WMNS-710 ADVANCED FEMINIST THEORY
SEM 001, Spring 2016

Class meeting: Tue. 4:00 p.m. – 6:40 p.m.
Location: CRT 535
Instructor: Xin Huang
Office: CRT 525
Email: huang32@uwm.edu
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-2:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description

What explains the oppression of women, and how can it be ended? How is the oppression of women related to other forms of oppression? Much feminist theory is devoted either to answering or to probing the limits of these questions, and our course will be largely structured around them. We will explore several major traditions in feminist thought, including liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, postmodern, and multicultural feminisms, among others. We will examine the concept of gender as a tool of analysis, and will focus on the idea that gender “intersects” with other aspects of identity, including race, class, and sexuality. We will also consider some recent developments in queer theory and explore their implications for feminist thought. Familiarity with the theoretical perspectives represented in this course will equip you for further graduate-level work in Women’s Studies or related fields, and will provide you with tools for thinking critically and systematically about the effects of sex, gender, and sexuality both in the personal and public spheres.

Required texts:

• Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios. Edited by The Latina Feminist Group. Will be available in February at People’s books Cooperative (804 E. Center St. in Riverwest, tel: 414-962-0575).
• Virtual coursepack, available online at the D2L webpage for this class. The D2L launch page may be found at http://d2l.uwm.edu/. Readings are posted under “Content” as pdf files. You will need access to the internet on a computer with an Adobe Reader to access these readings.

I will be using D2L to transmit announcements and other important course information and materials. For general technical help on how to access or use D2L, contact The Learning Technology Center (https://www4.uwm.edu/ltc/).

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Summary of Assignments
Class attendance and participation 20%
Weekly session leading 15%
“Link theory to practice” class presentation 10%
Research paper proposal (due 11:59 PM April 29) 10%
Research paper (due 11:59 PM May 16) 45%

Important information about course requirements:

1. Class attendance and participation (20%)
   Attendance is mandatory, and I will circulate a sign-in sheet each class. Please contact me in advance if you know you must miss a class. This course uses the seminar form, which builds on the ultimate responsibility students have for their own learning. Your active engagement in the classroom is an essential part of individual and group learning. You should come prepared to participate actively in discussion of assigned readings. You are also expected to participate in discussion of classmates’ in-class presentations. Please note that the topics and views studied in this course may be controversial, and may sometimes trigger strong reactions. It is unlikely that everyone will hold the same views. All students must strive for constructive, respectful engagement with each other’s ideas, even (especially!) in cases of disagreement.

2. Weekly session leading (15%)
   Each student will be assigned as the session leader for a week. They will be responsible for the following tasks: 1) email the class (via D2L) two discussion questions for each reading of that week at least 24 hours before the class meeting time. The discussion questions should raise critical issues or develop a related point or idea, 2) Lead off class discussion with a brief summary of each reading (5 minutes maximum). Session leading will be graded for clarity, comprehension of assigned readings, analytical ability, and originality.

   **Important**: Session leaders cannot be changed once assigned. If for some reason you cannot attend and lead your session, you are responsible to arrange alternatives (e.g. switching with other students) at least one week in advance and inform the instructor as soon as possible.

3. “Link theory to practice” class presentation 10%
   You will give a “link theory to practice” presentation in class (approximately 10-15 minutes). In this presentation, you are required to use the feminist theories and/or concepts discussed that week to comment on a current event, a contemporary issue or phenomenon of your choice. The purpose of the presentation is two-fold: to exercise your own critical and analytical skills in relation to assigned readings, and to provide the class with a spring-board for discussion. This assignment invites you to think creatively and critically about how to link the theories and concepts in the weekly readings to understand and critique the world around you. Remember that your presentation should not summarize the readings for the day. You may briefly recapitulate some key points on which you wish to focus, but the majority of your presentation should be devoted to making a critical or constructive point in your own voice.
You may start your presentation with materials in the form of a piece of news, a magazine article, a story, a joke, a picture, a photo, a short video, or an artistic work, etc., then demonstrate how certain concepts or ideas of the feminist thoughts of that week can help us to name the issue, understand the problem, or to envision alternatives. You may also reflect on what you have learned about the strength or limitation of certain ideas through this exercise. The instructor will provide assistance, if required, in identifying a suitable topic. Be creative, and have fun!

