

**Feminist Theory
Political Science 553
Spring 2008**

Monday and Wednesday
2:00 to 3:15, 339 Bancroft

Instructor: Dr. Michael Lipscomb
336 Bancroft
Work phone: 323 – 4666
Email: lipscombm@winthrop.edu
Office Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 12:30 to
2:00; and by appointment.

I. Goals of Course

This course exposes students to a variety of ways of seeing problems confronting feminism and feminist political activity. We will pursue this goal by exploring major debates within the academic disciplines of feminist theory over the last sixty years. We will examine those debates in the context of the historically specific problems of feminist politics, with special attention given to the relationship between practice and theory. Students are encouraged to think about how these debates are related to their own contemporary circumstances.

II. General Education Goals

PLSC 553 is designed to help students develop and master competencies in six of the seven General Education goals (see goals in italics):

Goal One: To communicate clearly and effectively in standard English.

Goal Two: To acquire and appreciate quantitative skills.

Goal Three: To use critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a variety of research methods.

Goal Four: To recognize and appreciate human diversity (both past and present) as well as the diversity of ideas, institutions, philosophies, moral codes, and ethical principles.

Goal Five: To understand scientific knowledge in terms of its methods or acquisition, its specific quantitative nature, and its dynamic and contingent character.

Goal Six: To understand aesthetic values, the creative process, and the interconnectedness of the literary, visual, and performing arts throughout the history of civilization.

Goal Seven: To examine values, attitudes, beliefs, and habits which define the nature and quality of life.

This class meets the General Education Humanities Requirement

III. Required Texts

Minnich. *Transforming Knowledge*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press; 2nd Edition, 2004.

Nicholson, ed. *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Recommended: Ryan, *Feminism and the Women's Movement: Dynamics of Change in Social Movement Ideology and Activism*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

IV. Assignments

- 1) **Attendance** will be taken daily. I will excuse absences because of religious holidays, but it is your responsibility to inform me that this is the reason for your absence. I will also excuse absences caused by sickness or family emergency if you provide me with proper written documentation.
- 2) You are expected to have completed all **reading** assignments before you come to class.
- 3) To make sure that you keep up with and understand the readings, you will be given **pop quizzes** throughout the semester.
- 4) You will be graded on both the frequency and quality of your **participation in class discussions**.
- 5) This class requires a **term paper** of 15 - 20 pages in length. In order to successfully produce a high quality term paper, an **annotated bibliography**, a **term paper proposal**, and a **term paper rough draft** are also required (see the "Schedule of Assignments" below).

Note: All written work will be penalized half a letter grade (four points) for each day that it is late.

V. Final Grade Distribution

Participation/Quizzes	20%
Annotated Bibliography/ Term Paper Proposal	20%
Term Paper Rough Draft	20%
Final	20%
Term Paper	20%

Political Science Department Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

The Winthrop University Political Science department abhors all forms of academic misconduct, and faculty members aggressively investigate all incidents of suspected cheating. This includes, but is not limited to, using turnitin.com. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is by far the most common form of academic misconduct in the Political Science department. Plagiarism includes, but is **not limited to:**

- Using the words or ideas of others as one's own;
- Reproducing, in whole or in part, principal ideas from a fellow student's work;
- Granting a fellow student permission to copy one's paper, or to reproduce some or all of its principal ideas;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material from sources without any citation;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material without sufficient and/or proper citation;
- Omitting some or all sources used in a paper; and
- Submitting a paper written for one course -- whether in Political Science or another discipline - - to meet a course requirement in a second course, *without the express permission of all instructors involved*. This is the case even though many paper topics may be relevant to several different courses.

All incidents of suspected academic misconduct are investigated with equal vigor.

When a faculty member suspects that a student engaged in academic misconduct, the faculty member will follow the appropriate procedures outlined in the *Student Handbook*. The faculty member will apply whatever sanctions s/he deems appropriate. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- Failing the assignment;
- Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for reduced credit;

Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for no credit; or
Failing the course.

Academic misconduct applies equally to required assignments and extra credit assignments. *All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Department Chair, the Dean of Students, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the student's academic advisor. The University may impose its own sanctions in addition to sanctions imposed by the faculty member or the department. The University may impose sanctions even after a student has graduated, and may include revoking a student's diploma.* In addition, students who engage in more than one incident of academic misconduct may be declared ineligible for departmental awards, ineligible for employment in the department or its affiliated programs, and ineligible to volunteer as a peer advisor.

Adopted August 14, 2007.

In this class, any act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in an "F" for the course and will lead to appropriate administrative action. Ignorance as to what constitutes plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty is not a valid excuse for such transgressions. For clarification about matters of academic dishonesty, students should consult Section V of the **Student Conduct Code** in the **Student Handbook**. For specific questions about plagiarism, the Writing Center, located on the second floor of Bancroft, is an excellent resource. The Center's web page (www.Winthrop.edu/wcenter) has specific links that can help you with questions about how to cite source material and how to avoid plagiarism. Your instructor is more than glad to talk to you about these matters.

