



COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 6304/17392

Women's Issues

TIME: 6:00 to 9:00 PM, Tuesdays **RM:** 107A

Semester: Summer 2015

FACULTY: Beverly McPhail, Ph.D., LMSW

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I. COURSE

This course provides an examination of selected social, political, and economic issues pertaining to women. Students are expected to develop critical awareness about historical and current concepts of gender while developing a gender lens through which to view social work clients, theory, practice, policy and advocacy.

II. Course Competencies

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Delineate and discuss the concepts of sex, gender, gender identity, sexual identity, and “doing gender;”
2. Identify, analyze, and critique three competing systems of gender and the underlying policies and practices that support each one;
3. Identify the mechanisms and varieties of gender oppression, its historical and cultural contexts, who benefits from it, and how it impacts women in different social and geographic locations;
4. Critically evaluate the empirical evidence that supports or contradicts the notions of women as the same or different from men;
5. Describe the various feminist perspectives including both their unique contributions and competing viewpoints;
6. Discuss how gender intersects with other status categories including race, class, sexual identity, age, and disability;
7. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of issues that affect women over the lifespan at both at the micro (personal) and macro (policy) levels;
8. Critique traditional androcentric models, practices, and policies while identifying new models, practices, and policies that make women visible;
9. Demonstrate an understanding of how gender as a status category includes and impacts men and masculinity as well as the lives of transgender individuals;
10. Develop the capacity to view people, problems, practices, and policies utilizing a gender lens

III. COURSE CONTENT

Content changes somewhat from semester to semester; the course will potentially include the following topical areas: patriarchy, critical consciousness, feminisms, intersectionality, sexism and discrimination, race and racism, sexual identities and homophobia, psychology of women, competing systems of gender, pornography,

violence against women, women as victims/survivors and perpetrators of violence, feminist policy analysis, women in the workplace, gendered representations in the media, women's health and mental health, reproductive justice, women across the lifespan, including adolescence and aging, female sexuality, women's history, the women's movement, and women and activism/advocacy, queer theory, gender socialization, "doing" gender, men and masculinity, and transgender issues.

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE

Class time will be used for lectures, discussion of assigned readings, participation in class exercises, and viewing pertinent films.

V. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Bromley, Victoria L. (2012). *Feminisms matter: Debates, theories, activism*. University of Toronto Press.

Morgan, Olivia & Skelton, K. (Eds). (2014). *The Shriver report: A woman's nation pushed back from the brink*. Center for American Progress. 2nd Edition New York: Palgrave, MacMillan.

Additional readings are listed on the syllabus and for your convenience are located in the weekly folders.

Reading Notes

1. This is a graduate level course so the readings will reflect that fact.
2. Since the semester is only 11 weeks instead of the usual 14, the readings will be a bit heavier to compensate for fewer class readings.
3. Readings will generally not correlate with class lectures and activities
4. Limited additional reading may be assigned over the course of the semester to illustrate topics that come up in class or in response to student questions or class discussions.
5. There will be links to YouTube videos in the class file for each week. Please review, but no write ups are necessary. Please post additional relevant ones on the website blackboard to share with the instructor and class.

VI. EVALUATION

1. Attendance/Class Participation Since much learning will occur in class through class discussions, class attendance will be taken and part of your grade will be based on attendance and participation. Due to personality differences, some students might feel more comfortable speaking than others. However, as social work professionals and especially women, it is important for all students to learn to be comfortable discussing ideas and giving voice to their *informed* opinions. (An informed opinion means coming to class prepared and having done the required readings for the day). The instructor will act as the discussion facilitator to balance the voices of extroverted and introverted students. It is helpful if the class honors both styles of being and allows everyone an opportunity to participate. Class participation also means posting at least twice on Blackboard Learn during the course.

20% attendance
10% class participation

2. **Weekly Snapshot Reading Report.** Assigned reading is vital in this class (and every other class). There is only so much information we can learn in class through lecture, film, and exercises. Each week you will need to fill out a Reading Analysis for the week. The form is attached to the syllabus and will also be available online. They will be graded Pass (100)/Fail (0). Not turning in a Reading Analysis will result in a grade of 0. You can turn in two Reading Analyses late without penalty, and subsequent late turn-ins will be recorded as a 0.

30% of grade

3. **Out of Class Experiences:** It is hoped you will take class and textbook learning with you out into the world. It is helpful to start looking the world through a gender lens. So plan **two out-of-class experiences** that take the concepts we are learning into the world to observe and comment on. They can be going to a store and looking at the gender differences in clothes and toys. They can be observing children on the playground. They can be viewing a movie, a play or art exhibit. After each experience, summarize on a single page (single spacing okay) what you did, what you observed, how it related to what you are learning or reading in class, and your thoughts about it. Analyze the experience using a gender lens. Going as small groups from class is also encouraged. Due by last day of class, but students are encouraged to turn in soon after you experience and record them.

