

Syllabus

Introduction to Women's Studies

Sul Ross State University
The University of the Big Bend

WS 2301 W01
Introduction to Women's Studies
Fall 2014
Instructor: Dr. Kathy Johnson

Course Description:

As a discipline, the goal of Women's Studies is to enhance students' knowledge, interest, and understanding of the contributions, challenges, needs, and aspirations of women--and of the way that gender shapes the lives of both women and men. Furthermore, Women's Studies seeks to re-examine material from much of the rest of the curriculum with a focus on women's perspectives and an awareness of the gender system. The "modest proposal" in Women's Studies then is study of history, language, literature, and culture from new and illuminating perspectives. In focusing on women as a group, we must, by definition, study the interaction of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, geography, class, age, sexuality, and disability. Women are a group that encompasses great diversity. Women's Studies is a dynamic and rapidly expanding interdisciplinary field of study and provides its students with the opportunity to use several theoretical/critical frames such as the historical, sociological, psychological, political, legal, literary, ethnographic, and aesthetic. In the last forty years, Women's Studies programs have been introduced at leading universities throughout the world and, happily, with the offering of a women's studies minor Sul Ross finds itself among these outstanding institutions.

Course Objectives:

- Summarizing issues crucial to women's lives.
- Understanding the effects of the gender systems in the lives of both women and men.

- Defining gender issues using the ideas of race, class, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, geographical location, religion.
- Describing the history of the women's movement, particularly the first and second wave.
- Explaining systems of inequality.
- Analyzing the social construction of gender and sexuality.
- Identifying reproductive and family issues.
- Discussing women's work and work-related issues.
- Explaining violence against women.
- Defining women's role in culture and religion.
- Developing skills in critical thinking.

Required Books:

Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee, Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings, 6th ed., (New York: McGraw Hill, 2015). (Be sure to get the sixth edition—there have been a lot of changes since the fifth edition.)

Miriam Schneir, Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings—there is only one edition of this book.

Remember, if you prefer to use an online bookseller like Amazon or Barnes and Noble or allbookstores.com, that's fine.

The reading assignments are posted under "Schedule" button. In addition to the reading in the texts, students are responsible for the content material in the external links and in the "Course Documents." Students also must keep up with the "Announcements" and with the SRSU e-mail accounts—these will be my major means of communication.

Attendance:

Distance learning (Online) Absences/Non-Participation Statement:

Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based and ITV courses. The University allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences. In Web courses, this policy is interpreted as not participating for more than three weeks in a long semester, one week in a summer session, or three days in the midwinter session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an F in the course dropped. Inactivity may include the following: not logging on to the course, not submitting assignments, not participating in scheduled activities, not communicating with the instructor by phone or email, and/or not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus.

Tests and Grading:

There will be three exams. Each will have fifty questions. Those questions will be multiple choice and true/false. Each test will cover one-third of the course. In other words, the final is not comprehensive. In addition, each student will be required to participate in the discussion board a minimum of once weekly. I will assign scores for discussion board posts which I will average at the end of the semester. Each exam is worth one hundred points. Your discussion total is worth fifty points. Thus, there are a total of 350 points possible in the course.

I reserve the right to assess a late penalty. But all the work for the whole semester **cannot** be turned in for credit at the end of the term. It is impossible to get the grading done under those circumstances.

Grading will be on a percentage basis as follows:

- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 60-69
- F 0-59

Plagiarism and SafeAssign:

Plagiarism is defined by the American Association of University Professors as "taking over the ideas, methods, or written words of another, without acknowledgement and with the intention that they be taken as the work of the deceiver It is theft of a special kind, for the true author still retains the original ideas and words, yet they are diminished as that author's property and a fraud is committed upon the audience that believes that those ideas and words originated with the deceiver." (American Association of University Professors, "Statement on Plagiarism," csep.iit.edu/codes/coe/aaup-h.htm, p. 3, 5/21/01.) To turn in another student's paper or portions of that paper or to submit a purchased paper is plagiarism. To copy (phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or pages) from a book, article, or web page is plagiarism. **Anyone who plagiarizes will be given a "zero" on that particular assignment. I also reserve the right to assign an "F" for the course grade.**

The policy is the same for exams. **Anyone who cheats on an exam will be given a "zero" for that particular test. I also reserve the right to assign an "F" for the course grade.** The following web sites define plagiarism and/or give examples:

<http://northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

Please visit these sites. Claiming ignorance about plagiarism is no defense. Furthermore, the **Sul Ross State University Handbook** proscribes plagiarism and cheating. Both are grounds for suspension.