**Important**: Presentation schedule cannot be changed once assigned. If for some reason you cannot present, you are responsible to arrange alternatives (e.g. switching with other students) at least one week in advance and inform the instructor as soon as possible.

4. **Research paper proposal**
   You should plan to discuss your intended topic for the research paper with me by early to mid-April. You are required to submit a 500-word (not include bibliography) research paper proposal by 11:59 PM **April 29, 2016**. Your proposal must including a concise statement of the problem you plan to address, a clear thesis statement, the feminist theories (include the names of the theorists/books/articles) you plan to use in your discussion, an abstract or outline of your argument, and a list of sources you will use.

5. **Research paper**
   The research paper is 3000-3500 words long (not including bibliography), and due by 11:59 pm on **May 16, 2016**. In this paper, you are required to choose an issue, condition or phenomenon (e.g. sexual harassment, domestic violence, gendered wage gap, misogyny, homophobia, etc.), explain how three feminist theories (of your choice) have or would approach this issue, with what concepts or ideas to be at the center of the analysis. You should try your best to find academic sources (peer reviewed articles and books) containing original discussion on the chosen issue, and if such sources are not available, try to use the feminist theories you chose to analyze the issue yourself. You are then required to compare and assess what new insight or unique perspective each of these feminist theories has contributed to the discussion, and reflect on the limitations of each approach. Please pay special attention to the original historical, political and cultural context your selected feminist theories were developed, and their applicability in analyzing your selected issue in a specific context. You may also offer your thoughts on how to contextualize and critically apply feminist theories in analyzing specific issues.

The research paper will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
1. Level of understanding of major theories and concepts in feminist theory
2. Ability to apply theory to analyzing specific gender issues
3. Ability to critically assess feminist theories and arguments
4. Ability to write a well-structured, well-argued paper using relevant academic sources, and communicate ideas effectively in writing.

Written work must be submitted to the D2L dropbox as a doc, docx, or rtf file. Please, no email submissions and no pdf files.

**Paper Format:**
Please be sure there is a title page that includes your name and student number, the name of the assignment or the title of your paper, the course name, and the instructor’s name.

All written assignments should be typed in size 12 font, Times New Roman, and double-spaced. Either leave a space to indicate paragraphs or indent (not both) and number all pages.

Credit your sources and avoid plagiarism.

You may use a citation style of your choice; if you do not have one, choose one from the library website: http://guides.library.uwm.edu.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/content.php?pid=217260&sid=1806368

Be sure to keep a copy of all the work you hand in.

**Estimated time to complete the work for this course**

As the UW System assumes “that study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours” (UWS ACPS 4), a 3-credit course such as this one will require a minimum of 144 (3 x 48) hours of your time. You may find it necessary to spend additional time; the numbers below only indicate that the course will not require any less of your time.\(^1\)

In a *traditional, or face-to-face*, course like this one, you will spend a minimum of
- 40 hours in the classroom
- 100 hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- 47 hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

**Participation by students with disabilities**

If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. If you have not already done so, you should also contact the Student Accessibility Center at 229-6287.

**Other Policies:**

Other university policies applicable to this course, including policies governing religious observances, active military duty, incompletes, discriminatory conduct, academic misconduct, complaint procedures, and appeal procedures, may be found at: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf

Please review these policies carefully and let me know if you have any questions.

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\(^1\) **Notes**

- The breakdown above is for a standard 15-week semester.
- UWM Credit Hour Policy, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Faculty Document No. 2838, can be found at https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/2838_Credit_Hour_Policy.pdf.
- UWS ACPS 4, the University Of Wisconsin System Policy On Academic Year Definition And Assorted Derivatives, can be found at http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acps/acps4.pdf.
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Readings from the Tong book are noted as such. All other readings will be posted online in the Virtual Coursepack (see the D2L website under Content). I reserve the right to make minor adjustments and changes to the list of readings as needed, with reasonable notice.

