

BSC101: Foundations of Inquiry
Theme: Gender, Sex, and Feminism

Fall 2010
MWF 10:00-10:50am
Classroom Building C303A

Professor: **Jenn Hunt, Ph.D.** Office hours: MWF 11:00am-12:00pm
Office: **Classroom Building C308** Other hours by appointment
Phone: **878-3421**
Email: **huntjs@buffalostate.edu**

Please read this syllabus carefully – it contains important information that you must know to succeed in this class. All students are responsible for knowing the information in this syllabus.

Course Description & Goals:

This course is designed to achieve two complementary goals.

1. It will serve as a cornerstone of your Intellectual Foundations program by teaching you about critical thinking, liberal arts education, the types of inquiry used by scholars in different disciplines, and basic library research skills.
2. It will provide an overview of scholarship related to gender, sex, and feminist theory.

We will achieve both of these goals by examining the ways in which different disciplines address questions related to gender and sex, critically analyzing this work from a feminist perspective, and using our analytic and research skills to develop arguments for solving important social problems related to gender.

The Keys to Succeeding in this Course:

So that we all have the same expectations, this is what you need to do to succeed in this course:

1. READ all of the assigned readings before coming to class. Reading does not mean skimming! Reading means carefully and thoroughly working your way through an article and *thinking* about the author's points. If you don't know a word, look it up in the dictionary.
2. ATTEND and PARTICIPATE in every class session. Be sure to ask questions when you have them.
3. TURN IN all of the assignments by due dates on the course outline (pp. 5-8 of this syllabus).
4. EXPECT to work 2 hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class. In other words, plan for the readings and assignments for this class to take about 6 hours per week. You will not be able to "cram" and still succeed in this course.

Readings:

Hunt, J.S. (2010). *Reading women's lives: Gender, sex, and feminism BSC101 reader*. New York: Pearson Learning Solutions.

Koritz, D.G. (2010). *Foundations of inquiry* (2010-2011 edition). New York: Pearson Learning Solutions.

In addition, a few readings will be posted on our class ANGEL site in pdf format. You need to PRINT these readings and bring them to class – they will be treated just like textbook readings.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to complete the assigned readings *before* class. Class participation (i.e., discussion, small group activities) is worth 10% of your grade, so missing class or coming to class unprepared will lower your grade. Some class activities will occur within the first 5 minutes of class, so being late to class will lower your grade as well.

In addition, all students are responsible for knowing material presented in lectures, class discussions, videos, and small group activities. Please note that much of this information will *not* be in your textbook, and that the professor will *not* provide notes to students who miss class.

Disruptive Student Policy:

Behaviors that disrupt other students' ability to learn (e.g., text messaging, talking with other students, reading non-class material) will not be tolerated. Out of respect for others, please be on time for class and turn off all cell phones, iPods, pagers, watch alarms, etc. If you engage in behavior that I deem disruptive, I will take your technological device and/or ask you to leave.

Use of Angel:

Course readings, handouts, exercises, and grades will be posted on Angel on an ongoing basis. In addition, if I need to contact the class, I will send or post a message on Angel, so you need to check your Angel account regularly.

Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will be based upon homework assignments, library exercises, a persuasive essay, three exams, and class participation.

Homework Assignments (60 points; 20% of your grade):

To develop your critical thinking skills, you will complete 6-7 homework assignments, most of which involve critically analyzing your readings or other materials (e.g., songs). Each homework assignment involves 1-2 pages of writing or a short oral presentation. Descriptions of the assignments and due dates are given in the course outline on pp. 5-8 of the syllabus.

Library Exercises (30 points; 10% of your grade):

All students in BSC101 will complete a series of on-line exercises about conducting library research, as well as referencing that information in writing assignments. These on-line exercises are worth a total of 30 points and are due on **October 1**.

