

REVISED AND CURRENT AS OF March 23, 2020

Brooklyn College
Spring 2020

WGS 1001

Intro to Women's Studies

Instructor: Prof. Gwendolyn Shaw

Lecture: Monday/Wednesday 2:15-3:30pm, (Section MW2, number 37797), room 4141
Boylan – VIRTUAL HOURS TBD

Credits: 3

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-4:00pm

Contact: gwendolyn.shaw@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Course website: <https://wgs1001shaw20.commonsc.gc.cuny.edu>

Course Description

An interdisciplinary introduction to the study of women. From the first and second waves of feminism to grrl power's cyberactivism and empowerment through femininity. Material and social constructions of sex and gender. Power and dynamics, which drive and structure women's lives. Expressions and representations of women's experiences. Starting fall 2018 satisfies Pathways Flexible Core US Experience in Its Diversity requirement.

Readings

Readings for this course will be distributed as links and PDFs via the course site. Types of sources include primary sources, museum and web resources, scholarly articles, critical essays, and more.

In addition to the readings, this course will require museum visits and field trips, most of which offer free entry with a CUNY (or Brooklyn College) ID card. You will be required to visit some if not all of the following:

- The Brooklyn Museum
- The Museum of Modern Art
- The Whitney Museum of American Art
- Interference Archive
- Herstory Archives
- The Barnard College Zine Library

Objectives

- Recognize and identify multiple ways power is unequally distributed across society, with an emphasis on gender and sexuality but not excluding race, class, ability, ethnicity, documentation and more
- Formulate an argument on a relevant topic supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources
- Present ideas clearly and concisely in spoken and written form
- Revise and self correct for improvement in communicative competence
- Demonstrate ways that you have learned through in-class participation and assigned work

- Demonstrate nimble thinking and the ability to make connections between seemingly disparate material

Assignments

Presentations and Papers (book and art reviews, etc).	20%
Blog Posts, Comments*, and Longer Writing Assignments	40%
Weekly annotation activity	15%
Independent Study*	25%

*You will have to make 10 comments on the posts of your peers by the end of the spring term, 4 on peers' posts and 6 on peers' presentations. This counts for part of your participation grade.

**Parallel to our course of study, you will identify and pursue an area of interest, culminating in a small research project that highlights what you have discovered over the course of the term. We will share material discovered in class and develop it into a project of your choosing by the end of the term.

Accessibility Policy

I will make any and all reasonable accommodations per Brooklyn College and CUNY policy, as well as on an as needed basis. Please see me or the office in charge of Disability Services for assistance.

Attendance Policy

Not surprisingly, students who attend class often do better than those who do not. Chronic lateness and absences will adversely affect your grade.

Attending class and being present is about more than just being physically in class: when you are distracted by technology, devices, conversations, etc., you are not able to be fully present in class. Please be responsible and respectful with your devices, conversation, and other items that demand your attention. More than two absences will begin to adversely affect your grade. Excessive lateness is tantamount to being absent, and will also affect your grade negatively over time.

A note on blog posts: In general, I expect blog posts to be about 200-250 words long. Assigned "papers" and more substantial writings (often ones that have their own assignment page) should be longer and more thoughtful, about 500-600 words. EVERY BLOG POST SHOULD INCLUDE A PICTURE! Be sure to make that picture the "featured image" on the post. Otherwise our site will look ugly. All work for this course should be submitted via the site.

Assignments turned in late will be docked one full letter grade/ten percentage points, meaning that the highest grade you could hope to receive on any late work submitted would be a B. Please be in touch if you are unable to meet due dates for support or an extension.

Grading Basics

A grades are earned by doing and turning in all assigned work on time, attending all classes (or doing make up work for any missed classes beyond the second absence), and demonstrating

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(showing me through your work) a sustained intellectual curiosity, willingness to learn, and the ability to engage with the course material in a meaningful way

B grades are earned by doing most of the assignments on time, not missing any major assignments, and demonstrating (showing me through your work) a sustained intellectual curiosity, willingness to learn, and the ability to engage with the course material in a meaningful way

C grades are earned by doing the majority of assignments, not missing major ones, and demonstrating (showing me through your work) a sustained intellectual curiosity, willingness to learn, and the ability to engage with the course material in a meaningful way

Not that it needs to be stated, but students cannot earn credit for work that they do not do or turn in; I will not give credit for work that I cannot evaluate.

Good to Know: There are a few things you can do to make sure you are getting the fullest credit for all aspects of this course:

1. Come to class and be present (actually *present* in both mind and body)
2. Be on time, or as timely as possible. Chronic lateness is tantamount to absences after a certain point
3. Do all projects and assigned course work
4. Make sure that the work you do is your own. Seriously. ‘nuff said.

Also, it is expected and encouraged that you take your own notes over the course of this class. Large points, artists, titles of works, dates, and other important information is a good start. Write down things that interest you, that you want to know more about, or that relate to other things you know or are learning about in other classes.

