

**MASTER SYLLABUS - INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES 101 - WMS 101**

**Course Overview**

The content of this class is question driven. The primary questions that are asked (and answered) are: what is Women’s Studies?; What is feminism?; How do we define gender?; How do constructions of gender affect women and men?; How does gender intersect with race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class?; Why is Women’s Studies important for men?; What are the current issues affecting women today? These questions will be asked within the geographical and cultural context of the United States.

These questions provide the structure of the class as students examine women’s lives, experiences, and issues. Through the class readings, videos, and discussions, they explore a number of different perspectives about women and men ranging from gender roles to economics and workplace issues to sexual politics and reproductive rights.

Women’s Studies aims to be inclusive and to critique the societal structures and expectations that affect all women. Thus discussions of gender and gender constructions will concern women and men of all races, classes, sexual orientations, ages, and abilities.

Readings will be drawn from both popular and scholarly presses and will cover historical, political, sociological, and literary approaches. Students are expected to read the assigned texts in advance and come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. Women's Studies places a great emphasis on cooperative learning and on team-based activities both in class and for graded assignments. Not only does Women's Studies hold that these pedagogical approaches lead to more effective learning, but we also believe that these approaches are more feminist than traditional approaches. Students in a WMS 101 course will typically have asynchronous online discussion assignments, individual written assignments, and a team-based research project. There is also a common assignment for all WMS 101 courses: the Politics of Location Statement, which will be explained in detail in the sample assignments section.

**Learning Outcomes**

WMS 101 Course-Specific Learning Outcomes:

* To gain an understanding of how the field of Women’s Studies has evolved;
* To learn feminist approaches to academics and world issues;
* To analyze the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, religion, and age on women’s identities and issues;
* To promote knowledge of women’s history and contemporary issues in the United States
* To reflect critically about the materials we read and view;
* To communicate effectively through verbal discussion and written work;
* To recognize the value of personal experience and activism;
* To develop our own informed perspectives on the course materials.

University Studies Learning Outcomes:

**Introduction to Women's Studies as a course to fulfill a requirement for the University Studies curriculum would fall under *Cluster 4, Area B, Option (a) - The Nature of US Society*. As such, its learning objectives are as follows"**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives;

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.

**Sample Texts:**

Kesselman, Amy, et al, Eds. *Women, Images & Realities: A Multicultural Anthology* (4th Ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill, 2008. This is the text currently being used by most WMS faculty. Every two to three years, faculty teaching WMS 101 meet to put together a brief list (2-3 texts) for use and/or to see if our current texts need updating.

*Reading Women’s Lives*, compiled by Professor Heidi M. Berggren for “Introduction to Women’s Studies”

**Required Text:**

Rich, Adrienne. “Notes Toward a Politics of Location.” *Arts of the Possible: Essays and Conversations.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001. 62-82.

**Example Assignment:**

All WMS 101 courses require an individually written "Politics of Location" assignment.

**The assignment meets all three of the learning outcomes for Cluster 4, Area B, Option (a).**

The assignment is in three parts:

(1) Read the short required text (listed above) by Adrienne Rich.

(2) **Politics of Location Statement. 1-3 pages. The statement is due approximately the third week of the semester.**

Politics of location statements examine your self-identity—who are you and how did you become this person?  Each statement addresses issues of class, race, gender, and age, among other things.

Directions: Write a statement of approximately 2 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 pt. font, regular margins) that examines your self-identity—who are you and how did you become this person? In explaining your self, you need to select a key issue to address, such as class, race, gender, etc. For example, how has your class background influenced your identity? Or, you might decide to focus on gender. How has gender and ideas about gender influenced who you are and how you think about your self? Some of you might decide to focus on race. How does your race affect you and position you in this world? In many ways, Rich’s essay, which comments on these perspectives and more, offers you a model to follow and draw upon as you construct your own statement.

 (3) **Politics of Location Statement Rewrite. The rewritten statement is due at the end of the semester.**

Directions: Your first assignment in this class was to write what is called a “politics of location” statement.  This statement explained who you are at that particular moment in time.  For your take home final, you need to rewrite that statement. In rewriting your statement, you may want to consider how gender has influenced who you are?  Have you experienced any advantages or disadvantages due to your gender? How does your race affect you?  Have you experienced “white privilege”?  What advantages or disadvantages have you experienced due to your race?  How do your experiences inform how you think about race in our culture?

 Above all, you need to always come back to the question:  Why do you see the world in the way that you do?  Remember that a politics of location statement isn’t only about how you feel and where you are located, but also about WHY you think what you do about various key cultural issues.  You might want to review Adrienne Rich’s “Notes Toward a Politics of Location” for help in thinking about your revision.