Persuasive Essay (120 points; 40% of your grade):

As a culminating project for the class, you will write a persuasive essay about an important social problem related to gender or sex. In the paper, you will identify a problem, present arguments for why it is important, discuss potential solutions for the problem, and present arguments for which solution is most effective. To add a “real world” dimension to the assignment, each student will contribute \$5 (or more) to a class “grant fund.” After turning in the persuasive essays, each student will make a short oral presentation about her or his problem and proposed solution. *Whoever presents the most persuasive argument will receive the grant money to put their plan into action!*

To help students succeed on this assignment, there will be several graded steps to writing the persuasive essay. More information will be given in class, but here are the major components. You will turn in a thesis statement on **September 27** (10 pts). On **October 13**, you will submit a list of potential references (10 pts). An annotated bibliography of the sources for your paper is due by **October 29** (30 pts), and a detailed outline of the essay must be submitted by **November 12** (10 pts). You will receive feedback from the professor at each of these stages. The final essay, worth 60 points, is due on **November 22**. It will be approximately 6-8 pages of text + references and title page. To prevent plagiarism, both the annotated bibliography and persuasive essay will be submitted electronically using the Turn It In program on Angel (see section on Academic Misconduct).

Examinations (60 points; 20% of your grade):

There will be three exams in this course, one on each of the following dates: **October 8, November 8, and December 15**. Exams will cover material presented in class, the readings, and the library exercises. The exams will contain some knowledge questions to make sure that you are keeping up with and understanding the readings. They also will contain essay questions in which you construct and analyze arguments.

Make-up exams only will be given for documented emergencies (e.g., documented illness, death of a family member). College policy states that, if you have three final exams scheduled on a single day, you may reschedule one of them. If you are in this situation, please see Dr. Hunt no later than two weeks before the final (i.e., December 3).

In-Class Participation (30 points; 10% of your grade):

This is NOT a lecture course! In class, we will be discussing readings, reasoning through issues, working in groups, and writing. I will try not to dominate class discussion, and you must try not

to be passive. The success of the class depends on the willingness of class members to discuss issues, raise questions, share ideas, and analyze and challenge each others' beliefs. You are expected to listen and show respect for other students' opinions, even if you disagree with them. You should be prepared to learn from, as well as to teach each other.

Points will be awarded for making comments and asking questions in class discussions, as well as active participation in small-group activities. You will be graded on both the quantity and quality of what you say. Thus you are encouraged to speak often, but also to think before speaking. In-class discussion and activities CANNOT be made up if you miss class.

Policy on Late Assignments

Assignments are due by the *beginning* of class on the day they are due. Twenty percentage points will be deducted for every 24 hour period that assignments are late. After 5 days, assignments will not be accepted unless you have a documented emergency.

Course Grades:

Course grades will be based on the total points you earn over the semester. There are a total of 300 possible points (60 pts homework, 30 pts library exercises, 120 pts assignments related to persuasive essay, 60 pts exams, 30 pts class participation). Final grades will be determined as follows:

| Grade | Percent | Points | Grade | Percent | Points |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| A | 93.0 – 100.0% | 279 – 300 | C | 73.0 - 76.9% | 219 – 230.5 |
| A- | 90.0 – 92.9% | 270 – 278.5 | C- | 70.0 – 72.9% | 210 – 218.5 |
| B+ | 87.0 - 89.9% | 261 – 269.5 | D+ | 67.0 - 69.9% | 201 – 209.5 |
| B | 83.0 - 86.9% | 249 – 260.5 | D | 60.0 - 66.9% | 180 – 200.5 |
| B- | 80.0 – 82.9% | 240 – 248.5 | E | below 60.0% | below 180 |
| C+ | 77.0 - 79.9% | 231 – 239.5 | | | |

Extra Credit:

You will have the opportunity to earn up to 12 extra credit points in this course by attending events (e.g., campus lectures, movies) related to gender and/or the Intellectual Foundations program. Announcements for approved events and studies will be made in class. *You will not earn extra credit for studies or events that are not announced in class.*

You will earn 4 points for each event you attend; those points will be added to your point total at the end of the semester. To earn credit for an event, you need to write a one-page summary of the event includes critical analysis of the message conveyed by the speaker/filmmaker/etc. Summaries need to be turned in *within two weeks after the event* to earn credit.

Course Outline

Note: FOI refers to *Foundations of Inquiry* book; RWL refers to *Reading Women's Lives* book

Aug. 30: **Introduction to the course and each other**

SECTION I: WHY STUDY GENDER, SEX, & FEMINISM?

Sept. 1 & 3: **Gender as a contemporary issue in the United States**

Reading: *You're a hardcore feminist. I swear.* (posted on ANGEL)

Video (in class): Generation M

Sept. 6: ***No Class – Labor Day***

Sept. 8 & 10: **Gender as a global issue**

Readings: *Half the Sky* – Chp. 1 (posted on ANGEL) + individually assigned section
(copy from reserve copy in the library)

Due 9/8-10: 3-4 minute oral presentation on individual section of *Half the Sky*

Sept. 13, 15, & 17: **A brief introduction to feminism**

Readings: RWL readings 1-4 (*Seneca Falls declaration, Ain't I a woman?, NOW statement, A day without feminism*)
The feminine mystique (posted on ANGEL)

Due 9/17: Call your grandparents (or another senior citizen) and ask them to describe what it was like to be a woman or man when they were your age. Write a 1 page paper discussing how their experiences relate to the readings.

9/15-17: Attend at least one session of the Anne Frank Project

SECTION II: CRITICAL THINKING AND ARGUMENT + LIBRARY RESEARCH

Sept. 20 & 22: **Critical thinking and elements of reasoning**

Readings: FOI chps 1-2
RWL reading 5 (*Imagine my surprise*)

Sept. 24 & 27: Evaluating arguments

Readings: FOI chps 3-4

Due 9/24: Using the SEE-I format, write a 1-2 page paper containing 2 arguments. What is one gender inequality identified in the Seneca Falls Declaration that is no longer a problem and why? What is one inequality that still is a problem and why?

Due 9/27: Come to class with a written thesis statement for your persuasive essay

Sept. 29 & Oct. 1: Conducting library research

Readings: FoI chp. 6

TBA: Class visit to the library

Due 10/1: On-line library tutorial, including the 7 exercises (*Note*: Be sure to follow the link for Exercise 7 on plagiarism!)

Oct. 4 & 6: Writing good arguments and avoiding plagiarism

Readings: FoI chp. 7
Additional plagiarism readings (posted on Angel)

Oct. 8: EXAM 1

Oct. 11: *No class – Fall Break*

SECTION III: GENDER AND SEX IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Oct. 13, 15, & 18: Fine Art: How is gender portrayed in art? How does it affect artists?

Readings: FOI chp. 12
RWL reading 6 (*Why have there been no great women artists?*)

TBA: Class visit to the Burchfield Penney Art Center

Due 10/13: List of potential references for your annotated bibliography + a one paragraph abstract of any one of *RWL* readings (practice for annotated bibliography)

Due 10/18: Use the ARTSTOR database on the library website to find a work of art you like representing women and/or men. Write a 1 page critical analysis of the messages about gender conveyed by the work.

Oct. 20, 22, & 25: Media Studies: How are women represented in TV and music?

Readings: RWL readings 7 & 8 (*Smurfette principle; The good, bad, and ugly*)

Songs (in class): Artists including The Angels, The Chiffons, Ethel Waters, Rodgers & Hammerstein, No Doubt, Ani Difranco, India.Arie, The Rolling Stones, and/or Kanye West.

Video (in class): Dreamworlds 3

Due 10/20: Analyze your iPod! Choose a song about women, men, or relationships from your music collection. Critically analyze the messages about gender contained in the lyrics in approximately 1 page of writing.

Oct. 27 & 29: English: Women as writers and readers

Readings: RWL readings 9-11: Poetry by Piercy, Clifton, & Castillo
Short story - Either *Traveler* or *Agreeable* (posted on Angel)

Due 10/29: Annotated bibliography for persuasive essay (submit to TurnItIn)

SECTION IV: TAKING A STEP BACK: WHAT IS A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION?