SRSU subscribes to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection program associated with Blackboard. Because the tests in this course will be “objective” exams, I do not anticipate using SafeAssign for this class. But you may encounter it, for example, in your English classes.

Incompletes and E-mail Attachments:

Because of persistent abuse, I will no longer give incompletes. Students who can't finish the required work will need to withdraw from the course on or before 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 4 (in the Office of Enrollment Services). For those students remaining in the class with missing work, I will average in a zero for each missing item.

Disabilities:

Accessibility Services, part of Counseling and Accessibility Services, provides support and assistance to students with physical disabilities, including hearing and visual impairments; psychological disabilities; learning disabilities; and Attention Deficit Disorder. To be eligible for services a student must be admitted to the university, have a documented disability, and register with the Accessibility Services office. Contact Mary Schwartze, Counseling and Accessibility Services, in Ferguson Hall 113 C at (432) 837-8399. Her e-mail is mschwartz@sulross.edu.

Multicultural Requirement:

This class, Introduction to Women's Studies, WS 2301 W01 Fall 2014, meets three units in the 040 Language, Philosophy, and Culture component in the recently revised core curriculum and the multicultural requirement in the 2012-2014 catalog.

Writing Assistance:

For those students with access to the Sul Ross campus, please utilize the Writing Lab in MAB 102 (TEL: 837-8270 or writing@sulross.edu for students at a distance). Excellent tutors are available to assist you with all your writing needs--from developmental through advanced. Although you probably won't need this service for WS 2301 W01 Fall 2014, I wanted you to have this information for your other classes.

Contact Information:

My office hours for this semester are as follows: MW 3:30-4:45 p.m. and TTH 10:00-11:00 a.m. **and by appointment.** *Just for your information, I do not hold office hours after the last day of classes (Wednesday, December 2, 2014) or during breaks.*

My office is MAB 103 C. My office phone is 837-8156—this number has voice messaging, so you can leave a message. However, since I generally share the office with other instructors, this is not the most reliable way to make contact with me. Another way to leave a message for me by phone is to call the department, Language and Literature, at 837-8151. Give your message to Laura Polanco, the departmental secretary. If you would like to leave a written message yourself, please go to the department (MAB 114). My mailbox is there. But the best way to leave a message for me is by e-mail, ajohnson@sulross.edu

For those of you who are in the Alpine area, feel free to come by during office hours or make an appointment for other times--if you'd like. I would enjoy meeting you. For those of you who are at a distance or who have difficult work hours, I'll get to know you online or we can talk on the phone. But please contact me should any difficulties arise during the semester. Don't wait until the last two weeks of class when it's too late, and I have run out of options.

Distance Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments only through Blackboard which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Course Calendar/Schedule

Week One (Week of August 25, 2014)

Monday, August 25, 2014, is the first day of classes.

Thursday, August 28, is the last day for late registration and schedule changes.

Reading: Susan Shaw and Janet Lee, Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings, Chapter One, "Women's Studies: Perspectives and Practices, pp. 1-45 in the sixth edition.

Schneir, Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings, Abigail Adams: Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife, Abigail Adams, During the Revolution, pp. 2-4.

Lecture: "Gender System." Go to the "Course Documents" section of our web pages, click on the "Lectures" folder, and read the lecture on "Gender Systems."

Handout: Mrs. Hopkins (Just read the handout. You don't have to answer the questions. They are there to guide your reading.) This will give you a sense of the gender system in colonial America and that gender systems change over time.

Don't forget to participate in the discussions! But, remember, that for the whole semester, only ten graded discussions are required.

Week Two (Week of September 1, 2014)

Monday, , is the Labor Day Holiday. No classes will meet on campus. Our course web pages, however, will remain up and running and available for student and instructor use.

