
WOMENSST 187H
Spring 2008
Schedule #: 81593

Introduction to Women's Studies
Tue & Thu: 9:30 – 10:45 am
Emily Dickinson 109B

Professor Alex Deschamps
Gen.Ed. IU

Office & Hours: Bartlett 7B » Mondays 2:30 – 3:30 pm & by appointment
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Course Description

This class introduces basic concepts and perspectives in our *gendered* lives both historically and contemporaneously by placing women's experiences at the center of analysis. It is an inter-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary study of women's roles and relations but it is also an overview of theoretical and social cultural concepts of *gender* and its intersection with other social constructs of difference, (race/ethnicity, class, disability, sexuality, and age). The central aim is to foster critical reading and thinking about all our lives and the ways in which these interlocking systems have shaped and influenced the historical, cultural, social, political, and economical contexts of our lives. Although the main focus is about women in the United States, attention will be given to women's resistance of these gendered inequalities, and the various ways they have worked to create new systems of transformative change. Central themes of this course are:

Integrative and interactional analysis: emphasis will be placed on the need to understand the concepts of "women" and "gender" as multiple and diverse, embedded in a complex network of interlocking variables of race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationality.

Levels of Analysis that considers micro, meso, macro, and global levels which should hone your ability to analyze arguments and "read" and "operationalize" gender.

Knowledge Construction: we will explore the production and politics of knowledge, think through key issues, questions, and debates from a range of disciplinary perspectives and the diversity of gendered experiences.

Theorizing: We use "feminism(s)" as a framework because the concept is constantly shifting in multiple and varied ways. It is geographical and political; it is about economics and the need for merging the theory with the practice; it is about *access and equity*; and it is about *description, analysis, vision, and change*.

Activisms is about how women have been influential in making progressive changes and how we need to continue to do this work using a "gendered lens of analysis" to the personal and the political.

General Education

One goal of higher education is to nurture the potentials in all students. General Education aims at personal enrichment, cultural awareness, and breadth of knowledge. Among other objectives, we want you to begin

- to think critically and creatively and to conduct self-directed learning projects
- to understand diverse perspectives, different philosophies, and how different cultures and groups relate
- to integrate and synthesize knowledge and to use quantitative and symbolic reasoning
- to communicate clearly, concisely and effectively both in writing and speaking tasks
- to demonstrate knowledge of self in diverse cultural contexts
- to acquire knowledge in a variety of scholarly modes and contexts
- to recognize diverse disciplinary viewpoints and methods

Course Requirements, Academic Honesty, University Policies, Class Guidelines

- Reading assignments must be completed **by the class period for which they are assigned**.
- In addition to fulfilling a general education requirement (IU), this course is an HONORS 4 Credit course and particular attention will be paid to your writing (content, style, mechanics, presentation). Let me know early if you need assistance with writing. Relevant resources are also available. This also means that you are expected to be responsible, diligent, and committed to your scholarship and learning.
- Regular attendance and occasional in class exercises are mandatory. Attendances cannot be made up. After **two unexcused absences** your final grade will begin to be marked down. You will lose *1 (one) point* for every unexcused absence. Class discussions will provide the opportunity to talk critically and analyze issues and topics. You will be expected to have completed and thought about all of the readings for each class. **Incompletes will not** be given unless there are unusual circumstances. University guidelines will be followed. If you know that you must miss a class session, please consult with me beforehand but be clear about the difference between **excused and unexcused** absences. Please take time to plan your semester.
- Religious Observances. It is the University Policy that each student must inform the instructor prior to the scheduled class session of any religious absence. This is an excused absence but it does not relieve you of any due assignment. The instructor will work with you about these.
- You are responsible for knowing when assignments are due (dates are in the syllabus) and submitting them on time. Excused or religious absences **do not exonerate** you from assignments. Read the Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities Handbook on issues of Academic Honesty, Grading, attendance, Examinations, and Absences. <http://www.umass.edu/umhome/policies/honesty.html>. You must inform me of Religious observances and other excused absences.
- UMASS policy requires that all students have a UMASS email account for University correspondence and for access to SPARK. It is free. Once you are registered in this course, you will automatically have access to SPARK. You will use your OIT username and password.
- If you have **special needs**, please discuss with me and obtain the relevant paperwork so that necessary accommodations can be made. The University provides appropriate accommodations for students with special needs. If you think you might be such a student, please contact the Disability Support Service in the Whitmore Administration Building and inform me promptly at the beginning of the semester. Together we can ensure that you obtain the support you need to get the most from the course and to give your best performance.
- My assumption is that students are generally honest. You are responsible for knowing and following the University of Massachusetts Academic Guidelines. Necessary action, in compliance with official policies, will be taken against students who commit academic dishonesty. Plagiarism of any kind will be detrimental to your tenure at the University. Avoid using written papers from the internet. By putting your name on an assignment that you turn in, you are indicating to me that the work is your own original work. Knowing how to cite the work of others in your own work is critical, and I expect you to do it unflinchingly. To do otherwise is plagiarism. The University Code of Academic Integrity prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. Please read and familiarize yourselves with the University Policy Statement on Academic Honesty, Course Requirements, Attendance, Religious Observances, and other relevant policies, in the Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities Booklet or at website <http://www.umass.edu/umhome/policies/honesty.html>. Consult with me about resources for learning needs.

