Instructor:  Mary Okin, PhD  
Mary.Okin@umit.maine.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores gender inequality in our society from multiple vantage points, such as the personal, interpersonal, and institutional dimensions of women’s experience and utilizes the extensive feminist and gender theory that has developed over the past thirty years to analyze women’s ongoing oppression in our society. In this course, we will focus primarily on American women’s experience but will also touch on some global women’s issues. The major themes that will be explored in the course are: the “social construction” of gender; women’s health, the objectification of women’s bodies in the media; violence against women; the “wage gap” and other disadvantages women face in the world of work; women’s experiences in the military; the impact of globalization on women worldwide; an examination of environmental issues through a feminist lens; and the patriarchal nature of the world’s religions. The course will also explore the ways in which race/ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference, and physical ability intersect with gender to create diverse experiences of compounded social inequality. Finally, the course will also explore the academic discipline of women’s and gender studies, focusing on an examination of its theories, methods, and multidisciplinary nature. One primary focus of the course will be on the way in which gender is socially constructed (created through socialization) in our society. Although the focus in this course is on women, we will also examine to a lesser extent the construction of masculinity in our society and the various scripts and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity that are learned and promulgated through socialization.

This course will occur “on-line” through Blackboard. The class will run on a Monday through Friday schedule with journal postings on the readings for the week due several days per week Monday through Friday. Students will also respond on these days to other students’ journal postings. This will constitute our class “discussion” of the topics.

**Please note this syllabus is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes the instructor may make through announcements that will be posted to the course conference.

**Please note that this is NOT a self-paced course. It is expected that you keep up with the weekly assignments and post them on time.

**Important note: If you do not start participating in this class on time you risk a failing grade for participation or you may not be permitted to join at all.

**Please also make sure that you have high-speed Internet access and Quick Time as a large part of this class includes videos that you need to be able to watch. If you do not have Quick Time you should contact U Maine IT Center for help.
EXPECTATIONS:
* Students will participate in the online discussion through their daily journal entries and responses to each other by posting their journals on time.
* Students will complete all the assignments that are listed on this syllabus on time.
* The instructor will provide feedback for all written assignments other than the daily journal responses.
* Assignments are due on the designated date. Late assignments will not be accepted.
* Academic Honesty. Plagiarism violates the University of Maine Student Conduct Code as outlined in the Student handbook. Make sure you cite all direct quotes, images, ideas, facts, and opinions that are not your own.
* All written work, including journals, should be well written with attention to grammar. Please write your own journal before reading other students’ journals. If your journal is very similar to one posted before yours, you may not receive credit.
* Please review the University of Maine codes for what is considered civil conduct and etiquette for the online classroom. Students must be civil and respectful in all communications with the instructor and fellow students.

Accommodation of Disabilities:
Any student who because of a disability may need arrangements or accommodations to meet the requirements of this course is encouraged to discuss these needs with me as soon as possible.

Non-sexist Language Policy:
The University of Maine, as an equal opportunity educational institution, is committed to both academic freedom and the fair treatment of all individuals. It therefore discourages the use of sexist language. Language that reinforces sexism can arise from imprecise word choices that may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory, or demeaning even if they are not intended to be. Accordingly, all University communications, whether delivered orally or in writing, shall be free of sexist language.

CONTINGENCY PLAN:
In the event of the disruption of normal classroom activities, the format of this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided with an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION REPORTING:
The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination involving members of the campus, your teacher is required to report this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources: For confidential resources on campus: Counseling Center: 207-581-1392 or Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000. For confidential resources off campus: Rape Response Services: 1-800-310-0000 or Spruce Run: 1-800-863-9909. Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

Note on Course Content:
Please be aware that some on the material in this course can be challenging for any students who may have experienced any kind of violence first or second-hand. Please take care of yourself and if you need more support as you go through this material, please contact the Counseling Center on campus at Orono: http://umaine.edu/counseling

REQUIRED TEXTS:
   PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU GET THE 6th EDITION! The 4th or 5th editions will not work.
2. Solomon, Rivka, *That Takes Ovaries* (required)
3. Brantenberg, Gerd, *Egalia’s Daughters* (required)
   All other readings will be posted to the class folder.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Journal Responses (class participation):

   WGS 101 is designed to be a discussion course and not a lecture course. Therefore, student participation is critical. Grading for participation will be based first and foremost on the quality and timeliness of your journal assignments. The course centers on our readings and it crucial that you do all the readings for the course. As this is a summer intensive course with the work of a whole semester condensed into five weeks, the course will run on a M-F schedule. Each student will be expected to do a journal posting each day M-F for the five weeks of the course to the appropriate Blackboard discussion board with a summary and discussion of the readings for the day, including any questions about the readings and personal reactions to it. **This journal response should be one-to-two pages long.** Students will also be expected to read other students’ daily journal postings and are encouraged to respond to each other as appropriate (for example agreeing or disagreeing –respectfully- with another student's opinions about the readings). Each student will be expected to respond to at least two other students’ journal postings per day in order to facilitate “discussion” about the readings. This activity is designed to provide a forum for online discussion, to help students keep up with the reading, and as a way to learn about how other students feel about the subject. The postings themselves will not be graded, but if you miss two or more daily journal postings, do not respond to other students, or if the journals are not of high quality, the grade for this component will be lowered. In these journals, I would like you to first summarize and give the main points in the reading and then include your personal reactions to them. **Please note that journal postings are always due by 9:00 am on the day they are due- so plan ahead and do them the night before if you need to.** Again, please note that your participation will be graded on the quality of your journals as well. Students who do not join the class on time and keep up with the expected postings each week should expect to receive a poor grade. It is not an option to make up the work for this class at the end as all students are expected to move through the material together. There will be no credit granted for late journals.

2. Event/ Documentary Report: During the course students will be expected to do the following and submit a written report: **either** attend an event in the community (a lecture, panel discussion, film, or performance) that relates to women/gender issues **or** watch a film or documentary that focuses on women’s issues or gender concerns and submit a 2-3 page report on the event to post to the course
discussion folder. These reports should include the basic facts about the event or film, a discussion of how the issue presented relates to class readings and discussions, and your reaction to the presentation. Students will also be expected to read the reports of the other students and respond to at least two. The instructor will provide students with examples of the types of events, films, and documentaries that would be appropriate. For example, instructor will post some Quick Time movies that you may choose to watch for credit for this assignment.

3. **Gender Issue/ Activism Paper:** By the second week of class, students will be asked to identify a particular global gender issue to research. In a 6-7 page paper due the last week of class, students will identify an issue that affects women, research, and describe the issue. In the paper students will also identify and describe any organizations or agencies that already exist to address/ combat the issue. Examples of possible issues are the status of women in Muslim nations, sex trafficking and slavery, honor killings, female genital mutilation, bride burning, acid throwing, etc. In the third part of your paper, you are asked to think up/design your own activism project that could help raise awareness about the issue. Examples of activism projects will be offered to help with this. The final written paper should consist of an introduction, a conclusion, citations, and a bibliography. Students will post their papers to the course discussion board and will be expected to read and respond to the papers of two other students.

4. **Final Exam:** There will be a take-home (open-book) Final Exam that will be posted to the conference during the last week of the course and will be due by Thurs Aug 3rd at 9:00 pm (at the latest). The exam will consist of defining terms, and some short answer and essay questions. The exam will be posted to the folder and students will be expected to email their completed exams directly to the professor cut and pasted directly into email (not as an attachment).

**COURSE EVALUATION**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (Journal Responses)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event/ Documentary Report</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Issue/ Activism Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

May 14  **Introduction to Women’s studies, Syllabus**
- Reading: Kirk et al, pp 3-26
- Review Timeline of Women’s Rights
- Read instructor’s **Introduction to the Course**
- Watch the Quick Time movie posted to the class folder *Seneca Reflections*.

