

Core Course Review Documentation

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy, and Culture

Component Area Option? Yes
Yes Cultural and Global Understanding
No Undergraduate Inquiry and Creativity

Proposed Course: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: POLS/WGST 2503

Credit Hours: 3

Proposed by: Political Science Department, Midwestern State University

Date: November 29, 2012

Please document how the proposed course meets each of the following requirements. (You may provide a written explanation or copy and paste the appropriate information from the syllabus.)

Content: *Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect the human experience.*

Students enrolling in **POLS/WGST 2503 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies** will examine the following content:

- The study of gender and identity.
- Examine the impact of gender on perceptions of beauty.
- The role of women in contemporary society.
- Gender based rights in contemporary society.
- Sexual harassment and violence against women.
- Women's reproductive rights.

SKILLS: *Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.*

Students enrolling in **POLS/WGST 2503 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies** develop the following skills:

- Students will display effective communication skills.
- Students will critically examine and analyze gender in contemporary society.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of ethical decision making with regards to gender in a contemporary society.
- Students will demonstrate a contextual understanding of one's place in the global community.

Throughout **POLS/WGST 2503 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies** students will engage in a series of learning activities designed to foster communication skills, critical thinking, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. These activities include classroom discussions that are focused on examining the role of gender in modern contemporary society. During these discussions students will develop their oral communication skills while developing an appreciation of their place in a larger global community as well as the importance of ethical decision making with regard to gender issues in contemporary society. These discussions will take place daily in conjunction with the content delivery of the course. These learning activities will occur regularly throughout the semester. In addition to these regular discussions, students will be required to complete a series of writing projects. The final writing project will be used to assess student progress towards these four learning objectives: critical thinking skills, communication skills, personal responsibility and social responsibility.

ASSESSMENT OF CORE OBJECTIVES: *Assessments should be authentic, intentional and direct. The following four Core Objectives must be addressed in each course approved to fulfill this category requirement:*

Assessment of the state core objectives will be conducted in a final writing assignment that requires students to develop a coherent argument that examines a contemporary issue involving gender in a contemporary society. In this final project, students will be required to critically evaluate rival explanations of gender issues, evaluate the ethical dimensions of the decision-making involved in the contemporary gender issue, demonstrate a consideration of the impact of gender for a larger, global society, and communicate this argument in a written paper. In general the final writing projects will require students to complete the following tasks. Students will be required to explore a contemporary gender issue and critically evaluate existing social theories to identify explanations that best address the contemporary gender issue under consideration. In this examination of the

gender issue students will be required to research the issue and develop an argument for which of the theories examined in class best accounts for the global political issue.

This argument must then be presented in a 4-6 page double spaced written essay. In this essay students will be required to examine the ethical considerations for each contemporary gender issue in order to develop a sense of the importance of personal responsibility in a global society. Furthermore, students will be required to examine the social implications for a gender issue on our global community. The following is an example of a final writing project used in Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies. The assessment of each of these core learning objects is described following the example.

Example of Final Writing Project:

Reflective Analysis Paper

Purpose: This assignment is meant to help you reflect on the issues we've discussed in Introduction to Women's Studies. You should pick an issues raised in an assigned reading (or assigned video). In your paper, you should explain the issue and how it was raised in the readings. What were the main points? What was the author's argument?

Once this has been explained, you should analyze the reading yourself. Did you agree or disagree? Did the viewpoint differ from your own? Did this reading affect your view of the issues raised?

In thinking about your reflective analysis try to answer the following question in your paper:

To what extent, if any, did this reading affect how you thought about the issues raised?

This paper should be 4-6 typed, double-spaced pages and submitted both electronically on Blackboard and in-person on the assigned due date. No outside research should be used for this paper. It is an essay about your analytical reaction to issues raised in a reading.

It may be written in first person. Do not include the bolded question in your paper. The paper should be written according to academic conventions of grammar and mechanics, as well as style. An introduction with a thesis statement, a body which develops the thesis, and a conclusion should be included.

Critical Thinking Skills - *to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information*

During the civic engagement project students will be required to explore a contemporary gender issue and critically evaluate competing gender based theories and select the theory that most accurately explains the contemporary event. Students ability to achieve this learning objective will be assessed with the critical thinking rubric attached below. This and all of the attached rubrics were adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities templates to fit the gender studies discipline.

Communication Skills - *to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication*

During the final writing project students will be required to develop an academic argument in response to the essay prompt. Students will then present this argument in a 4-6 page double spaced written essay. The Written communication rubric attached below will be used to assess the learner's progress towards the core learning objective of communication skills.

Personal Responsibility - *to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making*

During the final writing project students will be required to ethically evaluate decision-making with regard to gender based issues in a contemporary society. Progress towards the development of personal responsibility will be assessed with the attached personal responsibility rubric.