Reading: Susan Shaw and Janet Lee, Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings, Chapter Two, "Systems of Privilege and Inequality in Women's Lives," pp. 49-115 in the sixthth edition and Schneir, Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, Seneca Falls, pp.76-82. Frederick Douglass, Editorial from The North Star, pp. 83-85. Lucy Stone, The Marriage of Lucy Stone under Protest, pp. 103-105.

In the "Course Documents" section of our course web pages, in the handouts and pictures folders, read the information on these early feminists: Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Frederick Douglass and look at their pictures. All of these pictures are in the "First Wave" folder. Read the document titled "Seneca Falls" as well. Thus, I have given you two ways to read the Seneca Falls document--it's in the "Course Documents" section of our course web pages (in the "Handouts" folder) and it's in the assigned reading (for the second week) in the Schneir documents book. And then watch the five-minute excerpt from a video on Seneca Falls below. Watching this video is part of your assignment for Week Two.

Week Three (September 8, 2014)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Women's Voices, Feminist Visions, Chapter Three, "Learning Gender," pp. 116-80.

In Schneir, read Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman," pp. 93-95. Click on the "External Links" button, and read the material on Harriet Tubman.

In the "Course Documents" section, in the lectures folder, read "Russian Peasant Women." As you read this lecture, note the interplay of class and gender.

<http://womenshistory.about.com/library/bio/blhuerta.htm> Click on this link and read the material about Delores Huerta.

Week Four (September 15)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Women's Voices, Chapter Four, "Inscribing Gender on the Body," pp. 181-249. I want you to come away from this reading with a clear understanding of the social construction of gender. Make sure you can define it.

In the "Course Documents" section, in the lectures folder, read the lectures on "Catherine the Great of Russia" and the "Summary of Succession." In the pictures folder, take a look at the pictures of Russian peasants and the pictures of Catherine the Great. Please think about the tremendous differences between the aristocratic class and the peasant class. Class background is highly important. And we in America tend to underestimate it. Also in the lectures folder, read the lecture on "The Cult of True Womanhood," which describes the nineteenth century American gender system.

Week Five (September 22)

Friday, September 19, is the last day to apply for graduation without a late fee in December 2014.

Reading: No new reading in Shaw and Lee or in the documents book by Miriam Schneir this week. Instead study for Exam #1.

Read about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/> .

I will make exam #1 available this weekend, September 27 and 28. It will continue to be available until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, September 29. The exam will consist of fifty multiple choice and true/false questions. The exam will include this week's assignment as well as all previous reading assignments and all relevant material in the "Lectures," "Handouts," and Pictures" folders in the "Course Documents" section of our web pages. Questions on any assigned links or videos will also be included. The test will be timed. There are no makeups. So, make the time to take this test at a time of your choosing on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. A zero has a devastating effect on your grade average so don't blow off this test--or any of the others.

Week Six (September 29)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Five, "Media and Culture," pp. 250-312.

Schneir, Margaret Sanger, "Woman and the New Race," pp. 325-334.

In the handout folder, read the documents on the Civil War amendments and the early suffrage organizations. In the lecture folder, read about the early suffrage movement in "From Seneca Falls through the Civil War Amendments" and "The Post-Civil War Woman's Movement." After that, read the two lectures on the National Woman's Party. Then go to the next item down, click on the link, and watch a short video on the Suffrage Parade of 1913. And then scroll down to the next item. Click on the link, and watch a five-minute biography of Alice Paul. Watching these video clips is part of your assignment for Week Six.

Week Seven (October 6)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Six, "Sex, Power, and Intimacy, pp. 313-61.

Week Eight (October 13)

Shaw and Lee, Chapter Seven, "Health and Reproductive Justice," pp. 362-431.

Week Nine (October 20)

Monday, October 20, 2014, is mid-semester.

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Eight, "Family Systems, Family Lives," pp. 433-69.

Schneir, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Women and Economics*, pp. 230-46 and Senate Report--History of Women in Industry in the United States, pp. 254-67.

In the lectures folder, read the lecture on the Flapper, the "liberated woman" of the 1920s.

