WRT 101.62:
Feminism Around the World

Spring 2022

Room: Old Chemistry 003
Days and Times: M, W 5:15-6:30
Instructor: Jacqueline Allain (jma94@duke.edu)
Office Hours: M, W 4:15-5:15, or by appointment

Course Description

This course offers students an opportunity to hone their writing skills through the study of feminism and gender-based activism in different sites across the globe, past and present. Critics of feminism sometimes charge it with being a bourgeois, Western phenomenon. In truth, feminism represents an extraordinarily multifaceted and diverse array of theories, social movements, and political orientations. Similarly problematic is the oft-repeated axiom that feminism consists solely of the conviction that men and women should be "equal," or, similarly, the belief that all instances of women's political action should be understood as feminist. We are thus left with the question, what exactly is feminism? Is it perhaps more apt to speak of feminisms in the plural? How can we use writing to explore these questions?

Getting to the heart of these queries requires us to think both historically and globally, moving our line of vision beyond the United States, beyond the Global North, and toggling backward and forward through time. This course will examine case studies of feminist and gender-based activism and feminist theory around the world to examine fundamental questions about the history, meaning, and nature of feminist theory and political praxis (defined as theory-in-action), such as: What forms does feminism take, and to whom does it belong? Bearing in mind anthropologist Gayle Rubin's assertion that feminism is a "critical tool… fashioned to handle very specific areas of social activity" but lacking universal analytical power for all aspects of social life, what are feminism's limits? Simultaneously, what are its possibilities? Course readings include scholarly articles and book chapters, especially from the disciplines of history, sociology, and anthropology; journalistic pieces; poetry; and short fiction. The course is divided into six thematic units, each focusing on some combination of feminist thought and feminist or gender-based activism situated in different global contexts. It is open to anyone interested in exploring feminist theory and politics transnationally; no prior knowledge of the course's themes or material is required.

This is a WRT 101 course, and so its primary objective is to support students in the cultivation of their academic writing abilities. As the Thompson Writing Program website states, WRT 101 "helps students develop strategies for generating, supporting, and sharing their ideas within a community of scholars." To that end, the writing assignments for this course are numerous, varied, and constitutive of the very fabric of the course, allowing students to try their hand at multiple genres of writing in a supportive environment. Assignments consist of reflection 'letters' to the authors of assigned texts, an essay, and a portfolio-style final project called a multigenre project. The latter asks students to produce three pieces of writing from a selection of options, including op-eds, personal essays, and short stories, among others, all centered around a research topic of the student's choice.

Course Goals

- Engage with the work of others
- Articulate a position
- Situate writing within specific contexts
- Transfer writing knowledge into situations beyond Writing 101

Course Practices

- Researching.
- Workshopping
- Revising
- Editing

Evaluation

This class is graded out of a total of 200 points, divvied up as follows:

- **Attendance and Participation (40 pts.):** Students are expected to attend and actively participate in our class discussions. By "actively participate," I mean that I expect you to come to class having done the readings and prepared to share your thoughts on them. Sometimes, "sharing your thoughts" can come in the form of simply asking thoughtful questions. *Everyone* is expected to contribute to our class discussions, because this is a seminar, and seminars only work when people participate. However, if you are a shy or introverted person, I hope it will come as some relief to you to learn that we will be doing a lot of small-group and pair-based work. Please see the subheading Attendance, below, for more on our class attendance policy.
- **Letter Responses (36 pts.):** Four times throughout the course, students will complete short writing assignments to guide their reading of challenging texts. These assignments will consist of 1-2-page 'letters' to the writers whose work you are reading. This might sound silly, but the purpose here is to get you to think carefully about what you are reading and be able to articulate points of uncertainty. (Due Jan. 24, Feb. 7 and 21, and Apr. 11, 2022).
- **Essay (40 pts.):** Students will be asked to write a 4-5-page essay responding to given prompts. Prior to the essay due date, we will be conducting an in-class peer-review workshop of essay drafts. (Due Mar. 14, 2022).
- **Multigenre Project (MGP) (84 pts.):** In this portfolio-style final project, students will be asked to produce three pieces of writing from a list of various genres. We will devote ample class time to working on the MGP and to workshopping drafts. (Due during final exam block).
- **Extra Credit (4 pts.):** Periodically throughout the semester, I will apprise of you of various events—lectures, colloquia, and the like—taking place on campus that are related to our course. I will award four points of extra credit to any student who attends one of these events and writes a short summary and analysis of it, relating it back to our course material. You are encouraged to attend as many events as you would like, but you can only complete this assignment one time. I want to emphasize that this is entirely optional. (Due Apr. 20, 2022).