**Requirements:**

* The statement must be 2-4 pages in length.
* The statement needs to incorporate **AT LEAST TWO** class readings for support of your ideas and explanations.
* The statement needs to **ANALYZE** and **EXPLAIN** why you think the way you do about key issues such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity.  You can use personal experiences to help explain your ideas, but remember that you need to always come back to the question:  **Why do you see the world in the way that you do?**
* The statement needs to be error free.  Concentrate on proofreading and creating clear sentences.
* The statement needs to use an approved format correctly (MLA, CMS, etc.).  In other words, remember to integrate your quotes into a sentence, format the quotes properly, and cite page numbers.  Also, include a works cited page.

**Assessment Rubric for University Studies**

\_\_\_\_ Analyzes and explains why the student thinks in the way they do about ONE key issue such as race, class, gender, sexuality, or ethnicity (in the US).

\_\_\_\_ Statement answers the question: Why do you see the world in the way that you do as a result of this marker of identity

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes at least 2 class readings

­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_Readings are used to support statement

\_\_\_\_\_Statement is error free

\_\_\_\_\_ Statement is properly formatted and cited

**Alignment**

The assignment clearly aligns with the identified University Studies SLO below as demonstrated by the first four content elements of the rubric. WMS holds that writing is foundational to the demonstration of comprehension of ideas; hence the final two elements of the rubric on writing.

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives;

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.

**Sample Course Outline**

**Week One**

**Th 9/7 Course Welcome**

**In-Class:**

* Review of syllabus; overview of texts; pass out Rich handout
* Online introductions
* Race, Class, Gender, Age activity

**Week Two**

**T 9/13 What is Women's Studies & Feminism?**

**Readings:**

* Kimmel, “Men and Women’s Studies:  Premises, Perils, and Promise,” p. 24
* Yap, “Have You Ever Heard of Asian-American Feminism?”, p. 28
* Hunte, “Women’s Studies as a Growth Process,” p. 29
* Ferreira, “Finding My Latina Identity Through Women’s Studies,” p. 30
* Woodis, “What Women’s Studies Has Meant to Me,” p. 31
* Lennon, “Why Women’s Studies,”  p. 32
* Weissman, “Women’s Studies:  A Man’s Perspective,”  p. 33
* Faludi, “Blame it on Feminism,” p. 577
* Baumgardner & Richards, “Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future,” p. 627

**Th 9/15 Locating Ourselves**

**Readings:**

* Rich, “Notes Toward a Politics of Location”

**Week Three**

**T 9/20 19th Century: The Legacy of Seneca Falls**

**Readings:**

* Kesselman, “The First and Second Waves of Feminism in the U.S.” p. 542
* The Seneca Falls Women’s Rights Convention, p. 548
* Sojourner Truth’s Defense of the Rights of Women, p. 551
* Middleton, “What Feminism Means to Me,” p. 552

**Th 9/22 20th Century Women's Movement**

**Politics of Location Statement Due** (statements must be handed in during class AND posted to your assigned discussion board on the class myCourses site)

**Readings:**

* Roth, “The Making of the Vanguard Center: Black Feminist Emergence in the 1960s and 1970s,” p. 558
* Garcia, “The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse,” p. 565
* Shanley, “Thoughts on Indian Feminism,” p. 573
* Equal Rights Amendment:  <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>

**Online Activity #1:** Politics of Location Take Away (due by midnight Friday, September 30th)

**Week Four**

**T 9/27 Thinking About Gender**

**Readings:**

* “Learning Gender,” p. 70-71
* Piercy, “A Work of Artifice,” p. 48
* DiFranco, “not a pretty girl,” p. 69
* Henley & Freeman, “The Sexual Politics of Interpersonal Behavior,” p. 84
* Gould, “X: A Fabulous Child’s Story,” p. 108

**Th 9/29 Age, Disability, Race, and Class**

Don’t forget! **Online Activity #1:** Politics of Location Take Away (due by midnight Friday, September 30th)

**Readings:**

* Older Women’s League, “Older Women:  The Realities,” p. 434
* Hershey, “Rights, Realities, and Issues of Women with Disabilities,” p. 448
* Lorde, “Age, Race, Class, and Sex:  Women Redefining Difference,” p. 454

**Week Five: Racism, Privilege, Homophobia, Sexism, & You**

**T 10/4 Test #1 Online** (must be completed by midnight, October 4th)

**Th 10/6 Racism**

**Readings:**

* McIntosh, “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” p. 388
* Tatum, “Defining Racism: Can We Talk?,” p. 380
* Majaj, “Boundaries:  Arab/American,” p. 464
* Geiser, “Why Race Matters to a White Dyke,” p. 468

**Week Six**

**T 10/11 Follow Monday course schedule**

**Th 10/13 Homphobia and Sexism**

 **TEAM TOPIC PROPOSALS DUE**

**Readings:**

* Pharr, “Homophobia and Sexism,” p. 416
* Trujillo, “Chicana Lesbians:  Fear and Loathing in the Chicano Community,” p. 423
* McGuire, “Livin’ in a Gay Family,” p. 427

