

# Women's & Gender Studies

## ~ Fall 2017 Course DESCRIPTIONS ~

### **WGS 150 MULTICULTURAL AMERICA (3U; CD, HU)**

#### **LEC 201 Online Section Taught by Katie Witz**

As its focus, this course examines gender at the intersections of sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class. In this class, we will examine how these social categories shape girls' and women's lives and how girls and women negotiate these categories to create their own identities. In this interdisciplinary service-learning course, affiliated with both the Women's and Gender Studies and Cultures and Communities programs, we will discuss cultural differences among girls and women, focusing mainly on how they are gendered and socialized across multiple communities in the United States. More specifically, we'll analyze structures of domination and privileges in the social construction of one's gender. We will read selections from feminist theory, women's studies, cultural studies, social psychology, popular culture, and memoir.

Along with reading about gendered, sexual, ethnic, and racial identities/experiences, students will also explore their own identities, through writing regular reflections on course readings and service learning experiences, as well as through writing their own autobiographical narratives.

Additionally, to deepen our knowledge of the course topic, students are required to complete a community-based service learning assignment as part of and in tandem with this course. The assignment will involve ~1.5/2 hours a week (15/20 total hours/semester) of civic engagement over the course of the semester in a community partner placement. You will pick one of three sites at which to volunteer this semester, and we will review the specifics of each site together in class. Students will have an opportunity to place curricular concepts in the context of real-life situations and to analyze and synthesize these concepts in service to the community.

### **WGS 192 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR:**

#### ***Women's Graphic Memoirs* (3U)**

#### **SEM 001 TR 2:00pm – 3:15pm Taught by Casey O'Brien\***

*\*This section taught concurrently with Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies: Humanities Perspective. Students must also enroll in WGS 201-002. See the SOC (<http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/WGS/fall>) for more information.*

What does it mean to narrate a life by both writing and drawing? What do visual images—specifically hand-drawn graphic images—add to women's life stories? The twenty-first century has seen a wellspring of comic texts with women's lives as the subject. With its complex, nonlinear mining and assemblage of memory, the graphic memoir is well suited to explore concepts of remembering and knowing.

Examining recently published graphic memoirs by women, as well as recent feminist critical work on the graphic novel as archive, this course will examine how women remember, (re)create, draw, and narrate their lives. The diverse memoirs selected for this Women's and Gender Studies course creatively and critically explore territories of gender, identity, sexuality, culture, and knowledge. Through the process of examining the genre of the graphic memoir and the multiple questions—and complications—that arise when narrating women's lives in written and drawn form, students will learn to read and construct knowledge in new ways.

**WGS 192 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR:  
*Masculinities in Post-Apocalyptic Fiction* (3U)**

**SEM 002 MW 3:30pm – 4:45pm Taught by Dylan Barth**

In this course, we will discuss varying ways that gender is constructed in select American postapocalyptic texts, focusing primarily on the depiction of masculinities as they have been historically situated. Many post-apocalyptic novels subscribe to a common theme: modern culture — particularly consumer culture and its relation to domesticity — is to blame for the emasculation of contemporary men. The remedy for this masculinity crisis often comes in the form of post-apocalyptic fantasy landscapes in which “men can be men.” What masculinity looks like under these conditions varies historically, so this course will progress from 1945 to the present to examine ways in which gender plays out in post-apocalyptic fiction of differing cultural contexts. In addition, the course will introduce students to feminist theories, men’s studies, and speculative fiction as literature.

**WGS 200 INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN’S & GENDER STUDIES:  
A Social Science Perspective (3U; SS)**

**LEC 001 MW 2:00pm – 3:15pm Taught by Jill Hoffman**

**LEC 002 TR 11:00am – 12:15pm Taught by Julia Anderson-Ives**

This course is designed as an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS), an academic area of study focused on the ways that sex and gender manifest themselves in social, cultural, and political contexts. The primary goals of this course are to familiarize students with key issues, questions, and debates in WGS, and to develop a feminist lens for scholarly analysis. This semester, we will become acquainted with the history and influential members of the women’s rights movements in the United States. We will also look at the critical questions and concepts feminist scholars have developed as tools for thinking about gendered experience. In addition, we will study intersections among systems of oppression (such as sexism, racism, classism, ethnocentrism, homophobia/heterosexism, transphobia, ableism, and others). We will also learn to analyze gender, exploring how it impacts one’s understanding of and experiences in the world. Together and with our course texts, we will analyze competing perspectives and integrate various bodies of knowledge across traditional academic boundaries. In addition, we will apply critical thinking skills to identify and assess gender-based assumptions and biases in order to recognize their consequences on an individual, social, and cultural level. Topics include feminist histories, gender development, body images/representations in media, violence against women, health and reproductive justice, the family, women’s labor and activism.

