

WOMENSST 297G Spring 2009 Schedule #: 18604	Gender and Transnational Activism: Challenges and Transformations Tue & Thu: 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm Tobin Hall 204	Professor Alex Deschamps
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Office & Hours: Bartlett 7B » Thursdays 2:30 – 3:30 pm & by appointment
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Course Description

In the last two decades transnationalism has become an important conceptual approach and research program. The term *transnational* means a number of different things but first of all, it means, literally, moving across national boundaries referring to the ways in which people, goods, money, media images, technology, education, ideas, cross national boundaries and re-define the “*global*”. Second, the term *transnational* enables us to see how this transformation of national boundaries depends not only on political changes but also on economic and cultural shifts. In women’s and gender studies we can look at these changes from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing on many fields of study to begin to understand these complex conditions. The term *transnational* also refers to new forms of international and global alliances and networks that are enabled by new technologies as well as aided by non-governmental organizations and new social movements. This course will emphasize a global and transnational world of powerful possibilities and challenges.

The intent of this course is to engage in an interdisciplinary, global, diverse introduction and overview of disciplines that apply the *transnationalism* approach to different organizations, NGOs, feminist/women’s/gender based networks and organizations, educational spaces, and related organizations and movements. Selected readings will examine the worldwide variation in women’s and gender concerns, goals, and activist strategies and underscore the point that some of the most exciting recent developments in gender activism have been generated by the movement of scholars, ideas, technology, multigoal organizations, diverse organizational structures and a variety of social, cultural, and political engagements.

Gender is used here as a mode of thought that shapes the roles, relations, experiences, and equity of women and men. We will challenge the paradigms of universalism and essentialism. We will focus on the formation of the global nation-state and how ethnicity, race, gender, religion, economic status, and geo-politics play significant roles in shaping ideas about these nation states specifically those nations-states that are populated by diverse groups situated outside of the United States. We will reflect on what national identity means in a hemispheric and global context where transnational connections allow long-distance ties between multiple homelands. We will discuss on the uneasy placement of new immigrants into ethno-racial and other social categories, contexts of reception and incorporation, and how *transnationalism* can disrupt understanding of national belonging or citizenship.

Students will be expected to engage as active participants with their texts. We will engage in close readings of texts as needed, as well as small group activities, panel discussions, and the use of technology to navigate the work of activists in *diverse populations outside* of the United States. Discussions and readings will stress the necessity of “multiple differences” as sites where histories can be re-worked, re-interpreted, and re-conceptualized. The intersectional, interdisciplinary, diverse, and ethnographic case studies used in the course will illustrate and highlight the diversity of gender activist responses to and engagement with globalization. Students will also have the opportunity to be introduced to a range of guest lecturers from interdisciplinary perspectives.

Course Goals and Objectives

- To nurture the potentials in all students and to aim for personal enrichment, cultural awareness, and breadth of knowledge.
- 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 in a diverse global and transnational context.
- To integrate and synthesize knowledge and to use multiple methods of research, qualitative, quantitative and symbolic reasoning.
- To develop and practice the skills of critical thinking, reasoning, and communication.
- To communicate clearly, concisely, persuasively and effectively orally and in writing.
- 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.
- To work effectively and collaboratively in groups.
- To develop information and technology literacy.

Course Requirements, Academic Honesty, University Policies, Class Guidelines

- Reading assignments must be completed **by the class period for which they are assigned**.
- 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. You must inform me about these absences and arrange to have course work and assignments completed.
- 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 Honest, 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 at the website http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/. Talk with me about resources for learning needs.

Class Guidelines

- Come to class on time and be prepared for the discussion of the assigned material. If you know that you must miss a class session, consult with me beforehand. Contact me with any and all concerns, questions, and feedback throughout the course.
- We will discuss and negotiate guidelines together for our classroom community. Those below have worked well in the past and are offered here as a point of departure. We are working for the most collaborative environment possible so your suggestions or modifications are welcome.
- Assignments are due at the start of class or as otherwise indicated. Plagiarism is not acceptable - references must always be cited, even if you do journals.
- 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.
- 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. 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. I recommend learning about *Ref-Works* which will be useful for your citations for all your research and writing assignments.

