paper.

## **Grading**

The final grade for this course will be a weighted average of grades on all assignments. Weightings are as follows:

- Response Papers (35%)
- Group Action Projects Presentations—Students present a brief discussion on their projects to the class (15%)
- Final Paper (50%)

**Late Work:** If your work is late for any reason other than a medical reason (documentation is required), the work will be lowered one letter grade. No exceptions will be made.

**Plagiarism:** This is a very serious offense which could result in failure of the course and possibly even greater consequences. Consult your undergraduate catalog.

## **Course Schedule**

January 29

*Introduction to the course*

January 31

*Film Screening: The Way Home*

Student introduction papers are due today

February 2  
*Complete viewing: The Way Home*  
Read WIR Sections: 1-7  
Read WAC: Chapter One

February 5  
*Women's Low Status and Power*  
Read WAC: Chapter Two

February 7  
*Women's Low Status and Power Continued*  
Read WIR Sections: 9-12

February 9  
*Socialization and Gendered Performances*  
Read WIR Sections: 15-21

February 12  
*Intersectional Politics and Identity*  
Read WIR Sections: 13, 14, 98, 101

February 14  
We will meet in room 1620 in the Du Bois Library. Please bring in your paper ideas.

February 16  
*Intersectional Politics and Identity*  
Film: Black Is ...Black Ain't

**FEBRUARY 19**  
**NO CLASS**

February 21  
*Intersectional Politics and Identity*  
Film: Complete viewing of Black is...Black Ain't  
Read WIR Sections: 25, 27, and 28

February 23  
*Body Image*  
Read WIR Sections: 36-40

February 26  
*Beauty*  
Read WIR Sections: 29-33 (and the box)

February 28  
*Sexuality and Interpersonal relationships*  
Film: Fire

March 2  
***Sexuality and Interpersonal relationships***

Complete viewing Fire

Read WAC: Chapter 4

March 5  
***Sexuality and Interpersonal relationships***

Read WIR Sections: 41-44

March 7  
Discuss Group Projects

March 9  
***Women and Ageism***  
Read WIR Sections: 111-114 (and the box)

March 12  
***Women's Health and Reproduction***  
Read WAC: Chapter 3

March 14  
We will meet in room 1620 in the Du Bois Library. Please bring in your ideas for group projects.

**March 16-25 SPRING BREAK**

March 26  
***Women's Health and Reproduction***  
Read WIR Sections: 115 and 91

March 28  
***Women's Health and Reproduction***  
Read WIR Sections: 79-81, 83

March 30  
***Women Making New Life Scripts***  
Read WIR Sections: 68-70

April 2  
***Violence against Women***  
Film: Defending Our Lives

April 4  
***Violence against Women***  
Read WIR Sections: Box (bell hooks), 125-127, 129-131, 134 and 135

April 6  
***Women, Politics of Religion and Spirituality***  
Read WAC: Chapter 8  
Final paper abstract/ working bibliography due today!

April 9  
***Women, Politics of Religion and Spirituality***  
Read WIR Section: 71, 72, 74 and 75

April 11  
***Women's Work***  
Read WAC: Chapter 5

April 13  
***Women's Work***  
Read WIR Sections: 45-48 (read the boxes too)

April 16  
**NO CLASS**

April 18  
***Women's Work***  
Read WIR Sections: 52-55

April 20  
***Women and the Law***  
Read WIR Sections: 56-59 and 61

April 23  
Discuss progress of student projects

April 25  
***Women and Family***  
Read WIR Sections: 63, 65-67

April 27  
***Women and Class***  
Read WIR Sections: 100-104

April 30  
***Women and Racism***  
Read WIR Sections: 93-98

May 2  
***Women and Development***

Film: Guerillas in our Midst

May 4

***Women and Development***

Read WAC: Chapter 6

May 7

***Women and Activism***

Film: A Passion for Justice: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Feminism

Read WIR Sections: 140, 147, 148,152

May 9

***Women and Activism***

Read WIR Sections: 153,156, and 160

May 11

***Student Presentations***

May 14

***Student Presentations***

**Final papers due by 12pm on May 24 (WOST office)**