

Ann Cvetkovich
Fall 2021
Tuesdays 11:35-2:25 (in person)

Note for Majors:

This single-term course replaces the WGST 3809/3810 sequence previously required for the WGST major. For students completing their degrees under the old calendar, WGST 3001 plus another 3000-level course will complete the requirement.

WGST 3001 Theory and Research in Feminist Social Transformation

This new course is designed to provide foundations in both theory and method especially for Women's and Gender Studies majors. Students will be introduced to key theoretical issues that structure the field with particular emphasis on intersectional connections with the other areas of study that are also housed within the Institute: Critical Race Studies, Sexuality Studies, and Disability Studies. (Students who are completing Minors in those areas are also welcome to take the course.). Our interdisciplinary critical tools will also include Indigenous, decolonial, and transnational approaches as we seek to explore how feminist approaches to knowledge can facilitate institutional and social transformation.

In our focus on methods of inquiry, students will consider how research practices, both quantitative and qualitative, are transformed by critical feminist theory. How can critical theory inform the questions we ask and the ways we answer them? What are feminist research ethics? Our work will include exercises in experiential learning – such as ethnographic observation, archival research, interviews, and reports on personal experience – that will build practical research skills.

The course is also designed to encourage the formation of a cohort amongst our majors; finding ways to connect with each other and build community in the classroom will be priority at this time when so many have been separated or isolated due to the pandemic. The course will be thus be conducted in person as much as possible, although it may be necessary to have some sessions via Zoom -- or to meet in person with smaller cohorts in order to allow greater intimacy.

Readings

Readings will mostly be in essay format and available via ARES on Brightspace. Possible authors will include: Audre Lorde, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Jose Munoz, Judith Butler, Claudia Rankine, Leanne Betamosake Simpson, Saidiya Hartman, Christina Sharpe, Eve Sedgwick, Katherine McKittrick, Lisa Lowe, and others.

Assignments

Class participation including weekly discussion forum posts via Brightspace: 35%

Three short – 500-750 words – writing exercises: 30%

Research proposal – including bibliography, abstract, and class presentation: 35%