

Philosophy 2306
Philosophy and Feminism
Professor Christine Koggel

Fall 2025: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:35 – 3:55

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30- 2:30 (in-person or virtual by appointment)

Room 3A46 Paterson Hall, ext. 3239

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TEXTBOOKS: WE WILL BE READING MOST OF THE TWO TEXTS LISTED BELOW. THE WHOLE OF EACH IS AVAILABLE ONLINE FROM THE LIBRARY. YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE CHAPTERS THAT WE WILL READ OR READ THEM ONLINE. I HAVE PROVIDED LINKS BELOW. YOU WILL NEED TO SIGN INTO LIBRARY SERVICES TO ACCESS THESE. OR YOU CAN PURCHASE THESE TWO BOOKS.

The Gender Knot: Unraveling our Patriarchal Legacy. **Third Edition**. Allan G. Johnson.

Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014. [The Gender Knot : Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy - EBSCO](#)

Living a Feminist Life. Sarah Ahmed. Duke University Press, 2017. [ProQuest Ebook Central - Book Details](#)

All other readings (as noted on the “Class-by-Class Reading List” are **posted on Brightspace (under ARES)**. Please note that material may be changed or added. You will be given advance warning if this happens. Also note that there may be some classes that will be recorded in advance for viewing on Brightspace.

Course Description (from the calendar):

PHIL 2306 [0.5 credit]

Philosophy and Feminism

A study of philosophical issues arising from feminism. The course includes discussions of the historical roots of feminism, the role of reason and emotion, key concepts such as oppression, sexism, equality and difference, feminism and philosophies of race and of disability, and selected moral/political issues.

Prerequisite(s): 0.5 credit in philosophy or second-year standing.

Lectures three hours a week.

Course Description for fall 2025

Philosophy has played a key role in the emergence of feminism at the same time as the discipline has been largely male-dominated and prone to propounding and disseminating discriminatory beliefs about women. Feminist theory has, therefore, come to play a crucial role in uncovering biases and in its critical analysis of theories of all kinds in the history of Philosophy. In this course, we review some of the key concepts used by feminist philosophers and explore some of the history of the emergence and development of feminism. From here, we can begin to grasp that feminism has itself become a rich, varied, and broad area of philosophical inquiry and that there are many kinds of feminisms and feminists.

In recent times, we often encounter beliefs that discrimination on the basis of gender has been eliminated and that women have achieved equality. We challenge these assumptions and beliefs through an examination of the key concepts of patriarchy, sexism, oppression, equality and sex/gender. In the process of exploring these concepts central to feminist theory, we pay

attention to the history of feminism as well as to contemporary accounts of difference and varied experiences and what this means for feminist theory, feminism, and various topics. This examination then forms the base from which we explore the relevance of gender to moral and political issues related to issues of identity, difference, knowledge, intersectionality, law and policy, moral decision-making, and responsibility.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, a successful student should:

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge of the differences between some contemporary and some canonical views of feminism and (and in) philosophy.
- 2) Explore the applications, including the limits, of the theories studied, and examine possibilities for increasing knowledge and new lines of inquiry.
- 3) Practice the principle of charity and the strongest possible interpretations of selected texts.
- 4) Be able to write about complex central ideas and arguments from selected sources.

PLAGIARISM: The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, AI and computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE: I will not ban electronic devices from class (I have done this in previous classes!), but I quite dislike it when students are involved/engaged with using electronic devices in class. I will be upfront in admitting that I find it distracting and disrespectful, and other students often confirm that they too find it distracting and disrespectful when they see fellow students engrossed in non-lecture/non-class activities! NOTE that the Premiers of Ontario and Quebec have banned cell phones in public school classrooms! Please turn off (or silence) your cell phones and put them away at the start of class. The use of laptops for the **sole purpose** of notetaking is permitted.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It is a requirement of the course that you read the readings and attend classes. The “Class-by-Class Reading List” below identifies the readings. Opportunities for in-class participation will be a bit limited because of class size. There will be opportunities for participation on readings and class lectures/discussion as explained in 3) below.

- 1) **Mid-term exam (in-class) worth 25% of the final grade.** The exam will be on the readings on material covered in Weeks 1-6 and on the class lectures and discussion of this material. The midterm exam review questions will be available no later than October 9th. You will write the exam in class on October 14th. I am not looking for a particular length but for concise and precise answers – as much as you can physically write in 80 minutes.
- 2) **Class attendance (worth 10% of the final grade).** Because this course is centred around the readings and lectures, nothing is more important than attending class. You are adults and we will play this by ear, but at least at the start (when I’m learning your names) and into the semester, an attendance sheet will be sent around for you to sign. There are a total of 24 classes so calculating this grade will be fairly easy. For example, attending 22-24 classes will get you the 10% and attending half will get you about 5%.
- 3) **Class participation (worth 25% of the final grade).** Your participation grade will be based on you doing the readings, asking relevant questions, or making contributions related to the readings and class lectures, and on you doing these things at various points throughout the semester.

