

**MASTER SYLLABUS –WOMEN’S HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Course Overview:**

Investigation of the complex relationship between our environment and women's health and bodies is an important area of feminist analysis. Theoretical concepts such as environmental justice, environmental racism, cancer prevention, the precautionary principle, and ecological feminism will be examined. Key women's health issues include reproductive health, cancer, asthma and lung disease will be explored in detail. A feminist intersectional analysis of the ways race, class, and gender inform one’s experience of environmental harm and degradation will inform our study of women’s health issues.  In addition we will be exploring various activist and political responses to environmental and women's health issues in the U.S.

**Learning Outcomes:**

WGS 202 Course Specific Learning Outcomes

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

* Provide a comprehensive definition of environment.
* Identify and assess what feminism can add to the environmental justice movement in the U.S.
* Is aware of the environmental justice movement in the U.S.
* Evaluate and explain the role race, class, gender, and sexuality play in health.
* Analyze the power structures and decision-making processes that create environmental health problems for women.
* Knowledge of a range of policy solutions and activism regarding women’s health and environmental justice issues.
* Empower students to see themselves as responsible citizens in their community.
* Knowledge of the case study methodology and feminist methodological critique.
* Identify and assess women’s important contributions to the environmental movement.
* Identify and analyze gendered conceptions of nature and environment.
* Understand the disproportionate burden women face from environmental pollution, natural disasters, and degradation.
* Understand the gendering of our socioeconomic and political worlds and the individual and collective components of social change

**Women’s and Gender Studies Objectives:**

* Explain the gendering of our socioeconomic and political worlds and the individual and collective components of social

University Studies Learning Outcomes:

Women’s Health and Environment, as a course to fulfill a requirement for the University Studies curriculum would fall under *Cluster 4 The Social World: Humanity and Society. B: The Nature of U.S. Society*

As such, its learning objectives are as follows:

I.     To introduce students to questions about human knowledge and the human condition, as well as the relationship of the individual to the broader world.

 II.     To foster an understanding of the diversity within US society.

III.     To encourage a deeper understanding of one’s place and role in US society.

IV.     To engage students in critical thinking about humanity and society.

 V.     To foster awareness of global cultural perspectives.

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives; b) US social and cultural domains in relationship to other regions of the world; or c) the different facets of citizenship in the United States.

2. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.

3. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society.

**Required Texts:**

1. *Toxic Exposures* by Phil Brown
2. *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism* edited by Rachel Stein
3. *From Pink to Green* by Barbara Ley

**Example Assignment:**

All WGS 202 courses require students to complete a case study.

**Assignment Description:**

**Case Study:** Using the case study method, your group of 3-4 students will choose a case study from the list below. Using a wiki page, your group will educate the class on this particular case and how it demonstrates environmental racism. For this assignment you must also evaluate your case using an intersectional feminist analysis. This means that you must analyze your case by paying close attention to race, class, and gender. You must apply and critically evaluate the readings “Toxic Waste and Race in the United States” by the United Church of Christ and “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California” by Laura Pulido. Please look for an email at your UMD account inviting you to the course wiki page. More details on this assignment will be posted on the course site.

Case study list:

Emelle, Alabama World’s Largest Hazardous Waste Landfill

Dickson, Tennessee Landfill and Environmental Health

Warren County, North Carolina Toxic Dumping

Chester, Pennsylvania Hazardous Waste

Wolf Clan of the Mohawk Tribe/St. Regis Reservation in New York Water Pollution

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|  | [Grading Rubric](http://wms210.umassd.wikispaces.net/Grading+Rubric)  **Introduction to Topic /10**  Topic is clearly explained to the audience  Topic introduction engages audience interest  **2. Context of topic /25**  Case study establishes social and historical context of topic  **3. Significance of Topic /25**  Case study applies a feminist intersectional analysis of the way race, class, gender have shaped  Activists’ responses  Case study explains why the chosen topic is important to women and men  Case study explains why the chosen topic is an example of concept.  For example, why is it an example of environmental racism  Case study explains what is being done about the issue being discussed  Case study makes suggestions about what might happen with the issue in the future  **4. What do you think overall? / 20**  Case study analyzes possible solutions by applying ideas presented in suggested course readings  “Toxic Waste and Race in the United States” by the United Church of Christ and  “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California”  by Laura Pulido.  Case study discusses what should be done about the issue being presented and why the issue is important.  Case study provides suggestions/insights into topic  Case study provides ideas for ways to deal with or improve problems surrounding the issue  **5. Wiki Page /10**  Case study is easy to read by audience  Case study is error free (no spelling mistakes; no typos)  Case study contains list of resources with both print and internet sources  Case study includes works cited page  Case study cites 2-3 scholarly sources  Case study uses proper citation format  Case study synthesizes scholarly sources  **6. Peer Review /10**  Submitted on time  Thoughtfully evaluates the case studies of 2 groups this semester. The peer review will be done in class.  **Total: /100** |

**Alignment:**

**The assignment meets all three of the learning outcomes for Cluster 4B.**

The assignment clearly aligns with the identified University Studies SLO as demonstrated by the content elements of the assignment description. The first learning objective “Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives; b) US social and cultural domains in relationship to other regions of the world; or c) the different facets of citizenship in the United States,” is met by the case study assignment, as it requires students to become familiar with the women’s health movement in the U.S., the environmental justice movement and protests against environmental racism. Therefore this assignment clearly meets learning objective I for Cluster 4B: The Nature of US Society, because the assignment requires students to explore differences in health problems faced by women from various socioeconomic status. The case study assignment requires that students explain “the different facets of citizenship in the United States.” For example, the case study assignment requires students to explain the way gender, race and class will impact health and environment.