Please also review the syllabus to make sure you understand it and familiarize yourself with the FirstClass Conference. **In your first journal posting due today by 9:00 am, please summarize the readings and the video and also “introduce” yourself to the class, covering such things as what your major is, where you are in your studies, any exposure you have had to women’s studies, and what you hope to get out of the class.**
May 15  Framework, Feminism
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 27-40, "Introduction" from Women, Images and Realities, pp. 8-15, and "Men and Women's Studies: Premises, Perils, and Promise" by Michael Kimmel, pp. 24-28 (articles are located on e-reserves).
Journal due by 9:00 am: In your journal posting for today, please summarize some of the main points in the reading for today. Please also define the following terms in your own words: sexism, gender, and feminism. For feminism, please do not use a dictionary to define it, but please explore your own personal definition of what you think feminism is and please also include a statement about whether or not you consider yourself to be a feminist and why or why not.

May 16  Theory
Reading: Kirk, pp. 51-81, and Solomon, pp. 1-17
Journal response due by 9:00 am with reflections on the readings for today. Please summarize the entire chapter and offer your own reflections and opinions on the material.

May 17  Identities and Social Location
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 101-122, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh, and "The Male Privilege Checklist" (posted to the class folder).
Please also watch the video Codes of Gender posted to the course folder.
No journal response due today.

May 18  Identities and Social Location, II
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 123-150, and Solomon, pp. 64-67, 156-158,
Journal response due by 9:00 am with reflections on all the readings for June 29 and 30.
In your journal posting for today, please summarize the chapter and discuss your own identity or “social location,” including some advantages or disadvantages you may face due to your particular social location. Please also reflect upon the concepts of social hierarchy, and power and privilege based upon race, class, and gender.

May 21  Sexuality
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 173-206
Please also research the “Abortion debate” and include a short description of each side of the argument in your journal post. You do not have to state your own views on the topic. Describe what Roe versus Wade refers to and describe the concept of “reproductive rights” and "reproductive justice."
No journal response due.

***One-page Proposal due on your Final Gender Issue/ Activism paper (by 9:00 am). In this proposal, please discuss what topic you have chosen, why it is an important global women’s issue, and how you plan to go about researching it. Please email this proposal directly to the instructor. Instructor will provide feedback on your proposal.

May 22  Bodies and Health
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 209-237, and Solomon, pp. 77-78, 127-130, 135-137
Please also watch the video: Killing us Softly
http://130.111.228.122/viewResource.html?guid=0C130E3EAEA23371A20E5F635F3F85B1
No journal response due.
May 23  Bodies and Health, II
Journal response due by 9:00 am with reactions to all the readings for May 21, 22, and 23.

May 24  Violence Against Women
Reading: Kirk et al, pp 259-281, and Solomon, pp. 42-45, 101-103
Watch video Tough Guise.
No journal due today.

May 25 Violence Against Women, II
Reading: Kirk et al, pp 283-304,
Please also watch Ted Talk- short talk by Jackson Katz:
http://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue.html
Journal response due by 9:00 am. Please respond to all the readings for July 6 and July 7 and the Tough Guise and Katz videos in your journal for today. Please also do some online research to find organizations that exist to combat domestic violence (such as Spruce Run), and please discuss the organization/organizations you found.

May 28 Making a Home, Living
Watch video Motherhood.
No journal due.
**Event / Documentary Report due (by 9:00 am)- please post to the appropriate folder, read other students reports, and respond to at least two other students' reports.

May 29 Women and Work
Reading: "Women and Work," pp. 175-211 (on e-reserve), and Solomon, 142-152
Journal response due by 9:00 am with summary of and reactions to all the readings for July 10 and 11 and the video.

May 30 Global Economy
Reading: Kirk et al, pp 363-399
Watch video China Blue, posted to folder
No journal response due today.

May 31 Global Economy, II
Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of and reactions to all the readings for May 30 and May 31 and the video China Blue.

June 1 Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity
Reading: "Introduction" (pp. ix- xvii) from *Men's Lives*, and "Night to his Day" by Judith Lorber (all on e-reserve). Please also watch:

*The Bro Code: How Contemporary Culture Creates Sexist Men*:

No journal response due.

