

# Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## Syllabus

### Course Description

In this course students will learn concepts and theoretical perspectives within the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies (WGSS). Students will come to understand the multiple matrices of power that shape our world and lived experiences. Central to our discussions are the ways in which sexism, racism, capitalism, ableism, heterosexism, nationalism and other forms of kyriarchy impact human relations within our societies and cultures. We will focus on issues pertinent to the United States but will incorporate transnational feminist perspectives into our analysis. Students will create a digital magazine that will reflect their knowledge of course topics.



Protestors at a Slutwalk march in London carry signs against rape culture.

### Goals and Objectives

Students will

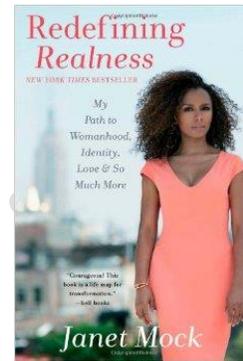
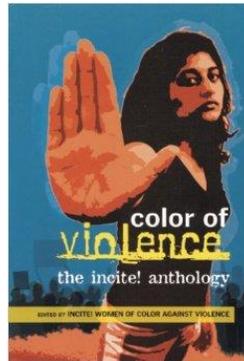
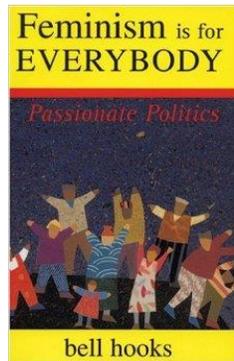
- Learn basic WGSS concepts such as intersectionality and standpoint theory
- Reformulate arguments in language accessible beyond the academy
- Acquire basic Adobe InDesign skills
- Plan and execute an event on campus

## Required Texts

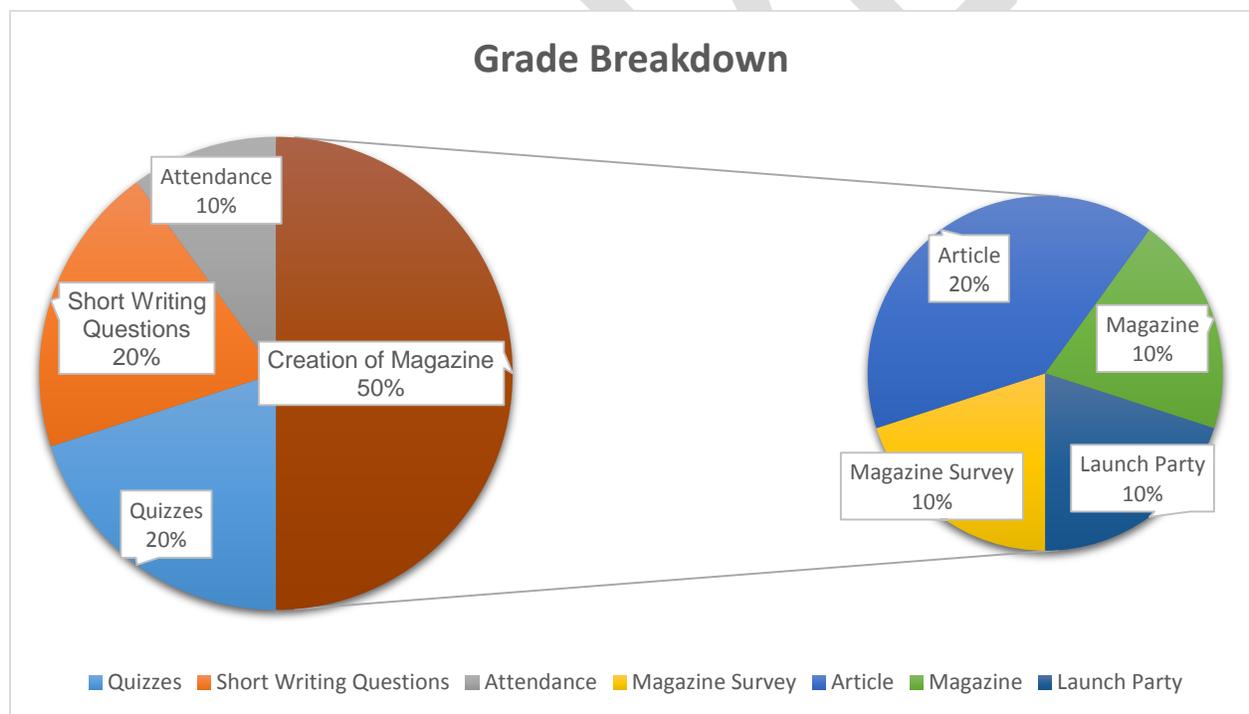
*Feminism is For Everybody* by bell hooks

*The Color of Violence: INCITE! Anthology* (noted in Reading Schedule as “CoV”)

*Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love and So Much More* by Janet Mock



## Grading and Requirements



## Class Participation

- **Quizzes** – There will be two quizzes this semester. All readings, short writing questions, and class discussions are potential material for quizzes.
- **Short Writing Questions** – At the beginning of class on some days there will be a writing prompt related to the days reading that students will need to answer. Your five best answers will be used to compile this grade.