Social Responsibility - *to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities*

During the final writing project students will be required to examine the consequences of decisions made by actors for themselves and the larger global community. Student progress towards the development of social responsibility will be assessed with the attached social responsibility rubric.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: *Provide any additional information supporting course inclusion in the core (optional).*

PLEASE ATTACH THE FOLLOWING

1 Syllabus

Course Description:

The purpose of WGST 2305 is to provide an introduction to the philosophical and practical issues that arise from the study of gender in society. We will examine issues of women, gender, and sex from an interdisciplinary perspective. We could examine every aspect of our society through the

study of gender and this course explores what happens when women's lives and their treatment in society are the focus of investigation.

To accomplish these goals, this course will combine interdisciplinary scholarship, court cases, film, lecture and class discussion. We will work to develop a critical eye for examining women in society and then work to apply that framework to a few issues that impact women's lives.

Texas Core Objectives:

This course will support the development of the following state mandated core learning objectives: Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

Texts:

Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Eds). *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Fourth Edition. McGraw-Hill.

Ariel Levy. *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture*. Free Press.
Additional Readings available on Blackboard.

Expectations, Examinations, and Grading:

We will have discussion throughout the course, sometimes of controversial topics. A classroom, including a virtual classroom, thrives on mutual respect. I expect considerate behavior from each of you, as well as for you to be respectful of your classmates, in order to make the most of your time in class. Students are expected to attend class. Lectures will not reproduce the texts. During lectures, students are expected to behave in an adult fashion. There will be a midterm and a final exam. The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). If for any reason you should have to miss a test you must inform the instructor prior to the time of the test and proper documentation is required for any makeup test. In addition to the exams students will be graded on periodic quizzes, homework, and participation. Students will also be required to complete three writing assignments which will be explained in detail in class. The percentage breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

Grading:

Reflective Analysis: 25%
Film Analysis: 15%
Class Participation: 10%
Midterm Examination: 25%
Final Exam: 25%

Calendar The following course schedule represents the schedule of readings and topics for the course. The readings are located below each topic. All page numbers are from *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions* unless otherwise specified. Student's should read the assigned readings prior to class.

- Lesson One: What is Women's Studies? What is Feminism?
Pages 1-24, 29-31.
Film: "Bridgett Jones's Diary."
Homework: Look up CEDAW, the ERA, The Declaration of Sentiments.

- Lesson Two: Feminism and Women's Rights
Pages 20-24, 633-641.
Paper I due.

- Lesson Three: Gender, Identity, and Difference
Pages 59-69, 76-98.
Homework: Bring in a popular song with gender based lyrics.

- Lesson Four: Learning Gender
Pages 124-139 and 142-145.

- Midterm examination.

- Lesson Five: Women's Bodies: Beauty and Perception.
Pages 223-243, 249-255, and 266-278.
Film Excerpt: "I'm the One That I Want"
Film: "Killing Us Softly 4".

- Lesson Six: Women and Feminism in Today's Society
Female Chauvinist Pigs.
Paper II due.
- Lesson Seven: Sexual Harassment and Violence Against Women
Pages 486-492, 555-580, and 593-599.
Film: "Sex Slaves," Frontline 2005.
Film: "War Against Women" 60 Minutes 2008.
- Lesson Eight: Women's Reproductive Rights
Pages 307-325, 336-350, and 358-376.
Final writing project due.
- Final Exam

2 Assessment for Critical Thinking Skills

Undergraduate-Level Critical Thinking Rubric

Critical Thinking, undergraduate-level work in Women's and Gender Studies will be evaluated through the assessment of a final writing project in the areas of explanation of argument, evidence, student's position, and conclusions. A summary chart is provided to explain how work will be assessed. In addition, the areas of evaluation used are outlined below.

Skill	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
Explanation of Argument					
Evidence					
Student's Position					
Conclusions					

Explanation of Argument:

- Does the student clearly state the contemporary gender issues examined?
- Does the student comprehensively describe the contemporary issue examined?
- Does the student deliver the relevant information necessary for a full understanding of a contemporary gender issue?

Evidence:

- Does the student use authoritative sources?
- Does the evidence employed enable the student to develop a comprehensive analysis of a contemporary gender issue?
- Does the student thoroughly evaluate the viewpoints/positions of the authoritative sources?

Student's Position:

- Does the student's position take into account the complexity of the contemporary gender issues?
- Does the student acknowledge the limits of their position?
- Does the student synthesize other's points of view within their position?

Conclusions:

- Are the student's conclusions logical?
- Do the student's conclusions reflect an informed evaluation?
- Do the student's conclusions demonstrate an ability to place evidence and perspectives in priority order?