Nov. 1, 3, & 5: Liberal arts education: How it can help you understand gender as well as improve your life

Readings: FoI chps. 8-10

Due 11/5: Using the SEE-I format, write a 1 page argument about the greatest benefit you expect to receive from your liberal arts education.

Nov. 8: EXAM 2

SECTION V: GENDER AND SEX IN THE SOCIAL AND NATURAL SCIENCES + EDUCATION

- Nov. 10 & 12: Biology: How many sexes are there? Is biology destiny?**
- Readings: RWL reading 15 (*Fives Sexes Revisited*)
- Due 11/12: Detailed outline for persuasive essay
- Nov. 15 & 17: Psychological research on women and men**
- Readings: RWL reading 14 (*Measuring up*)
- Nov. 19: Body image**
- Readings: RWL readings 12-13 (*Beauty myth; Straightening our hair*)
- Nov. 22: Political Science: Could a woman be elected president?**
- Readings: RWL readings 18-19 (*Women's representation in elected office; Madam President*)
- Due: Persuasive Essay (submit to TurnItIn)
- Nov. 24 & 26: No class - Thanksgiving**
- Nov. 29 & Dec 1: Oral presentations: How can we effectively address social problems related to gender?**
- 12/3: DECISION DAY: Whose proposal gets funded??
- Dec. 3 & 6: Education: Whose needs are – and are not – being met?**
- Readings: RWL readings 16-17 (*Gender equity in the classroom; Too many women in college?*)
- Due 12/6: Optional assignment: Write a 1-2 page argument analysis for one of the readings about psychology, political science, or education (*Note: If you do this assignment, your score will replace your lowest homework score*)
- Dec. 8: Last Day: Wrap-up and Reflections**
- Dec. 10: No class - Study day**
- Wed. Dec 15: Exam 3 (final) from 9:40-11:30am**

Other Important Information

Incompletes:

A grade of “Incomplete” (“I”) will be given only for extenuating circumstances or personal emergencies (e.g., severe illness, death in family) that can be documented and are acceptable to the professor.

Extenuating circumstances do *not* include vacation, travel, employment, or heavy course loads. Please see Dr. Hunt *as soon as possible* if you think you may need an incomplete.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

It is my policy, as well as the college’s, to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss their needs. In addition, please contact the director of the Disabilities Services Office, 120 South Wing, 878-4500. All such discussions will be held in strict confidence.

Available Support Services:

If, during this course, you realize that you need assistance with academic skills not directly related to psychology, such as writing, note-taking, computers, or math, please contact the Academic Skills Center, South Wing 330, 878-4041.

Academic Misconduct:

There is a zero tolerance policy toward academic misconduct in this class. Students who engage in any form of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, cheating on exams, turning in another person’s work as your own, turning in the same paper in more than one course, or engaging in behaviors that prevent other students in the class from succeeding, will be sanctioned. At a minimum, you will receive a grade of zero for the exam or assignment; in all likelihood, you will receive a grade of “E” for the course. All cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the college, which may impose additional penalties. *If you choose to cheat or plagiarize, you are choosing to fail this course.*

To prevent plagiarism, students will submit their papers electronically using Turn It In, a textual similarity detection program. Textual similarity detection software compares submitted student text to a database of millions of previously published documents, including those on the public Internet, a proprietary collection of published articles, as well as every student paper previously submitted to the detection service. When similarities between student text and an existing document are found, the software identifies those similarities for instructor and/or student review. (Similarity alone is not evidence of academic misconduct, as such material may be correctly cited.) This software may be used as an educational tool to assist students in learning how to properly cite resources, to decrease instances of academic misconduct, and/or to assist in the identification of acts of academic misconduct.

More information about plagiarism and how to avoid it will be provided during the semester. If you have any questions about appropriate paraphrasing, citations, etc., please see the professor.