**Week Seven**

**T 10/18 Body Politics**

**Readings:**

* “Female Beauty,” p. 119
* Wolf, “The Beauty Myth,” p. 120
* Wong, “When I Was Growing Up,” p. 125
* Chernik, “The Body Politic,” p. 130

**Th 10/20 Body Politics Online Discussion #1 Activity**

**Readings:**

* Rodriguez, “Breaking the Model,” p. 134
* Higgenbotham, “Teen Mags:  How to Get a Guy, Drop 20 Pounds, and Lose Your Self-Esteem,” p. 93
* Wolf, “Brideland,” p. 61
* Video Cip: Kilbourne, *Killing Us Softly IV*

 **Test #2 Online – to be completed by midnight on Monday, October 24th**

**Week Eight**

**T 10/25 Reproductive Health**

**Readings:**

* “The Health Care System,” p. 316
* Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, “The Politics of Women’s Health in the United States,” p. 317
* Zuniga, “The Feminization of AIDS,” p. 331
* McCormick,” Breast Cancer Activism: Moving Beyond the Mammography Debate,” p. 343
* Rivera, “Uninsured, Exposed and at Risk—But Not Powerless,” p. 324
* Ms., “Breast Cancer: Is it the Environment?,” http://www.msmagazine.com/apr2k/breastcancer.asp

**Th 10/27 Reproductive Rights**

 **Annotated Bibliographies due**

**Readings:**

* “Reproductive Justice,” p. 347
* Prochoice & Prolife Overview, p. 356
* Willis, “Abortion:  Is a Woman a Person?,” p. 348
* Roberts, “Killing the Black Body,” p. 365
* Fried, “Abortion in the U.S.: Barriers to Access,” p. 367

**Week Nine**

**T 11/1 Complicated Questions**

**Readings:**

* Males, “Parental Consent Laws: Are They a “Reasonable” Compromise?”, p. 357
* Cathy Young, “Reproductive Rights for Men?” (Handout in myCourses site)
* “Bill Would End Abstinence Only Funding,” <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20043507-503544.html>
* “What’s Your Reproductive Rights IQ?”, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhjl4m6Y3k4>

**Th 11/3 Women and Violence**

**Readings:**

* “Sexual Violence Against Women & Girls,” p. 499
* Griffin, “Rape, the All-American Crime,” p. 499
* Sanday, “Naming and Studying Acquaintance Rape,” p. 511

**Week Ten**

**T 11/8 Women and Violence continued**

**Readings:**

* Jones, “Battering: Who’s Going to Stop It?,” p. 482
* Lin & Tan, “Holding Up More Than Half the Heavens,” p. 496
* Scarce, “Same Sex Rape of Male College Students” (link in myCourses site)

**Th 11/10 Team work day**

**Week Eleven**

**T 11/15 Women and Work**

**Readings:**

* “Women and Work,” p. 179
* Bravo & Santa Anna, “An Overview of Women and Work,” p. 180
* National Committee For Pay Equity, “Questions and Answers on Pay Equity,” p. 185
* Holcomb, “Friendly for Whose Family?”, p. 194
* Bravo, “Sexual Harassment,” p. 202
* Jensen, “Exploding the Stereotypes: Welfare,” p. 226
* Albelda, “New Welfare Regime, Same Single-Mother Poverty Problems,” p. 231

**Th 11/17 Women and the Family**

**Readings:**

* “Women and the Family,” p. 243
* Mainardi, “The Politics of Housework,” p. 188
* Lehrer, “Family and Women’s Lives,” p. 244
* Box: European Child-care: Policies and Programs, p. 226
* “Crittenden, “The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued,” p. 191
* Ackelssberg & Plaksow, “Why We’re Not Getting Married,” p. 274

**Week Twelve: Team Projects**

**T 11/22 Online Discussion #2 Activity**

**Th 11/24 No Class**

**Week Thirteen**

**T 11/29 Consciousness Raising**

**Readings:**

* Sarachild, “Consciousness Raising:  A Radical Weapon,” p. 553
* Voices of Women’s Studies Graduates, p. 632-635

**Th 12/1 Team Work Day**

**Week Fourteen**

**T 12/6 Team Poster Presentations (10 teams)**

 **Self and Team evaluations due**

**Th 12/8 Team Poster Presentations (10 teams)**

 **Self and Team Evaluations due**

**Week Fifteen: Wrapping Up**

**T 12/13 Test #3 Online** (Test must be completed by midnight December 13th)

**Poster Presentation Take Away Discussion Board Posting due by midnight December 13th**

**Th 12/15 Last Class**

 **Revised Politics of Location Statements due**

 **Class Take Away Discussion Board posting due by midnight Dec. 16th**