10% of grade

4. **Self-Assigned Project:** Key themes within feminist practice are empowerment, autonomy, and choice. With this in mind you are to assign yourself a project that will allow you to explore a topic you are interested in, in a way that you are interested in. So pick a gendered topic (almost any topic is) and then either write a short paper, develop a list of resources, create a fact sheet for your classmates, create an art display, or plan a short activism project. Other ideas will need to be approved by the instructor. You may work alone or in small groups. Due by last day of class.

30% of grade

VI. Grading:

Final Grades will be Determined by Adding Four Grades

Class Attendance (11)	20 points
Class Participation	10 points
Reading Report (9)	30 points
Out of Class Experiences (2)	10 points
<u>Self-Assigned Project (1)</u>	<u>30 points</u>
Total	100 points

Grades will be based on the following point system:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	69 and below, no credit given

VII. CLASS SCHEDULE

In the spirits of feminism(s), the class can pick the last two topics of the semester, possibilities include: women and work, immigration, pornography, disAbilities, practice with women, activism, poverty, economic inequality, women and policy, gender oppression and globalization, women and gerontology, reproductive rights and justice, negotiation and jobs, work/life integration, women's health, trans women, Trafficking in Persons, or female sexuality. Topics not listed here can also be considered. Since we really don't have class time to debate or discuss, I would like the class to take responsibility for deciding by the third class (June 16) which two additional topics we will address. I may need to arrange guest speakers if it is not a topic I am especially fluent in.

Date	Class Topic	Class Activities	Textbook Readings	Additional Readings
June 2	Syllabus Review/Key Concepts	Discussion/Lecture	Obtain textbooks	none
June 9	More key concepts/film <i>She's Beautiful when She is Angry</i>	Lecture/Film	Brom Chapters 1-3	McPhail_Setting the Record Straight; Male Privilege Handout; Feminist Survey on BlackBoard (opt); Wave article
June 16	Understanding Gender	Lecture/Show n' Tell	Brom Chapters 5-7	The Yellow Wallpaper, Gilmore; X: A fabulous child's story, Gould; Gender models handouts; Hyde Article, Transgender article
June 23	Intersectionality/Privilege Race/Class/LGBT	Lecture	Brom Chapters 4, 8, 9	McIntosh_Unpacking the backpack, Mehrotra and Barretti articles
June 30	Developing Critical Thinking/Critiquing Male Models/Gender Lens	Lecture/Film <i>Orgasm Inc.</i>	Brom 10-11	DDPD article
July 7	Body Image and Media Representations	Film, <i>Killing Me Softly 4</i> /Poster Project	Shriver Part I	APA Sexualization report Bring mainstream magazine to class!!
July 14	Sexual Assault	Lecture/Role Play/PowerPoint	Shriver Part II	Stout and McPhail article - SA
July 21	Intimate Partner Violence	Lecture/Role Play	Shriver Part III	Stout and McPhail article - IPV, What Fresh Hell is this? Article
July 28	TBA		Shriver Part IV	
August 4	TBA		TBA	

August 11	Masculinities/Pot Luck/End of class Discussion and Debrief	Film <i>Tough Guise 2</i> / Discussion	none	none
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IX. Class Policies

1. Class attendance and participation is expected. Students are expected to be active participants in the learning process, which includes reading class assignments before class. Readings will generally **not** be reviewed in class. Students are expected to demonstrate their integration of learning in class discussions, questions, and exercises. It is assumed that students are adult learners and share in the responsibility for their learning.
2. Work is required to be turned in on the day it is due. *However, two reading analyses may be turned in late without penalty.*
3. While academic dishonesty is not anticipated at any level of study, but especially at the graduate level, students should be familiar with the University of Houston's policy on this subject found at: <http://catalog.uh.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=1025>. Scholastic dishonesty may result in the instructor following the process listed in the academic dishonesty policy of the student handbook with student consequences detailed.
4. Students are expected to adhere to the letter and spirit of the NASW code of ethics, available at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>. Applied to the classroom setting, the standards include respecting the feelings and opinions of other students, even though you may disagree with them. This standard also brings the assurance of confidentiality into the room, especially personal revelations that may be made in class by students. The instructor, who will strive to maintain an open, honest, safe, and respectful classroom atmosphere, will also abide by the code.
5. The instructor is open to constructive student feedback. Please contact the instructor via email or phone for any questions, concerns, or issues that may arise.

Blackboard Vista Information for Students

The course will have a Blackboard Vista site for discussions, posting of additional source information, and email functions. Please check the site every couple of days for announcements or emails.

Support

- Obtain an online support form here: <http://www.uh.edu/blackboard/support/>
- **By Phone:** - Call 713-743-1411, 8am - 8pm, 7 days a week (except during University holidays)
- **In Person at Main Campus** - 58 MD Anderson Library, Technology Commons, 7 days a week, 8 am to 8 pm (except during University holidays)
- **By email** - support@uh.edu
- **By live chat** - <http://www.uh.edu/infotech/livechat> - Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm (except during University holidays)

Addendum: Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call (713) 743-5400 for more assistance.

Women's Issues Reading Report

I affirm that I have completed the readings assigned for this week

_____. (Date)

Signature

The three major take-away points I gained from the readings were:

1.

2.

3.

The primary reflection/criticism/insight/analysis/reaction/application I had from the reading was: