WNS 412: Women’s Studies Seminar (3)  
Spring 2015

Days/Times of Meeting: MWF 11:00  
Office: Cook Room 338
Place of Meeting: Cook 110  
Professor: Susan Conradsen
Office Phone: 236-5494  
Email: sconradsen@berry.edu
Office hours: M 9:30-10; 12:50-2:10; W 9:30-10; 12:50-5:10; F 9:30-10; 12:50-3:10. I’m always willing to provide individual assistance – come by or email to find a time that works well for both of us!

Course Description: Students undertake research projects in which they apply the theories and methodology of women’s studies to their major fields. PR: WNS 210.

Textbooks:  
1) The Rich and the Rest of Us by Tavis Smiley & Cornel West  
2) Hand to Mouth: Living in Bootstrap America by Linda Tirado  
3) Unspeakable things: Sex, Lies, & Revolution by Laurie Penny  
4) I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

Purpose of Course: The purpose of this course is threefold. First, students will conduct independent research projects that will link the knowledge and skills they have developed in their women’s and gender studies courses to their major fields of study. Second, students will participate in one of feminism’s central tenets – activism – by working together to tackle an important issue in our community. Third, students will read and discuss feminist theory and learn about some of the current issues in women’s and gender studies. This course will provide a capstone experience for women’s studies students that will enable them to synthesize the information and ideas they have encountered in their women’s and gender studies courses.

Student Learning Outcomes:  
By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Understand and engage in discussing current issues in the field of women’s and gender studies.
2. Understand how women’s studies applies in their major field, including research methods employed and resource materials available in both fields by designing and completing an intellectually coherent, informed, and meaningful individual research project.
3. Use the knowledge they have gained in their women’s studies classes by developing and implementing ways to educate and empower others by engaging in activism within their community.
4. Engage in dialogue (written and oral) about complex and at times controversial issues with others in a thoughtful, direct, open-minded, and respectful manner.

Assessment Measures: Achievement of these outcomes will be measured by satisfactory completion of course requirements, including participation in class meetings, outside assignments, the research project, the activism project/portfolio, leading class, and attending out of class activism events outside of class time. Measurement of class participation will include attendance and other methods as adopted by the class.
Methods of Instruction: We will meet three times a week for discussion of the readings. In addition to lecture and class discussion, other methods will include films and group work. I will consult with each of you about your individual research projects as necessary, and we will work together on the activism project.

**Evaluation components and grading scale:**
The final grades will be based on:

- Class participation/Readiness 25%
- Class Leadership 10%
- Activism Portfolio 30%
- Research project 35%

Grades will be assigned on the following point scale:

- **A** = (92-100%)
- **A-** = (89.5-91.9%)
- **B+** = (87.5-89.4%)
- **B** = (81.5-87.4%)
- **B-** = (79.5-81.4%)
- **C+** = (77.5-79.4%)
- **C** = (71.5-77.4%)
- **C-** = (69.5-71.4%)
- **D+** = (67.5-69.4%)
- **D** = (60-67.4%)
- **F** = (<60%)

Attendance Policy: Regular, punctual attendance is expected and is necessary to achieve a passing grade in this course. Roll will be taken daily. Any student missing more than one class meetings without a written medical, athletic, or academic excuse is subject to having points deducted from their final grade. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out about and making up whatever you have missed. Students must attend the out of class activism events.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to be familiar with and follow the policies in the College Catalog. Documentation of all sources is required.

Accommodation Statement: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodation in this course are encouraged to contact the Academic Support as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Special Requirements:

1. **Class Participation (25%):** Given the discussion nature of this senior seminar course, your preparation, attendance, promptness, and involvement in each class meeting will be vital to your own learning, your grade (1/4th), and the success of the course as a whole. Students are expected to attend every session, read the assignments before the day they are listed in the syllabus, prepare to discuss the readings, and participate in class discussion. Class readiness will be assessed in a method determined by the class, and
participation grades will be given periodically throughout the course with suggestions for how to improve your grade.