There are **2 ways** to satisfy this requirement:

A) **The first option** will have you sign up for about 10 pages of the Sara Ahmed chapter readings (list of page numbers will be posted on Brightspace – no doubling up and first come first serve). In those classes in which we cover chapters of Ahmed’s book (Tuesday and Thursday of Week 9 and Tuesday of Week 10) your job will be to outline/summarize (up to a page long) what Ahmed is arguing in the 10 pages you select. You will then upload this summary page on Brightspace during or just after the class in which your reading is being covered. In the class in which your pages are being covered, you will select and **read to the class** a paragraph or two of the 10 pages that capture what Ahmed is saying/claiming/arguing. You will ask the class questions or get the class to engage in a discussion of the Ahmed you have selected to discuss. Each student will take no more than 10 minutes, and this will mean about 6 students per class in which we cover the Ahmed chapters.

B) **The second option** will have you do between 10 and 15 postings on Brightspace throughout the semester. I will use a points system that allows 1-3 points (not percentages) per contribution. Higher points will be assigned to contributions that engage with the texts, the lectures, and each other (respectfully). The more points you have at the end of the semester, the higher your grade out of 25. Here are examples of what you can do:

- a) Ask questions/make comments about the material covered in class lectures by sending an email or posting a comment/question on Brightspace (so that classmates can contribute answers to the question). Discussion group forums will be set up on Brightspace every week.
- b) Respond (respectfully) to a question or comment made by a classmate on Brightspace. I will be reviewing the questions and/or discussion as it happens so that I can assess whether the material/ideas/concepts/arguments are being grasped and understood well.
- c) Ask questions or contribute to the in-person class discussion. Follow this up with an email reporting what your in-class question or contribution was. I will be reviewing the question and/or contribution so that I get to know you, your understanding of the readings, and whether I missed something in my responses to questions/comments.
- d) Contribute to discussion groups – when these are set up in some of the classes.

4) TWO short assignments on readings (one single space or two double-spaced pages) (each worth 5% of the final grade for a total of 10%). Assignment information is marked on the Class-by-Class Reading list.

The first of these is assigned in Week 4 before the mid-term exam in Week 7. This early assignment allows you to get feedback on your work before the mid-term. The other will be assigned after the fall break and before the final exam. The assignment topic will be provided on Brightspace the morning of the day the readings are covered in class. The topics will test comprehension of a particular aspect of a particular reading. You will take 10-15 minutes to write these near the beginning of class.

5) Final exam worth 30% of the final grade. There will be a final exam scheduled during the examination period in December which will be worth 30% of the overall grade for the course. The format for the final will be similar to that for the midterm. The final exam will not be cumulative but will focus on the material covered after the midterm (Weeks 7-13).

CLASS-BY-CLASS READING LIST

Week 1 - Feminism and Philosophy

September 4 - Introduction to the course.

Read “All My Pronouns: How I learned to live with the singular *they*” by Annie Fadiman.

Harper’s Magazine, August 2020:

https://harpers.org/archive/2020/08/all-my-pronouns-the-singular-they/?campaign_id=3&emc=edit_MBAU_p_20200804&instance_id=20968&nl=morning-briefing®i_id=90327141§ion=whatElse&segment_id=35233&te=1&user_id=b8ad05e9d7c9874ad944b617c9a70ea8

Decide on your preferred pronouns and let us know.

Week 2 – Key Concepts

September 9 - Readings from Allan Johnson’s *The Gender Knot*: Chapter 1 (3-25) and from Marilyn Frye’s *The Politics of Reality*, Chapter on Oppression (**on Brightspace**).

September 11 - Readings from Johnson’s *The Gender Knot*: Chapter 2 (26-47) and from Frye’s *The Politics of Reality*, Chapter on Sexism (**on Brightspace**).

Week 3 – Key Concepts

September 16 - Readings from Johnson’s *The Gender Knot*: Chapter 3 (48-72).

September 18 – Readings from Anne Fausto-Sterling’s *Sexing the Body*, Chapter 1, “Dueling Dualisms” (1-29) (**on Brightspace**).

Week 4 – Historical Roots of Feminism

September 23 - Readings from Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Chapter IX “Of the Pernicious Effects which Arise from the Unnatural Distinctions Established in Society” (**on Brightspace**).

Assignment topic 1 on the readings for September 25th on Brightspace Sept 25 by 11 a.m.

September 25 - Readings from John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Woman*, Chapter 1 (**on Brightspace**) and from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Introduction (**on Brightspace**).

Assignment 1 in-class.

Week 5 – Kinds of Feminism

September 30 – Readings from *The Gender Knot*: Chapter 5 (92-121) and from Rosemary Tong's *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, "Introduction: The Diversity of Feminist Thinking" (1-9) (**on Brightspace**).

