**POLS/GWS 485: GENDER AND POLITICS**

**Prof. Norma Claire Moruzzi**

**Spring 2022**

**Tuesdays 1:00-3:30, BSB 1115 (when on campus) & ZOOM**

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**Office Hours: M, W 2-3, Tuesday 3:30-4:00, and by appointment**

**Course Description**

How do we engage the interdisciplinary, historically and geographically determined subject field of Gender and Politics in the course of a fifteen week semester? Any approach will necessarily be partial and exclusionary, whether it prioritizes chronology (either of “classic” or “contemporary” issues and arguments) or a thematic organization (sexualities? inequalities? exclusions?).

For this semester, we will approach this broad field of inquiry through considerations of alternate methodological approaches. Rather than focusing directly on a limited number of gender issues, we will try to reconsider how to focus. This means exploring the reality of the blank spots in our vision: can we begin to make room for the issues, details, and perspectives that might be right in front of us, but that we are used to not seeing? We will read for content and technique. Many weeks’ readings will juxtapose (present together) two radically different ways of writing about difficult subjects, usually one that is more “narrative” and one that is more “analytical.” How do authors choose to convey their ideas about gender, power, identity, and their overlapping intersections? What gets conveyed, and what gets lost, in these various approaches to discussing the issues that are involved with studying diverse aspects of Gender and Politics?

**Requirements**

This course is a seminar with an emphasis on collaborative work and discussion. Our semester will be as much about the process of learning as about the substance of what is learned. Your experience of the course will only be successful if you read carefully on your own, and engage generously with collective work and discussion.

Class Participation 10%

All responsible contributions to class discussion are welcome: please be respectful of yourself, the arguments, and everyone else in the course.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Throughout the semester, relevant events, lectures, films, exhibitions, etc will be publicized. These can be on or off campus, in person or online. Attend an event, submit a 1-2 page memo (What/When/Where was it? What did you learn?) and receive Extra Credit. Know of an event? Share the information with the class. Organizing an event? Share that information and receive Extra Credit.

**Weeks BEFORE Spring Break**

Critical Response Memos 20%

Weekly short memos on the reading (undergrads 2-3 pages, grads 3-4 pages), due by 10am Tuesday (and preferably the night before). **Memos should be emailed to me in WORD. Do not send me a GoogleDoc or a PDF!**

Critical response memos are short written write-ups of your thinking about the reading, intended to help you focus your thoughts and enunciate them to yourself and your reader.

Critical response memos are NOT a summary of everything in the reading! They are your personal individual response to the argument (first person writing is allowed!). What do you think is/are the main point(s)? Did something particular strike you about the writing/thinking? What is your response to this reading? Especially for the first few weeks of reading, prompt questions will be posted to help you get started in responding to the week’s assigned reading.

Group Presentations 10%

Each week’s already assigned readings will be introduced by a short group presentation (size of groups depending on final enrollment). Everyone will have the chance to do several presentations. On the day of the presentation, each member of the group must participate in the oral presentation and submit their critical response memo (as usual).

The presentations are intended to begin our conversation by introducing some key ideas and questions from the readings. Feel free to use your Critical Response Memos as the basis of your presentation! Presentations are not intended to be authoritative! But they are intended to be thoughtful. What do you think is going on in the reading? What do you think about it? Work together as a group to organize the presentation of your ideas; these presentations are informal but they should be organized! End your presentation with a question for the rest of the class, in order to help the rest of us pick up and continue the discussion.

Critical Analysis Essays 20% each (40% total)

Two longer analytic essays that build on the work you have been doing (reading, thinking, writing) for weekly assignments, while giving you the opportunity to explore the texts and your response to them more fully and in detail. Your weekly Critical Response Memos are the notes you can use develop your longer Critical Analysis Essays!

**Weeks AFTER Spring Break**

Individual Presentations (5%) & Final Research Essay (15%) (20% total)

After Spring Break, readings will be selected by students!

Every student will select some key readings on an area of their interest in Gender and Politics. These readings will make up the shared required readings for the remaining weeks of the course. These readings will also give the rest of the class some insight into the topic of each individual student’s final research essay, on a Gender and Politics topic that you determine.

For the class session of your selected reading, you will provide an overview presentation of your selection: a presentation that is a combination of summary (What is in the reading? Why is it important?) and response (Why is this particular reading important to you? How does it relate to the topic you will be discussing in your final essay?).

You are expected to behave with academic integrity: you can check the university policy on this at: http://www.uic.edu/ucat/catalog/GR.shtml#qa

**Accommodations**

I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, to discuss with me, after class or during my office hours, appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to them.

“Stuff happens”: I encourage all students to reach out if challenging situations arise that are interfering with your ability to prioritize your academic responsibilities. Illness, accident, domestic crises, etc. can all become even more of a problem if you do not inform your supervisors when something is going on. I do not need/want to know the details of your life! But I cannot work with you to organize accommodations to a crisis (or a chronic situation) if I don’t know about it.

Students must notify the instructor within the first ten days of the semester of the specific dates on which they are requesting an absence for religious observance.

**Readings**

**Required Articles/Chapters/Books**

**(Available through the UIC Library OR posted on Blackboard**

Nancy Fraser, “Contradictions of Capital and Care” (listed as “Feminism’s Home Front” in *NLR* journal contents) in *New Left Review* No. 100 (July/August 2016), 99-117

[link for download on Blackboard]

Ella Shohat, “Dislocated Identities: Reflections of an Arab Jew” in *On the Arab-Jew, Palestine, and Other Displacements: Selected Writings* (Pluto Press, 2017), 77-82 [chapter on Blackboard]

Ella Shohat, “Remembering a Baghdad Elsewhere; An Emotional Cartography” in *Biography*, Vol. 37, No. 3, (Summer 2014), 784-790 [Daley library journals]

Jennifer Nash, “Re-Thinking Intersectionality” in *Feminist Review*, No.89 (2008), 1-15 [Daley library journals]

Deniz Kandiyoti, “Bargaining with Patriarchy” in *Gender and Society*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Sept., 1988), 274-290 [Daley library journals]

Amélie Le Renard, “Covering Women’s Rights, Silencing Suppression: Western News Media and Saudi Female Activists” in *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies (JMEWS)*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (July 2019), 251-255 [Daley Library Journals]

Norma Claire Moruzzi, “A Problem with Headscarves: Contemporary of Political and Social Identity” in *Political Theory*, Vol. 22, No. 4, (Nov., 1994), 653-672

[Daley library journals]

James McAuley, “Who Does Éric Zenmour Speak For?” in *New York Review of Books*, January 13, 2022 issue

Mohammed Almahmood, Oliver Schulze, Tine Agervig Carstensen and Gertrud Jørgensen (2017): “The Sidewalk as a Contested Space: Women’s Negotiation of Social-Spatial Processes of Exclusion in Public Urban Space in Saudi Arabia; The Case of Al Tahlia Street” in *Planning Practice and Research*, DOI 10.1080/02697459.2017.1419652

[link for download on Blackboard]

**Required Books (Available in the UIC Bookstore)**

Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*

(University of Minnesota Press, 2008)

Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (Yale University Press, 1993)

Leila Ahmed, *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America—Am Woman’s Journey* (Penguin, 2012)

Assia Djebar, Dorothy S. Blair, trans., *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (Heinemann, 1993/2003)

**Suggested/Recommended Readings (if you’re interested in more background, especially graduate students)**

Pierre Bourdieu, trans. Richard Nic, “Preface” from *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 2-21 [on Blackboard]

Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon, Astrid Henry, *Feminism Unfinished: A Short, Surprising history of American Women’s Movements* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2014)

**Course Schedule (Tuesdays)**

**Gender and Politics:**

**Thinking What Matters Through the Gaps & Silences**

Jan. 11 Course Introduction

Suggested (for graduate students)

Bourdieu, “Preface” [BB]

(Noticing What’s Right in Front of Us that Isn’t Seen) [Noah, Elif]

Jan. 18 Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, Ch. 1, “her shape and his hand,” Ch. 2, “distractions” (pages 1-60)

Fraser, “Contradictions of Capital and Care” [BB]

(Speaking a Violence that Is Difficult to Hear) [Hector, Lesly]

Jan. 25 Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, Ch. 3, “the other door, its floods of tears with consolation enclosed” (pages 63-135)

Shohat, “Dislocated Identities” [BB]

Shohat, “Remembering a Baghdad Elsewhere” [Daley]

(Writing the Cross Purposes) [Shawn, Mora, Amy]

Feb. 1 Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, Ch. 4 “not only the footprints but the water too and what is down there, Ch. 5 “there are crossroads” (pages 137-208)

Nash, “Re-Thinking Intersectionality” [Daley]

**Gender and Politics:**

**Middle East Women’s Agency and Voice: Complexities of History, Language, and Identity**

Feb. 8 Ahmed, *Women and Gender*, [Jay, Michael, Kenya, Tahira]

“Introduction,” and Part 1, “The Pre-Islamic Middle East” (Chapter 1, “Mesopotamia,” Ch. 2, “The Mediterranean Middle East”); “Founding Discourses” (Ch. 3, “Women and the Rise of Islam”). SKIM ONLY Ch. 4, 5, 6.

Kandiyoti, “Bargaining with Patriarchy” [Daley]

LeRenard, “Covering Women’s Rights” [Daley]

**1st Essay Due SUNDAY Feb. 13 (or earlier!)**

Feb. 15 Ahmed, *Women and Gender*, [Yasmine, Jodi, Amy]

Part 3, “New Discourses” (Ch. 7, “Social and Intellectual Change,” Ch. 8, “The Discourse of the Veil,” Ch. 9, “The First Feminists,” Ch. 10, “Divergent Voices,” Ch. 11, “The Struggle for the Future,” Ch. 12, “Conclusion”)

Moruzzi, “A Problem with Headscarves” [Daley]

McAuley, “Who Does Éric Zenmour Speak For? [BB]

Feb. 22 Ahmed, *A Border Passage* [Lesly, Jay, Noah, Mora]

Almahmood et al, “The Sidewalk as a Contested Space” [BB]

Mar. 1 Djebar , *Fantasia*, Parts 1 & 2 (through page 109) [Elif, Hector]

GUEST PRESENTATION:

Prof. Danielle Beaujon (French colonial history in Algeria)

Mar. 8 Djebar, *Fantasia*, Part 3 & Finale (through page 227) [Yasmine, Shawn]

PREPARATION FOR INDIVIDUAL READING SELECTIONS &

FINAL PAPERS

Mar. 15 Moruzzi, book chapters in progress, (probably)

[Jodi, Michael, Kenya, Tahira]

“Shopping for Shoes: Consumer Identity, Commodity Fetishism, and Gender as a Brand” [BB]

and

“We Are More Than One, When We Speak Together: Collective Art, Plural Possibilities, and the Horizon of Utopia” [BB]

Mar. 22 **SPRING BREAK/NO CLASS**

**Genders and Politics:**

**Forging Our Paths**

Mar. 29 **2nd Essay Due TUESDAY Mar. 29 (or earlier!)**

**(NO CLASS)**

Apr. 5 TBA (Student Work)

Apr. 12 TBA (Student Work )

Apr. 19 TBA (Student Work)

Apr. 26 TBA (Student Work) and Course Conclusion

**Final Essay Due TUESDAY MAY 3**