POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMINAR:  
GLOBAL FEMINISMS  
790:395:06  
SPRING 2020

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Course Time: Wednesday, 2.15-5.15 PM  
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This course examines the global dimensions of feminist organizing and policy-making, with a particular focus on the United Nations. It explores the formation, activities, and strategies of international and transnational women’s networks on a variety of women’s rights issues, including political participation; labor issues and migration; sexual and reproductive rights; violence against women; and women, war, and peace. It analyzes interactions with local and national women’s movements, as well as states and international organizations, and weighs the opportunities and constraints involved in mobilizing beyond the nation-state in struggles against inequality in global and national arenas.

Course Requirements

The course seeks to introduce students to basic concepts and debates on feminism and globalization via a diverse array of course assignments:

- **Class participation** (30%) which includes coming to class prepared and participating actively in class discussions. Students are expected to read all assigned materials prior to class and arrive with questions and observations to contribute to class discussions. A copy of the readings should be brought to each class. *Attendance is included as part of this grade.* See further details in Appendix 1.
- A **quiz** (10%) on basic theoretical concepts, reviewing materials covered in readings and lectures during Weeks 1-2. This quiz will be administered in class on **February 5**.
- A **presentation** (10%) on an empirical example of the topic for that week’s class session, reflecting on how it speaks back to the readings and other concepts/readings addressed in class. See further details in Appendix 2.
- A **major term paper** (50%) on one particular aspect of global feminisms. The paper should be 5000-8000 words long and will be written in stages over the course of the semester. For further details see Appendix 3.
- **Deadlines:** a paper proposal on **February 12**, a first section on **March 11**, a second section on **April 15**, and the final paper on **May 13**. Sections are due by 11.59 PM on each day and be turned in via the Dropbox on Sakai.

Required Texts

All of the readings are available on the course’s Sakai page.

COURSE SCHEDULE

**January 22: Social Movements and Transnational Activism**


**January 29: Global Diffusion and International Norms**


**February 5: Resistance to International Norms**


**February 12: International Organizations and Women’s Rights**


*Read one of the following:*


**February 19: Transnational Feminist Networks**

*Film: Once and For All*


**February 26: Women’s Rights in the Global Economy**

Press, 55-85.


Read one of the following:


March 4: Women’s Human Rights and Violence Against Women


March 11: NO CLASS, UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

March 18: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

March 25: Women, War, and Peace: Part I

Films: War Redefined, I Came to Testify, and Pray the Devil Back to Hell


April 1: Women, War, and Peace: Part II


April 8: Reproductive Rights and Sexual Health in Global Perspective


April 15: Global Strategies for Gender Equality: Mainstreaming and Quotas


April 22: Masculinities and Global Politics


April 29: ‘Feminist Imperialism’ and International Politics

Film: Half the Sky


APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPATION GRADE

As noted on page 1, **30% of the final grade** for this course is determined by your participation. This grade is determined by a number of elements:

- **Attending class regularly:** Student attendance is vital to the life of a seminar. Multiple, unexcused absences will result in a reduction of this grade. Coming unduly late or leaving early will also be treated as lack of attendance.

- **Coming to class prepared:** Students should do all assigned course readings prior to class. All articles and book chapters are posted in Sakai. These materials should be brought to each class session, with notes and annotations of your questions and observations. Students are also encouraged to bring in news items related to the topics being discussed in the class (or illustrating themes from prior weeks) that will be used to start each class session.

- **Participating actively in class discussions:** Students are expected to not only be present in class but to be present in class. This entails being an active listener, answering questions, or offering observations and reflections on the class materials. Reading emails, checking social media, surfing the internet, etc., on your phone or laptop during class will be treated as lack of participation.

Participation in class sessions is an essential and valuing part of the learning experience. The following studies demonstrate the importance of attendance and active engagement with class materials. I do not ban laptops in the classroom, but I instead encourage all students to consider the value of using a pen and paper for note-taking.

