

St. Martin's University
Spring 2008

WS 400
Feminist Theory and Practice

SYLLABUS (Revised 1/4/08)

Faculty:

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Course Description:

This advanced study in women's studies is designed to serve as a capstone integration course for students with minors in this field. We will review key issues in feminist theory, research, and practice, with a particular emphasis on gender in national, international and transnational settings. This course will also prepare students to participate in the 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women in Madrid Spain in July 2008. The conference will explore such issues as gendered aspects of migration and immigration, illegal trafficking of women, women as cheap labor, racism, xenophobia, and violence against women. In addition, participating scholars and activists will examine new avenues, strategies, and ties among people who are fighting for gender equality and social justice around the World. Following the conference students will study gender issues in Spain, with particular attention to the relationship between gender and nationalism in the Basque Country.

Required Texts:

- Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, eds. *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational Perspective*, 2nd edition, McGraw Hill, 2006.
- Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, Carrol & Graf, 2006.
- Alan Rickman and Katharine Viner, eds. *My Name is Rachel Corrie*, 2006, Nick Hern Books; New Ed edition.

Recommended Text:

- Hamilton, Carrie, *Women and ETA: The Gender Politics of Radical Basque Nationalism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Course Expectations, Requirements, and Grading

- **Research paper (30 points)**

This assignment is designed to prepare you for the study-abroad portion of the class and to provide you with some experience of conducting feminist research. You are expected to choose a topic you would like to research, formulate a clear question or thesis, summarize the existing literature pertaining to your topic and reach a conclusion. You have the option of supplementing your library research with some basic field research to be conducted while in Spain. You can use the course's text and the recommended book (Hamilton) as the main sources for your paper or conduct library research on the topic. Please note that a college level research paper should be grounded primarily in literature found in scholarly books and journals. While these sources can be found online, non-scholarly material found online should be used sparsely.

You will receive detailed instructions and guidance on how to write this paper as well as an additional list of topics. If you have another idea for a topic please contact us to get it approved.

The following are examples of possible topics:

1. What can we learn from the experiences of women in ETA on the interplay between gender and politics?
2. Using Basque nationalism as a case in point, explain what is unique about feminist analyses of nationalisms? What do they allow us to see that non-feminist analyses don't?
3. How is the interplay between gender and nationalism in the Basque country affected by such phenomena as post-nationalism and globalization?
4. Compare and contrast the interplay between gender and nationalism in the Basque country with either Palestine or the North or Ireland.

Length: 10-12 double spaced pages (including references)

Due: April 25 (Draft); July 30 (final paper)

Paper Presentation (10 points)

You are expected to prepare a 10 minute presentation based on your research paper. Your presentation could take the form of a power point presentation, a professional poster, or another creative method you prefer. Your presentation should NOT consist of you reading your paper out loud.

Due: April 25

- ***Reflections & Discussion blogs (2 X 15 =30 points)***

1. Reflections on class materials

You are expected to post on the course's webpage 3-4 paragraphs of your reflections and insights in response to the various readings on the subject introduced in the section. In order to stimulate group discussion, please address the integration questions at the end of each section. You can address in the course's text book (Grewal & Caplan). In addition, you are to read your classmates' reflections and summarize in one paragraph the differences and similarities in your reactions to the issues presented in the section.

Due: Your own reflections are due on Monday (by 5pm) and your response to your classmates' reflections are due the following Friday (by 9pm). Please check the outline for particular dates and chapters.

2. Reflections on field trip

You are expected to post at least 3 entries: one prior to the trip, one during the trip and one after the conclusion of the field trip experience. Each entry should be 3-4 paragraphs long. You will receive more information regarding this assignment as the semester progresses.

- **Response paper (15 points)**

You are expected to write a response paper to the play *My Name is Rachel Corrie*. Your response should contain a brief description of the content of the play and the context surrounding it. Questions you may want to consider but are not limited to include: How is this book related to course's themes? What are some of the issues in the play that you were able to empathize with? What are some of the issues that you had problems with? How is your life similar to/different than Rachel's? What are some of the issues that you are passionate about outside your immediate personal life and family?