**June 4**  
**Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity**
Reading: "Television Cartoons: Do Children Notice it's a Boy's World?", "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence" by Michael Kaufman, "The Fraternal Bond as a Joking Relationship" by Peter Lyman (all articles on e-reserve), and this short article:
http://www.peace.ca/crisismasculinity.htm

Journal response due by 9:00 am with summary of and reactions to all the readings for June 1 and June 4 and the video.

**June 5**  
**Women and the Military, War and Peace**

Please also watch short videos on women in the military posted to the class folder.

Journal response due by 9:00 am with summary of and reactions to all the readings and the short videos.

**June 6**  
**Women and the Environment**
Reading: Kirk et al, pp. 503-522, and 536-544, and 553-559

Watch Quick Time video: *The Shape of Water*.

Journal response to readings due by 9:00 am. Please also answer these questions in your response: How has the connection between women and the environment been theorized? What parallels do you see between the treatment of women and the environment? What are some of the main arguments of the chapter and do you agree or disagree with them?

**June 7**  
**Women and the Media**
Reading: "The More You Subtract the More You Add" by Jean Kilbourne, pp. 231-238, "Bitches and Morons and Skanks, Oh My!" by Jennifer Plozner, pp. 96-100, "Teen Mags" by Anastasia Higginbotham, pp. 88-92, and "Gender in the Media" by Marielena Zuniga, pp. 92-96 (all articles on e-reserves)

Please also watch the video: *Miss Representation*:
http://130.111.228.123/manage/5/1EDF20FD512340FEDD1E83827642FF8B/viewProgram.html?sbauth=88395F7F621E3649&distLoc=dn

Journal response due by 9:00 am with reactions to all the readings and the video. Please also find an advertisement (in a magazine, online, on tv, etc) that exemplifies the points that Jean Kilbourne made about the representation of women in the media and describe and analyze it (or attach it) with your journal post.

****Instructor will post Final Exam to the class folder.

**June 8**  
**Religion**
Reading: Read instructor’s posting on First Class conference and readings listed, which are
posted to the folder: “Grandmother of the Sun,” “Witchcraft and Women’s Culture,” “Standing again at Sinai,” “Naked Dancing and Long Dreaming,” and “Expressing Anger at God.”

Also, please watch the six-part U Tube documentary: The Burning Times

Journal response to the reading due (by 9:00 am). Please respond to all five of the articles, the instructor’s post, and the documentary in your journal.

June 9  Creating Change
Reading: Kirk: 561-594, Solomon: 154-156, 174-177
Watch video: Women, Power and Politics
No journal response due.

June 12  Creating Change
Reading: Kirk: 595-615
Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of and reactions to all the readings for June 9 and June 12 and the Women, Power, and Politics video. Please summarize the entire chapter and answer the following questions: Why do you think the Kirk and Okazawa-Rey book ends on the note of creating change? How do the authors suggest that change comes about? How did the various articles in the chapter represent different forms of political activism for change?
Please also read the Introduction and Glossary Handout on Egalia’s Daughters.

June 13  Egalia’s Daughters, pp. 9-61.
Watch video Taking the Heat.
Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of the main themes, characters, plot, and your personal reactions to the book so far and a discussion of the documentary.

June 14  Egalia’s Daughters, pp. 62-120
No journal response due.

June 15  Egalia’s Daughters, pp. 121-179
Journal response due at 9:00 am.

June 18  Finish Egalia's Daughters, pp. 180-269
Final journal due by 9:00 am: In your final journal for this course, please include your analysis of the end of the book and of its message. In this final journal post, please also include your final comments or questions on the course as a whole, including what you feel you learned.

June 20  Final Gender Issue/ Activism Paper due by 9:00 am. Please post your paper to the appropriate folder on the course conference (cut and paste into the main body of the message- not as an attachment). Please read other students' papers and respond to two other students’ papers.

June 22  Final Exam due at 9:00 to be emailed directly to the instructor and cut and paste directly into email as well as as an attachment, please. Late exams will not be accepted.

Have a great rest of your summer!