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# GWS 200: Introduction to Gender & Women's Studies

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## **Required Texts:**

- Shaw and Lee, eds. *Women's Voices/Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. 2015.
- Additional readings available on Blackboard

**Course Overview:** This class introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of gender & women's studies. Drawing on historical perspectives and socio-cultural analysis, this course will consider some of the major issues that have concerned gender & women's studies including the social construction of gender and the intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality. We will be concerned with the ways in which these constructions and intersections shape people's lives. Our investigation will proceed through reading the work of a diverse group of primarily American feminist scholars, writers, and activists.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Recognize ways that gender functions as a social institution;
- Explain how socially constructed categories of gender, race, class, and sexual identity function together to formulate systems of oppression;
- Define basic terms central to gender & women's studies, including *sex*, *gender*, *sexuality*, *feminism*, *patriarchy*, and *oppression*;
- Apply conceptual frameworks important to the field of gender & women's studies to life experiences as they relate to the broader society.

**General Education/Colonnade:** Under the Colonnade Program, this course fulfills the Social and Behavioral requirement under Explorations (E-SB). If you are using the old general education requirements, this course fulfills Category C (Social and Behavioral Science). It will help students to attain a stronger understanding of society and human behavior.

## **Colonnade Explorations Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences (SBS).

- Apply knowledge, theories, and research methods, including ethical conduct, to analyze problems pertinent to at least one area of the SBS
- Understand and demonstrate how at least one area of the SBS conceptualizes diversity and the ways it shapes human experience.
- Integrate knowledge of at least one area of the SBS into issues of personal or public importance.
- Communicate using the language and terminology germane to at least one area of the SBS.

**Gender & Women's Studies Minor:** GWS 200 Introduction to Gender & Women's Studies is a core course requirement for the Gender & Women's Studies Undergraduate Minor. For more information on the minor, visit [www.wku.edu/womensstudies](http://www.wku.edu/womensstudies).

**Diversity & Community Studies Major:** GWS 200 is a core course for the undergraduate major in Diversity & Community Studies. For more information on the major, visit <http://www.wku.edu/dcs/>.

**Online Learning & Attendance:** The instructor and students do NOT meet on a designated day and time each week. For each module, there is a timeframe to complete all activities and assignments, and you may work at your own pace within that timeframe. However, because this is a summer course that occurs within a condensed timeframe, you must adhere to the deadlines outlined on Blackboard. You should log into the course daily to check for updates, review lessons, and participate in activities.

**Deadlines:** Assignments are due by the date/time indicated within each module on Blackboard. As a general rule, you will NOT be able to go back and make up missed assignments. In other words, there is no 'late penalty' option because all work is due on the deadline and if you miss that deadline, you will receive a zero for that assignment. It is your responsibility to keep up with the assignments. Students with an excused absence (hospitalization, jury duty, or family emergency) may be asked to produce proper documentation in order to make up graded work. **All make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.**

**Evaluation:** Students must satisfactorily complete the following requirements in order to pass this course. Please remember that if you're having difficulties, contacting me is the best way to resolve them.

The breakdown of your final grade is as follows:

Reading Quizzes .....	240
Discussion Leader.....	100
Discussion Posts .....	280
Special Activities.....	180
Final Essay .....	200
<b>Total Points .....</b>	<b>1000</b>

895- 1000	A
795-894	B
695-794	C
595-694	D
< 595	F

**Organization:** This course is made up of NINE modules. Each module relates to a major topic in gender and women's studies. For each module, you will complete the following activities and assignments. Due dates for each assignment are available on Blackboard:

- Assigned reading
- Watch lecture
- Reading Quiz
- Special Activity
- Discussion Board participation

In addition, you will take on the role of Discussion Leader during one module and complete a final essay for this course.

## Assignments

**Reading Quizzes:** The "open book" quizzes are based on course readings, and they contain short answer, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false questions. You should choose the best answer for each quiz question. Quizzes are untimed, but only open for a 24-hour period, so plan accordingly. No make-up quizzes will be offered after the allotted time has passed. There are eight (8) reading quizzes throughout the semester, worth 30 pts each.