Class Guidelines: We will discuss and negotiate guidelines together for our classroom community. Those below have served me well in the past and are offered here as a point of departure. Remember that we are working for the most collaborative environment possible so your suggestions or modifications are welcome:

- Please come to class on time and be prepared for the discussion of the assigned material. Your attendance throughout the course is expected at all times and is an important factor in our ability to be successful individually and as a community. If you know that you must miss a class session, please consult with me beforehand. Feel free to contact me with any and all concerns, questions, and feedback throughout the course.
- Assignments are due at the start of class or as otherwise indicated.
- Each class participant is expected to treat the ideas, opinions and work of others with the utmost respect. Derogatory remarks of any kind are not acceptable. Active listening is expected and encouraged.
- Plagiarism is not acceptable - references must always be cited, even if you do journals.
- Late work is never acceptable unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. This could result in a grade (at least one half to begin with) penalty.
- Verbal (“good idea!”) and non-verbal encouragement (nodding, etc.) are both great reinforcement.
- Remember to use ‘door openers’ – “Could you say more about that?”
- Paraphrasing can sometimes help move the discussion forward – (“What I heard you say was....”)
- Reflecting feelings can also be clarifying – “Are you feeling ____” (excited, hopeful, upset...)
- Sometimes it helps to jot down the essence of your ideas before you begin to speak.
- Connect what you plan to say with what has already been said.
- Avoid getting involved in a direct exchange with specific class members. Always speak to the group and be sure that your comments will relate to and involve the entire class.
- In person etiquette and online etiquette are expected to be used at all times – including the use of real names, respecting one another's confidentiality, and the absence of any libelous, or abusive remarks. All emails must be appropriately addressed and professional. We will discuss these.
- Be respectfully attentive to the discussion at all times; monitor yourself to be sure that you don't monopolize the discussion; encourage/invite more reserved class members to join the discussion.

Critical Analysis and Helpful hints for writing

Critical analysis means that you must apply thoughtful reasoning to the arguments presented in this course through readings, lectures and discussion. It means not only finding what you agree with, what's new, what's the basis for the assumptions, but also what the limitations are and what other questions you have, and so forth. When you write a critical analysis, all of your statements need to be backed up with reasons or examples, and you must keep your fellow classmate and readers in mind. Are you giving the reader enough information? Ask the following:

- What is/are the main point(s) of the readings - both individually and collectively? Why does the author raise these particular points for discussion? How does she/he hope to answer them? Do you think she/he succeeded? Why or why not? Be aware of how the author uses key terms and her/his definitions for them.
- What are the strengths and weaknesses in any given ideology, theory or model for change presented? How are the important new ideas presented? What does this text, essay/artwork/film, contribute to our understanding of the issues of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other key factors shaping the lives of women and our gendered lives?

- What is the author's perspective (s) and underlying assumptions about her/his subject, her/his audience, people or culture in general? How are these issues pertinent or not pertinent in all of our/your lives and others? - White, Black, Asian, Native American, older, younger, of different classes or educational levels? How and to whom are they pertinent? What are the assumptions? Do you find any of them to be essentializing?
- What is your perspective on the subject raised for discussion? Does this influence your view of what the author argues? Where or how have you developed your opinions on this subject - and do you see them changing in any way? Do you agree/disagree with the ideas being developed? How/why? What comparisons can you make, if any, between this piece and other readings we have considered?
- Does the author consider differences among people? Is there anything missing from the piece? Remember...Always ask yourself WHY. What is at stake for the author? For you? What points are you are trying to make in response to the issues raised?