Written Assignments and Exams and Expectations

Detailed guidelines will be given. All due dates for assignments etc. are also in the course calendar.

- Attendance and participation (15 points).
- Three (3) critical analysis papers. *Due dates are Thursday, February 19th, Tuesday March 10th, & Thursday April 2nd* (10 points each - 30 points).
- Research paper. *Due Tuesday, May 12th* (20 points).
- Mid-term report. *Due Thursday, March 12th* (10 points).

- Five (5) Information and technological literacy assignments. *Due dates are as follows: (1) Thu January 29th; (2) Tue March 03rd; (3) Thu April 09th; (4) Tue April 28th; (5) Thu April 30th (15 points).*
- E-Portfolio. *Due on SPARK, Tuesday, May 05th (10 points).*

Keep track of your grades and caucus 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)				

Books

[Required Texts]:	Srilatha Batliwala (Ed.) <i>Transnational Civil Society: An Introduction</i> . 2006. Kumarian Press.
	J. Michael Adams & Angelo Carfagna. <i>Coming of Age in a Globalized World</i> . 2006. Kumarian Press.
[E-Reserves/Handouts]:	Some readings will be on E-reserves and handouts will be distributed as needed.

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

Course Calendar

Tue January 27 th	<p><u>Introduction to Course and Introductory Questions</u></p> <p>Syllabus, Requirements, Expectations, Guidelines, Introductory Questions.</p>
Thu January 29 th Readings:	<p><u>Working Definitions, Mapping the World of Activist Practices</u></p> <p>[Web Resource]–The 11th International Forum on Women’s Rights and Development. http://www.awid.org</p> <p>***<i>Information and Technological Literacy Assignment 1 Due</i>***</p>
Tue February 03 rd Readings:	<p><u>Gender & Globalization, Transnationalism, Inter-sectionalities, Inter-disciplinarity</u></p> <p>[Handout]–Transnational Feminism: A Range of Disciplinary Perspectives. http://www.history.ucla.edu/dubois/Transnational%20Feminism.html.</p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Basu, Amrita. <i>Globalization of the Local/Localization of the Global: Mapping Transnational Women’s Movements</i>. <u>Meridians: Feminisms, Race, and Transnationalism</u> 1.1 (2000): pp. 68-84.</p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Kurasawa, Fuyuki, <i>Introduction: Theorizing the Work of Global Justice in</i> <u>The Work of Global Justice: Human Rights as Practices</u>. 2009. Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-22.</p>
Thu February 05 th	<p><u>Guest Presentation: Beth Lang, Librarian</u></p> <p>Introduction to data bases, journals, case studies in Ethnography, ref-works, and other relevant course research resources.</p>
21st Century Conflicts and Challenges: Coming of Age in a Globalized World	
Tue February 10 th Readings:	<p><u>Making the Global and Transnational Connections</u></p> <p>[Text]–Adams & Carfagna, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-90. Discussion questions will be provided.</p>
Thu February 12 th Readings:	<p><u>Education Foundations for World Citizenship Part 1</u></p> <p>[Text]–Adams & Carfagna, Chapters 4-5, pp. 91-150. Discussion questions will be provided.</p>
Tue February 17 th Readings:	<p><u>Education Foundations for World Citizenship Part 2</u></p> <p>[Text]–Adams & Carfagna, Chapters 6-8, pp. 151-218. Discussion questions will be provided.</p>
Thu February 19 th	<p><u>Student Roundtable Discussions</u></p> <p>Student Analysis Papers</p> <p>***<i>Critical Analysis Paper 1 Due in Class</i>***</p>