Detailed instructions for all of the above assignments can be found in the folder titled Assignments under the Resources tab on Sakai. I will go over each assignment in class. Dates when assignments are due are indicated on the schedule that begins on p. 6 of this syllabus.

In accordance with Thompson Writing Program policy, all WRT 101 students are evaluated on a grading scale of A-F. WRT 101 students, therefore, will be unable to request or get approval for S/U grading. The Duke University Trinity College of Arts & Sciences grading scale is as follows:

A 93-100% (186-200 pts.)	**B+** 87-89% (174-178 pts.)	**C+** 77-79% (154-158 pts.)	**D+** 67-69% (134-138 pts.)	**F** 59% (≤ 118 pts.)
A- 90-92 % (180-184 pts.)	**B** 83-86% (166-172 pts.)	**C** 73-76% (146-152 pts.)	**D** 63-66% (126-132 pts.)	
	B- 80-82 % (160-164 pts.)	**C-** 70-72% (140-144 pts.)	**D-** 60-62% (120-124 pts.)	

If you land "between" a grade—for example, 185 points—I will round up. ☺ Obviously, the grade you earn is far less important than what you *learn*. Nevertheless, I am aware that grades are important to many students. If it is any consolation, please know that in my classes, genuine effort counts for a lot.

Late Assignments
All writing assignments must be submitted as hard copies in class on their due dates.
Unless you have been granted explicit permission for an extension, late assignments will incur a significant penalty: **letters** will incur a penalty of **two** points per every 24 hours, and the **essay** will incur a penalty of **four** points per every 24 hours. *Late letters and essays will not be accepted later than 48 hours after they are due*. Please email me at least 24 hours in advance of the due date to request an extension.

As for your **MGPs**: Please note that I am required to submit your final grades within 48 hours of the final exam period. Therefore, except only in very extreme cases, I absolutely cannot accept late MGPs or grant extensions. Plan your time accordingly. Additionally, I will not accept late **extra credit assignments**.

Finally, I will not award point to late **drafts** of anything unless you have requested an extension beforehand or if you have documentation of illness or an emergency. In-class peer review only works when people bring in their drafts. If you cannot make it to class on a day where we are doing peer review, please email me a copy of your draft before class.

Attendance
Everyone is entitled to **three** unexcused absences, no questions asked. (That said, on days when we are doing peer-review workshops, it would be helpful if you would let me know ahead of time if you plan on being absent.) More than two unexcused absences will cause your grade to drop by **eight points** for each missed class.

In the event of illness or an emergency, you are entitled to an excused absence. For more information on excused absences, please take a look at Duke's Class Attendance and Missed

Work Policy:
https://trinity.duke.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-and-missed-work.

Whether your absence is excused or unexcused, I strongly urge you to get notes from a classmate.

COVID-19 Policies
If Duke instates a mask mandate, I will enforce it. If you should ever feel under the weather, I would encourage you to make use of your three permitted unexcused absences and simply stay home (beyond those three, please get a doctor's note). I would also encourage you to make ample use of Duke's free COVID testing.

If we are compelled to move online due to COVID-19, everything in this syllabus will remain the same, except, of course, we will meet over Zoom, and assignments will be due through Dropbox on Sakai rather than as hard copies in class.