Because of an escalating problem with cheating, I have decided that all papers in this class must be turned in through the electronic detection service provided by the library, **Turnitin.com**. The ID and the password will be provided for you. We will discuss the protocol for using this system when we go over the first assignment in class.

VI. Grading Criteria For Written Work

I will grade your written work using the General Education Writing Competency Rubric developed by the English Department, which can be accessed through the General Education home page. Across the University, and specifically in this class, writing competency is expected and taken very seriously. A student and a citizen who cannot write can neither think clearly nor communicate effectively.

VII. Schedule

Note on schedule: the instructor reserves the right to make changes to this schedule as he sees fit, depending on the unfolding needs of the class. Any such changes will be announced in class, and it is the sole responsibility of the student to be aware of such changes.

Date	Author	Reading Assignment	Dates for Written Assignments
January 14		Introduction	
January 16	Minnich	<i>Transforming Knowledge.</i>	
January 21	Minnich	<i>Transforming Knowledge.</i>	
January 23	Minnich	<i>Transforming Knowledge.</i>	

January 28	Minnich	<i>Transforming Knowledge</i>	
January 30	Minnich	<i>Transforming Knowledge</i>	
February 4	Nicholson, de Beauvoir	Preface, Introduction and “Early Statements” (Nicholson) “Introduction” to <i>The Second Sex</i> (Nicholson)	
February 6	Marx Engels	“Marx on the History of His Opinions” (“Preface” to <i>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</i>), in the <i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 3 – 6 (Reserve) <i>The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State</i> , in the Marx-Engels Reader, 734 – 751 (Reserve)	
February 11	Firestone	“The Dialectic of Sex” (Nicholson).	
February 13	Rubin	“The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex” (Nicholson).	
February 18	Nicholson Hartmann	“With and Against Marx” (Nicholson) “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union” (Nicholson).	
February 20	Barret Nicholson	“Capitalism and Women’s Liberation” (Nicholson). “Feminism and Marx: Integrating Kinship and the Economic” (Nicholson)	
February 24	The Cohambee River Collective	“A Black Feminist Statement” (Nicholson)	
February 26	Williams,	“The Equality Crisis” (Nicholson)	

	Plato	<i>The Republic</i> , Book V, 180 – 215 (Reserve)	
March 3	Nicholson	“Gynocentrism, Women’s Oppression, Women’s Identity, and Women’s Standpoint” (Nicholson)	
	Freud	“The Psychology of Women” (This title of this lecture is often translated as “Femininity”), from <i>New Introductory Lectures in Psychology</i> (Reserve)	
	Hall	“Development of Personality” in <i>A Primer of Freudian Psychology</i> (Reserve)	
March 5	Chodorow	“The Psychodynamics of the Family” (Nicholson).	
	Gilligan	“Woman’s Place in a Man’s Life Cycle” (Nicholson)	
March 10	Mackinnon	“Sexuality” (Nicholson).	
	Hartsock,	“The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism” (Nicholson)	
March 12	Collins	“Defining Black Feminist Thought” (Nicholson).	Term Paper Proposal/ Annotated Bibliography Due
March 17 -21	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
March 24	Radicalesbians	“The Woman Identified Woman” (Nicholson).	
	Nicholson	“Theorizing Difference/Deconstructing Identity” (Nicholson).	
	Wittig	“One is Not Born a Woman” (Nicholson).	
March 26	Nietzsche	“On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense” (Reserve)	
	Butler	“Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” (Nicholson)	

March 31	Brown	“What Has Happened Here: The Politics of Difference in Women’s History and Feminist Politics” (Nicholson).	
	Alarcón	“The Theoretical Subject(s) of <i>This Bridge Called My Back</i> and Anglo-American Feminism,” (Nicholson).	
April 2	Nicholson	“The Question of Essentialism” (Nicholson).	
	Irigaray	“This Sex Which is Not One” (Nicholson)	
April 7	Alcoff	“Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory” (Nicholson)	
	Fraser	“Structuralism or Pragmatics: On Discourse Theory and Feminist Politics” (Nicholson)	
April 9	Spivak with Rooney	“‘In a Word’: Interview” (Nicholson)	
	Narayan	“Contesting Cultures: ‘Westernization,’ Respect For Cultures, and Third World Feminism” (Nicholson)	
April 14			Rough Draft of Term Paper Due
April 16		Paper Presentations	Paper Presentations
April 21		Paper Presentations	Paper Presentations
April 23		Paper Presentations	Paper Presentations
April 28		Paper Presentations	Paper Presentations
April 28			Final Paper Due

The **final exam** for this class is scheduled for Friday, May 2nd at 3 p.m. The exam must be taken at this time unless there is a conflict with other exams which has been certified by the registrar. **Travel plans are not a valid excuse for requesting an alternative exam period.**