Instructor: Dr. Michelle Rowley  mrowley1@umd.edu
Teaching Assistants/Section Leaders
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phone  x50981
Office:  Women’s Studies Department, Woods Hall
Class Session:  Tu. 2:00 – 3:40 p.m.
Location  Francis Scott Key - 0102
Office Hours:  Wednesday 9:00 – 12:00  (by appointment only outside these hours)

Course Description and Objectives:
My goal in Introduction to Women’s Studies: Women and Society is to provide you with the analytical skills that enables you to see how the socio-economic and political dimensions of the world in which you live are gendered. This course will give you the analytical skills needed to explore and question constructions of race, class, sexuality, and gender relations within society. We will draw on a social science, multi-disciplinary perspective to examine how systems of oppression and privilege are created, and enforced. I would like this course to be meaningful to you on a personal level so throughout the semester our course-work and class discussion will prompt you to reflect on your own location within racialized, and gendered power relations.

This course places great emphasis and value on collaborative learning, peer teaching and group work. You will work in Learning Groups throughout the semester for class-based activities. All submissions, including personal reflections, must be analytical and should critically engage the material that we are reading in class. I am always excited to see students draw on their many skills, these include but are not limited to your wide range of musical knowledge, artistic ability, use of technology, and creative writing skills. Please feel free to use all of these skills in your presentations and submissions and do see your Learning Group as an opportunity to explore these skills in synergistic ways.

If you have ANY questions at all please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours, on e-mail, or by appointment. Learning is most effective when it is enjoyable so let’s get ready to be excited about the ways in which we will learn from each other this semester!

Instructor’s expectations:
Surely you will feel short changed if your instructor came to class unprepared or disinterested in your learning. Learning is collaborative and contractual, so please

1. Complete assigned readings by the date they are listed on the syllabus.

2. Get class notes from one of your classmates if you miss a class.

3. Do not miss out on participating in our class discussions. Turn off all cell phones and do not text or IM during our class sessions.
4. Do not send assignments via email. Email etiquette: Please do not send emails without subject headings or appropriate salutations, e.g. “Hey Prof.” or any variation thereof, is not an appropriate salutation.

5. Attend all classes, including your discussion section and be on time. Be mindful of the fact that there will be several in class Learning Group Activities. These cannot be redone outside of class since the collaborative element is a part of the assessment. All absences must be appropriately documented e.g. doctor’s note. These will be kept on file until your final grade is submitted. It is your responsibility to sign in to each session. The sign in sheet will be at the front of the class.

Religious Observances
The University System of Maryland policy "Assignments and Attendance on Dates of Religious Observance" provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform me in advance if you are going to be absent from class due to any religious observance.

Accommodations for Students with Special Needs
If you have any special needs related to your participation in this course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your performance in this course, you should meet with me to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. At the discretion of the instructor, some accommodations may require prior approval by Disability Services. All communication will remain confidential.

Required Materials:
- Additional materials posted on Blackboard (Bkbd)

Required Event Attendance (See course-outline for further details)
When: Monday, March 1, 2010 . 7PM
Where: Kogod Theatre, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
Cost: Free
What: Creative Dialogue: Internet Identity - Women in a Virtual World
When we log on to a computer network we are able to put our 'self' on line. How do women today choose to represent themselves in their online identities? Michelle Rowley from the Department of Women's Studies moderates this discussion with Alice Marwick, one of the leading researchers in the study of internet identity, and Gesel Mason, whose new work Women, Sex & Desire: Sometimes You Feel Like A Ho, Sometimes You Don’t, is a multi-media investigation on how women navigate sex, desire, choice, and perception. How do women and teenage girls choose to define themselves in a virtual world? This discussion explores some of the implications related to women and the internet today from a feminist perspective. Kogod Theatre, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center FREE