The case study assignment meets learning objective III to “Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society.” The case study assignment requires students to apply and critically evaluate the perspectives in two assigned readings “Toxic Waste and Race in the United States” by the United Church of Christ and “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California” by Laura Pulido. These two articles specifically provide important perspectives of U.S. society that identify the way white privilege and structural racism function in the United States. These specific readings alongside other assigned texts require students gain a deeper understanding of one’s place and role in US society. Lastly, the students are required to perform a two peer reviews where they must evaluate the arguments made by their peers. The peer review will ensure that students evaluate their peers’ ability to make arguments in support of different perspectives of U.S. society. Specifically students are asked to apply the concept of environmental racism and explain the structural forms of racism as related to the environment.

In addition, students are asked to do research and integrate 2-3 scholarly sources into their case study presentation wiki. This requirement aligns with learning objective II “locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.” In preparation for the case study presentation students also attend a mandatory library session with Susan Raidy Klein the WGS library liason to practice using databases and evaluating scholarly sources. They will also be provided with a library research guide designed by Klein with sources relevant to this study. For the case study, students are required to cite from 2-3 scholarly sources and must submit a separate annotated bibliography, which will allow students to summarize and paraphrase the scholarly articles they have located. The process of writing up their case study will encourage students to synthesize the scholarly sources, and is an element found in the grading rubric.

**Sample of Assessment:**

Paper 10%

Presentation and Case Study 30%

Annotated Bibliography 5%

Midterm Exam 20%

Participation 15%

Final Exam 20%

**Sample Course Assignments:**

**1. Paper:** This will be an essay on the topic of Breast Cancer Culture and the Environment. Your essay will submitted after reading Pink Ribbon Blues and having extensive class discussion and lecture. The essay question will be handed out at a later date. The essay should be approximately three to four pages and formatted in MLA or APA, and a works cited should be submitted.

**2. Exams:** There are two multiple-choice exams in addition to the Final Exam. Each of the exams will consist of twenty questions and a short essay. The exams are based on in class lectures, readings, and case studies. **Final Exam:** This is a twenty questions, multiple-choice and short essay exam given during the final examination period. This final exam will be a comprehensive final exam and will test on the material covered from the entire semester.

**Sample Course Outline:**

September 8, 2011 **First Day of Class**

* Introductions
* Go over syllabus and course expectations

September 13, 2011 **History and Background of Women’s Health Movement in U.S.**

* (Weblink) Our Bodies Our Selves <http://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/about/jamwa.asp>
* (Weblink) “Body Politic” by Barbara Ehrenreich

http://www.msmagazine.com/spring2002/ehrenreichandfuntes.asp

* (Ereserve) “Women’s Health” by Kirk and Okazawa-Rey

September 15, 2011 **Conceptualizing Gender and the Feminization of Nature**

* (Ereserve) “Social Construction of Gender” by Judith Lorber,.
* (Ereserve) “Introduction” by Karen Warren.
* \*In class reflection: What prejudices/presumptions have guided your perceptions of your body? Of gender? Nature?
* \* Bring to class a gendered item.

September 20, 2011 **Defining Environment**

* Read pg. 1-20 “Introduction” by Rachel Stein in New Perspectives on Environmental Justice
* Read pg. 262-276 “The Power is Yours, Planeteers!” by Noel Sturgeon in New Perspectives on Environmental Justice
* \*Bring to class an advertisement that features an environmental message.

September 22, 2011 **Gender and Environmental Justice Movement**

* Read pg. 63- 77 “Feminist Theory and Environmental Justice” in New Perspectives of Environmental Justice
* (Ereserve) “Principles of Environmental Justice” by The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit
* \*In class sign up for group case study presentation and received handout detailing case study presentation.
* \*Confirm that you have received invitation to join course wiki for case study presentation.