Where to go when you need help with organizing your ideas and writing:

All writing must be proof-read, grammatically correct and well-organized. Sources must be properly cited, preferably using MLA or APA style. There are many online resources for checking citation styles. The Writing Center in the Learning Commons at the Campus Library offers assistance with writing skills. You should always have rough drafts well before the due date of the assignment. The Learning Commons is a Resource that you should utilize whether it is for information, study time, or for doing group assignments.

Written Assignments and Exams

- Attendance, Participation, occasional in-class assignments, and Web Assignments (12 points).
- Examination 1. *Thursday February 21st, 2008* (10 points).
- Assignment 1. *Tuesday February 26th, 2008*. Sociocultural location essay or visual presentation (3 points).
- Assignment 2. *Thursday March 13th, 2008*. Women in the First Wave Movement (3 points).
- Examination 2. *Tuesday April 08th, 2008* (15 points).
- Two short analysis/research papers (3 pages) based on the readings, lectures, class discussions and other presentations. Guidelines will be distributed. *Papers must be typewritten and double-spaced. Late papers will be graded down. Due Thursday March 06th, and Tuesday April 22nd 2008* (10 points each).
- Examination 3. *Thursday May 01st, 2008* (20 points).
- An out of class assignment. Due *no later than Thursday April 24th, 2008*. Detailed guidelines will be distributed (5 points).
- Learning Communities Collaborative Group Research Activity. Detailed guidelines will be distributed and discussed. You will be required to work in small groups but submit individual learning summaries which will be due on *Tuesday May 13th, 2008*. (12 points).

Keep track of your grades and meet with me to help you determine and make sense of your progress.

Final Grading Scale

A (94-100)	A- (90-93)	B+ (87-89)	B (83-86)	B- (80-82)
C+ (77-79)	C (73-76)	C- (70-72)	D+ (67-69)	D (60-66)
F (59 or				

below)				
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Books

[Required Texts]:	Gwyn Kirk & Margo Okazawa Rey. <i>Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives</i> . (Fourth Edition). McGraw
Highly Recommended:	Howard Zinn, <i>A People's History Of The United States 1492-Present</i> . New York. Harper Perennial, 2003. Chapters 1 and 6 will be on Electronic Reserve.

Available at Food For Thought Book-shop, North Pleasant Street, Amherst and also
on reserve in the library

Course Calendar

Tue January 29 th	<u>Introduction to Course</u> Syllabus, Requirements, Expectations, Guidelines, Introductory Questions.
Thu January 31 st	<u>Contemporary Issues: Work, Education, Representation</u> Exercises, discussions, and contemporary issues
Tue February 05 th Readings	<u>Key Concepts, Theories, Theorizing: Gendered Implications</u> [Text]–Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, pp. 2-9 & 11-23.
Thu February 07 th Readings	<u>Social Construction of Gender: Themes of Equality and Equity</u> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Chapter One, Readings 1,2, 3, 4, 5, pp. 24-49.
Tue February 12 th	<u>Library Research and Writing Workshop</u>
Thu February 14 th Readings	<u>Identities & Social Locations: Micro, Meso, Macro Levels</u> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, pp. 61-72 & 81-92 (group selections).
Tue February 19 th	***Monday's Schedule re President's Day Holiday***
Thu February 21 st	***Examination 1***
GENDERING BODIES: REPRESENTATIONS, IDEALS, AND SEXUALITIES	
Tue. February 26 th Readings	<u>Gendered Representations: Then and Now</u> Video Screening: <i>Still Killing Us Softly 3</i> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Chapter 3, pp. 121-130. ***Assignment 1: Sociocultural Location and Intersectionality Due***
Thu February 28 th Readings	<u>The Politics of Women's Bodies: In their Own Words</u> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Chapter 3, Readings 15-21, pp. 132-162.
Tue March 04 th Readings	<u>Sexuality: Stereotypes, Contradictions, Double Standards, Activisms</u> Video Screening: <i>Dreamworlds 3</i> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Part two, Chapter 4, pp. 165-174 & group selections of Readings 25, 26, 27, pp. 183-197.
Thu March 06 th	<u>Dialogues and Discussion re Themes in Dreamworlds 3</u> ***Analysis Paper 1 Due***
FREEDOMS – THE FIRST AND SECOND WAVES OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT	
Tue March 11 th Readings	<u>Colonization and Indigenous Women's Lives</u> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Chapter 2, Reading 8, pp. 72-80. [E-Reserves]–Howard Zinn, Chapter 1. [E-Reserves]–Sally Roesch Wagner, <i>Is Equality Indigenous? The Untold Iroquois Influence on Early Radical Feminists</i> . 1996.

