

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO, LONDON, CANADA
WOMEN'S STUDIES AND FEMINIST RESEARCH
WINTER TERM 2016

WS3350G: Feminism Across Borders

TIME & LOCATION: Tuesdays 10:30am – 1:30pm, AHB 2B02
INSTRUCTOR: TBA
OFFICE HOURS: TBA
EMAIL: _____

Course Description:

Rapid globalization and resulting “Third-wave Feminism” has challenged Western feminism’s universalization of women’s experiences as arbitrary and restrictive. A singular depiction of women under patriarchal tyranny without incorporating cultural, historical and religious differences undercuts the complexity of women’s issues which have gained new currency in post 9/11 clash of civilizations, Global War on Terror and rising fear of Islamic fundamentalism. Women’s education and gender inequality in extremist societies, including issues like child marriages, veiling and genital mutilation, have become causes of urgent debate in recent years. In light of these developments, is an inclusive feminism possible, or indeed feasible?

This course reads exploratory texts in tandem with critical essays to examine the implications of new feminist discourses arising from issues of relativism, cultural imperialism and terrorism, and whether these changing understandings can help in the internationalization of feminist thought and action.

Required Readings: (From UWO Bookstore)

Hanif, Mohammed. *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. *The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Joya, Malalai, and Derrick O’Keefe. *A Woman among Warlords: The Extraordinary Story of an Afghan Who Dared to Raise Her Voice*. New York: Scribner, 2009.

Satrape, Marjane. *Persepolis*. New York: Pantheon, 2003.

Yousafzai, Malala with Christina Lamb. *I am Malala*. London: Little, Brown and Company, 2013.

Relevant extracts from the following books will be made available on OWL. These will also be kept on reserve at Weldon Library:

1. Basu, Amrita. *Women’s Movements in the Global Era*. Boulder CO: Westview Press, 2010.
2. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003.
3. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Robin L. Riley and Minnie Bruce Pratt, eds. *Feminism and War: Confronting US Imperialism*. London: Zed, 2008.
4. Narayan, Uma. *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminisms*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
5. Perera, Suvendrini, and Sherene Razack. *At the Limits of Justice: Women of Colour on Terror*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.
6. Additionally, select video films or documentaries will be shown in class. Details will be made available in the course outline before classes commence.

Objectives:

By the end of this course,

- Students will be able to identify key issues and debates within international feminist discourse, focusing on the challenges posed by “Third World” women to dominant ideas about feminism, and articulate their ideas collaboratively through regular class presentations.

- Students will be able to analyze selected literature on this topic and demonstrate the ability to respond critically to the readings and related class discussions through written responses.
- Students will be able to develop their own personal line of argument on global feminist matters of current concern and present it coherently in the final term paper.

Course Structure:

This course will be run as a weekly lecture, followed by seminar discussion. Required readings will be assigned for each week to form the basis of class discussions. Each topic or segment will be introduced by the instructor, (or by a group of students assigned a class presentation), followed by a discussion. Some classes may involve watching films or documentaries and responding to the topics raised. Every student is required to do the essential readings for each class and all the assignments.

Note: This course is subject to change with prior notice.

Evaluation:

1. Class participation (15%)
2. Response paper: 500 word response to issues arising from the first three classes (10%)
3. Book Review: 1500 word paper (15%)
4. Class presentation (20%)
5. Final Term Paper: 2,500 words (40%)

Class participation:

Attendance and active participation is essential to the success of classroom learning. Students should come prepared to discuss the weekly readings, and to contribute to the week's presentations by responding to any questions asked, or by raising relevant questions that may prompt active discussion. The participation grade will take into account engaged listening, thoughtful contributions during class presentations and discussions, and a good attendance record.

Response paper:

The two-page response paper will be due on January 26 in class. The students may choose to respond to any of the topics discussed in the first three classes. This assignment allows the instructor to evaluate the writing skills of the students and to extend help to students early on in the course. This assignment is also useful for familiarizing the students with the expectation level of the instructor regarding the writing of the longer assignments.

Book review:

The book review evaluates the students' ability to apply critical theory to one of the literary texts studied during the course and to develop an argument to support their opinion. The essay should be 5-6 pages long, in MLA style, and will be due on March 8 at the start of the class. This assignment will be marked on content and format both. There should be a persuasive and well-developed argument with a clear statement in the introductory paragraph. The conclusion should sum up the argument and portray a personal stance on the issue in question.

Class presentation:

On the first day of class, students will be grouped (number depending on class size) and assigned days for class presentations. The groups may choose which topic they want to present on.