Course Outline

Unit	Week		Topic Covered		
Intro	1	Jan27	Introduction		
		Jan29			
History	2	Feb 3	A brief history of misogyny		
		Feb 5	Con't		
	3	Feb 10	First Wave: Suffrage		
		Feb 12	NO CLASS!		
	4	Feb 17	NO CLASS!		
		Feb 19	Second Wave & Civil Rights		

	5	Feb 24	Second Wave & Civil Rights		
		Feb 26	Con't		
	6	Mar 2	Women of Color Feminism		
		Mar 4	Women of Color Feminism		
	7	Mar 9	TBA		
		Mar 11	TBA		
Women's Studies as a Tool and a Weapon	8	Mar 16	Women of Color Feminism and its legacies		
		Date	Topic (see course site for reading)	Posts are due the day they are listed here!	Comments Due
	9	Mar 23	Check in and begin online class format	Blog Post 5 (Due March 30): How are you doing? How are you getting by and staying busy, or at least not bored out of your mind? Please share as much or as little as you'd like, and if you need me to know that you don't want to post, you can email me.	
				Blog post 6 (Due Mar 30): Oral History about the women's liberation movement and intersections with civil rights	
		Mar 25	Women of Color Feminism and its legacies	Blog Post 7: How to use hypothesis to annotate a text	
	10	Mar 30	Women of Color Feminism and its legacies	Blog Post 8: <i>This Bridge Called My Back</i> : Choose a passage from	Comment on another post that dealt with

				<i>TBCMB</i> , highlight it in hypothesis and explain what it is that you cited and why it is important to the larger text	a different reading
		Apr 1	Disidentifications & Culture Wars and Third Wave	Blog Post 9: What does it mean to disidentify with something? Can you identify a time in your life when you disidentified with something you encountered? (note a passage in hypothesis with a definition and explain what you think Muñoz means in your post)	Comment on someone else's Post 9. Does their definition align with yours?
11		Apr 6	Judith Butler Week!	Blog Post 10: What are the culture wars, and what do they have to do with feminism? (Use the Faludi and Heywood readings to find an appropriate definition— whose definition are you using?)	Comment on a colleague's post— does their take on the culture wars make sense to you?
TUES		Apr 7	Con't -- This Tuesday is a CUNY Wednesday	Blog Post 11: What is Judith Butler talking about?: What does it mean for gender to be a performance? Can you think of an example of performing gender (from personal experience or in the culture at large?)	
12		Apr 13	NO CLASS!	SPRING BREAK	

	Apr 15	NO CLASS!	SPRING BREAK	
13	Apr 20	Material Feminisms		
	Apr 22	Con't	Blog Post 12: What is material feminism and what does it offer that we haven't yet seen?	Comment on someone's post mentioning something you hadn't thought of. What is it and how did it expand your thinking?
14	Apr 27	Toni Morrison Week		
	Apr 29	Present on your own Morrison text	Blog Post 13: Book Report —tell us about the Morrison book you read. Give us plot details and major characters, but also a spoiler alert if necessary. Draw connections between Morrison's essay <i>Playing in the Dark</i> and the book you read.	Comment on the post of someone who read a different book than you. How is it similar or different (from what you can tell) to your book.
15	May 4	Space & Place		
	May 6	Feminist geographies	Blog Post 14: Show that you have learned: Choose three posts/reading responses that you have done that were most important or impactful to you. What about them or the week's topic was most important to your understanding of feminism, or the world more generally?	

	16	May 11	Fine tuning independent study projects		
		May 13	Last Day of class		
	17	May 18	Final Day	Independent Study Due	

College Policies

Academic Integrity:

According to the Academic Integrity Policy, “The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.”

Sexual and Gender-based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX

According to Sexual and Gender-based Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX, “Brooklyn College is committed to fostering a safe, equitable and productive learning environment. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment on or off campus can find information about the reporting process, their rights, specific details about confidentiality of information, and reporting obligations of Brooklyn College employees on the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs website. Reports of sexual misconduct or discrimination may be made to Public Safety (719.951.5511), the New York City Police Department (911 or a local NYPD precinct), Patricio Jimenez, Senior Investigator and Title IX Coordinator (718.951.5000, ext. 3602), or Michelle Vargas, Assistant Director of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs (718.951.5352).” For more information please visit:
<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/offices/diversity.php>

Disability Services:

According to Disability Services, “In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at (718) 951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.”

Bereavement:

According to the Student Bereavement Policy, “Upon approval from the Division of Student Affairs, the student is allowed one week, commencing from the day of the death of the loved

one, of excused absence. Should the student feel that he or she needs additional days, these should be discussed with individual course instructors and/or the Division of Student Affairs. The Division of Student Affairs will contact the student's faculty and academic staff of the student's courses. Faculty and academic staff will be advised that extensions must be granted to the student for the period of one week of excused absence. Further extensions may be negotiated with the student when he or she returns to campus. Students are encouraged to discuss options with their instructors.” For more information, please visit:
<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/policies/bereavement.php>

Religious Observances:

According to Consideration of Religious Observances, “Please bear in mind that due to religious holidays and related religious observances, a number of students will not be able to attend classes or take examinations. New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we “make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his [or her] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he [or she] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.” For more information, please visit:
<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/enrollment/registrar/bulletins.php>