Classroom Etiquette
The issues and ideas we are going to be discussing this semester are controversial. Sometimes, we will disagree with each other. Sometimes, we will disagree with the material we read. That is okay. However, students are expected to come to class having engaged with the readings in good faith, and prepared to treat each other—and me—with respect. I will do the same for you.

Students are allowed to use computers or tablets in class *for the **sole** purposes of reading class materials and taking notes!* It is obvious to me when someone is misusing technology; it is disrespectful and distracting. If you are someone who has a hard time avoiding browsing the internet when there is a computer in front of you (which I can certainly relate to!), may I suggest bringing hard copies of the readings to seminar, taking notes by hand, or, at the very least, simply turning off your wi-fi connection while in class? As for phone use, in the event that you urgently need to take a call or send a text, please simply step outside the classroom to do so.

Office Hours
I hold office hours meetings by appointment. If you ever feel confused by the readings, wish to discuss the assignments, or are just curious to discuss the course content in further depth with me, please do not hesitate to email me to make an office hours appointment. *No issue is too big or too small for an appointment. Holding office hours is part of my job, and I would be happy to meet with you.*

Email
I will respond to all emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends. Email should be used for basic communications only. More complex questions pertaining to the course material should be addressed during office hours.

Accessibility
I strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students. According to the Duke Disability Management System, students with disabilities are entitled to "reasonable, necessary, and appropriate accommodations in a timely manner." *If you have an accommodation need,*

please talk to me about it at your earliest convenience, and if necessary, schedule an appointment with a Student Disability Access Office staff member. I will do everything I can to ensure that your needs are met and that your work is evaluated fairly. *If you are experiencing stress or anxiety related to the workload for this class, please talk to me.*

Academic Honesty
I expect you to adhere to the Duke Community Standard. Plagiarism, which consists of representing another's words or ideas as one's own, will be treated as a serious offense and result in your being reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Please see the following website to learn more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it: https://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/. We will discuss this further in class.

Writing Studio
Students are encouraged to make full use of the services Duke University provides, including the services of the Thompson Writing Program (TWP) Writing Studio. Please visit the TWP website for more information about the Writing Studio and to schedule an appointment: https://twp.duke.edu/twp-writing-studio.

A Final Note
The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus and all the assignments described herein when necessary and as appropriate.

Writing and Reading Schedule

The following schedule provides you a list of what readings you have to do and by when, the due dates of various assignments, as well as a sketch of the what I have planned for each class session. On days where I have not specified any readings, there are no readings! Occasionally, I offer recommended readings. I encourage you to read these, but you are not required to.

Most of these readings are on Sakai; others, you will need to access yourself through the Duke Library system, which we will go over how to do in class. Readings not posted to Sakai are labeled with an asterisk (*).

DATE	READ BEFORE CLASS	DUE IN CLASS	IN-CLASS AGENDA
UNIT 1: DEFINING FEMINISM			
W, 1/5/22			Introduction to course; overview of syllabus.
M, 1/10/22	● hooks, "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression" (1984)		Lesson on annotating; discussion of reading.
W, 1/12/22	● Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World,* Introduction (1986)		Lesson on introductions (as a genre of writing); discussion of reading.
UNIT 2: FAMILY MATTERS			
W, 1/19/22	● Bellucci, "Childless Motherhood: Interview with Nora Cortiñas, a Mother of the Plaza De Mayo, Argentina" (1999)*		Overview of letter assignment; discussion of plagiarism; discussion of reading.
M, 1/24/22	● Hodge, "We Kind of Family" (2002) ● TallBear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family" (2018)	Letter 1	Lesson on personal essays; discussion of reading.
UNIT 3: SEX/WORK			
W, 1/26/22	● "The myth of 'sex work' w/ Esperanza Fonseca and Khara Jabola-Carolus" (2021) OR "The world's oldest oppression w/ Valeria Reynoso" (2021) (you choose)		Lesson on press releases; discussion of assigned materials; in-class reading and discussion of "Red Canary Song Response to Shootings at Gold Massage Spa, Young's Asian Massage, & Aroma Therapy Spa" (2021).
M, 1/31/22	● Phipps, *The Politics of the Body: Gender in a Neoliberal and Neoconservative Age* (2014) (excerpts)		Discussion of reading.
W, 2/1/22			Mini-lesson on twentieth-century decolonization movements; lesson on citation formatting.

