

University of Northern British Columbia
WMST 100: An Introduction to Women's Studies
Fall 2014

Instructor: Anna Casas Aguilar, PhD
 Office: 3084 ADM
 E-mail: anna.casasaguilar@unbc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 to 2:00 pm or by appointment

Teaching Assistants: Jess Pikkarainen
 Linda Amoah

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:30 to 12:50
Classroom location: 8-164
Twitter: @annacasasa
 #unbcwm100

This course introduces students to Women's Studies, with an emphasis on the theoretical foundations of feminist analysis and the diversity of debates within feminism. We will investigate women's histories and the histories of feminist movements. We will approach gender as a pivotal organizing feature in social structures and we will consider the ways in which gender intersects with race, class, age, sexuality, and ability in ways that contribute to the diversity of women's experiences. We will explore various topics related to women, including feminist activism, representations of women, sexuality, women's work, and violence against women. Through readings, class discussions and multi modal engagement exercises over the course of the semester, we will examine how femininity has been defined and played out in a variety of social contexts. This course will also provide an opportunity for students to examine their own experiences in order to gain a better understanding of social relationships between women and men, particularly in the context of contemporary society.

Required Texts:

Shaw, Susan M. and Janet Lee (eds.) *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions Classic and Contemporary Readings*. McGraw Hill, 2014. (Available at the Bookstore)

Other documents distributed through Backboard and in class.

Course Structure:

The course will consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, group work, and the analysis of additional media shown in class. Readings are to be completed before each class and assignments are due on the date specified. Full participation in group work and discussion is part of an active and engaged learning process.

Course Objectives:

- to identify the variety of feminisms and feminist movements that have emerged in different historical periods
- to develop an understanding of gender as a social construct as it intersects with norms of race, class, nationality, sexuality, and ability
- to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of gender and the ways in which gender roles have had an impact on the life choices available to women
- to understand more fully the diversity of women's experiences
- to develop and demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills that will enable us to relate theoretical insights – as articulated and demonstrated in assigned readings – with our personal experiences, cultures, and communities

Course Evaluation:

Response Paper	10 %	-- October 2
First term test	25 %	-- October 16
Second term test	25 %	-- November 27
Peer-editing of Final Essay	5 %	-- November 4
Final Essay	25 %	-- November 13
Participation	10 %	-- on-going

- Be responsible for material you may have missed.
- If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact the teaching assistants or the instructor.
- Always read the material before class. Taking notes while reading will help you to prepare for the response paper, final paper, and term tests, which will notably improve your final mark.
- Start to prepare for the term tests, and to write your response paper and final essay well in advance.
- Remember that you can take advantage of the Learning Skills Centre and the free services offered at the drop-in writing centre in the library (<http://www.unbc.ca/academic-success-centre/library-writing-centre>). The Academic Success Centre also provides helpful services to students for free (<http://www.unbc.ca/academic-success-centre>).

Response Paper

This is a short analysis paper/critical reflection on one of the selected readings for the class. The idea of this assignment is that you comment critically one of the texts that has drawn your attention, offering a well developed and well-thought response to it. Response papers should have 3 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt. font. If you are interested about writing your response on a movie, image or advertisement that we have commented in class or of your choice, do not hesitate to contact me to explore this idea. In this case, you will need to relate the movie, image or advertisement to one of the readings of the class.

Term Tests

They will consist of material covered from the beginning of class to the first term test, and from the first term test to the end of the semester. They will have multiple choice, true/false questions, definitions of concepts, and one or two questions that require a more developed answer. The point of these tests is to encourage you to absorb and understand the material from lectures and readings, as well as to show to the instructor your familiarity and understanding of the course content.

Peer editing of Final Essay (in class)

Students will bring a first draft of their final essay to class on November 3. Each of you will read one of your colleagues' draft and suggest comments to improve the essay. You will give a copy of your comments to your colleague and another to the instructor. In this case, you will be graded on the quality of your comments: Do you offer useful critical insights to your colleagues? Do you demonstrate an engagement with the issues and ideas that your colleagues raise in their work? What course concepts and themes do you effectively relate to your colleagues' work? Please note that this is an in-class assignment only. If you are not in class for this assignment, you will receive the grade of 0.