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**Class Attendance in College: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Relationship of Class Attendance With Grades and Student Characteristics**

Marcus Credé, Sylvia G. Roch, Urszula M. Kieszkowska

First Published June 1, 2013 | Research Article

https://doi.org/10.3102/0034431710362998

Abstract

A meta-analysis of the relationship between class attendance in college and college grades reveals that attendance has strong relationships with both class grades (k = 69, N = 21,195, r = .44) and GPA (k = 33, N = 9,243, r = .41). These relationships make class attendance a better predictor of college grades than any other known predictor of academic performance, including scores on standardized admissions tests such as the SAT, high school GPA, study habits, and study skills. Results also show that class attendance explains large amounts of unique variance in college grades because of its relative independence from SAT scores.

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**The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking**

Pam A. Mueller, Daniel M. Oppenheimer

First Published April 23, 2014 | Research Article

https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614524561

Abstract

Taking notes on laptops rather than in longhand is increasingly common. Many researchers have suggested that laptop note taking is less effective than longhand note taking for learning. Prior studies have primarily focused on students' capacity for multitasking and distraction when using laptops. The present research suggests that even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing. In three studies, we found that students who took notes on laptops performed worse on conceptual questions than students who took notes longhand. We show that whereas taking more notes can be beneficial, laptop note takers' tendency to transcribe lectures verbatim rather than processing information and reframing it in their own words is detrimental to learning.
APPENDIX 2

PRESENTATION GRADE

As noted on page 1, **10% of the final grade** for this course will be based on a class presentation. During the second week of class, a sign-up sheet will be circulated for students to select the week of their presentation:

International Organizations and Women’s Rights  
Transnational Feminist Networks  
Women’s Rights in the Global Economy  
Women’s Human Rights and Violence Against Women  
Women, War, and Peace  
Reproductive Rights and Sexual Health in Global Perspective  
Global Strategies for Gender Equality: Mainstreaming and Quotas  
Masculinities and Global Politics

Students should choose **one empirical example** that relates to the topic for that week’s class session and develop a short 5-10 minute presentation that:

- Summarizes the example;  
- Provides relevant background; and  
- Explains clearly how it relates to (illustrates, challenges, or extends) themes (concepts, theories, and/or findings) discussed in that week’s readings.

Students are welcome – but not required – to show an image or short video clip as part of the presentation.
APPENDIX 3

COURSE RESEARCH PAPER

As noted in the syllabus, **50% of the final grade** for this course is determined by a substantial research paper.

Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

**Length**

The final paper should be double-spaced and **5000-8000 words long** (approximately 20-30 pages, if you use a standard 12-point font). Papers may be longer, as appropriate, but under no circumstances should they be shorter than 5000 words. Sections handed in over the course of the semester should therefore aim to be about 2000-3000 words long, apart from the topic proposal which should be 1-2 pages.

**Content and Structure**

Students are free to focus on a variety of topics related to global feminisms. The essay itself, however, must engage **centrally with theories, concepts, and readings discussed in class**. The paper should not, therefore, be simply a descriptive piece or stand entirely apart from the materials in the course: there should be a clear relationship between the paper’s content and the course as a whole. **Readings from outside class** must be included, with the final paper including a minimum of 20 references. The majority of these references must come from academic sources.

**Feedback and Grading**

The research paper will be **developed in stages**, with students writing and submitting sections over the course of the semester. To encourage attention to feedback, no letter grades will be given for these sections. To gauge progress, students will instead receive a check-plus, check, or check-minus. These assignments are not optional: in addition to detracting from the quality of the final paper, failure to hand in sections as they are due will reduce the final grade.

Students should revise and eventually integrate the different parts in a final paper handed in at the end of the semester, which will be given a letter grade. **This approach seeks to train students to read, interpret, and respond to feedback, developing an important ‘real world’ skill.** Students are thus encouraged to contact me to discuss their plans as well as any difficulties that arise during the research.

**Submission and Deadlines**

Papers will be handed in via the Drop Box function on Sakai, which will also be used to upload sections with my comments for each student, creating a central record for each student.

**Deadlines**: a topic proposal on February 12, a first section on March 11, a second section on April 15, and the final paper on May 13. Sections are due by **11.59 PM on each day** and be turned in via the Dropbox on Sakai. Emailed submissions will not be accepted. Missing class to work on these sections will not count as an excused absence.

**References**

The final paper must include a minimum of 20 references, the majority of which cite scholarly sources.