

Humanities 3332-001
Introduction to Feminist Philosophy
FALL 2020

Instructor: Daniel Skibra

Time and Location: Monday, 1:30 – 4:30PM, online

Contact: email: dskibra@saic.edu

Office Hours: Monday, 12:00 – 1:00 PM via Zoom

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. 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.

Humanities Student Learning Goal

- Students will study and inquire into how crucial ideas about human and non-human nature, knowledge, experience, and value have been developed, supported, and/or expressed in philosophy, religion, literature (including poetry and the dramatic arts), and music, in various cultures and time periods.

Humanities Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate understanding of the methods used in the humanities, such as argumentation and interpretation.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the crucial ideas of the humanities as they have been explored in different cultures and times, and/or in connection to issues that currently affect individuals and societies across the globe.
- Students will be able to evaluate claims and the evidence and/or reasons given in support of these claims, as found in primary and/or secondary sources.
- Students will be able to construct their own claims and defend them in written and/or oral forms, and using proper methods of documentation (e.g., citation and bibliography).

Course Requirements

Assignments

Asynchronous Discussions (10)	50 points
Presentation on assigned essay	30 points
Paper 1 (approx. 4 pages)	50 points
Reflection assignment	10 points
Paper 2 (approx. 4 - 5 pages)	50 points
Presentation of Paper 2 thesis	10 points
total possible	= 200 points

You need at least a 70% to earn 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/

Course Policies

What to Expect

Here is what a typical week would look like when you are taking this class. This class will be hybrid, meaning it will be a combination of synchronous and asynchronous components. Once a week, during our scheduled class time, we will meet online via teleconference for live discussions and activities for an hour and a half. The remaining work for the week will be asynchronous. You will access and complete it at your own pace (respecting schedules and deadlines, of course). All of the lectures will be pre-recorded and uploaded to Canvas ahead of time.

The course material will all be accessible on Canvas. The course material will be organized by week, so simply navigate to the appropriate week, where all you have to do for the week is laid out in the weekly module. Each module will contain a breakdown of the week's work, reproducing the information on the syllabus, but with more detail and instructions. You can expect having to watch about 45 minutes to an hour of such lectures every week, in conjunction with the week's reading assignment, in preparation for the discussion. A typically week will include readings, videos of lectures, and links to any assignments for the week.

To do well in this course, you have to be committed to putting the work in every week. I aim to make it a manageable amount, but if you let it slide for a week or two, you run the real risk of falling behind. If you encounter any trouble in the course (with the material, with assignments, or with the technology), send me an email. I am happy to help, discuss, and meet with you (virtually) as necessary.

Attendance

In face-to-face classes, I take attendance. Since we are not meeting in a classroom, I obviously won't be passing around a sign-in sheet. Nonetheless, your attendance is required in this course. There are two ways that I will manage attendance for the course. First of all, I will take attendance during our live meetings. You are required to be in attendance for those. Second, I will monitor that you are indeed watching the lectures. (The application that hosts the videos on Canvas, Panopto, allows me to track viewership, and I will be monitoring this.)

If you miss more than three "live" meetings over the course of the term, your final grade will drop by 5 points, and another 5 points for each additional missed meeting. If you expect to miss a live meeting, but have a valid excuse for this which you can provide documentation of (doctor's note, etc.), I will excuse the absence.

For the lectures, if your viewership drops below 75% (so, you watch less than 75% of the lectures), your final grade will drop by 5 points. For every additional 5% below that benchmark, your final grade will drop another 5 points. Since you can watch the lectures at your own leisure, the only way you can be excused from this is if you become really sick at some point, and can provide a doctor's note.

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.

Writing Center Resources

Writing Center

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

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.)

Participation

In our discussions, 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

*Do the readings on the week they are listed. Since our class “meets” on a Monday, we will use our live meetings to discuss the readings from the previous week. By then you will have had ample time to read the articles, write your response, and watch the associated lecture. **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.

Week 1: September 2

- We don’t meet this week (the term starts on a Wed).

Week 2: September 7 CHARACTERIZING OPPRESSION AND MISOGYNY

- **Labor Day:** no class meeting (again), but read the following and watch the associated lectures, so we can get started in earnest next week.
- Marilyn Frye- *Oppression* (9 pages)
Kate Manne- *Ameliorating Misogyny* (23 pages)
- ALSO: Read over this (online):
<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>

Week 3: September 14 EQUALITY

- Monday class discussion on Frye/ Manne
- **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?*

Week 4: September 21 THE FAMILY

- Monday class discussion on Wollstonecraft/ Mill

- **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)

Week 5: September 28 SEXUALITY

- Monday class discussion on Engels/ Okin/ Pateman
- **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*

Week 6: October 5 RECOGNIZING DIFFERENCE

- Monday class discussion on Rich/ Sarachild/ Redstockings/ Card
- **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*

Week 7: October 12 INTERSECTIONALITY

- Monday class discussion on hooks/ Lorde/ Matsuda
- **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)*

Week 8: October 19 TRANS FEMINISM

- Monday class discussion on Lugones & Spellman/ Crenshaw
- **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*

Week 9: October 26 CHALLENGES SURROUNDING INTERSECTIONALITY

Monday class discussion on Koyama/ Betcher/ Heyes

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

Week 10: November 2 ANTI-PORN FEMINISM

Monday class discussion on Alcoff/ Zack

- **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)

Week 11: November 9 FEMINIST RESPONSES TO ANTI-PORN FEMINISM

- Monday class discussion on MacKinnon/ Dworkin/ Eaton
- **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*)

Week 12: November 16 GENDER

- Monday class discussion on Rubin/ Cornell/ Strossen
- **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*

Week 13: November 23 FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

- Monday class discussion on Butler/ Haslanger
- **Note: Thursday, Nov. 26 is Thanksgiving**
- **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*

Week 14: November 30 FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY

- Monday class discussion on Hornsby/ Langton
- **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*

Week 15: December 7

- Monday class discussion on Anderson/ Dotson
- **Readings:** No new readings this week. Start to work on your papers

Week 16: December 14

- **Readings:** Final Paper presentations
- Class will be 2 hours today instead of 1 and a half hours, to allow for the presentations.
- **Note:** Crit Week starts Tuesday

Week 17: December 21

- No Zoom meeting; Finish your writing assignments (due **Sun, Dec 20th at 11:59 PM**)
- **Readings:** no new reading