

University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Spring 2013  
**WOMENSST201H Gender and Difference: Transnational Approaches**

*SPIRE# 25160*  
**Instructor: Eve Ng**

*Classroom:* Bartlett 109

*Office hours:* Thurs 2:15-3:45pm or by appointment

*email:* ecng<at>comm.umass.edu

*Mailbox:* Bartlett 208 (WGSS office)

*Class time:* Tues, Thurs 1:00-2:15pm

*Office:* Middlesex 229

*Phone:* 413-545-1922 (WGSS office)

**GENERAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

[I] EMAIL

**Please do not use email as a substitute for coming to office hours with questions about the material.**

Email only in regard to matters such as:

1. Class scheduling, e.g. "Am I scheduled to lead class discussion next class or the class after?"
2. Arranging a time to meet and talk about course matters.
3. Unforeseeable emergencies (e.g. medical) that have caused you to miss coming to class.

**Emailing an instructor is not the same as texting a friend.** I expect you to address me as your instructor, sign your email with your name, and be polite.

[II] TALKING AND LISTENING IN CLASS

You don't have to agree with everything that is said in class (in fact, I don't expect you to), but keep in mind that you're here to critically engage with the course material. Therefore:

(i) **Respect another person's rights to speak** and listen attentively to what is being said, even when it challenges your own perspectives.

(ii) **Use discretion and sensitivity when speaking**, and be respectful to me and to your classmates.

**Do not use cell-phones.** Laptops should only be used for taking notes or class-related activities. If you are using any electronic devices inappropriately, I may take them from you for the duration of the class.

[III] ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

**Plagiarism and other forms of academic cheating are serious violations of your contract as a student and will be treated severely.**

Plagiarism is any representation of another person's words or ideas in a manner that makes it seem as if they were your own. This means that you may not copy another person's published or unpublished work (except if you are explicitly citing them), but it also means that you should not use another person's **unique phrases or ideas** without making it clear to your audience from where those words or ideas originated. This **includes material from online sources**, even when they are anonymous, such as Wikipedia.

**Disability Services:**

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, contact Disability Services, 161 Whitmore at ds@educ.umass.edu or 413-545-0892 (website: <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>).

**Learning Resource Center:**

If you are interested in tutoring or study assistance, contact the Learning Resource Center, 10th Floor W.E.B. DuBois Library, at lrc@acad.umass.edu or 413-545-5334 (website: <http://www.umass.edu/lrc/>).

**Writing Center:**

If you would like to improve your writing skills, contact the Writing Center, located in the Learning Commons of the DuBois Library, at writingcenter@acad.umass.edu or 413-577-1293 (website: <http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/contact.html>).

**WGSS Writing TA:**

Shakuntala Ray is the writing TA for the Department of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies and works with students in WGSS classes. She can be contacted at shakuntalaray5@gmail.com, and her office hours are Tues and Thurs, 1:00-3:00pm, Bartlett 208, plus extended hours (tba) other times during the semester.

*COURSE DESCRIPTION*

This course examines the multifaceted dimensions of gendered experiences within local and global contexts, on a range of topics that include media representation, labor and migration, reproductive justice, and political empowerment. The overall goal is to address fundamental questions and concepts of feminist analysis. Questions that we will interrogate throughout the semester include:

- How are individuals, institutions, and social processes gendered?
- How do biological, cultural, and political frameworks shape understandings of sex, gender, and sexuality?
- How do gender differences vary according to sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, and nationality? How do we integrate these cross-cutting categories in analyzing identities and social positions?
- How can an understanding of gendered processes empower us to act as agents of personal and social change?

The course has a strong comparative focus that emphasizes transnational linkages and processes of globalization. Women's and gender studies is highly interdisciplinary, and we will read from areas including anthropology, cultural studies, history, literature, media studies, sociology, and science and technology studies.

Goals

- 1) To gain an understanding of the major intellectual concepts and debates in interdisciplinary feminist studies.
- 2) To become skilled in the basic tools of feminist inquiry, including the ability to identify gendered processes, pose theoretical questions, understand methods of research, and participate in advocacy.
- 3) To critique your own ideas and beliefs, situating them within your social context and background.
- 4) To develop written and verbal skills for expressing academic arguments, exchanging ideas with others, and presenting these ideas to a broader audience.

## Readings

### Required text

Lee, Janet and Shaw, Susan. (2011). *Women worldwide: Transnational feminist perspectives on women*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

ISBN-13: 978-0073512297

This textbook has been ordered at Food for Thought Books in downtown Amherst (106 North Pleasant St., near CVS). Its list price new is quite expensive, but you have some other options:

- (1) Buy a used copy, if available, from Food for Thought.
- (2) Share a copy with one or two other classmates.
- (3) Rent the textbook for a semester (till June 23, 2013) from Amazon.com for about half the list price.
- (4) Buy used from online sites such as Amazon.com or Half.com.