Introduction: Oppression, Privilege, and Voice

WEEK 1 Jan 26
   Iris Marion Young, “Five Faces of Oppression”
   Audre Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”
   Maria Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman, “Have We Got a Theory for You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism, and the Demand for ‘The Woman’s Voice’

Liberal Feminisms

WEEK 2 Feb 2
   Rosemarie Tong, Chapter 1
   Susan Okin, “Vulnerability by Marriage”
   Martha Nussbaum, “The Future of Feminist Liberalism”
   Anca Gheaus, “Gender Justice”
   bell hooks, “Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression”

Materialist Feminisms

WEEK 3 Feb 9
   Rosemarie Tong, Chapter 3
   Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union”
   Iris Marion Young, “Socialist Feminism and the Limits of Dual Systems Theory”
   Nancy Hartsock, “The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Grounds for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism”

Radical Feminisms

WEEK 4 Feb 16
   Rosemarie Tong, Chapter 2
   Shulamith Firestone, “The Dialectic of Sex” and “The Culture of Romance”
   Catherine MacKinnon, “Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory”
   Catherine MacKinnon, “Difference and Dominance”
The Sex Wars

WEEK 5 Feb 23
Marilyn Frye, “Willful Virgin or Do You Have to Be a Lesbian to be a Feminist?”
Ann Ferguson, “Sex War: The Debate Between Radical and Liberation Feminists”
Carole S. Vance, “Pleasure and Danger: Toward a Politics of Sexuality”
Anne Eaton, “A Sensible Anti-Porn Feminism”

Psychoanalytic/Care-Based Feminisms

WEEK 6 Mar 1
Rosemarie Tong, Chapter 4
Nancy Chodorow, “Family Structure and Feminine Personality”
Patricia Hill Collins, “Black Women and Mothering”
Sarah Ruddick, “Maternal Thinking”

Existentialist and Postmodern Feminisms

WEEK 7 Mar 8
Tong, Chapter 5
Simone de Beauvoir, Introduction to The Second Sex
Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which is not One”
Elisabeth Grosz, “Sexual Difference and the Problem of Essentialism”
Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson, “Social Criticism Without Philosophy: An Encounter Between Postmodernism and Feminism”

March 14-18 Spring Recess

Rethinking Sex and Gender

WEEK 8 Mar 22
Judith Butler, excerpts from Gender Trouble
Judith (Jack) Halberstam, “Transgender Butch: Butch/FTM Border Wars and the Masculine Continuum”
Anne Fausto Sterling, “Should There be Only Two Sexes?”

WEEK 9 Mar 29
Sandy Stone, “A Posttranssexual Manifesto”
Emi Koyama, “The Transfeminist Manifesto”
Judith Butler, “Against Proper Objects”
Cressida Heyes, “Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory”
WEEK 10 April 5

_Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios_. Edited by The Latina Feminist Group

Feminist Lecture Series visiting speaker: Norma Cantu, Title TBA, 
**Thursday April 7, 3:30 p.m.**

Intersectional, Multicultural, and Transnational Feminisms

WEEK 11 April 12

Tong, Chapter 6
Elizabeth Spelman, “Woman: The One and the Many”
Ann Garry, “Intersectionality, Metaphors, and the Multiplicity of Gender”

WEEK 12 April 19

Gloria Anzaldúa, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness”
Maria Lugones, “Playfulness, “World”-Travelling, and Loving Perception”
Edwina Barvosa, “Mestiza Consciousness and Intersectional Identity: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework of Multiple Identities”, from _Wealth of Selves: Multiple Identities, Mestiza Consciousness, and the Subject of Politics._

Feminist Futures

WEEK 13 April 26

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”
Uma Narayan, “Contesting Cultures: “Westernization,” Respect for Cultures, and Third World Feminists”
Inderpal Grewal, “Women’s Rights as Human Rights': The Transnational Production of Global Feminist Subjects”, from _Transnational America_

Research paper proposal due by 11:59PM April 29, 2016

WEEK 14 May 3

Wendy Brown, “Women’s Studies Unbound: Revolution, Mourning, Politics”
Sara Ahmed, “Feminist Attachments”, from _The Cultural Politics of Emotion_
Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes’ Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anticapitalist Struggles”

Week 15 May 10

Presentations of research papers