

## **GWS 535.701 Roots of Feminism**

**Fall 16 (Web-Based Course)**

### **Contact Information:**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kristi Branham

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**Office Hours:** 1p-4p CST Wednesday and by appointment

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### **Course Description:**

The focus of this class is the roughly 300 years of the feminist movement primarily in the U.S., from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-twentieth century. We move at a very rapid pace through incredibly exciting material. You'll find the readings exciting, challenging, humorous, outrageous, mind-bending, and in some cases, familiar.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- identify key writings in the evolution of Western feminism;
- understand intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality in feminist theory;
- formulate critical arguments on the ideas of pioneering feminists.

### **Required Books** (unless otherwise noted, please get these editions only):

- Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, (any edition).
- Estelle B. Freedman, ed., *The Essential Feminist Reader*, Modern Library, 2007. ISBN#978-0-8129-7460-7.
- Beverly Guy-Sheftall, ed., *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought*, New Press, 1995. ISBN#1-56584-256-1.
- Miriam Schneir, ed., *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*, Vintage, 1994. ISBN# 0679753818.
- Websites and Course Docs: See Class Schedule for details.

### **Gender & Women's Studies at WKU:**

Western Kentucky University has a strong and growing Gender & Women's Studies Program. The Women's Studies Program sponsors several on-campus events, including films and speakers. Attending our events is a great way for both women and men to become part of a smaller community of interesting and intelligent people at the university. We offer a \$1000 scholarship every year to a graduate student enrolled in the certificate program. Check out our [Gender & Women's Studies homepage](http://www.wku.edu/womensstudies): <http://www.wku.edu/womensstudies>.

### **Statement from Student Disability Services:**

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. The phone number is 270.745.5004 [270.745.3030 V/TTY] or email at sarc@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

### **Grade Distribution:**

Discussion Board .....	600
Group Project .....	200
Synthesis Paper 1 .....	250
Synthesis Paper 2 .....	250
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>1300 points</b>

### **Discussion Board (Db): (see Course Information > Discussion Board Requirements)**

Discussions of readings and responses to others' comments are the single-most important ongoing requirement of this course. You absolutely must schedule your participation in such a way that others have a chance to reply to you and you have a chance to reply to them without concentrating our exchanges in one or two days. **You must post your first original post of the week no later than Wednesday or it will be considered late.** This means that you get to a computer for a serious and focused writing session at least twice and preferably three times a week, with at least one day between sessions. My suggestion: you get the week's reading finished by Tuesday and generate a thread and respond to at least one other person and then return by Thursday and generate a second thread and respond (again) to at least one other person.

### **Db Grading:**

For full credit, you should expect to post **at least 1,500 words/week** including **at least two original posts and three response posts** (2,000 words/week is more common)—see **Course Information** for a fuller discussion of this. Your comments should address the readings. Anecdotes are acceptable but not as a replacement for engaging with the material. Tangents are also often helpful, but not instead of responding to the readings.

### **Synthesis Papers:**

You will compose two 8-10 page synthesis papers. Each paper will ask you to reflect on a topic, issue, or theme you see in a minimum of four of the texts assigned for class. You must also include personal experience and reflection when synthesizing the materials. In other words, I expect you to use first person and to incorporate your experiences as credible evidence. However, I also want to emphasize that the synthesis papers are **formal academic essays**; therefore, your synthesis papers must have a clear thesis, supporting claims, and substantial evidence from the course readings and your experience. I expect your synthesis papers to be free of grammatical and mechanical errors and to clearly cite any and all outside sources using an accepted format such as MLA or APA.

**Group Project:**

In groups of three to four, students will prepare a presentation to share with the class. The format of this presentation is up to you. You could produce a wiki, blog, or webpage, and I encourage you to use the tools available through the course Blackboard site. I will assign students to a group during the third week of the semester. The group project should directly address the course material. You could prepare a webpage outlining the history of reproductive rights, introducing a specific feminist activist or theorist, or exploring a feminist school of thought.

**Academic Integrity:**

It is understood that students will present their own work for all assignments. Student work will be checked using plagiarism detection software. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in either failure of the assignment or failure of the course and will be reported to the WKU Office of Judicial Affairs. Please refer to the *WKU Student Handbook* for more information.

**Late Assignments:**

Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized one letter grade for each business day it is late. Assignments late more than five business days will receive minimal partial credit.

**Email and Office Hours:**

I will use WKU's Blackboard and email system to communicate with students outside of class. 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. In addition, there are two ways to contact me outside of class. Please feel free to come by my office during office hours or to email questions and concerns to me. I have listed my office hours and email address at the top of this Syllabus. Understand, however, that I need 24 hours to respond to email. If you need to meet with me but cannot make my office hours, I'll gladly schedule an appointment at a time convenient for both of us.

**Emergencies:**

In the event of an emergency, do your best to contact me (email, phone, fax, snail mail). Continue to make reasonable independent efforts toward course completion as per the syllabus. Have a back-up plan for Internet access in case your computer fails.

**Films:**

Augmenting the readings are two films: *Iron Jawed Angels* and *I Shot Andy Warhol*. Both are available through Netflix.com, video store, or library.