It will also be on 2-hour reserve at the W.E.B. Dubois Library reserve desk.

Additional readings will be posted to the course Moodle page. Please plan on printing out all articles and bring them to class. You may share printed readings with one other classmate. If you do not have access to a printer, OIT will print them out for you for a fee.

## Requirements

This course follows a seminar format, which means that our class time is devoted more to class discussion and interactive learning exercises rather than lectures. You should come to class having completed all the readings and prepared to think critically, articulate ideas coherently, and listen respectfully to the diversity of experiences and perspectives of your classmates.

In order to do well, plan on taking the time to digest and integrate the course material through consistent work over the semester. This is not a course that you will be able to “cram” for. Rather than completing one section and moving on, we will draw connections and contrast between different authors and analytical approaches. Therefore, it is important to read and master concepts in each section.

### Summary of Assessments and Deadlines

In-class attendance, participation, and quizzes: 20%

Leading one class discussion: 10%

Moodle responses (at least 5 times): 10%

Assignment 1, due Mar 5 on Moodle and hard copy at the beginning of class: 15%

Assignment 2, due Apr 18 on Moodle and hard copy at the beginning of class: 15%

In-class test, Apr 25: 10%

Final paper, abstract due Apr 9, final draft due Apr 30 on Moodle and hard copy at the beginning of class: 20%

Total: 100%

## *COURSE SCHEDULE*

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Tues, Jan 22: Introduction, course overview*

Review syllabus and files in the Helpful Study Resources folder on Moodle

Review the "Dates and Readings for Leading Class Discussion" file about signing up for leading class discussion

*Thurs, Jan 24: The social production of the science of gender*

Martin, Slater, Sapolsky

*Tues, Jan 29: Deconstructing gender binaries; \*\*sign up for leading class discussion\*\**

Schulman, Padawer, Tabuchi

*Thurs, Jan 31: The social construction of race; \*\*sign up for leading class discussion\*\**

López, Dikkoter, Hammonds

*Tues, Feb 5: Introduction to transnational feminisms*

Textbook, Ch. 1, Reading 3, Reading 4

### **TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA, AND CULTURE**

*Thurs, Feb 7: World media*

Textbook, Ch. 2

*Tues, Feb 12: Bodily representations*

Textbook, Ch. 3, Reading 16, Reading 17

*Thurs, Feb 14: American masculinities*

Hatfield, Butsch

*Tues, Feb 19: Monday schedule (NO CLASS)*

*Thurs, Feb 21: **Queerness***

Becker, Jones, Yang and Bao

*Tues, Feb 26: **Popular culture, gender, and national identities***

Mankekar

*Thurs, Feb 28: **Online media***

Textbook, Reading 7, Reading 12, Daniels

*Tues, Mar 5: **Gaming; \*\*Assignment 1 due\*\****

Everett, Goggin

*Thurs, Mar 7: **Globalization, gender, and labor: A preview***

[Video] *Maquilapolis: City of Factories* (Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre, 2006)

*Mar 9-17: SPRING RECESS (NO CLASSES)*

### **GLOBALIZATION AND LABOR**

*Tues, Mar 19: **Globalization, gender, and labor***

Textbook, Ch. 9, Reading 60

*Thurs, Mar 21: **Case studies***

[Video] *Behind The Labels: Garment Workers on U.S. Saipan* (Tia Lessin, 2010)

Bradsher and Duhigg, Chang

*Tues, Mar 26: **Case studies (cont.)***

Wilson, Hochschild

### **HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE POLITICS**

*Thurs, Mar 28: **Gender and health***

Textbook, Ch. 5, Reading 14, Reading 29

*Tues, Apr 2: **Medicalization of reproductive processes***

Reissman, Gawande

*Thurs, Apr 4: **Reproductive politics***

Textbook, Ch. 6, Manninen

*Thurs, Apr 4-Sat, Apr 6*

Mediating Public Spheres: Genealogies of Feminist Knowledge in the Digital Age symposium, various locations in the Five Colleges

*Tues, Apr 9: **Gender and environment; \*\*Final Paper abstract due\*\****

Textbook, Ch. 10, Reading 28, Reading 59

### **CITIZENSHIP, BELONGING, ACTIVISM**

*Thurs, Apr 11: NO CLASS*

*Fri, Apr 12-Sun, Apr 14*

Civil Liberties and Public Policy (CLPP) Conference, Hampshire College  
<http://clpp.hampshire.edu/conference>

*Tues, Apr 16: **Gender and nationalism***

Yural-Davis, Enloe, Basu, Blee

*Thurs, Apr 18: **Feminist social movements and transnational politics; \*\*Assignment 2 due\*\****

Textbook, Ch. 11, Long

*Tues, Apr 23: **Sexualities***

Textbook, Ch. 4, Kollman and Waites, Wilson

*Thurs, Apr 25: **\*\*In-class test\*\****

*Tues, Apr 30: **Wrap-up and evaluations; \*\*Final Paper due\*\****