**Discussion Leader:** Each student will take the lead over the course of the semester in helping to facilitate discussion. Sign-ups will occur during Module 1. The discussion leader will post to Bb by 11:59pm the first day of the module they are assigned to lead. The discussion leader will include a 600-800-word post that contains, (1) a brief summary of the readings, (2) critical analysis of a theme, issue, or pattern within the reading, (3) discussion of connections to previous readings, (4) a short list of 2-3 discussion prompts that the class will respond to. The discussion leader should focus heavily on the readings, but may also link to outside material (music, newspaper articles, video clips) that relates directly to the readings to further prompt discussion. Additional guidelines for this assignment are posted on Bb.

**Discussion Posts:** Discussion board participation requires one original 400-word post that demonstrates familiarity with the module's assigned readings AND engages with the discussion leader's post and prompt. You are encouraged to quote directly from the text, reference the discussion leader's post and make connections to readings and your classmate's discussion posts from previous modules. There are seven (7) discussion boards throughout the semester, each worth 40 points. Additional guidelines for this assignment are posted on Bb.

**Special Activities:** The field of Gender and Women's Studies is concerned with the intersection of theory and practice, and strives to find innovative ways to bridge the two. You will complete special activities that encourage you to apply course content to contemporary issues. There are six (6) special activities throughout the semester, worth 30 points each. Additional guidelines for this assignment are available on Blackboard.

**Final Essay:** Students will choose from a variety of writing prompts to compose a 1500-word final essay. The writing prompts, along with a more detailed description of the essay assignment, are available on Blackboard. You will submit a draft of the essay during the semester for feedback, and the essay is due the final day of class.

### **Course Resources & Policies**

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 V/TTY] or email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). After contacting SARC, please email me so that we can work out access and accommodations.

**Online Classroom Expectations:** Western Kentucky University (WKU) embraces the diversity of all students, faculty, and staff, respects the dignity of all individuals without bias, welcomes all cultural, racial, ethnic, gender/gender identities, and religious experiences, values all political and belief systems, and regards all intellectual perspectives. If any aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experience of the course result in barriers to your inclusion, please let me know. For a list of campus Safe Spaces visit <http://www.wku.edu/dcs/safety.php>

**Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination & Harassment Policies:** Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) [Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy](#) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159 or see this list of [sexual misconduct resources](#).

**Counseling and Testing Center:** The WKU Counseling and Testing Center is committed to promoting the academic mission of the university by providing a variety of psychological services to students that will augment recruitment, retention, and graduation by strengthening students' capacity to tolerate distress, form healthy relationships, and seek healthy expressions of their ideals and values. Call 270-745-3159 or visit the website for an appointment. Emergency and after hours appointments may be made by calling 270-745-3159

**Academic Integrity:** There is no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating at WKU. The university requires faculty to report any dishonest work, and the student could both fail the course and possibly be expelled from the university. This policy will be practiced in this course. If you are not familiar with the university plagiarism policy you may access it at: <https://www.wku.edu/handbook/academic-dishonesty.php/> Everything you write for this class should be an original piece of work specifically written by you. If any materials are not properly cited "in-text" or a reference page, I will consider that omission as an attempt to plagiarize. If you are not sure how to cite properly, see me and I will help.

**Writing Center Assistance:** The writing center is located in Cherry Hall 123 on the Bowling Green campus and also available online for consultations for students who live at a distance or who cannot visit during the center's operating hours. The Writing Center's tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project. Call 270-745-5719 during operating hours to schedule an appointment or check out the website: <https://www.wku.edu/writingcenter/>

**Email and Office Hours:** I will use WKU's Blackboard and email system for all communicate with students. These communications will range from class announcements to supplemental readings. Students will be responsible for information posted on the class Blackboard site and sent via email. If you need to meet with me, I'll gladly schedule an appointment at a time convenient for both of us, including in-person, phone and Skype appointments.