September 27, 2011 **Eco Feminism**

* (Ereserve) “The Ecofeminist Imperative” by Ynestra King
* (Ereserve) “Rose Moon” by Sandra Steingraber
* \*In class Review for Exam

September 29, 2011

* + **Extra Credit Opportunity: Attend event in Woodland Commons from 4:00pm-5:30 by Keith Labelle.Write a one-page reaction paper.**

October 4, 2011 **Reproductive Justice and Environment: Hormones**

* (Ereserve) “Girl, Disrupted” by Barrett, Gonzalez, Sarantis, Varshavsky
* (Ereserve) “Birth Control-Tainted “Ladypee” in our Water: Myth or Menace?” by Kimberly Inez MacGuire
* (Weblink) “Environmental Justice Campaigns Provide Fertile Ground for Joint Efforts with Reproductive Rights Advocates” by Chinue Turner Richardson at Guttamacher Institute

<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/09/1/gpr090114.html>

(Weblink) “Stop Scapegoating Women” by Jill Morrison at National Women’s Law Center

http://www.nwlc.org/our-blog/environmental-justice-and-reproductive-justice-stop-scapegoating-women

October 6, 2011 **Reproductive Justice and Environment: Abortion Politics**

* (Weblink) “Environmental and Reproductive Justice” by Sister Song

http://www.sistersong.net/documents/When%20Movements\_CV\_Vol4\_Issue9\_pg21.pdf

* (Ereserve) “Reproductive Justice: Vision, Analysis and Action for a Stronger Movement” by Kirk and Okazawa-Rey
* \*In class Video Clips on Anti Abortion Groups target black women

October 11, 2011 No class Follow Monday’s Schedule due to Columbus Day

October 13, 2011 **Reproductive Justice and Environment: Population Control**

* (Weblink) “Population Control is not the Solution to Global Warming” by Hartmann and Barajas-Roman http://www.sistersong.net/documents/Population\_CV\_Vol4\_Issue9\_pg18.pdf
* (Ereserve) “Killing the Black Body” by Dorothy Roberts

October 18, 2011 **Environmental Racism**

* (Ereserve) “A climate of Change: African Americans, Global Warming, and a Just Climate Policy for the U.S.” by Hoerner and Robinson
* (Ereserve) “Dumping in Dixie Race, Class, and Environmental Quality Chapter TWO” by Robert D. Bullard

October 20, 2011 **Environmental Racism**

* “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California” by Laura Pulido
* “Toxic Waste and Race in the United States” by the United Church of Christ

October 25, 2011 **Environmental Racism**

* (Ereserve) “Rape of the Land” by Andrea Smith
* (Ereserve) “Who Hears their cry?” by Andrea Simpson

October 27, 2011 **Mid Term Exam**

November 1, 2011 **Cancer and the Environment**

* Read pg. 161 “Public Eyes” by Marcy Jane Knopf-Newman in New Perspectives of Environmental Justice
* **\***In class Film: No Family History
* **Extra Credit Opportunity: Attend event on sexuality by Robyn Ochs from 4:00pm-5:30. Write a one-page reaction.**

November 3, 2011 **Breast Cancer and Environment**

* *Toxic Exposures* by Phil Brown

November 8, 2011 **Breast Cancer and Environment**

* *Toxic Exposures* by Phil Brown

November 10, 2011 **Breast Cancer and Environment**

* *Toxic Exposures* by Phil Brown
* **Paper Due**

November 15, 2011 **Library Research Training**

November 17, 2011 **The Beauty Industry & Nail Salons**

* (Weblink) “Brazilian Blowout” by Campaign for Safe Cosmetics <http://safecosmetics.org/downloads/Brazilian-Blowout-case-study_May2011.pdf>
* (Weblink) “Nine Ugly Truths” by Campaign for Safe Cosmetics <http://safecosmetics.org/downloads/Unmasked_2010.pdf>
* (Weblink) “Not So Pretty” by Campaign for Safe Cosmetics <http://safecosmetics.org/downloads/SafeCosmetics_BlackWomen_brochure.pdf>
* (Ereserve) “Women’s Bodies and Beauty Ideals” by Kirk and Okazawa-Rey
* \*In class video “The Story of Stuff: Cosmetics” by Annie Leonard
* \* Bring to class a beauty product after researching its ingredients in Skin Deep Database http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/

November 22, 2011 **Case Study Presentation**

November 24, 2011 **No class. Thanksgiving break**

November 29, 2011 **Natural Disasters**

* (Ereserve) “Katrina, Black Women, and the Deadly Discourse on Black Poverty in America” by Ransby, Barbara
* (Ereserve) “Why Did Hurricane Katrina Hit Women so Hard” by Laura Butterbaugh
* (Ereserve) “Were Women Raped in New Orleans?” by Lucinda Marshall

December 1, 2011 **Precautionary Principle**

* (Ereserve) “ The New Precautionary Approach” by Phil Brown

December 6, 2011 **Precautionary Principle**

* + Read pg. 191-206 “No Remedy for the Inuit” by Anne E. Lucas in New Perspectives on Environmental Justice

December 8, 2011 **Film: In Our Own Backyards**

* Watch film outside of class
* Homework: Answer questions handed out in class. You should email your answers by midnight.

December 13, 2011 **Women’s Activism and Environment**

* Read pg. 78- 91 “Witness to the Truth” by Valerie Ann Kaalund in New Perspectives on Environmental Justice

December 15, 2011 **Last Day of Class**

* Course Evaluations
* Exam Review

December 17-23  **Final Exam Period. Exam Date TBA**