- **Attendance** – Students **must** participate in classroom discussions. To do so students must be present. Students can miss **three** classes without penalty. Any absence beyond these three will result in a percentage decrease from your class participation grade. Students are still responsible for any assignments missed. Students are responsible for looking at the syllabus and asking classmates what work may have been missed.

Tardiness is unacceptable. Excessive tardiness will result in a percentage decrease from your class participation grade. Computers are for typing notes. Do not use your computer to do work for another class or use Facebook, etc. **Do not use your cell phones in class!**

### Creation of Magazine

- **Magazine Survey** – Students will complete an assessment of current magazines by identifying its sections and components. This will serve as preparation for the creation of the class magazine.
- **Article** – Each student will draft an article that corresponds to class concepts and course themes. Each article must include two references that come from the class reading and discussion schedule as well as two references that are from a book or scholarly article.
- **Magazine** - Students will work in small groups to create the magazine. Students will be divided as follows:
  - **Editors**- The editors are responsible for correcting grammar and spelling errors in the different sections of the magazine. This group also includes section editors who will be responsible for selecting which articles will be selected for the magazine and how they will be organized.
  - **Launch party planners**- Students involved in planning the launch party are responsible for finding a location and notifying the Northeastern community about the event. Students in this group will make an invitation and coordinate the other students in preparing a program that introduces the magazine at the end of the semester.
  - **Design and layout**- Students in this group are responsible for learning and using InDesign to layout the magazine. Students in this group will work closely with the authors of selected articles to find images and layouts that best highlight the article's content. Students in this group will create a cover, table of contents, and a work/images cited page.
  - **Advertising**- Students will highlight relevant campus groups and events to use as ads in the magazine. Students in this group will also create two ads that address class themes.

Each group will grade themselves, assessing how they worked as a team and how their efforts contributed to the magazine as a whole. Other groups will also evaluate the groups and assess how they worked together.

## **Grades**

A = 100 – 93

B = 86 – 83

C = 76 – 73

F = 64 – Below

A- = 92 – 90

B- = 82 – 80

C- = 72 – 70

B+ = 89 – 87

C+ = 79 – 77

D = 69 – 64

**To earn an A students must participate in class and be present for class. All assignments must be complete, polished, and turned in on time. Work should be of excellent quality and demonstrate an understanding of class concepts and themes.**

## **Sustainable Classroom Efforts**

We will attempt to tread a little lighter on the planet, at least in the context of this classroom. Assignments and grades will be submitted electronically through Blackboard before class on the date due. Students may eat in class as long as food is not noisy or smelly (chips, garlic, etc.)

## **Academic Integrity**

Students should be familiar with Northeastern's academic integrity policy and Honor Code. Before submitting an article for the magazine, students must review the Academic Integrity Policy checklist. For more from the student handbook:

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, participation in academically dishonest activities, and facilitating academic dishonesty. All members of the Northeastern University community—students, faculty, and staff—share the responsibility to bring forward known acts of apparent academic dishonesty. Any member of the academic community who witnesses an act of academic dishonesty should report it to the appropriate faculty member or to the director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. The charge will be investigated and if sufficient evidence is presented, the case will be referred to the Northeastern University Student Judicial Hearing Board. Visit [www.northeastern.edu/osccr](http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr) for a full description of these policies and procedures.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students should notify the professor within the first three class periods of their need for accommodations. Such requests should be accompanied by the appropriate paperwork from the Disability Resource Center. As noted in the handbook:

Northeastern University and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) are committed to providing disability services that enable students who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) to participate fully in the activities of the university. To receive accommodations through the DRC, students must provide appropriate documentation that demonstrates a current substantially limiting disability. Accommodations are provided based on an evaluation of the information provided by students and their clinicians, on a case-by-case basis. Students

should provide documentation to the DRC at their earliest convenience to allow for sufficient time for review. After the documentation has been reviewed, a disability specialist will contact the student regarding appropriate next steps. For additional information on the DRC, visit their website at [www.northeastern.edu/drc](http://www.northeastern.edu/drc) or contact staff at 617.373.2675.

## **Title IX**

*Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from sex or gender-based discrimination, including discrimination based on gender-identity, in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.*

Northeastern's Title IX Policy prohibits Prohibited Offenses, which are defined as sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship or domestic violence, and stalking. The Title IX Policy applies to the entire community, including male, female, transgender students, and faculty and staff. Alleged violations can be reported non-confidentially to the Title IX Coordinator within **The Office for Gender Equity and Compliance** at: [titleix@northeastern.edu](mailto:titleix@northeastern.edu) and/or through **NUPD** (Emergency [617.373.3333](tel:617.373.3333); Non-Emergency [617.373.2121](tel:617.373.2121)). Reporting Prohibited Offenses to NUPD does **NOT** commit the victim/affected party to future legal action.