**WGS 201 INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN’S & GENDER STUDIES:  
A Humanities Perspective (3U; HU)**

**LEC 001 TR 2:00pm – 3:15pm Taught by Carolyn Eichner**

**LEC 002 TR 9:30am – 10:45am Taught by Krista Grensavitch\***

**LEC 004 TR 9:30am – 10:45am Taught by Krista Grensavitch**

**LEC 203 Online Section Taught by Krista Grensavitch**

This course is designed as an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Women’s Studies, an academic area of study focused on the ways that sex and gender manifest themselves in social, cultural, and political contexts. The primary goal of this course is to familiarize students with key issues, questions, and debates in Women’s Studies scholarship, both historical and contemporary. We will become acquainted with many of the critical questions and concepts feminist scholars have developed as tools for thinking about gendered experience. In addition, we will study interconnections among systems of oppression (such as sexism, racism, classism, ethnocentrism, homophobia/heterosexism, transphobia, ableism,

and others). We will also learn to “read” and analyze gender, exploring how it impacts one’s understanding of and experiences in the world.

Together and with our course texts, we will analyze competing perspectives and integrate various bodies of knowledge across traditional academic boundaries. In addition, we will apply critical thinking skills to identify and assess gender-based assumptions and biases in order to recognize their consequences on an individual, social, and cultural level.

*\*This section taught concurrently with the First Year Seminar. Students must also enroll in WGS 192-001. See the SOC (<http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/WGS/fall>) for more information.*

## **WGS 290 SELECTED TOPICS IN WOMEN’S & GENDER STUDIES: *Black Feminisms (3U)***

### **LEC 001 MW 2:00pm – 3:15pm Taught by Charmaine Lang**

The aim of this course is to examine Black women’s lived experiences via literature, theory, and activism. Section one of the course explores Black feminist theory’s use and relationship to standpoint theory, womanism and intersectionality. Section two of the course explores the text of Black feminist literature for topics of Black women’s realities, intersecting identities and activism. Some questions we will analyze during the semester include: What is the relationship between Black feminism, womanism, and Black Nationalism? What is the connection between gender, racism, and homophobia in the lives of Black women? What is the connection between pop culture and Black feminism? Where is Black feminism now? We will draw on multiple texts, current events and films to situate Black feminist theory not only as an intellectual project but as a personal and activist one.

## **WGS 401 GLOBAL FEMINISMS (3U)**

### **LEC 001 Wed 3:30pm – 6:10pm Hybrid Course Taught by Anna Mansson McGinty**

*This course taught jointly with WGS 701, See the SOC (<http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/WGS/fall>) for meeting dates and more information.*

This course explores different expressions of feminist understanding and women’s activism and movements around the world. Rather than offering a brief overview of several countries, the class focuses on some particular contexts in order to obtain a more in-depth view of how women’s lives, actions, and feminist understandings relate to specific cultural, political, and social conditions.

We begin with the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. We will study the salient document “Platform for Action” formulated during the conference and its significance for thinking about women’s rights as human rights as well as the serious tensions between various positions on women’s rights. The course moves then on to the debate on universalism and cultural relativism. Are human rights universal or do we have to take culture and difference into consideration? Thereafter, the class gets to the more theoretical part of the semester. We will examine different feminist perspectives and theoretical texts regarding “Western” and “Third World”/Postcolonial Feminisms and how they relate to each other. This exploration brings about crucial questions such as: What is global about feminism? Can we talk about feminism and “sisterhood” in global terms? In which ways do “Third World” feminists critique “Western” feminist discourse? Does feminism mean different things for different women? After this theoretically oriented discussion we will look on a few specific countries and regions -- Sub-Saharan Africa (Zimbabwe), Latin America (El Salvador), and a few Muslim countries. We will learn about women’s everyday life and struggle not only through academic texts, but also through novels, testimonials, personal accounts, and documentaries. Throughout the class the issue of women’s lives as well as their activism and feminism are investigated in relation to broader social and political interlocking systems such as imperialism, colonialism, and globalization.

The main objective of the course is to expose the students to a broad range of feminist thought and action. It urges the students to examine their own position and have an open mind to the

different ways women across the world relate to gender relations and the social and cultural conditions within which they live.