Final Essay

Your task will be to explore an issue or aspect of the course that has interested, intrigued, challenged, or unsettled you the most. You will produce a six-page critical analysis paper that explores the chosen issue. The main goal of the paper is to fully develop an argument and show how you have applied the course material or connected a key concept from the course to your observations, and, where relevant, your experiences outside the classroom. You will be required to support your observations and analysis with at least four academic sources. Remember to quote your sources using the MLA style.

Participation

All students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the course. You are expected to contribute to class discussion, participate in group work, complete in-class and out-of-class writing assignments and peer editing, and carefully prepare the assigned readings.

Class Schedule

Thursday, **September 4**

Introduction to the Course

Tuesday, **September 9** Women's and Gender Studies: Perspectives and Practices

Selected Readings: Reading 1, "Claiming an Education;" Reading 3, "No More Miss America;" Reading 4, "A Day Without Feminism"

Thursday, **September 11**

Selected Readings: Reading 5, "Feminist Politics;" Reading 7, "Facebook for Women;" Reading 8, "Still Needing the F Word;" Reading 9, "My Heroines"

Tuesday, **September 16** Systems of Privilege and Inequality

Selected Readings: Reading 10 "Toward a New Vision;" Reading 11, "Intersectionality;" Reading 12, "There is No Hierarchy;" Reading 13, "White Privilege"

Thursday, **September 18**

Selected Readings: Reading 14, "Cisgender Privilege;" Reading 15, "Opening Pandora's Box;" Reading 16, "Don't Laugh;" Reading 17, "The Social Construction of Disability"

Tuesday, **September 23** Learning Gender

Selected Readings: Reading 20, "The Five Sexes, Revisited;" Reading 21, "The Social Construction of Gender;" Reading 22 "Unraveling Hardwiring;" Reading 23, "Trans Identities and Continent Masculinities"

Thursday, **September 25**

Selected Readings: Reading 24, "What's Up with Boys;" Reading 25, "When I Was Growing Up;" Reading 26 "Through the Lens of Race;" Reading 27, "Wrestling with Gender"

Tuesday, **September 30** Inscribing Gender on the Body

Selected Readings: Reading 28 "Brest Buds and The "Training" Bra;" Reading 29 "If Men Could Menstruate;" Reading 31, "Beating Anorexia;" Reading 32, "Ethnicity and Body Consciousness"

Thursday, **October 2**

Selected Readings: Reading 35, "Is Fat a Feminist Issue;" Reading 36, "Bodies and

Bathrooms;” Reading 37, “If the Clothes Fit”

Response paper due in class

Tuesday, **October 7** Media and Culture

Selected Readings: Reading 38, “Thinking about Shakespeare’s Sister;” Reading 39, “The Wife;” Reading 40, “Rush Limbaugh and the New Networked Feminism;” Reading 41, “Poetry is not a Luxury”

Thursday, **October 9**

Selected Readings: Reading 42, “Enlightened Sexim” Reading 43, “If Women Ran Hip Hop;” Reading 44, “Vampires and Vixens;” Reading 46, “Beyoncé: Feminist Icon?;”

Tuesday, **October 14**

Review for Term Test

Thursday, **October 16**

First Term Test – In Class

Tuesday, **October 21** Sex, Power, and Intimacy

Selected Readings: Reading 49 “The Cult of Virginity;” Reading 50, “Gate C22;” Reading 51, “A World of Difference;” Reading 52, “Some Like Indians Endure”

Thursday, **October 23**

Selected Readings: Reading 53, “New Orientations: Asexuality;” Reading 54, “Dismantling Hierarchy;” Reading 55, “Queering Black Female Heterosexuality”

Tuesday, **October 28** Family Systems, Family Lives

Selected Readings: Reading 62 “Marriage and Love;” Reading 63, “Who Wants to Marry a Feminist?;” Reading 64, “Family Way”

Thursday, **October 30**

Selected Readings: Reading 65, “Marriage Equality;” Reading 66, “Singled Out;” Reading 67, “Lullabies Behind Bars”