2. **Class Leadership (10%)**: You will choose a topic within the field of gender studies that interests you and will teach the class about this topic. You will assign 2 articles for the class to read, one of which will be an academic article, which you will email us AT LEAST FIVE DAYS BEFORE. Your task will be to teach the class about this topic focusing on the latest data/statistics/issues using the entire class hour. Topics can not include readings already being discussed, and will be assigned on a first come basis. On the day you lead the class you will turn in a 1-2 page annotated bibliography with at least FIVE reputable sources on this topic that you used in your presentation, including 1 full length academic journal article; bring 10 copies of this to hand out to your classmates.

3. **Activism Project/Portfolio (30%)**: In the early weeks of the course, we will be scheduling various activism events that we will do as a class. This will include film screenings and community service outside of class time. In addition, you will create a portfolio that will include several components: a) Personal Reflection: journal type entries/descriptions describing your experience doing the activism, pictures from the events, discussion of your particular contributions to the project; b) Reading reflections: connecting content from the assigned books to the events/your experiences, a summary of what you gained from the *I am Malala*; c) Your Activist Mission Statement: discuss your sense of yourself as an activist, your history of activism and current involvement, and your future plans, what are you passionate about changing? What are some organizations/people that are doing things on this issue? Research about them and include information about them; d) Inspiration: discuss two people that inspire you that have made a difference (what they did, etc).; find several examples of the written word that inspires you, describe other things/images/memories/etc that inspires you.

4. **Individual Research Project (35%)**: This may be a paper. If you write a paper, it should meet the following criteria:
   - Be 15 pages long;
   - Display careful and thorough thought;
   - Accurately incorporate, cite, and document at least 10 sources;
   - Reveal knowledge of the current state of research in the field;
   - Present a focused idea in a clear, comprehensive, and logical manner;
   - Apply a women’s studies perspective to your major field.

For those choosing to write a paper, the deadlines are as follows:
   - A one page paper topic description and annotated bibliography with at least 5 sources is due on ________________
   - First draft of your paper is due on _______ (turn in two copies).
   - Students will peer review one other student’s paper. Reviews due on _____.
   - Final drafts of papers are due on ________ in class (turn in original and peer reviewed copy).

Rather than write a paper, some of you may choose a more creative format for your major project, such as a performance, a display of some sort, a zine, or a short story or series of
poems. If you elect to pursue a non-paper option, I will work with you to create specific criteria for this project; that is, I will make clear to you what I expect from the project, which should amount to the equivalent of the kind of paper described above. In all cases, I will require a written component of some sort, as well as significant research and documented resources.

**Schedule of Classes**

*Note: The syllabus is subject to change, with notice.*

*Please complete the readings and assignments for the day next to which they are listed.*

1/12 Introduction; planning day by class for schedule

1/14 Malala – Prologue, Chp 1-4

1/16 Malala – Chps 5-8

1/21 Malala - Part Two (Chps 9-15)

1/23 Malala Nobel Peace Talk & Class planning for Film

1/26 Malala – Part Three (Chps 16-20)

1/28 Malala - Parts 4 & 5 (Chps 21- Epilogue)

1/30 Smiley – Intro, Chps 1 & 2

*Paragraph due on proposed project including title, thesis, plan of action (including type of final product)*

2/2 Smiley – Chps 3 & 4

2/4 Smiley – Chps 5 & 6

2/6 Smiley – Chp 7

2/9 Tirado – Intro – Chp 3

2/11 Tirado – Intro – Chps 4-7

2/13 Tirado – Chp 8 – Afterword

2/16 Outside Class Work day

2/18 Penny – Intro & Chp 1

*Outline (single spaced) of your proposed project including your 10 academic sources*
2/20 Penny – Chp 2

2/23 Penny – Chp 3

2/25 Penny – Chp 4

2/27 Penny – Chp 5 & Afterword

3/2 1) hooks, bell (1989). Feminism: A Transformational Politic in *Race, Class & Gender, 710-717.*
2) On Being White at [http://www.feminist-reprise.org/docs/fryewhite1.htm](http://www.feminist-reprise.org/docs/fryewhite1.htm);


3/6 1) [http://www.egs.edu/faculty/judith-butler/articles/gender-is-extramoral/](http://www.egs.edu/faculty/judith-butler/articles/gender-is-extramoral/)

Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory

3/16 Film: Southern Comfort

*R*esearch project in GOOD shape is due for peer review (a complete paper/project to be evaluated) for peer review