October 2 – Readings from Iris Marion Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Chapter 2: "Five Faces of Oppression" (**on Brightspace**) and from bell hooks' *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, Chapter 2: "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression" (**on Brightspace**)

Week 6 – Responsibility, Change, and Difference

October 7 – Readings from Linda Martín Alcoff "The Radical Future of #MeToo: The Effects of an Intersectional Analysis" *Social Philosophy Today* doi: 10.5840/socphiltoday20218980 Online First: August 10, 2021 (**on Brightspace**).

October 9 - Readings from Marilyn Frye's *Willful Virgin: Essays in Feminism* (The Crossing Press 1992) Chapter "White Woman Feminist" (147-169) (**on Brightspace**)

Week 7 – Responsibility, Change, and Difference

October 14 – **In-class Midterm exam on readings from Weeks 1-6.**

October 16 – – Readings from Laurence Thomas "Moral Deference" from *Theorizing Multiculturalism*. (p. 359-381) (**on Brightspace**)

FALL BREAK

Week 8 – Differences and Being Feminist (these two classes will have up to 6 student presentations per class)

October 28 - Readings from Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life*, Chapter 7.

October 30 - Readings from Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life*, Chapter 8.

Week 9 – Differences and Being Feminist

November 4 - Readings from Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life*, Chapter 9. (class will have up to 6 student presentations)

Assignment topic 2 on the readings for November 6 on Brightspace November 6 by 11 a.m.

November 6 - Readings from Susan Wendell "Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability,"
Hypatia, v. 4, no. 2, 1989: 104-124. (on Brightspace)

Assignment 2 in-class.

Week 10 –Differences Revisited

November 11 – Readings from Dean Spade "Mutilating Gender" Spring 2000 (on Brightspace)

November 13 – Readings from Miranda Fricker and Katherine Jenkins "Epistemic Injustice, Ignorance, and Trans Experiences" In *Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, eds. Garry, Khader, & Stone (2017) (on Brightspace)

Week 11 – Is Ethics Gendered?

November 18 – Readings from Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*: Letter to Readers (ix-xxvii), Introduction (1-4) and Chapter 2 (on Brightspace).

November 20 - Readings from Annette Baier's *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics*, Chapter 2: The Need for More than Justice (on Brightspace)

Week 12 – Challenging Norms

November 25 – Readings from Kate Norlock "Perpetual Struggle" *Hypatia* vol. 34, no. 1 (Winter 2019) (on Brightspace).

November 27 - Readings from Sue Campbell "Being Dismissed: The Politics of Emotional Expression" *Hypatia*, v. 9, no. 3, 1994: 46-65 (on Brightspace).

Week 13 – Struggling and Challenging

December 2 – Readings from bell hooks' *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, Chapter 4: Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Amongst Women (on Brightspace) and from Patricia Hill Collins' *Black Feminist Thought*, Chapter 10, "U.S. Black Feminism in Transnational Context" (245-268) (on Brightspace).

December 4 – Readings from Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life*, Conclusion 2: A Killjoy Manifesto.

FINAL EXAM DURING SCHEDULED EXAMS IN DECEMBER

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2025-26)

Assignments:

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically. We no longer allow hard copies to be placed in the department's essay box.

Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

Deferrals for Final Exams:

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](#))

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or religious obligation:* write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the [EIC](#) website.
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* The [Paul Menton Centre](#) for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.
- *Survivors of Sexual Violence:* As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per [Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy](#).
- *Accommodation for [Student Activities](#):* Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Important Dates:

Sept. 3	Classes start.
Sept. 16	Last day for registration and course changes for fall term and fall/winter (two-term) courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
Oct. 13	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 20-24	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 21	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, before the official examination period.
Dec. 5	Last day of fall term classes. <i>Classes follow a Monday schedule.</i> Last day for academic withdrawal from fall term courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for a fall term course.
Dec. 6-7	No classes or examinations take place.
Dec. 8-20	Final examinations for fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Dec. 20	All take-home examinations are due.
Jan. 5	Classes begin.
Jan. 16	Last day for registration and course changes in the winter term.
Jan. 31	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter term courses or from the winter portion of two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
Feb. 16	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 16-20	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 15	Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses.
Mar. 25	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in winter term or fall/winter courses before the official examination period.
Apr. 3	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 8	Last day of two-term and winter term classes. <i>Classes follow a Friday schedule.</i> Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for winter term courses.
Apr. 9-10	No classes or examinations take place.
Apr. 11-23	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 23	All take-home examinations are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:

www.carleton.ca/philosophy

520-2110

Registrar's Office:

www.carleton.ca/registrar

520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:

www.carleton.ca/academicadvising

520-7850

Writing Services:

<https://carleton.ca/csas/support/>

520-3822

MacOdrum Library

<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>

520-2735