

**PSCI 3303A**  
**Feminist Political Theory**

Monday and Wednesdays 1:05-2:25 p.m.  
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Professor Lee MacLean  
Office: Loeb D686  
Office Hours: Monday 12-1 p.m.; Wednesday 12-1 p.m.  
Friday: 10:30-11:15 a.m. and 1:15-2 p.m.  
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This course will introduce students to the Western tradition of feminist political theory. It will begin with a consideration of sexism in both its practical and theoretical manifestations. We will then study various feminist responses to sexism, taking into consideration the different waves of feminist discourse. Topics we examine include the concept of gender; women's diversity and its implications; 'gynocentrism'; 'intersectionality'; gender, capitalism and the family; violence against women; coalition politics; and new approaches to feminist knowledge and feminist agency.

Objectives of the Course:

An important goal of the course is to expose students to the diversity and breadth of feminist writing. It is designed to foster an understanding of key debates in feminist thought, along with a sense of its historical development.

The course is also designed to help students develop their skills of discussion, argumentation and listening. My objective is to foster a classroom atmosphere conducive to respectful, reasoned debate. The course challenges students to engage in critical thinking, to rethink assumptions and resist dogmatism or pat answers. It seeks to teach the importance of careful reading and accurate reporting and to encourage sensitivity in the interpretation of texts. The course also aims to help students become clearer writers.

**N.B** The course proceeds by close textual and contextual study of philosophical texts. Our approach will be **theoretical**.

Prerequisite: third-year standing.

## Required Texts (Available at Haven Books)

A required packet of assigned readings.

## Recommended Texts

Rosemarie Putman Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*.

Third Edition. Westview Press: 2008.

Jagger, Alison M. and Iris Marion Young, ed. *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy* .

Wiley-Blackwell, 2000.

## Course Requirements

True/False Quiz on Oct. 15	10%
Essay of 5-8 double-spaced pages, due Mon. Nov. 3	30%
Take-home Exam, due on the last day of the exam period	50%
Participation Grade	10%

True/False Quiz: As per early feedback guidelines this assignment will be returned by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Quiz: Please be on time for the quiz. The quiz will be written at the beginning of class. To discourage cheating, students who arrive more than 15 minutes late will be unable to write the quiz.

Essay: The essay is to be of 5-7 double-spaced pages with no more than 300 words per page. It is due at the beginning of class on due Mon. Nov. 3. Please follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The essay will be graded on the basis of criteria which include: clarity, precision, organization, coherent justification, focus, provision of ample evidence and documentation, reflection on course readings and overall grasp of the topic under discussion. A one-page description of these criteria will be distributed when the paper topics are handed out. My goal will be to return all graded essays that are passed in on time to students within two to three weeks of the date the essay is due.

Policy regarding late papers: A penalty of one half point out of 30 per day will be imposed on all late papers not excused by a doctor's certificate. (i.e. A paper that is one day late and assigned an original grade of 21 / 30 will become 20.5 / 30). Unless you have documentation proving that serious unforeseen circumstances, such as illness or family

affliction, have arisen, you can expect the penalty to be fairly and consistently applied. Late essays will be accepted up to and until the end of classes.

Take-home Exam: Take-home exam: The take-home assignment sheet will be handed out on the last day of classes. There will be a choice of two questions. You will be asked to write a response of 6-9 double-spaced pages to one of the questions.

Please also note the following:

- Late essays not submitted directly to the instructor must be placed in the drop-box in the Political Science Office, Loeb B640. They will be date-stamped. The drop-box is emptied **every weekday at 4 p.m.** and all items collected at that time are date-stamped with that day's date. Essays placed in the drop-box after working hours are date-stamped the following day.
- Essays cannot be submitted to the Department of Political Science by fax.
- It is not acceptable to hand in the same assignment for two or more courses.
- The Undergraduate Calendar states "To obtain credit in a course, students must meet all the course requirements for attendance, term work, and examinations." (Academic Regulation [AR] 2.1)

Class Etiquette: Each person who speaks in class should be given the floor. Talking or whispering to other students while someone else is speaking is destructive of the quality of class deliberation; it may therefore result in deductions from the participation grade.