3/18 Film: Southern Comfort

3/20 1) The Transfeminist Manifesto at [http://eminism.org/readings/pdf-rdg/TFMANIFESTO.PDF](http://eminism.org/readings/pdf-rdg/TFMANIFESTO.PDF);
3) Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence at [http://www.terry.uga.edu/~dawndba/4500compulsoryhet.htm](http://www.terry.uga.edu/~dawndba/4500compulsoryhet.htm)
4) [http://powderroom.jezebel.com/trans-feminism-what-is-it-is-it-necessary-506571126](http://powderroom.jezebel.com/trans-feminism-what-is-it-is-it-necessary-506571126)

3/23 Outside Class Work Day
Peer Reviews Due by noon to my office (turn in what they gave to you and your detailed suggestions for improvement)

3/25
2) http://nova.wpunj.edu/newpolitics/issue34/brenne34.htm
3) Under Western Eyes: Revisited by Mohanty at http://www2.hawaii.edu/~dasgupta/Mohantysigns.pdf

3/27 Possible Film: Pray the Devil Back to Hell

3/30 Possible Film: Pray the Devil Back to Hell

4/1 Outside Class Work Day

4/6 Student Presentation

Research Project Due

4/8 Student Presentation

4/10 Outside Class Work Day

4/13 Student Presentation

4/15 Student Presentation

4/17 Student Presentation

4/20 Student Presentation

4/22 Current Events Day/Class Chosen topic

4/24 Current Events Day/Class Chosen topic

4/27 Wrap Up

**Bibliography/Recommended Reading**

Atwood, Margaret (1968). *The Handmaid’s Tale*
Barnett, Rosalind and Rivers, Caryl (2004). *Same Difference*
Basu, Amrita (2010). *Women’s Movements in the Global Era*
Baumgardner, Jennifer & Richards, Amy. (2005). *Grassroots*
Bennetts, Leslie (2007). *The Feminine Mistake*

Blades, Joan (2006). *The Motherhood Manifesto*

Block, Jennifer (2007). *Pushed: The Painful Truth about Childbirth and Modern Maternity Care*


Bloom, Lisa (2011). *Think: Straight Talk for Women to Stay Smart in a Dumbed Down World* 

Bornstein, Kate (1998). *My gender workbook* 

Boylan, Jennifer Finney (2003). *She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders* 


Collins, Gail (2009). *When Everything Changed* 


Crittendon, Anne (2001) *The Price of Motherhood*  


Dines, Gail (2010). *Pornland*  

Douglas, Susan & Michaels, Meredith (2004). *The Mommy Myth* 


Ehrenreich, Barbara (2001). *Nickel and Dimed* 

Ensler, Eve (1998). *The Vagina Monologues* 


Gaudiani, Claire & Brunett, David Graham (2011). *Daughters of the Declaration* 


Hanauer, Cathi & Gilchrest, Ellen (2002). *The Bitch in the House* 


hooks, bell (2000). *Feminism is For Everybody*

Inness, Sherrie (2007). *Geek Chic – Smart Women in Popular Culture*

Jeffries, Sheila (2005). *Beauty & Misogyny*


Katz, Jonathan (2007). *The Invention of Heterosexuality*


Leibovich, L. (Ed.). (2006). *Maybe Baby: 28 writers tell the truth about skepticism, infertility, baby lust, childlessness, ambivalence, and how they made the biggest decision of their lives.*


Malveau, Julianne & Perry, Deborah (2002). *Unfinished Business: The 10 Most Important Issues Facing Women Today*


Newits & Anders (2006). *She’s Such a Geek*

O’Reilly, Andrea (2011). *The 21st Century Motherhood Movement*

Paul, Pamela (2005) *Pornified*

Rothenburg, P. S. (2007). *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*

Samuels, M. (2011). *Run Like a Girl*


Simmons, Rachel (2009). *The Curse of the Good Girl*


Staal, Stephanie (2011). *Reading Women: How the Great Books of Feminism Changed my Life*

Steinem, Gloria (1983). *Outrageous Acts & Everyday Rebellions*

Sycamore, Mattilda (2004). *That’s Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*

Tolman, Deborah (2002). *Dilemmas of Desire*

Valenti, Jessica (2009). *The Purity Myth*


Warner, Judith (2005). *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety*
Williams, Florence (2012). *Breasts: A Natural and Unnatural History*