Tuesday, **November 4** Work Inside and Outside the Home

Selected Readings: Reading 69, “Will Marriage Equality Lead to Equal Sharing of Housework;” Reading 71, “The Triumph of the Working Mother;” Reading 72,

“Maid to Order”

Bring draft of final essay for peer-evaluation

Thursday, **November 6**

Selected Readings: Reading 75 “Power Plays;” Reading 76, “The Sexist Truth About Office Romances;” Reading 77, “Sex Work as Test Case for African Feminism”

Tuesday, **November 11 – No Class**

Thursday, **November 13** Resisting Gender Violence

Selected Readings: Reading 80, “She Said;” Reading 83, “Lisa’s Ritual, Age 10;” Reading 84, “Anti-LGBTQ Violence: Three Essays”

Final essay due in class

Tuesday, **November 18** Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures

Selected Readings: Reading 103, “Feminist Men;” Reading 104, “Fear of Feminism;”

Thursday, **November 20**

Selected Readings: Reading 107, “What Pussy Riot Taught the World;” Reading 108, “We are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For”

Tuesday, **November 25**

Review for the Second Term Test

Thursday, **November 27**

Second Term Test – In Class

Expectations and Policies: An important guideline for a Women's Studies classroom is respect for all class members, their ideas, experiences, and comments. Please communicate your observations and ideas in ways that acknowledge the many voices and perspectives in the room.

Attendance and Participation: Much of the value that you will receive from this course will come from a conscientious consideration of the course readings and from your interactions with your colleagues. You are expected to attend class having read and thought about the assigned materials.

Late Policy: Assignments must be submitted on specified deadlines. Late assignments will not be accepted. If you anticipate that you may miss a deadline due to an illness or personal matter, please let me know as soon as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made.

E-mail Policy: Use e-mail to communicate with me for administrative matters. Please come to the scheduled office hours to address questions that you have or raise them in class. If you cannot make it to my office hours, please e-mail me to set up an alternative appointment. Please use your UNBC e-mail address to communicate with me, and check this e-mail account regularly to receive updates about this course.

Technology Etiquette in the Classroom: Laptops may be used in class, but only for note taking. I advise that you print a copy of the notes that you take on the assigned readings and participate in class discussions using those notes. Please turn off your cellphones before class begins.

Illness and absences: Notify me as soon as possible if a serious illness or other concern is affecting your ability to keep up with the course. It is also wise to contact the UNBC Wellness Centre or the Registrar's Office if you are experiencing academic or personal difficulties.

Accessibility and Accommodations: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require course format accommodation, please contact me to discuss your needs. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, you can also contact the Access Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities at arc@unbc.ca (<http://www.unbc.ca/access-resource-centre/contact>) UNBC is committed to providing an environment conducive to all students.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: The University of Northern British Columbia takes academic honesty very seriously. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated. More information on the University's procedures on academic offences can be found here: <http://www.unbc.ca/calendar/undergraduate/regulations>

The code of academic conduct disallows the following:

- to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism;

- to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the university or elsewhere.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in the policy outlined in the UNBC Undergraduate calendar.

Student Conduct: The University of Northern British Columbia is an academic community whose purpose is to search for knowledge through teaching, research, and the free exchange of ideas. As such, UNBC is committed to developing among its members an enduring sense of community rooted in a working and learning environment which emphasizes mutual respect and tolerance and which is free from discrimination, harassment, disruptive behaviour, and violence. The members of the UNBC community include students, faculty, staff, administrators, governors, senators, and, in certain contexts, visitors. In order for the members of the university community to participate fully and effectively in the university's purpose, certain standards of conduct must be recognized and respected. The university's policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on this website: <http://www.unbc.ca/calendar/undergraduate/regulations>

Twitter: Feel free to follow me on Twitter. I will also use the hashtag #unbcwm100 to tweet articles, images, and advertisements related to course topics. All students are welcome to use this hashtag and to tweet articles, movies, images, and songs related to the course as well. Please remember to compose all tweets using the professional language that is expected in the classroom at the University of Northern British Columbia. Using Twitter is not a requirement for this course. No important course content will be distributed over Twitter. The hashtag #unbcwm100 exists only to share related materials and to create a sense of community