

Feminist Political Thought
POS 4931
Tu 3-4:55pm / Th 4:05-4:55 pm
Anderson Hall 0034
Fall 2022

Dr. Stacey Liou (she/hers)
Office Hours: W 1-4pm

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Description

This course introduces students to feminist political thought, with particular attention to contemporary debates animating feminist thought and practice. We will read and examine texts that critically engage liberal, Marxist, and other political theories, as well as actually existing forms of domination, from a variety of feminist perspectives. We will consider how feminist thinkers engage, extend, and challenge each other, as well as various approaches to political action and solidarity. Among the themes we will discuss are the boundaries of the category “woman,” the historical struggle and justifications for women’s political equality, the multiplicity of women’s experiences including along various axes of identity and difference, and the potential for emancipatory action. We will explore the extent to which these ideas are relevant to and visible in contemporary sociopolitical life.

Goals

You will be required to think critically and independently, and to learn how to support your arguments with logic and evidence. By the end of this class you will be able to speak intelligently about various strands of feminist political thought, key themes and issues of contention, the social and historical circumstances that have animated and reflected different ways of approaching feminist political thought, and how the problems and concepts discussed illuminate contemporary political life and envision feminist futures.

Requirements

1. Attendance & Participation (15%; 5%, 10%)

This is an advanced undergraduate seminar, and its success relies on your active in-class participation. Attendance is required (5%). Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found [here](#).

In-class participation (10%) includes analyzing assigned readings, bringing personal insight to them, using the texts to consider current events, referencing relevant outside articles, and responding thoughtfully to classmates. You should attend class ready to discuss the readings assigned for that meeting. Allow yourself enough time for these readings because they are complex and require close attention.

Many topics covered in the course can be controversial, difficult, and personally felt. You will undoubtedly disagree with some of the texts and theories that we read, just as they often disagree with each other. I encourage you to share your perspectives on them in contributing to an open and respectful discussion. Your respect and courtesy toward others are an integral part of our time together – they are key to making this course enjoyable and intellectually stimulating.

2. Response Papers (45%; 15% each)

You will write three 4-page (~1,000 words) response papers on a topic distributed one week in advance, due by 11:59pm on **September 16**, **October 7**, and **October 28**. These papers are an opportunity for you to analyze, apply, and critique the concepts and themes presented in the readings and discussed in class. I will provide more details on these papers in class.

3. Final Research Paper (25%)

You will write a short research paper of 8-10 pages (2,000-2,500 words) on a provided topic that engages the thinkers and themes we discuss in our class. I will provide more detail on this assignment during the semester. Submit your final paper on Canvas by **Thursday, December 8**.

4. Final Research Paper Draft & Peer Review (15%; 7.5% each)

On **Thursday, November 17**, you will participate in an in-class peer review session with a pre-assigned partner. In advance of the peer review session, you will review your partner's draft and prepare a 1-page (single-spaced) response to it. Please be respectful and provide constructive feedback so that they can strengthen their paper. I will provide a rubric for you to use in evaluating your partner's draft.

Submit your draft on Canvas by **Friday, November 11**, so that your partner has time to review and provide thoughtful feedback on it before the peer-review session.

Required Texts

All readings can be found as PDFs on the course's Canvas page. Course material and details in this syllabus are subject to change. I will announce any such changes in class and on the Canvas course page.

Grading Policy

I expect assignments to be submitted on time, and late papers will be penalized a 1/2 letter grade for each day late. Any requests for accommodations should be made in advance of an assignment's deadline.

Requirements for class attendance and assignments are consistent with university policies that can be found at: catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/.

The following cutoffs will be used for grades:

A 94–100%	A- 90–94%	
B+ 87–90%	B 84–87%	B- 80–84%
C+ 77–80%	C 74–77%	C- 70–74%
D+ 67–70%	D 64–67%	D- 60–64%
		E < 60%

Office Hours

I will hold office hours on Wednesdays from 1-4pm. Please take advantage of this time. It is especially important to contact me if you feel confused or that you're falling behind. You may also email me with concerns or questions you have or if you need to meet outside of designated office hours.

Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, you will receive an accommodation letter to share with me. If you need accommodation, please follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>. I take this feedback seriously and use your constructive feedback to improve the course for future offerings. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

Academic Integrity

All students are required to abide by the University of Florida's Academic Honesty Guidelines, which may be viewed at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>. Most obviously, this means cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers is completely unacceptable. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: submitting entire papers written by others, submitting portions of papers written by others, copying text without quotations and proper citation, or paraphrasing text without proper attribution in a footnote. In addition to harming your professional career, academic dishonesty will destroy your ability to learn from this class. Consequences for academic punishment can range up to automatically failing the course. If you have any questions about whether something counts as academic dishonesty, please contact me. I am happy to clarify these rules further.

In other words, you must be the one producing all submitted assignments, and you must appropriately reference all source material, including the assigned texts. If you do not do both of these, you are committing academic dishonesty, which is grounds for a failing grade. If you're unsure, you should just cite it. If you have any questions about whether something counts as academic dishonesty, please contact me. I am happy to clarify these rules further.