- All films/documentaries will be available on Dial Access at the Non-Print Media at Hornbake Library (Ground Floor). These screenings are mandatory and may form part of your mid-term and final course evaluation. I’ve also provided you with the viewing length for each film so that you
will schedule your time appropriately. Remember to take your I.D. with you to Hornbake. I’ve also provided the call numbers in the event that you wish to screen these pieces before the scheduled date. If there is no call number it means that the film is a personal copy and will only be available for the period listed. The following documentary/films will be available on dial access:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title and Call Number</th>
<th>Dates Available at Hornbake</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The F-Word A Video About Feminism 10 mins.</td>
<td>02/02/10 (In Class Screening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Just Telling Stories</td>
<td>03/22/10-03/20/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maid in America (57 min.)</td>
<td>04/05/10-04/12/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing Us Softly 3 (34 mins. HF 5827.K56 2000)</td>
<td>In class screening (20 mins)</td>
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Blackboard Information
Additional required course material has been placed on Blackboard under course documents. These articles have been identified on your course outline and can be accessed via: https://elms.umd.edu

In conjunction with email (mrowley1@umd.edu) Blackboard will be our primary mode of communication and means of keeping the course dynamic. If you have any questions or problems with bkbd, please contact (301)405-1400 or elms-support@umd.edu.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the email address that you use is the one that is listed on Blackboard. If there is a different email address listed you will not receive class correspondence.

After completing WMST 200 you should be able to:

- recognize and discuss the role of power in gender relations.
- identify and de-construct hierarchies of race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender from a number of disciplinary perspectives.
- discuss how gender, racial, sexuality, and class oppressions manifest in both institutional and interpersonal relations
- formulate strategies for resisting and dismantling oppression
- reflect on your own location within a wide web of power relations

Week 1: 01/26/10
Overview of Course (course-outline, course work, reading materials).
Introduction – Teaching Assistants/Discussion Sections
Blackboard Demonstration

Unit One: What is Women’s Studies? Exploring the Discipline.
Many of you have taken this course as part of your GEN. ED. requirement but may not be quite sure what women’s studies is all about. In this unit we will begin to think about women’s studies as an area of study. What are some of its premises? What are some of the theoretical approaches, and who are some of the theorists who have built and are building the area of study? Is the field of Women’s Studies feminist? Could there be women’s studies without feminism? In this unit, as you read it is important that you are alert to how different constituencies of women apply, reject or nuance the meanings of Women’s Studies and feminism(s).
Week II: 02/02/10 – Building a Conceptual Framework (I) (Keywords: women’s studies, feminism, second wave)

In Class-Screening: The F-Word

hooks, bell. *Feminism is For Everybody*. pp. I-19


Shaw, Susan and Janet Lee “What is Women’s Studies” Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings. I-17

Learning Activity One:
Read the given op-ed piece
(http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/ellen_goodman_women_20091223/)

In groups of three complete the following exercise, Drawing on the material read and viewed this week (which means you should reference at least two authors) discuss your perspective on a) What is women’s studies? and, b) feminism. Is it possible to have Women’s Studies without feminism? c) Remember to provide an overview of the author’s main argument/s.
Time Allocation: 30 mins. To be submitted before leaving with each participant’s name on script.
15 points

Building a Conceptual Framework (II).
Having addressed the two main frames of the class “Women’s Studies” and feminism what do we do with them? In the following two weeks we will look at some of the concepts, modes of analysis and critiques that are central to women’s studies. First I will ask you to think about analytical approaches that do not center the idea of “feminism.” Further, we will begin to add to our conceptual bag. For example, what does gender mean? How might we think differently about economic activity, the health care system, work, family, war if we applied a gender analysis? In addition to an examination of the concept “gender” I will introduce the concept of intersectionality to help you think about the many levels at which discrimination operates in society.

Week Three: 02/09/10 (Keywords: Third Wave Feminism, womanism, persistence of inequality)


Deborah Rhode. “Denials of Inequality” Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings


Week Four: 02/16/10 (Keywords: gender, social construction, power, performativity)

Week Five: 02/23/10 (Keywords: privilege, matrix of domination, intersectionality)

Crenshaw, Kimberle “Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color” Feminist Theory: A Reader. ed. Wendy Kolmar (Bkbd)


Learning Activity III: This in-class activity requires that you work in your learning group to construct an artistic or diagrammatic representation of your collective understanding of intersectionality. (25 points)

TAKE HOME MIDTERM EXAM – 26th-27th February, 2010. MUST BE RETURNED BY 8 p.m. 27th February, 2010.