Every member of the group should participate in the presentation (either by gathering information, writing down material, creating PowerPoint or being the lead speaker e.g.). The group will provide a very brief outline of their presentation to the instructor before they start to allow her to follow their arrangement, with details of names and the contributions made by each member.

The presentation will be 30-40 minutes, followed by questions. The group will have questions ready to initiate discussion. However, the class may also be invited to ask questions and the group should be ready to respond.

The students will be graded (same grade for every member of the group) according to the strength of their argument, presentation skills and tools used, facilitation skills for directing class discussion, and research ability.

Final term paper:

The final term paper will be 8-10 pages long, with a clear development of an argument stemming from all the readings done in class, leading to an informed conclusion that demonstrates a personal stance about a current transnational feminist issue. There should be little or no grammatical or formatting errors.

Students are encouraged to discuss their early drafts with the instructor during office hours and get feedback on their chosen areas.

The final paper will be due at the start of the last class: April 5.

Course Website:

All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>.

Prerequisites:

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites." (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>).

Prerequisites for WS 3350G are **Women's Studies 2220E** or permission of the Department.

Policies:

"This course does not have a final exam; persistent absenteeism may be rendered grounds for failure in the course, in accordance with the policy of the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research."

Attendance: All students registered in this course are expected to attend class each week, arrive on time, stay for the duration, and take an active role in class discussion. Students whose absences from classes and/or tutorials are deemed excessive by the instructor can be debarred from writing the final exam/term paper in the course, according to the procedures established under "Examinations/Attendance" in the 2008 *Western Academic Calendar*.

Use of electronic devices: The use of cell phones in class is not allowed. Laptops can only be used in class for course related purposes. The use of Facebook and other social media is not allowed in class.

Assignments: Hard copies of the assignments are to be handed to the instructor in class on the due date and also by the end of the day to <http://turnitin.com> **as Word documents**.

Late paper policy: Late papers will be penalized 2 points per day (out of 100) after a two-day grace period. In accordance with UWO guidelines, no papers will be accepted after the end of term, without an incomplete form from your Dean's Office.

Drop-Box Policy: Hard copies of late assignments not submitted in class should be deposited in the essay drop box, located across from the Main Office doors, Lawson Hall 3260. Papers received between:

- 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday will be stamped with the current day's date;
- 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday will be stamped with the previous day's date;

- 3:30 p.m. Friday and 8:30 a.m. Monday will be stamped with Friday's date.
- No essays will be stamped with the previous day's date after 8:30 a.m.

Email policy: Students can email the instructor if they have short, course-related questions. (For lengthier questions, students are encouraged to come during office hours, or make an appointment). An answer can be expected within twenty-four hours except on weekends. Any emails received on weekends will be answered on Monday.

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf

Where the missed test or component comprises less than 10% of their final grade, students must make arrangements to make up the assignment with the instructor at least two weeks before the final exam or essay is due.

Turnitin:

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licencing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>.)"

(<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>)

Academic Offences:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/schloff.pdf>

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>

Note for students with disabilities: Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

Lecture Schedule: TBA

Women's Studies Grading Criteria A+ (90 to 100)

One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level

A (80 and up)

Superior work which is clearly above average

- Challenging and specific thesis that is clearly developed • Correct and interesting sentence structure • Sophisticated writing style • Appropriate documentation
- Quotations well integrated into the text, with proper documentation • Evidence of originality or independence of thought • Provision of strong analysis • Complexity, and subtlety in approach to subject
- Well-organized with a logical development of the argument

B (70 to 79)

Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory

- Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs
- Correct sentence structure
- Adequate documentation
- Allowance for some (minor) problems such as:
 - errors in factual content or interpretation
 - some minor errors in terminology or general writing skills
 - occasional lapses in clarity, including vagueness, incompleteness, flaws in structure
- Provision of some analysis

Note: A grade in the range of 75-79 indicates an essay that borders on an A but has some significant flaw that prevents giving out the higher grade.

C (60 to 69)

Competent work, meeting requirements

- Generally correct but tends to provide more description than analysis
- Tends to be too general or superficial in the handling of material
- Weaknesses in argument including a descriptive thesis, a mechanical approach, lack of adequate evidence, documentation, or support
- Problems with grammar or matters of style
- Simplicity of thought, structure, or expression

D (50 to 59)

Fair work, minimally acceptable

- Does not provide an argument or a line of thought
- Major difficulties with logical structure, and expression of ideas
- Topic has not been thought through
- Errors of grammar and diction interfere with understanding
- Over-generalization with inadequate support, evidence, or documentation

F (49 and down)

Fail

- Assignment submitted does not apply to course
 - Basic requirements of the assignment are not met
- Plagiarism with intent to deceive (to be handled by the department)**