Class readings: Students are welcome to make suggestions for readings to be included in future versions of the course.

### **Schedule of Readings**

(Numbers in brackets refer to readings in the packet)

Mon. Sept. 8 *Introduction*

Wed. Sept. 10 *Diverse Approaches to Sexism*

1) Carole Pateman, "Feminism and Democracy" from her *The Disorder of Women* (Stanford, 1990)

2) Iris Marion Young, "Five Faces of Oppression," ch. 2 of her *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, (Princeton, 1990)

Mon. Sept. 15

3) Virginia Sapiro, "Feminist Studies and Political Science--And Vice Versa," from Anne Phillips, ed. *Feminism and Politics* (Oxford, 1998)

4) Marilyn Friedman, "Multicultural Education and Feminist Ethics," *Hypatia* 10 No. 5 (Spring 1995)

Wed. Sept. 17

- 5) Martha Nussbaum, "Women and Cultural Universals," ch.1 of her *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford, 1999)
- 6) Leila Ahmed, "Gender and Islam," from E. Weed, ed. *Coming to Terms* (Routledge, 1989)
- 7) Patricia Monture, "I Know my Name," from Geraldine Finn, ed., *Limited Edition* (Fernwood, 1993)

Mon. Sept. 22

- 8) bell hooks, "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Between Women," from *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*. (South End Press, 1984).
- 9) Marilyn Frye, "A Lesbian Perspective on Women's Studies," from *Willful Virgin* (Crossing Press, 1992)
- 10) Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Sex and Class: Women Defining Difference," from her *Sister, Outsider* (Crossing Press, 1984)

Wed. Sept. 24 *Doctrinaire Sexism and its Critics from the First and Second Waves:*

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile Or, On Education*, Allan Bloom, trans. pp. 357-369 (On Reserve)
- 11) Mary Wollstonecraft, excerpt from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, from Miriam Schneir, ed. *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings* (Random House, 1972)
  - 12) Christine Pierce, "Natural Law Language and Women," from her *Immovable Laws, Irresistible Rights: Natural Law, Moral Rights, and Feminist Ethics* (University Press of Kansas, 2000).

Mon. Sept. 29 *Classics of the Second Wave*

- 13) Simone de Beauvoir, *Introduction to the Second Sex*, (Vintage, 1989)
- 14) Recommended: Alison Jaggar, "Political Philosophies of Women's Liberation," from *Women and Philosophy*, Sharon Bishop and Marjorie Weinzweig, eds. (Wadsworth, 1979)

Wed. Oct 1

- 15) Shulamith Firestone, "The Dialectic of Sex," excerpt from Alison Jaggar and Paula S. Rothenberg, eds., *Feminist Frameworks* (McGraw Hill, 1984)
- 16) Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women," excerpt from Alison Jaggar and Paula S. Rothenberg, eds., *Feminist Frameworks* (McGraw Hill, 1984)

Mon. Oct. 6 *Gynocentrism*

- 17) Iris Young, "Humanism, Gynocentrism and Feminist Politics," from her *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays* (Indiana University Press, 1990)

18) Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism Versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminism" from Nancy Tuana and Rosemarie Tong, eds. *Feminism and Philosophy* (Westview, 1995)

Wed. Oct. 8

19) Carol Gilligan, "Woman's Place in Man's Life Cycle," from Linda Nicholson, ed., *The Second Wave*, (Routledge, 1997)

Mon. Oct. 13 Thanksgiving; no University classes

Wed. Oct. 15 True/false test;  
Film: T.B.A

Mon. Oct. 20 *Gender, Capitalism and the Family*

20) Margaret Benston, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," from Alison Jaggar and Paula S. Rothenberg, eds., *Feminist Frameworks* (McGraw Hill, 1984)

21) Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Feminism, Family and Community," *Dissent* 29 Fall 1992

Wed. Oct. 22

22) Linda Nicholson, "Feminism and Marx: Integrating Kinship with the Economic," from Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell, eds., *Feminism as Critique* (University of Minnesota Press, 1987)

23) Vandana Shiva, excerpt from *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development from Political Ideologies*, Matthew Festenstein and Michael Kenny, eds. (Oxford, 2005).

