

**Humanities 3332-001**  
**Introduction to Feminist Philosophy**  
FALL 2019

**Instructor:** Daniel Skibra

**Time and Location:** Thursday, 1:00 – 4:00PM, Spertus 423-A

**Contact:** email: dskibra@saiu.edu

**Office Hours:** Thursday, 11:45 - 12:45pm Lakeview building # 1008, or by appointment

## Course Description

This course is an introduction to feminist philosophy. While feminist philosophy continues to describe women's oppression and aims at theorizing strategies for women's liberation, feminist philosophy today addresses a multitude of theoretical and political concerns and encompasses numerous positions. The aim of the course is to trace some of the important developments in feminist theorizing to give students an appreciation for the formative debates in feminist theory, and for the ways in which gender and other social factors are of social and political consequence. Topics include the nature of gendered and sexual oppression; the interrelations of sex and race, class, sexual orientation, and gender expression, the problem of intersectionality, the distinction between sex and gender, and feminist topics in epistemology and the philosophies of science. Students will gain an appreciation for the multiplicities of feminist positions, and above all, for the important arguments deployed in these positions.

## Course Objectives

Students will:

- learn to understand philosophical arguments
- develop their own informed views on the topics of study
- present the arguments of the philosophers and theorists as well their own views in clear prose
- subject both the views studied as well as their own to critical scrutiny.

# Course Requirements

## Assignments

Paper 1 due **Oct 24th** (Draft due *in class* **Oct 17**) ( $\approx 5$  pages): 30%  
Paper 2 due **Dec 16th** (Outline/ summary due by **Dec 12**) ( $\approx 5$  pages): 30%  
Weekly Reading Responses (at least 10): 10%  
Presentation on an Assigned Essay: 10%  
Mini-Assignments: 10%  
Class discussion/ participation: 10%

**You need at least a 70% to get credit for this course.** There are no extra credit opportunities associated with this course. All assignments for course credit are required as stated in this syllabus, and students should fully utilize all these assignments in order to successfully complete the course. Students requesting individual extra credit opportunities will be referred back to their copy of the syllabus and this course policy.

## Notes on assignments

Resources for writing a philosophy paper:

- <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>
- <http://www.public.asu.edu/~dportmor/tips.pdf>
- [https://prezi.com/z4h1\\_fwilbxj/a-sample-philosophy-paper/](https://prezi.com/z4h1_fwilbxj/a-sample-philosophy-paper/)

## Course Policies

### Attendance

You are required to attend the class meetings; attendance will be taken. However, I understand that emergencies arise, people get sick, and other factors may legitimately prevent you from coming to a particular class. Therefore, I will adopt the following attendance policy. Your grade will not be affected by up to **2** absences. You do not need to provide any kind of written excuse or justification for these absences (although you are welcome to provide them). Importantly, you are responsible for the material covered in class. Any slides presented in class will be made available on Canvas, but class time will often not be devoted to lecture, and material will not always be on the slides. There is simply no substitute for being in class.

If you miss a *third* class, your cumulative class average will drop by 8 percentage points. For more than 3 absences, I adhere to SAIC's recommended policy. SAIC's recommended institutional policy is as follows: If a student misses MORE than three classes, whether or not for a reasonable cause, the student will fail the class, if the student does not withdraw from the class prior to the deadline for withdrawal with a grade of "W." **Deadline for**

**withdrawal: Fall 2019 semester: Tuesday, October 29, 2019.** Reasonable cause to miss a class might include:

- Illness or hospitalization (the student should also contact Health Services or their academic advisor, who will relay information to the faculty in whose class the student is enrolled)
- Family illness or death (the student should also contact their academic advisor, who can relay information to all faculty)
- Observation of a religious holiday (students are expected to notify their instructors in advance to discuss reasonable accommodations for holidays they might observe).

## **Audit Policy**

Per SAIC's policy on non-credit enrollment, auditing this course is possible, space permitting and provided the student proposes an acceptable audit arrangement. Interested students should review SAIC's policy on non-credit enrollment to review options and process, and then contact me to discuss specifics.

"Unofficial" auditing of this or any course i.e. "sitting in" is prohibited. Participation in specific class activities by non-enrolled students is prohibited without advance, specific consent from the instructor.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

SAIC is committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunities for students with disabilities. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) to schedule an appointment. DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to your instructors. This letter must be presented before any accommodations will be implemented. You should contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible. The DLRC is located within the Wellness Center on the 13th floor of 116 S Michigan Ave. and can be reached via phone at 312.499.4278 or email at [dlrc@saic.edu](mailto:dlrc@saic.edu).