## **Extra Credit**

Students may attend events detailed by the professor and write a one-page reflection on the event. Each write up must include a reference to at least one class reading that connects to the event. Students are welcome to write additional articles for the magazine for extra credit as well. These additional articles must still fit the guidelines set forth above. Other extra credit opportunities will be announced in class.

## Reading and Discussion Schedule

### Introduction

#### **Class 1**

- Syllabus
- Hey! How are you? Who are you? Why are you here?

#### **Class 2**

- *Feminism is for Everybody* Chapters 1-4
- Rebel Girls: The Illustrated (And Quite Condensed) History of Women's Studies
- What do you want from this class?

### The Invention of Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

#### **Class 3**

- *One in 2000* in Class
- [Intersex FAQ](#)
- [Intersex/Trans FAQ](#)

#### **Class 4**

- "Dueling Dualisms." by Anne Fausto-Sterling
- "Sexuality and Gender in Certain Native American Tribes: The Case of Cross-Gender Females." by Evelyn Blackwood

#### **Class 5**

- "Theories of Gender and Race." By Londa Schiebinger
- "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles." by Emily Martin

#### **Class 6**

- *Redefining Realness* Chapters 1-2

#### **Class 7**

- *Redefining Realness* Chapters 3-6

#### **Class 8**

- "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body in American Culture." by Siobhan Somerville in *Queer Studies*, B. Beemyn and L. Eliason
- Magazine Groups Discussion

## Race (and Nation) Matters

### **Class 9**

- Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference by Audre Lorde
- Combahee River Collective Statement

### **Class 10**

- “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color.” by Kimberle Crenshaw

### **Class 11**

- “The Color of Violence” by Haunani-Kay Trask in CoV
- Magazine group selections

### **Class 12**

- Quiz

### **Class 13**

- *Redefining Realness* Chapters 7- End.
- InDesign for the Design and Layout group

### **Class 14**

- “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” by Peggy McIntosh
- A Mother’s White Privilege by Manic Pixie Dream Mama

### **Class 15**

- **No Class**

### **Class 16**

- Medical Violence Against People of Color and the Medicalization of Domestic Violence by Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo in CoV
- Law Enforcement Violence Against Women of Color by Andrea J. Ritchie in CoV

### **Class 17**

- Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses by Chandra Mohanty

## Living History and Troubling Tradition

### **Class 18**

- Magazine Survey Due before class
- Small group meet up and class discussion of Article topics

**Class 19**

- Navigating our own “Sea of Islands”: Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism by Lisa Kahaleole Hall
- Sheila Watt-Cloutier. [“Inuit’s right to cold.”](#) Video. In Class

**Class 20**

- “SCUM Manifesto.” by Valerie Solanas
- *Born in Flames* in Class

**Class 21**

- *The Law In These Parts*. Watch Before class

**Class 22**

- “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?” by Cathy Cohen

**Class 23**

- *Love Story* by Dean Spade
- “‘Christian Nations’, ‘Polygamic Races’ and Women’s Rights: Toward a Genealogy of Non/Monogamy and Whiteness.” by Angela Willey
- *Feminism is for Everybody* Chapter 14

**Our Bodies, Ourselves****Class 24**

- First Article drafts are due
- *Our Bodies, Ourselves* Chapter 5 1973 edition

**Class 25**

- Disability in the New World Order by Nirmala Erevelles in CoV
- Sins Invalid in Class

**Class 26**

- *Feminism is for Everybody* 5, 6, 12
- Launch party invitations go out

**Class 27**

- “Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention.” by Sharon Marcus
- Taking Risks: Implementing Grassroots Community Accountability in CoV
- First draft articles returned to students

**Class 28**

- Small Group Work

**Class 29**

- Small Group Work

**Class 30**

- Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire by Judith Butler
- Second draft of Articles and Advertisement due

**Class 31**

- Program for launch party finalized
- The Color of Choice: White Supremacy and Reproductive Justice by Loretta Ross in CoV

**Class 32**

- Don't Liberate Me by S.R. in CoV
- This White Feminist Loved her Locks- Here's Why She Cut them Off by Annah Anti-Palindrome

**Class 33**

- Articles returned to writers for the last time
- Commodity Feminism by Robert Goldman, Deborah Heath and Sharon Smith

**Classes 35 & 36**

- **No Class – Thanksgiving**

**Class 37**

- Final version of magazine due to Professor
- Work Day

**Class 38**

- "National Security and the Violation of Women by Sylvanna Falcon in CoV

**Class 39**

- Final Magazine Viewing with the whole class

**Class 40**

- Launch Party – class will not meet at the regular time

**Class 41**

- Last Day of Class Final assessment