

Department of English & Writing Studies

Feminist Literary Theory
English 2240G (001)
Winter 2017

Instructor: Dr. Michelle Hartley
mhartley@uwo.ca | AHB 2G28D
Office Hours: Wed 11:30am-12:30pm or by
appt.

Teaching Assistant: Jeremy Johnston
jjohn387@uwo.ca | IGAB 0N20E
Office Hours: Mon 1pm-2pm

Class Location: Thames Hall 3102

Class Date/Time: Monday 10:30am-
12:30pm, Wednesday 10:30am-11:30am

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department. 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.

Course Description

An introduction to critical debates in twentieth-century feminist literary theory. Students will study (1) the diversity of feminist approaches to literature, literary production, the politics of language, questions of genre and subjectivity; and (2) the intersections among feminist literary theories, post-colonialism, Marxism, anti-racist criticism, queer theory, and post-structuralism.

Objectives:

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- Identify and discuss the main ideas, themes and assumptions of various feminist aesthetic and political movements from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries;
- Adopt a range of feminist perspectives to examine and think critically about the historical, political, economic, social, technological and psychological forces that shape and regulate the idea of woman and the feminine in Western culture and literature;
- Consider how a selection of literary themes and writing strategies are used by feminist writers to re-imagine gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class and nation, and to recognize the ways in which various feminisms inform, critique, and expand upon one another;
- Develop the ability to read, interpret and analyze texts and to produce clear, well-articulated and logical feminist literary criticism supported by adequate evidence from the text(s);
- Write a thoughtful research paper in MLA format by integrating research materials (i.e. secondary sources) and a critical perspective on texts from the course (i.e. primary sources).

Course Materials

Required Texts:

The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Literary Theory. Ed. Ellen Rooney.
Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory. Eds. Katie Conboy, Nadia Medina, and Sarah Stanbury.

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment	Value	Due Date	Length
Participation	10%		
Presentation/Response Paper	15%	5-8 min	750 words
Research Essay	25%	March 25	2000-2500 words
Mid-Term	15%	Feb 15	1 hour
Exam	35%	TBA	3 hours

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Assignments:

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BUT WILL BE PENALIZED 2% PER DAY, INCLUDING WEEKENDS. All assignments must be submitted to me in person or through the English office dropbox so that the time and date of their arrival is acknowledged. Essays may not be faxed, emailed (without express prior permission), or slipped under my door. Papers handed in after 10 days or after the assignment is returned will not normally be accepted. Keep a copy of all assignments until after the submission of final grades. In addition to receiving late penalties, late papers will also receive minimal if any comments and be returned at my leisure.

EVALUATION

Response Paper/Presentation: 15% 750 words/ 3 pages

Response papers are short, but well considered critical writings. The first page or so should consist of a summary of the critical article. You may consult secondary sources such as *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory* available on-line through the library for unfamiliar terms or names to write this summary. Then analyze your response to the article by focusing on one aspect of the argument. Students should avoid unsupported personal opinion, invective, or purely emotional responses. Your responsibility as you present your paper (in 5-10 minutes) is to clearly outline vital points from the critical article and generate discussion on one point with

your response to it. You will be evaluated for the accuracy of your summary and the thought you have put into your response and questioning in addition to how effectively you present the material. *Papers are due one week after presentation. If you miss your presentation date, your paper will only count for 10% rather than 15%.*

Final Paper: 25% 2000-2500 words/ 7-9 pages
 Students must use at least TWO theoretical sources. The *CCFLT* supplies lists of ‘Further Reading’ that will prove helpful. Students may use a response paper as the impetus for their larger paper, but the final paper must differ substantially in scope and argument.

Participation: 10%
 Attendance is mandatory and will not be taken into account except detrimentally when students miss classes. A class depends on your lively, engaged participation and thus your mark will depend on your level of commitment and level of preparedness. Those who have trouble voicing opinions and questions in class may participate by writing out their questions and observations to hand in to me each class. Students will be expected to generate questions in response to their classmates’ presentations and to be prepared to engage with the work following the presentation.