## **Writing Center Resources**

### **Writing Center**

Lakeview Building, 116 S. Michigan Ave., 10th Floor

[writingcenter@saic.edu](mailto:writingcenter@saic.edu)

312.499.4138

<http://www.saic.edu/academics/academicresources/writingcenter/>

### **Appointments**

Schedule in advance: <https://www.supersaas.com/schedule/saic/WritingCenter>  
Short-notice: Call 312.499.4138 to see if there are any openings

### **Hours**

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 AM - 7:15 PM

Friday: 9:00 AM - 5:15 PM

Walk-in hours: Monday - Thursday: 4:15 - 7:15 PM

### **Email/ Communication**

The best way to reach me outside class is via email. However, give me 24 hours to respond during the week. If you email me after 5pm on Friday, don't expect a response until Monday morning. Most of the time, I will be able to respond to you sooner than this, but when there is a paper due, get all of your questions to be 48 hours before the due date.

I will answer *simple, specific* questions over email pertaining to the course material or the logistics of the course. I can also address simple interpretive questions you have with the material, or arguments you are trying out for your papers. To address anything more involved, you'll need to meet with me in office hours. (I highly encourage you to come to office hours in any event.)

### **Technology & Digital Devices**

In this class, we will regularly engage in small group instruction and activities, as well as discussions with the whole class. Technology such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops easily become a distraction and create an obstacle to engagement during class time. For this reason, the policy of the class will be as follows. Do not use these devices during class time. Any lecture slides will be made available on the online course site, and any notes you might need to make should be taken by hand. There are two exceptions. First, if you have the need for such a device as an accommodation. (If you have a need for such a device, please consult the instructor.) Second, for class time that is dedicated to revising, editing, or peer reviewing assignments for this class, laptops and such devices will be allowed. I will make clear in advance when class time will be devoted to such tasks.

### **Participation**

Participation in class discussion constitutes a significant part of your grade. You will be expected to attend class having done the readings and thought about them enough to discuss the arguments they make, to ask informed questions about them, and to engage with the other members of the class on these matters. Two expectations in service of these aims are worth making explicit. First, you'll need to be well-prepared, having read and thought about the assigned readings before class. Secondly, we will all need to foster a respectful, open environment where we can clarify, interpret and critically engage the philosophical issues dealt with in readings. Maintaining a respectful classroom atmosphere is crucial, and part of your responsibility.

## Academic Misconduct

From the SAIC Student Handbook: “Academic misconduct includes both plagiarism and cheating, and may consist of: the submission of the work of another as one’s own; unauthorized assistance on a test or assignment; submission of the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all instructors; or the failure to properly cite texts or ideas from other sources. Academic misconduct extends to all spaces on campus, including satellite locations and online education. Academic integrity is expected in all coursework, including online learning. It is assumed that the person receiving the credit for the course is the person completing the work. SAIC has processes in place that protect student privacy and uses LDAP authentication to verify student identity.”

Specific procedures for faculty to follow in the case of academic misconduct are detailed in the Student Handbook.

Additional resources for students:

- Read “Plagiarism: How to Recognize It and Avoid It” - a short guide prepared by the Faculty Senate Student Life Subcommittee in 2004.
- Read the Flaxman Library’s quick guide titled “AVOID PLAGIARISM.”

## Extra Credit Policy

There are no extra credit opportunities associated with this course. All assignments for course credit are required as stated in this syllabus, and students should fully utilize all these assignments in order to successfully complete the course.

## Required Texts

All the readings for the course will be posted on Canvas. You do not need to purchase any books for this class.

## Course Outline

\*Readings are due on the dates they are listed for. The optional readings are not strictly required, but they either contain helpful background material or overviews, touch on noteworthy debates, or they are classics you should read at some point, if you don’t do so for the class listed.