Thu March 13 th	<u>Abolition, Suffrage, and the First Wave of the Women's Movement</u> Video Screening: <i>Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice</i> Readings [E-Reserves]–Angela Davis, “Working Women, Black Women and the History of the Suffrage Movement” in <i>Women, Race, and Class</i> . 1981. pp. 73-78. [E-Reserves]–Howard Zinn, Chapter 6. [Web Resource]–“Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments” http://www.pbs.org/stantonanthony/resources/index.html?body=dec_sentiments.htm . [Web Resource]–Sarah Grimke, “The Legal Disabilities of Women, 1837”. [Web Resource]–Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I A Woman”. ***Assignment 2: <i>Women in the First Wave Movement</i> ***
March 15 th – 23 rd	***Spring Break Recess***
Tue March 25 th	<u>Women, Resistance, Immigration, and Industrialization – 1880-1920s</u> Readings [Handout]– <i>A Century of Women</i> , 1994, pp. 7-39. Turner Publishing Inc. [Web Resource]–“Triangle Factory Fire”.
Thu March 27 th	<u>Women During and Post World War II</u> Video Screening: Excerpts from <i>Rosie the Riveter</i> Readings [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey. Part Three, Chapter 11, pp. 483-500. [E-Reserves]–Valerie Matsumoto, <i>Japanese American Women During World War II</i> , in <i>Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies</i> , Vol. V111. no. 1, 1984. [Web Resource]– http://www.rosietheriveter.org/
Tue April 01 st	<u>Women, Civil Rights, Alliances, Coalitions, Conflicts</u> Readings [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Part One, Chapter One, Reading 3, pp. 38-43. [E-Reserves]–E. Dubois, Ch.9, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique” pp. 574-592. [E-Reserves]– <i>Women in the Civil Rights Movements: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1945-1965</i> . Vicki Crawford et. al, editors. 1990, pp. 1-11.
Thu April 03 rd	<u>Contemporary Politics: Race, Gender, Class, and the American Vote</u> Roundtable Discussion – Newspaper Articles
Tue April 08 th	*** <i>Examination 2</i> ***
RECURRING ISSUES: PERSONAL, POLITICAL, INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL, MATERIAL	
Thu April 10 th	<u>The Culture of Masculinity</u> Video Screening: Excerpts from <i>Tough Guise</i> .
Tue April 15 th	<u>Gender, Violence, and Activist Strategies</u> Readings [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Part Two, Chapter 6, pp. 249-263 & Readings 37, 38, 39, pp. 267-287.

Thu April 17 th Readings	<u>Women & Work: Feminization of Poverty, Solutions and Actions</u> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Part Three, Chapter 8, pp. 339-354 & 48 – 53, pp. 356-385.
Tue April 22 nd Readings	<u>Women, Work, & Realities of the Global Economy</u> Video Screening: <i>Behind The Labels</i> [Text]–Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, Part Three, Chapter 9, pp. 387-405 & Readings 54, 55, 56, & 58. pp. 407-425, & 435-437. *** <i>Analysis Paper 2 Due</i> ***
Thu April 24 th Readings	<u>Medicalization of Women’s Bodies and Reproductive Justice</u> [Text]–Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, Part Two, Chapter 5, pp. 203-216, & Readings 30, pp. 221-224 & 32, pp. 227-231. *** <i>Last Date to submit Out of Class Event paper</i> ***
Tue April 29 th	*** <i>Examination 3</i> ***
CREATING CHANGE, THEORY, VISION, ACTION	
Thu May 01 st	<u>“Doing” the Interdisciplines: Theory, Vision, and Action</u> Student Interpretations of Course Concepts and Learnings
Tue May 06 th	<u>“Doing” the Interdisciplines: Theory, Vision, and Action</u> Student Interpretations of Course Concepts and Learnings
Thu May 08 th	<u>“Doing” the Interdisciplines: Theory, Vision, and Action</u> Student Interpretations of Course Concepts and Learnings
Tue May 13 th	<u>The Praxis: Visions, Actions and the Interdisciplines</u> Student Interpretations of Course Concepts and Learnings *** <i>Individual Learning Paper Due</i> ***