WEEK SIX: YOUR CLASS ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK WILL BE THE CREATIVE DIALOGUE: INTERNET IDENTITY - WOMEN IN A VIRTUAL WORLD. SEE COURSE-OUTLINE. (03/01/10). KOGOD THEATER – CSPAC (7 p.m.) THERE WILL BE A SIGN-IN SHEET.

Unit Three: Gender within Popular Culture
In this unit we will look at the ways in which bodies are gendered and racialized within popular culture. In the coming sessions I will ask you to think about the gendered and raced assumptions and deployments at work with advertising, music and virtual realities.

Week Seven: 03/09/10 Gender, Race and Technology (Keywords: technology, gendered/raced hierarchies)


Optional: “Your Race Affects Whether People Write You Back”

SPRING BREAK 03/16/10

Week Eight: 03/23/10 On Beauty and Other Myths (keywords: male gaze, branding, representation)

In Class Screening and Discussion: Killing Us Softly 3 (twenty min.)

Steineim, Gloria. Sex, Lies and Advertising” Gender, Race and Class in Media: A Text Reader. Gail Dines and Jean Humez. (Blackboard)


Bordo, Susan “Never Just Pictures” The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader. N.Y.: Routledge (posted Blackboard)


hooks, bell. “Beauty Within and Without” Feminism is For Everybody.

Learning Activity IV: Bring a copy of your favorite magazine with you to class (20 points)

Unit Four: Examining Institutionalized Discrimination

In this final phase of the course we will look at the ways in which various identity scripts are at work within the institutions that structure society. We will examine what the term “prison industrial complex” means. We will connect the use of this term to an understanding of the “business” of incarceration. The film that you will watch will prompt you to think about the ways in which theater is able to help incarcerated women to process their lives and tell their stories. Our reading material for the next two weeks will examine the politics and economics of imprisonment and prompt us to think about a constituency of our population that often remains invisible. We will also, look women as workers in a number of different contexts. We will look at wage differentials among different constituencies of men and women (i.e. not just sex but race) we will also examine questions of hostility and discriminatory practices in the workplace and discuss the possible ways in which work places create normative practices of inclusion/exclusion that are gendered, classed and raced.

Week Nine: 03/30/10 The Prison Industrial Complex (Keywords: prison, industrial complex, story telling)
Remember to watch “We Just Telling Stories” on Dial-Access BEFORE class on 03/30/10.
Davis, Angela. Are Prisons Obsolete?

Week Ten: 04/06/10 Intersections of Women’s Studies and Disability Studies


Schneider, Marj. “From Personal Tragedy to Group Consciousness: The Movement for Disability Rights” Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions.

Learning Activity V: Why do(nt) We Stare?
http://www.youtube.com/emoryuniversity#p/u/0/jALsDVW63wo (15 points)

Week Eleven: 04/13/10 Women and Work
Remember to watch Maid In American on Dial Access before 04/13/10

Week Twelve: 04/20/10 Challenging Heteronormativity.
Griffin Horace “The Own Received Them Not: African America Lesbians and Gays in Black Churches” The Greatest Taboo. 110-123

Pharr, Susan. Homophobia a Weapon of Sexism.


Rich, Adrienne “Compulsory Heterosexuality”

Week Thirteen: 04/27/10 Women’s Health and Reproductive Well-Being
Remember to watch “If These Walls Could Talk” BEFORE class on dial-access
hooks, bell. “Our Bodies, Ourselves” Feminism is For Everybody.

Chapter Six – Health and Reproductive Rights in Women’s Voices, Feminism Visions

Week Fourteen: 05/04/10 Recap, Discussion of Finals.

Class Activity VI: Writing a Feminist Manifesta (15 points)