Week Ten (October 27)

Reading: In Shaw and Lee, no new reading this week. Instead, study for Exam #2.

Schneir, Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin, "Virtue: What It Is and What It Is Not," pp. 143-48 and Emma Goldman, "The Traffic in Women," pp. 308-17.

I will make exam #2 available this weekend (November 1 and 2). It will continue to be available until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 3. It will follow the same format as the first test--it will consist of fifty multiple choice and true/false questions. And the test will be timed. Exam #2 will cover chapters five, six, seven, and eight in the Shaw and Lee text, as well as the assignments in the documents book (Schneir) and in the Course Documents on our web pages. Questions on assigned links and videos will also be included. There are no makeups.

Week Eleven (November 3)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Nine, "Work Inside and Outside the Home," pp. 470-536.

In the handout folder, read "Translations of Selected Russian Proverbs on Wife-beating." In the lecture folder, read the lecture, "Russian Women Combat Pilots in World War II." Take a look at pictures of these pilots in the pictures folder.

Week Twelve (November 10)

Friday, November 14, is the last day to withdraw from the university or to drop courses with a grade of "W." Drops must be processed with Enrollment Services by 4:00 p.m.

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Ten, "Resisting Gender Violence," 537-81.

In the handout folder, read the documents on women and education, women and work, and women and sexuality.

Week Thirteen (November 17)

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Twelve, "Religion and Spirituality," pp. 635-91. (I have decided not to assign Chapter Eleven.)

[Click on this link and read the material.](#)

(Maria Hernandez)

In the lecture folder, read the lecture on Anna Akhmatova and Russian women combat pilots. Then watch the video posted below.

After watching this video clip, click on the link below and watch a short audio-visual report from the BBC. Watching these videos is part of your assignment for Week Thirteen.

Week Fourteen (November 24 and 25)

This is a partial week.

Reading: Shaw and Lee, Chapter Thirteen, "Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures," pp. 692-727.

In the lectures folder, read "Origins of the Modern Day Women's Movement." In the handouts folder, read "Handout to Accompany the Emergence of the Second Wave of American Feminism." Also in the handouts folder, read the brief biographical sketches

of Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, Barbara Jordan, and Shirley Chisholm--all early leaders in the second wave.

Thanksgiving Holiday

The Thanksgiving Holiday begins after the last scheduled class on Tuesday, November 25, and continues through Friday, November 28.

Week Fifteen (December 1, 2, and 3)

Wednesday, December 3, 2014, is the last day of classes (before finals). So, this is another partial week. Thursday and Friday, May 1 and 2, are "dead days." Use this time to study for your finals.

I do not hold office hours after the last day of classes. Most instructors have very little flexibility at the end of the semester. We are all facing deadlines that are written in stone, so to speak.

Schneir, Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, pp. 344-5.

In the lectures folder, read "How Far Have Women Really Come?" and "Summing up Women's Studies--Title VII and Current Issues." Click on <http://molina.lacounty.gov/> and read about Gloria Molina. On her homepage, click on "About Gloria" and then "Biography."

Finals

Monday through Thursday, December 8 through 11, is the final exam period for classes that meet on campus.

Since we meet on the web, our schedule is different. First, our final is not really a final--it's just the last test covering the last third of the course. Notwithstanding, I will make the last test available at 12:05 a.m. (five minutes after midnight) on Saturday, December 6. It will continue to be available all day (and night) on Sunday, December 7. It will remain available until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, December 8, at which time it will close down. During these times, click on the "Exams" button to access it. Please remember that I do not hold office hours after the last day of class (which is Wednesday, December 3). Exam #3 is over chapters 9, 10, 12, and 13 in the Shaw and Lee text, the reading assigned in documents book by Miriam

Schneir, and the assigned lectures, handouts, links, and videos in the "Course Documents." There are no makeups or late tests--unfortunately, I have absolutely no flexibility at the end of a semester. In other words, exam #3 follows the same format as the first two tests.

Perhaps you are wondering what you are supposed to do on Thursday and Friday, December 4 and 5. These are "dead days." Please use this time to study for your other finals. I wish all of you the best of luck with all of your finals!