### **Thursday, August 29** CHARACTERIZING OPPRESSION AND MISOGYNY

- Marilyn Frye- *Oppression* (9 pages)
- Kate Manne- *Ameliorating Misogyny* (23 pages)

- ALSO: Read over this (online):  
<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>

### Thursday, September 5 EQUALITY

- **Readings:** Mary Wollstonecraft- Chapter 2 of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (22 pages)  
John Stuart Mill- Chapter 1 of *the Subjection of Women* (sections) (27 pages)
- **Optional:** Sojourner Truth- *Ain't I a Woman?*

### Thursday, September 12 THE FAMILY

- **Readings:** Friedrich Engels- Excerpts from *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (18 pages)  
Susan Okin- *Vulnerability by Marriage* (36 pages)  
Carol Pateman- *Feminism and the Marriage Contract* (36 pages)

### Thursday, September 19 SEXUALITY

- **Readings:** Adrienne Rich- *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Experience* (31 pages)  
Kathie Sarachild- *A Program for Feminist Consciousness Raising* (4 pages)  
*the Redstocking Manifesto* (2 pages)  
Claudia Card- *Radicalesbianfeminist Theory* (8 pages)
- **Optional:** Chesire Calhoun- *Lesbian Philosophy*

### Thursday, September 26 RECOGNIZING DIFFERENCE

- **Readings:** bell hooks- Chapter 1 of *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (“Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory”) (19 pages)  
Audre Lorde- *Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference* (11 pages)  
Mari Matsuda- *On Identity Politics* (4 pages)
- **Optional:** Combahee River Collective- *A Black Feminist Statement*

### Thursday, October 3 INTERSECTIONALITY

- **Readings:** María C. Lugones & Elizabeth Spellman- *Have We Got a Theory For You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism, and the Demand for ‘the Woman’s Voice’* (9 pages)  
Kimberlé Crenshaw- *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color* (60 pages)
- **Optional:** Kimberlé Crenshaw- *Intersectionality: the Double-bind of Race and Gender (Interview)*

**Thursday, October 10** TRANS FEMINISM

- **Readings:** Emi Koyama- *the Transfeminist Manifesto* (15 pages)  
Talia Mae Betcher- *Intersexuality, Transgender, and Transsexuality* (24 pages)  
Cressida J. Heyes- *Changing Race, Changing Sex: the Ethics of Self-Transformation* (17 pages)
- **Optional:** Rebecca Tuvel- *In Defense of Transracialism*

**Thursday, October 17** CHALLENGES SURROUNDING INTERSECTIONALITY

- Readings:** Linda Alcoff- *the Problem of Speaking for Others* (29 pages)  
Naomi Zack- *Can Third Wave Feminism Be Inclusive?* (15 pages)

**Thursday, October 24** ANTI-PORN FEMINISM

- **Readings:** Catharine MacKinnon- *Pornography, Civil Rights, and Speech* (excerpt) (13 pages)  
Andrea Dworkin- *Against the Male Flood* (20 pages)  
Anne Eaton- *Towards a Sensible Anti-Porn Feminism* (42 pages)

**Thursday, October 31** FEMINIST RESPONSES TO ANTI-PORN FEMINISM

- **Readings:** Gayle Rubin- *Misguided, Dangerous, and Wrong: An Analysis of Antipornography Politics* (22 pages)  
Drucilla Cornell- *Pornography's Temptation* (16 pages)  
Nadine Strossen- *Why Censoring Pornography Would Not Reduce Discrimination or Violence Against Women* (10 pages)
- **Optional:** Raja Halwani- *Pornography and Degradation* (excerpted from *Philosophy of Love, Sex, and Marriage*)

**Thursday, November 7** GENDER

- **Readings:** Judith Butler- *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution* (13 pages)  
Sally Haslanger- *Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?* (25 pages)
- **Optional:** Simone de Beauvoir- Introduction to *the Second Sex*

**Thursday, November 14** FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

- **Readings:** Jennifer Hornsby- *Disempowered Speech* (22 pages)  
Rae Langton- *Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts* (38 pages)
- **Optional:** Rebecca Kukla- *Performative Force, Convention, and Discursive Injustice*

**Thursday, November 21** FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY

- **Readings:** Elizabeth Anderson- *Situated Knowers and Feminist Standpoint Theory* (10 pages)  
Kristie Dotson- *Tracking Epistemic Violence: Tracking Practices of Silencing* (22 pages)
- **Optional:** Nancy Hartsock- *the Feminist Standpoint*

**Thursday, November 28**

- **Thanksgiving Break:** no class

**Thursday, Dec 5**

- **Critique Week:** no class

**Thursday, December 12**

- **Catch-up day**