M, 2/7/22	• Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (2005) (excerpts)	Letter 2	Discussion of reading
UNIT 4: "TRADITION" AND "AGENCY"			
W, 2/9/22	• Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others" (2002)* • *Recommended*: Vergès, *A Decolonial Feminism* (2021) (excerpts)		Overview of essay assignment; discussion of reading.
M, 2/14/22	• Marshood and Alsanah, "Tal'at: a feminist movement that is redefining liberation and reimagining Palestine" (2020) • Qutami, "Why Feminism? Why Now? Reflections on the 'Palestine is a Feminist Issue' Pledge" (2021) • *Recommended*: Jahshan, "Queer life, Occupation and Expectations: How Palestinian-Singer Bashar Murad Challenges Conservative Norms with Music"		Lesson on journalistic writing; discussion of readings.
W, 2/16/22			Lesson on op-eds; in-class reading and discussion of Aly, "UK mosques must make space for women – not turn us away" (2018).
M, 2/21/22	• Mojab, "Introduction: Marxism and Feminism" (2015)	Letter 3	Discussion of reading.
UNIT 5: FEMINISM, NATIONAL LIBERATION, AND DECOLONIZATION			
W, 2/23/22		Essay Draft	Essay workshop
M, 2/28/22			Viewing and discussion of clips from *Know Your African Feminists*; in-class reading and discussion of "African Feminisms – a Decolonial History: An Interview with Rama Salla Dieng" (2021).
W, 3/2/22	• Jayawardena, "Women Reformists and Revolutionaries in Vietnam" (1986) (excerpts)		Discussion of readings
M, 3/14/22	• Pulgar, "The Queer and Trans Activists on the Forefront of Bogotá's Protests" (2021) • *Recommended*: Morales, "Feminists and LGBTQ Activists Are Leading the Insurrection in Puerto Rico" (2019) and Newton, "Gender" (2014)		Overview of MGP assignment; discussion of readings; in-class reading and discussion of Senior, "Colonial Girls School" (1985)

UNIT 6: GENDER AND GLOBAL CAPITALISM			
W, 3/16/22		Essay	Library workshop. If possible, please bring your laptop to class.
M, 3/21/22	• Andaiye, "The Impact of the IMF Structural Adjustment Programme on Women's Unwaged Work and How We Can Resist It" (c. mid-1980s)		Discussion of reading
W, 3/23/22		MGP Proposal	In-class reading and discussion of Dias and Barcia, "Pandemic Worsens Working Conditions in Brazil's Informal Care Economy" (2020).
M, 3/28/22	• Spivak, "A Moral Dilemma" (2000) (selections)		Discussion of reading
UNIT 7: CONCLUSIONS			
W, 3/30/22 11am-12 pm			Visit to Nasher Museum. Class will meet at 11 am in the lobby of the Nasher. If you cannot make this time, you can visit the museum independently. To receive credit for the missed attendance, please complete the worksheet titled Nasher Visit, found on Sakai, and email it to me by 11:59 pm Wednesday, 4/6.
M, 4/4/22		MGP Category B Draft	MGP Category B Workshop
W, 4/6/22	• Sandoval, "US Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World" (1991)	Nasher Visit Assignment (if you missed our class visit to the Nasher)	Discussion of Reading
M, 4/11/22	• Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles" (2003)*	Letter 4	Discussion of Reading
W, 4/13/22		MGP Category A Draft	MGP Category A Workshop
M, 4/18/22			Independent work on MGP
W, 4/20/22		Extra Credit Assignment	Independent work on MGP

Final Exam Block: MGP Presentations