3 Assessment for Communication Skills

Undergraduate-Level Written Communication Rubric

Written, undergraduate-level work in Women’s and Gender Studies will be evaluated through the assessment of a final written project in the areas of argumentation and analysis, evidence and documentation, structure and style, and grammar and mechanics. A summary chart is provided to explain how work will be assessed. In addition, the areas of evaluation used are outlined below.

Skill	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
Argument and Analysis					
Evidence and Documentation					
Structure and Style					
Grammar and Mechanics					

Argument and Analysis:

- Does the paper contain a clear thesis statement or research question?
- Does the paper have a clear hypothesis and argument, appropriate for college-level work?
- Does the main argument of the paper match or answer the research question or thesis statement?
- Are the main argument and key points clear?
- Does the paper clearly address the research question and hypothesis or thesis statement throughout?
- Does the paper develop its main points well?
- Does the paper address other research in the field to place its argument in conversation with other work?
- Does the paper address counterarguments and possible limitations of the research presented in the paper?

Evidence and Documentation:

- To what extent does the paper support its claims?
- What types of support are utilized and are they appropriate for college-level work?
- Are source materials clearly documented in accordance with citation guidelines given in the course or in college-level writing courses at Midwestern State University?
- Is there analysis of the sources or is evidence used too descriptively?
- Does the evidence offered in the paper help to further the overall argument?

Structure and Style:

- Is the paper clearly organized?
- Does the paper include required elements of the assignment?
- Is the style of the paper appropriate for a college-level course?
- Is the tone of the paper appropriate for a college-level course?

Grammar and Mechanics:

- Does the paper employ appropriate grammar?
- Does the paper make use of punctuation and mechanics?

4 Assessment for Personal Responsibility

Undergraduate-Level Personal Responsibility Rubric

Personal Responsibility (*to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making*) undergraduate-level work in Women's and Gender Studies will be evaluated through the assessment of a final written project in the areas of ethical self awareness, understanding different ethical perspectives, ethical issue recognition, and application of ethical perspectives. A summary chart is provided to explain how work will be assessed. In addition, the areas of evaluation used are outlined below.

Skill	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
Ethical Self-Awareness					
Understanding different Ethical Perspectives					
Ethical Issue Recognition					
Application of Ethical Perspectives					

Ethical Self-Awareness:

- Did the student discuss core ethical beliefs?
- Did the student discuss the origins of core ethical beliefs?
- Did the student connect core ethical beliefs with the origins of core ethical beliefs when examining a contemporary gender issue?

Understanding Different Ethical Perspectives:

- Did the student identify gender theory relevant to the contemporary gender issue?
- Did the student accurately apply gender theory to a contemporary gender issue?
- Did the student accurately identify and apply gender theory to a contemporary gender issue?

Ethical Issue Recognition:

- Did the student recognize an ethical issue when presented with a complex gender issue?
- Did the student recognize cross relationships among multiple gender issues?
- Did the student identify an ethical issue and link this issue with broader gender implications?

Application of Ethical Perspectives:

- Did the student independently apply ethical principles to contemporary gender issue?
- Did the student correctly apply ethical principles to a contemporary gender issue?
- Did the student consider the full implications of the application of ethical principles to a contemporary gender issue?

5 Assessment for Social Responsibility

Undergraduate-Level Social Responsibility Rubric

Social Responsibility (to include cultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities) undergraduate-level work in Women’s and Gender Studies will be evaluated through the assessment of a final written project in the areas of diversity of communities and cultures, ethical issue recognition, application of ethical perspectives, and civic context. A summary chart is provided to explain how work will be assessed. In addition, the areas of evaluation used are outlined below.

Skill	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
Diversity of Communities and Cultures					
Analysis of Knowledge					
Civic Identity					
Civic Contexts					

Ethical Issue Recognition:

- Did the student demonstrate an adjustment in their attitudes and beliefs based on learning from diversity of communities and cultures?
- Did the student promote others engagement with diversity?
- Did the student demonstrate adjustments in their own attitudes and promote engagement with diversity based on their learning from diversity of communities and cultures?

Analysis of Knowledge:

- Did the student connect political science theory to civic engagement?
- Did the student connect political science theory to their own participation in civic life?
- Did the student display an understanding of the connection between civic engagement and contemporary public policy?

Civic Identity:

- Did the student identify lessons learned from civic engagement experiences?
- Did the civic engagement experience shape the student’s civic identity?
- Did the civic engagement experience strength the student’s commitment to public action?

Civic Context:

- Did the student demonstrate an ability to identify a civic aim for a community?
- Did the student demonstrate a commitment to work within community contexts to achieve a civic aim?
- Did the student identify a civic aim and demonstrate a commitment to work within a civic context to achieve this aim?