Timetable:

Date	Schedule of Readings and Assignments
Mon. Jan. 9	Intro to course, texts, and expectations
Wed. Jan. 11	Rooney “Introduction” <i>CCFLT</i> ; Conboy et al “Introduction” <i>WB</i>
Mon. Jan. 16	Rooney, “The Literary Politics of Feminist Theory” <i>CCFLT</i> (73-96)
Wed. Jan. 18	Anderson, “Autobiography and the Feminist Subject” (119-35)
Mon. Jan. 23	THE BODY BEGINS: Irigaray, “This Sex Which is Not One” <i>WB</i> (249-56); Weil, “French Feminism’s <i>Ecriture Feminine</i> ” <i>CCFLT</i> (153-171)
Wed. Jan. 25	Martin, “Medical Metaphors of Women’s Bodies” <i>WB</i> (15-41)
Mon. Jan. 30	MacKinnon, “Rape: On Coercion and Consent” <i>WB</i> (42-58)
Wed. Feb 1	Bordo, “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity” <i>WB</i> (90-110)
Mon. Feb. 6	Braidotti, “Mothers, Monsters, and Machines” <i>WB</i> (59-79); Bordo cont’d.
Wed. Feb. 8	Mairs, “Carnal Acts” <i>WB</i> (296-305)
Mon. Feb. 13	Kuhn, “The Body and Cinema” and Review
Wed. Feb. 15	Mid-Term Test
Mon. Feb. 20	READING WEEK
Wed. Feb. 22	

Mon. Feb. 27	SEXUALITY: Schoene, "Queer Politics, queer theory, and the future of 'Identity'" <i>WB</i> (283-302) Wittig, "One is Not Born a Woman" <i>WB</i> (309-18)
Wed. Mar. 1	
Mon. Mar. 6	Chow, "Poststructuralism" <i>CCFLT</i> (195-210); Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" <i>WB</i> (401-17)
Wed. Mar. 8	
Mon. Mar. 13	RACE AND GENDER: Truth, "Ain't I A Woman?" <i>WB</i> (231-32); Williams, "On Being the Object of Property" <i>WB</i> (155-75) Hooks, "Selling Hot Pussy" (<i>WB</i> 113-28)
Wed. Mar. 15	
Mon. Mar. 20	DuCille, "On Canons" <i>CCFLT</i> (29-52) Anzaldua, " <i>La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness</i> " <i>WB</i> (233-47)
Wed. Mar. 22	
Mon. Mar. 27	George, "Feminists Theorize colonial/postcolonial" <i>CCFLT</i> (211-31)
Wed. Mar. 29	Modleski, "Cinema and the Dark Continent" <i>WB</i> (208-29)
Mon. Apr. 3	Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back: a Transsexual Manifesto" <i>WB</i> (337-59)
Wed. Apr. 5	Review

ESSAY BASICS – your response paper needs to follow these guidelines as well.

Formal features: Essays should be written according to the standard essay style: typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, on white 8.5" paper with 1" margins. You should include the title of the essay, your name, the course number, my name, and the date on the top left-hand corner of the first page. Pages should be attached by a paperclip or staple; please avoid binders, plastic report covers, etc. You must use MLA citation style. Let me know whether you are using the 7th or 8th edition. I do not have a preference, but you must make a choice.

Grading criteria: Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text in the form of quotations; rhetorical persuasiveness; syntax, grammar, spelling, which are mechanics; and accurate bibliographic citation will all be factors in the grading of the essay.

Citations: All bibliographic notation should use the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a Works Cited page. Please consult a standard style guide such as the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, which is available in the reference shelves of the DB Weldon Library. See below for information on plagiarism.

Accommodation

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 Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.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

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

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 for such checking 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 licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.