

Feminist Political Thought
POS 4931 / WST 4930
Fall 2024
T 3-4:55pm / Th 4:05-4:55 pm
Anderson Hall 034

Dr. Stacey Liou (she/hers)
Office Hours: T/Th 5-6 pm (or by appointment)
[Calendly Link](#)

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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 gendered forms of domination, from a variety of feminist perspectives. We will consider how feminist thinkers engage, extend, and challenge each other, in addition to various approaches to theorizing and practicing 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 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 (10%)

This is an advanced undergraduate seminar, and its success relies on your active participation. Attendance is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect your final grade. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation. Additional information can be found [here](#).

Participation includes meaningful in-class contributions as well as office hour attendance, including analyzing assigned readings, bringing personal insight to them, using the texts to consider current events, referencing relevant outside materials, and responding thoughtfully to classmates. A rubric for evaluating participation is posted online.

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. In-Class Exams (70%: 25, 25, 20%)

You will take three in-class exams on **October 1**, **October 24**, and **December 3**. The first two exams will be cumulative, while the third will focus on recently discussed texts and themes. All three exams may include a combination of essay-based, short-answer, and multiple-choice questions.

These exam dates cannot be changed. If you foresee a genuine emergency or conflict, speak to me as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate accommodation.

3. Chat-GPT Assignment (20%)

There are two parts to this assignment. You will use Chat-GPT to answer a prompt I provide in advance. Based on your analysis of class materials, write a short (750-word) essay examining the strengths and shortcomings of the AI-generated response. Submit both parts together in-class on December 3. Additional detail, including a rubric, will be provided during the semester.

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.

All readings should be completed *prior to class* on the dates listed below. Allow yourself enough time for these readings because they are complex and require close attention.

Grading Policy

Late assignment submissions will not be accepted, except in the case of documented illness, legal, or civic/university duty situations. If you miss an assignment and have a documented excuse, email me within the same week to discuss making up the work.

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%

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.

Resources

Accommodations

Students with disabilities 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.

Health & Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know is struggling with any crisis including but not limited to gender, sexual, racial, or domestic violence, there are many community and University of Florida resources available. Some of these include:

- U Matter, We Care (umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, umatter.ufl.edu)
- RESPECT – UF Division of Student Affairs (respect.ufsa.ufl.edu)
- Counseling and Wellness Center – available 24/7 (352-392-1575, counseling.ufl.edu)
- Student Health Care Center (352-392-1161, shcc.ufl.edu)
- Multicultural & Diversity Affairs (352-392-1217, multicultural.ufl.edu)
- UFPD Office of Victim Services (352-392-1111, police.ufl.edu)
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center (352-733-0111)

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.

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.

In-Class Recording

While students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures, the ways these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only purposes allowed are for personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the university, or as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Students may not publish recorded lectures without the instructor's written consent.

Schedule

- August 22 (Thursday) Introduction
- August 27 (Tuesday) Equality
- Olympe de Gouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen”
 - Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (dedicatory letter, introduction, chs. 1-4)
- August 29 (Thursday) Equality (cont.)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Declaration of Sentiments”
 - NOW Statement of Purpose
- September 3 (Tuesday) Representation
- Jane Mansbridge, “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women?”
 - Margaret Marshment, “The Picture is Political”
- September 5 (Thursday) No Class (Dr. Liou at conference)
- September 10 (Tuesday) The State
- Catharine MacKinnon, “Reflections on Sex Equality Under the Law”
 - Wendy Brown, “Finding the Man in the State” from *States of Injury*
- September 12 (Thursday) Public-Private
- Susan Moller Okin, “Gender, the Public, and the Private”
 - Ananya Bhattacharjee, “The Public/Private Mirage”
- September 17 (Tuesday) Reason-Emotion
- Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication* (ch. 13)
 - Alison M. Jaggar, “Love and Knowledge”
 - Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger” and “Uses of the Erotic”
- September 19 (Thursday) The Body
- Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight* (Introduction)
 - Rosemarie Garland-Thompson, “Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory”
- September 24 (Tuesday) Desire, Sex, & Gender
- Amia Srinivasan, “Does Anyone Have The Right to Sex?” and “Coda: The Politics of Desire”
 - Judith Butler, 1990 Preface, “Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions,” Conclusion, 1999 Preface from *Gender Trouble*
- September 26 (Thursday) Consent
- Carole Pateman, “Women and Consent”
 - Melissa Febos, “I Spent My Life Consenting to Touch I Didn’t Want”

- October 1 (Tuesday) **In-Class Exam**
- October 3 (Thursday) Work
- Betty Friedan, “The Problem that Has No Name”
 - Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Why Women Still Can’t Have It All”
- October 8 (Tuesday) Household Labor
- Silvia Federici, “Wages against Housework”
 - Joan C. Tronto, “The ‘Nanny’ Question in Feminism”
- October 10 (Thursday) Reproductive Labor
- Angela Davis, “Reflections on the Black Woman’s Role in the Community of Slaves”
 - bell hooks, “Rethinking the Nature of Work” and “Women at Work”
- October 15 (Tuesday) Capitalism
- Catherine Rottenberg, “The Rise of Neoliberal Feminism”
 - Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Women Workers and Capitalist Scripts”
- October 17 (Thursday) Power
- Iris Marion Young, “Five Faces of Oppression” from *Justice and the Politics of Difference*
- October 22 (Tuesday) Freedom
- Nancy J. Hirschmann, “Toward a Feminist Theory of Freedom”
 - Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety* (ch. 1)
- October 24 (Thursday) **In-Class Exam**
- October 29 (Tuesday) Intersectionality
- Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement”
 - Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins”
- October 31 (Thursday) Race
- Gloria Anzaldúa, “La conciencia de la mestiza / Toward a New Consciousness”
 - Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”
- November 5 (Tuesday) No Class (Election Day: vote!)
- November 7 (Thursday) Queering Feminisms
- Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality & Lesbian Existence”
 - Cathy J. Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens”
- November 12 (Tuesday) Trans Politics
- Susan Stryker, “(De)Subjugated Knowledges”

- Cressida Heyes, “Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory”

November 14 (Thursday) Decolonizing Feminist Political Thought

- Andrea Smith, “American Studies without America”
- Mary Kathryn Nagle and Emma Lower, “What Will It Take to End Violence Against Native Women?”

November 19 (Tuesday) Feminism Across Borders

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes”

November 21 (Thursday) Feminist Futures

- Alicia Garza, “A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement”
- Audre Lorde, “The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House” and “Poetry is Not a Luxury”

November 26, 28 No Class

December 3 (Tuesday) **In-Class Exam**
Chat-GPT Assignment Due