Important Dates

Friday, September 16	Response Paper #1
Friday, October 7	Response Paper #2
Friday, October 28	Response Paper #3
Tuesday, November 22	Draft Research Paper
Tuesday, November 29	Peer Review Session (in-class)
Thursday, December 8	Final Research Paper

Schedule

August 25 (R) **Introduction**

August 30 (T) **Equality**

- Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (dedicatory letter, introduction, chs. 1-4)
- Olympe de Gouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen”
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Declaration of Sentiments”

September 1 (R) **Rights and the State**

- NOW Statement of Purpose
- Catherine MacKinnon, “Reflections on Sex Equality Under the Law”
- Wendy Brown, “Finding the Man in the State” from *States of Injury*

September 6 (T) **Public / Private**

- Susan Moller Okin, “Gender, the Public, and the Private”
- Ananya Bhattacharjee, “The Public/Private Mirage”

September 8 (R) **Representation**

- Jane Mansbridge, “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women?”
- Margaret Marshment, “The Picture is Political”

September 13 (T) **Reason / Emotion**

- Mary Wollstonecraft, ch. 13 and review ch. 1 from *Vindication*
- Alison M. Jaggar, “Love and Knowledge”

September 15 (R) **The Body**

- Susan Bordo, “Introduction” and “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity” in *Unbearable Weight*
- Rosemarie Garland-Thompson, “Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory”

Friday, September 16
Response Paper #1 Due

September 20 (T) **Freedom**

- Nancy J. Hirschmann, “Toward a Feminist Theory of Freedom”
- Hagar Kotef, “Little Chinese Feet Encased in Iron Shoes”

September 22 (R) **Consent**

- Carole Pateman, “Women and Consent”
- Melissa Febos, “I Spent My Life Consenting to Touch I Didn’t Want”

September 27 (T) **Work**

- Betty Friedan, “The Problem that Has No Name”
- Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Why Women Still Can’t Have It All”
- bell hooks, “Rethinking the Nature of Work” and “Women at Work”

September 29 (R) **Desire, Sex & Work**

- Amia Srinivasan, “Does Anyone Have The Right to Sex?” and “Coda: The Politics of Desire”
- Silvia Federici, “Why Sexuality is Work”
- Conner Habib and Heather Berg, “The Problem With Sex Work Is Work”

October 4 (T) **Household & Reproductive Labors**

- Silvia Federici, “Wages against Housework”
- Joan C. Tronto, “The ‘Nanny’ Question in Feminism”
- Angela Davis, “Reflections on the Black Woman’s Role in the Community of Slaves”

October 6 (R) **Capitalism**

- Catherine Rottenberg, “The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism”
- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Women Workers and Capitalist Scripts”

Friday, October 7
Response Paper #2 Due

October 11 (T) **Race**

- Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement”
- Patricia Hill Collins, “The Politics of Black Feminist Thought”
- Gloria Anzaldúa, “La conciencia de la mestiza / Toward a New Consciousness”
- Mitsuye Yamada, “Asian Pacific American Women and Feminism”
- Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

October 13 (R) **Intersectionality**

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins”

October 18 (T) **Transnational Feminisms**

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes” and “Under Western Eyes Revisited”

October 20 (R) **Decolonizing Feminist Political Thought**

- Celeste Liddle, “Intersectionality and Indigenous Feminism: An Aboriginal Woman’s Perspective”
- Mary Kathryn Nagle and Emma Lower, “What Will It Take to End Violence Against Native Women?”

October 25 (T) **Redistribution or Recognition?**

- Nancy Fraser, “Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics”

October 27 (R) **No Class (Dr. Liou at conference)**

**Friday, October 28
Response Paper #3 Due**

November 1 (T) **Sex and Gender**

- Judith Butler, selections from *Gender Trouble*

November 3 (R) **Queering Feminisms**

- Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality & Lesbian Existence”
- Cathy J. Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens”

November 8 (T) **Trans Politics**

- Cressida Heyes, “Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory”
- Emi Koyama, “The Transfeminist Manifesto”

November 10 (R) **Who is Feminism For?**

- Judith Butler, “Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire” from *Gender Trouble*
- Michael Ferguson, “Dead Dogma and the Limits of Feminist Political Imagination”

November 15 (T) **Feminist Solidarities?**

- bell hooks, “Sisterhood”
- Alicia Garza, “A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement”

November 17 (R) **Feminist Abolition?**

- Elizabeth Bernstein, “The Sexual Politics of the ‘New Abolitionism’”
- Mimi E. Kim, “Anti-Carceral Feminism”
- Jordie Davies, “Political Possibilities”

**Tuesday, November 22
Peer Review Draft Due**

November 22, 24 **No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday**

November 29 (T) **Peer Review Session**

December 1 (R) **Feminist Futures?**

- Audre Lorde, selections from *Sister Outsider*
- Sara Ahmed, “A Killjoy Manifesto” (from *Living a Feminist Life*)

December 6 (T) **Conclusion**

- bell hooks, “Theory as Liberatory Practice”

**Thursday, December 8
Research Paper Due**