Geo Politics and the Difference that Place makes: Geographies of Transnational Activism, Re-defining Power, Re-assessing the Political	
Tue February 24 th Readings:	<p><u>Identities in a Changing World</u></p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Suki Ali, Kelly Coate & Wangui wa Goro. <i>Despite Diversity: Women’s Unity in Western Cape South Africa</i> in <u>Global Feminist Politics</u>, 2000. Routledge, Chapter 2, pp. 11-25.</p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Suki Ale, Kelly Coate & Wangui wa Goro. <i>Political Thoughts and Domestic Lives</i> in <u>Global Feminist Politics</u>, 2000. Routledge, Chapter 3, pp. 28-47.</p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Suki Ale, Kelly Coate & Wangui wa Goro. <i>Gender, Ethnicity and ‘the Community’: Locations with Multiple Identities</i> in <u>Global Feminist Politics</u>, 2000. Routledge, Chapter 4, pp. 48-65.</p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Suki Ale, Kelly Coate & Wangui wa Goro. <i>Is there a Space for Gender in Modernist Planning?</i> in <u>Global Feminist Politics</u>, 2000. Routledge, Chapter 5, pp. 69-89.</p>
Thu February 26 th Readings:	<p><u>Social Politics: Gender, State, Society</u></p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Conway, Janet. <i>Geographies of Feminisms: The Politics of Place and Scale in the World March of Women</i>. <u>Social Politics: International Studies of Gender, State & Society</u>. 2008 15(2): 207-231.</p>
Tue March 03 rd	<p><u>Video Screening: The Shape of Water</u></p> <p>A Social justice documentary featuring five women in developing nations who stand up for their rights. Featured are Brazil’s rain-forest; Jewish and non-Jewish protesters in the Women in Black movement; Senegalese women; a farm in the Himalayan foothills; SEWA (self-employed women’s association in India).</p> <p>Students will research the film, the creator, the writer and the geographical locations of these case studies for class discussion and for their E-Portfolio</p> <p>***Information and Technological Literacy Assignment 2 Due***</p>
Thu March 05 th Readings:	<p><u>Guest Presentation: Professor Millie Thayer, Sociology</u></p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Thayer, Millie. 2001. <i>Transnational Feminism: Reading Joan Scott in the Brazilian Sertao</i>. <i>Ethnography</i>, No.4. June.</p>
Anthropology of Transnationalism: Migration, Diaspora, National and Transnational Belonging	
Tue March 10 th Readings	<p><u>Theoretical Perspectives: Globalization, Diaspora, Transnational Projects</u></p> <p>[E-Reserves/Handout]–Basch, Linda; Nina Glick-Schiller; & Christina Szanton Blanc 1994. <i>Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States</i>. Routledge. Chapters 1 & 2.</p> <p>***Critical Analysis Paper 2 Due in Class***</p>

The Praxis: Health Activism	
Tue April 14 th	<u>Social Justice in Psychology with HIV/AIDS – The Case of South Africa</u> Guest Lecture: Dr. Susan Hawes, Professor and Director of Accountability Research, Antioch University.
Readings:	[Handouts]–Selected Readings from Dr. Hawes.
Thu April 16 th	<u>Population Control and Reproductive Rights: Technology and Power</u>
Readings:	[E-Reserves]–Selections from Grewal & Kaplan. <i>Gender in a Transnational World</i> , 2 nd Edition, 2006. McGraw Hill. Section 5, pp. 99-118.
Tue April 21 st	***No Class: Monday’s Schedule Re Patriot’s Day Holiday***
Thu April 23 rd	<u>Strategizing Health Education and Advocacy: Global Aspects of health and Health Policy in Third World Countries</u>
Readings:	[E-Reserves]–Selections from Grewal & Kaplan. <i>Gender in a Transnational World</i> , 2 nd Edition, 2006. McGraw Hill. Section 5, pp. 119-144.
The Praxis: Gendered Politics of Economics	
Tue April 28 th	<u>Transnational Micro Finance Practices: Kenya Women Finance Trust</u>
Readings:	[Web Resource]– http://www.kwft.org ***Information and Technological Literacy Assignment 4 Due***
Thu April 30 th	<u>Gender and Transnational Corporations (YNCs)</u>
	Information and Technological Literacy Assignment 5 Due
The Praxis: Performance and Social Action. New Directions in Cultural Sociology	
Tue May 05 th	<u>Localizing the Global and Transnational</u>
Readings:	[Resource]–New World Theatre and the Somalese Community Action Project in Springfield. ***E-Portfolios Due on SPARK***
Class Synthesis and Future Challenges	
Thu May 07 th	<u>Student Discussions: E-Portfolios and/or Research Papers</u>
Tue May 12 th	<u>Into the Future</u> Student interpretations of course. Evaluations ***Library Research Paper Due***