Length: 2-3 double-spaced pages

Due: March 31

- **Book review (15 points)**

You are expected to write a review of the novel The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf.

The review should contain a brief description of the novel's content but consist mostly of your ORIGINAL analysis of how the novel addresses issues and questions that we have explored in this class. You will receive more instructions on how to write a book review and some guiding questions prior to the due date.

Length: 2-3 double-spaced and typed pages.

Due: April 14

Grading

Course grades will be based on a 100 point scale. The cut offs are: 93 and above A; 90 A-; 87 B+; 83 B; 80 B-; 77 C+; 73 C; 70 C-; 67 D+; 60 D; below 60 E.

Academic Honesty

It is expected that all students enrolled in this class support the letter and the spirit of the Academic Honesty Policy as stated in the college catalog. Dishonest conduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, forgery, and alteration of records, along with any lying, deceit, bribery, coercion, or intimidation for the purpose of influencing a grade or for any other academic gain. Action against a student determined to have violated the academic honesty policy can range from a reduction of the grade on an assignment, through failure of a course, to suspension or even dismissal from the academic program, the department, or the college.

Course Outline:

This course would consist of several face-to-face class meetings as well as several online components. The dates for the in-class meetings are as follows:

- Friday, January 18, 12:30-2pm
- Friday, February 8, 12:30-2pm
- Friday, February 29, 12:30-2pm
- Friday, April 25, 12:30-2pm.

Week 1 (Jan 14—20) Social and Historical Constructions of Gender I

Read: Grewal & Kaplan pp. 1-51

Week 2 (Jan 22-27) Social and Historical Constructions of Gender II
Read: Grewal & Kaplan pp. 52-98

Week 3 (Jan 28-Feb 3) Social and Historical Constructions of Gender III
Read: Grewal & Kaplan pp. 99-147

Week 4 (Feb 4-10) Gendered Identities in Nations and States I
Read: Grewal & Kaplan pp. 149-194

Week 5 (Feb 11-17) Gendered Identities in Nations and States II
Read: Grewal & Kaplan pp. 195-263

Week 6 (Feb 19-24) Representations, Cultures, Media, and Markets I
Grewal & Kaplan pp. 265-313

Week 7 (Feb 25-March 2) Representations, Cultures, Media, and Markets II
Grewal & Kaplan pp. 314-81

Week 8 (March 2-9) Gendering Globalization and Displacement I
Grewal & Kaplan pp. 383-462

Week 9 (March 10-16) Gendering Globalization and Displacement II & Feminist Futures
Grewal & Kaplan pp. 463-498

March 14-March 25 Spring Break

Week 10 (March 25-30)
Read: *My Name is Rachel Corrie*
Due: Response paper by March 31

Week 11 (March 31—April 6)
Read: *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (first half)

Week 12 (April 7-13)
Read: *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* (finish)
Due: Book review by April 14

Week 13 (April 14-20) Feminist Research Methods: Theory and Practice I
Read: Material relevant to your research paper

Week 14 (April 21-27) Feminist Research Methods: Theory and Practice II
Read: each other's draft papers

Week 15 (April 28-30) Moving Beyond the Classroom

Study Abroad preliminary information

Destination: Madrid, Spain & Basque Country
July 1-15, 2008

Program outline:

July 1 – Arrival in Madrid, Spain

July 2 – Orientation & sightseeing

July 3-8 – Conference: The 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Madrid Spain. For more information see: www.mmww08.org

July 9 – Travel to Basque Country

July 10-14 – Field study in the Basque Country

July 15 – Return to US or travel independently in Europe.

Estimated Student Costs

--Program expenses **\$1250**

(includes: conference registration, lodging, ground transportation in Spain and program in the Basque country)

Expenses you are responsible for:

- Airfare: **\$900-1200**
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- Passport if you don't have one **\$100**
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- Travel insurance (depends on type of insurance and length of stay)
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- Food **\$150**