Mon Oct. 27 *Recent Feminist Reflections on Violence against Women and Women's Agency*

24) Kimberle Crenshaw, "Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color," from Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, eds., *Feminist Theory: A Reader* (McGraw-Hill, 2004)

25) Catharine MacKinnon, "Are Women Human?" (Interviewed by Susan G. Cole) *Herizons* Winter 2007

Wed. Oct. 29

26) Sharon Marcus, "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention" from Judith Butler and Joan Scott, eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (Routledge, 1992)

27) Carine M. Mardorossian, "Toward a New Feminist Theory of Rape", *Signs* (Vol. 27 No. 3, Spring 2002) 743-777

Mon. Nov. 3 Essays due;

Film: T.B.A

Wed. Nov. 5 *Coalition Politics and the Third Wave of Feminism*

28) Margaret Christakos, "The Craft that Politics Requires: An Interview with June Jordan," *Fireweed* (36) Summer 1992

29) Charlotte Bunch, "Making Common Cause," from Lisa Albrecht and Rose M. Brewer, eds., *Bridges of Power: Women's Multicultural Alliances* (New Society Publishers, 1990).

30) Introduction, *Catching a Wave : Reclaiming Feminism for the 21st Century*, Rory Dicker and Alison Piepmeier, eds. (Northeastern University Press, 2003).

31) Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, "Third Wave Manifesta" from Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, eds., *Feminist Theory: A Reader* (McGraw-Hill, 2004)

Mon. Nov. 10 *Diversity, Agency and Knowledge*

32) Sandra Harding, "Reinventing Ourselves as Other," *American Feminist Thought at Century's End: A Reader*, Linda S. Kauffman, ed. (Blackwell, 1993).

Recommended: Sandra Harding, "Re-thinking Standpoint Epistemology," in *Feminist Epistemologies*, Linda Alcoff, ed. (On reserve).

Wed. Nov. 12

33) David J. Kahane, "Male Feminism as Oxymoron," in Tom Digby, ed. *Men Doing Feminism* (Routledge, 1998).

-Anne Russo, "We Cannot Live Without Our Lives," from Chandra Talpade Mohanty et al. eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (On reserve).

Mon. Nov. 17 *Rethinking the Category of Gender*

34) Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes", from Mohanty et al. eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Indiana University Press, 1993)

Wed. Nov. 19

35) Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," Ch. 18, *The Second Wave*

36) Susan Bordo, "Feminism, Post modernism and Gender Skepticism," in Linda J. Nicholson, ed. *Feminism/Postmodernism* (On Reserve)

Mon. Nov. 24

37) Iris Marion Young, "Gender as Seriality: Thinking About Women as a Social Collective," from Barbara Laslett, et. al eds. *Rethinking the Political* (University of Chicago Press, 1995)

Wed. Nov. 26

38) Alison Jaggar, "Globalizing Feminist Ethics," from Uma Narayan and Sandra Harding, eds., *Decentering the Center*. (Indiana University Press, 2000).

Mon. Dec. 1 *Feminism, Militarism and Global Politics*

39) Cynthia Enloe, "Decisions, Decisions, Decisions" from *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*, in Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, eds., *Feminist Theory: A Reader* (McGraw-Hill, 2004)

-Take-home exam will be handed out  
-Conclusion

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### Academic Accommodations

**For students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (9500 University Drive) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your letter of accommodation, **no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 7, 2008**, for December examinations, and **March 6, 2009**, for April examinations."

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance ([www.carleton.ca/equity](http://www.carleton.ca/equity)).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**Plagiarism:** The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

**Oral Examination:** At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

**Submission and Return of Term Work:** Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with

that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

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

**Course Requirements:** Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

**Connect Email Accounts:** The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.

**Carleton Political Science Society:** The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email [carletonpss@gmail.com](mailto:carletonpss@gmail.com), visit our website at [poliscisociety.com](http://poliscisociety.com), or come to our office in Loeb D688.