### **WGS 410 FEMINIST THEORY (3U/G)**

#### **LEC 001 MW 12:30pm – 1:45pm Taught by Xin Huang**

What explains the oppression of women, and how can it be ended? Much feminist theory is devoted either to answering or to probing the limits of these two questions, and our course will be largely structured around them. We will explore several major traditions in feminist thought, including liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, postmodern, and multicultural feminisms, among others. Familiarity with these theories will equip you for further work in Women's and Gender Studies, or related fields, and will provide you with tools for thinking critically and systematically about the effects of sex, gender, and sexuality in your own lives. Throughout the course, more dominant viewpoints will be juxtaposed with other, often excluded voices, and we will consider various ways in which gender intersects with race, class, and sexuality.

### **WGS 501 ADVANCED HUMANITIES SEMINAR:**

#### ***Gender and Anger***

#### **SEM 001 Tues 3:30pm – 6:10pm Taught by Gwynne Kennedy**

This course offers an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of emotions, with particular attention to women's anger. We will read novels, poems and essays by women writers from the 1960s to the present that deal with women's anger in some way. Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Ana Castillo, Ruth Ozeki, Margaret Atwood, Louise Erdrich, Toni Morrison, Gloria Steinem, and Marjane Satrapi are some of the writers we may read. Secondary material from the interdisciplinary fields of emotions and affect studies will offer other perspectives on gender and anger (from philosophy, nursing, sociology, cultural studies, gender studies, feminist theory, and psychology). How should women express their anger? At what? When? To whom? And which women? How do age, race, class, or sexuality, for example, affect the expression of anger and whether it is legitimate or valued? We'll address these and other questions that arise during the semester.

Students will have opportunities to refine their critical thinking and writing skills. The primary goal of the course is to offer students an overview of interdisciplinary scholarship on emotions, specifically women's anger, and a body of questions, theories, and issues that they can bring to their own areas of interest.

### **WGS 535 PHILOSOPHICAL TOPICS IN FEMINIST THEORY:**

#### ***Women in the History of Philosophy***

#### **LEC 001 Tues 11:00am – 1:40pm Taught by Margaret Atherton**

*This course is jointly offered with PHILOS 535. See the SOC (<http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/WGS/fall>) for more information.*

Not too many years ago, no one knew that there had ever been any women writing and publishing philosophical treatises and books at all. Now, after a lot of work uncovering and rediscovering women philosophers of the early modern period of the 17th and 18th centuries, the existence of these women is now well understood and studying their work is now well underway. This course will fall into two parts. In the first, or longer part, we will take advantage of the new scholarship to study in depth a sample of the women philosophers of the early modern period, including Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway, Mary Astell and Catherine Trotter Cockburn. In the second part, we will take up the further question, yes, but were there more women doing philosophy in other periods, by looking at a sample of the work of women who got PhDs in philosophy, jobs teaching philosophy and who published in leading philosophy journals at the beginning of the 20th century.

## **WGS 700 FEMINIST ISSUES AND SCHOLARSHIP**

### **SEM 001 Mon 3:30pm – 6:10pm Taught by Kristin Pitt**

The course introduces graduate students to the interdisciplinary nature of Women's and Gender Studies and some contemporary feminist research at UWM. Faculty from a variety of disciplines will provide readings and lead discussion related to their own research and to feminist work in their fields that falls under the general theme of "gendered bodies." We will also address expectations for academic research, analysis, and writing at the graduate level.

## **WGS 701 Advanced Global Feminisms (3G)**

### **LEC 001 Wed 3:30pm – 6:10pm Hybrid Course Taught by Anna Mansson McGinty**

*This course taught jointly with WGS 401 and has the same description. See the SOC (<http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/WGS/fall>) for meeting dates and more information.*

## **WGS 710 ADVANCED FEMINIST THEORY (3G)**

### **SEM 001 Tues 3:30pm – 6:10pm Taught by Andrea Westlund**

What explains the oppression of women, and how can it be ended? How is the oppression of women related to other forms of oppression? Much feminist theory is devoted either to answering or to probing the limits of these questions, and our course will be largely structured around them. We will explore several major traditions in feminist thought, including liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, postmodern, and multicultural feminisms, among others. We will also consider some recent developments in queer theory and explore their implications for feminist thought. Familiarity with the theoretical perspectives represented in this course will equip you for further graduate-level work in Women's Studies or related fields, and will provide you with tools for thinking critically and systematically about the effects of sex, gender, and sexuality both in the personal and public spheres. Throughout the course, more dominant viewpoints will be juxtaposed with other, often excluded voices, and we will consider various ways in which gender intersects with race, class, and sexuality.