

WGSS 140B: Intro to WGSS

Fall 2021: T/TR 8:20 am – 9:50 am

Taught by: Dr. Jess “River” Vooris AKA “Prof V” or “Dr. River”

Pronouns: they/them

Email: jessicavooris@depauw.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 10 am-noon (and by appointment)

Zoom Office Hours: Mondays 4:30-6:30 pm (and by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION/REQUIREMENTS:

WS 140 serves as a prerequisite for the major and minor in Women’s Studies, as well as a survey course that introduces students to the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Our main aim is to begin to understand human behavior through a focus on how gender shapes cultures and the institutions that structure them. Students will explore the study of women and feminism by examining the intersections of race, class, sexuality, and disability with gender across cultural and disciplinary contexts. We will develop a framework for thinking at the intersections of identity, politics, culture and knowledge. Topics will include feminism and women’s movements; gender socialization; the body; violence against women; and women’s resistance and activism.

This course will meet twice a week for a discussion-based class.

Please visit me during my office hours (virtual or in person when covid conditions allow) as I would love to learn more about what you are thinking and learning (in this class and at DePauw more generally), and I am happy to answer any question you have about class and class materials.

Be sure to let me know during office hours or via email if you need support, or any specific accommodations, the sooner the better. Students with disabilities or who need time from class to observe religious holidays, please contact me as soon as you can to make any arrangements necessary.

Acknowledgements: Thank-you Katie King for your examples of Intro courses, and conversations about feminist pedagogy. Ayu Saraswathi, Heather Rellihan, and Barbara Shaw for your Intro to Women’s and Gender Studies textbook that guided the creation of this syllabus. Rebecca Barrett-Fox and Mimi Khúc for your guidance around accessible teaching, and Lydia Wilson Marshall for DePauw-specific resources.

Required Materials

Please purchase the book below or rent/borrow it. Hardcover or paperback, either form is fine. An e-book or audio version is great. We will not be reading this until the end of the semester, so it is okay if you do not buy it/rent it straight away.

Barnhill, Kelly. *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*. Algonquin Young Readers, 2016. ISBN: [978-1616207465](#)

You will need access to Netflix to watch one documentary for this class. (I will also provide an optional movie screening for those who might not have Netflix).

Knock Down the House. 2019. (Netflix)
This Changes Everything, 2019. (Kanopy)

All other course readings will be available on Moodle.

How the course will be organized

- This is a discussion course that meets on campus twice a week

Each week students should:

- Carefully read the materials and take notes on them
- Come to class prepared to talk and share your thoughts with others

This course is unique because

- There is usually a mix of students from different years, majors, backgrounds
- Some folks already have knowledge about feminism and gender, and others who are brand new to the subject
- Together we will create an open community where we can learn from each other

Creating a community of learning means we must:

- Build a space where each member of the class feels comfortable about sharing their thoughts.
- Understand that we may not always agree, but that disagreement can be a positive, productive part of learning
- Listen carefully to each other and treat each other kindly and with respect.
- Remember that we all have something to contribute, every one of us is learning (including me!) and it is okay to ask questions.
- Understand that learning means taking risks, trying new things, playing around, guessing at times, making mistakes and recognizing that sometimes we won't get it right the first time.

Note: Part of my role as a professor is to guide your learning. I may interrupt if someone is using outdated language or saying something harmful, and I may suggest a way of re-wording a question or statement to be more inclusive. Please take these moments as an opportunity to grow and learn—hopefully this is one reason you are in this course!

Communication for the Course

Moodle: Class readings, an updated syllabus, course calendar, and announcements will be kept on Moodle.

Note: Moodle keeps track of when you log in, what links you click, and how long you keep any part of the Moodle open. This means I can tell if you haven't logged in for a week, or if you never opened a particular file.

Email: Please send email to jessicavooris@depauw.edu if you have questions/comments about the course, readings, or want to make an appointment with me. It will be

helpful if you include the course number and a relevant subject heading with your email. **Example:** WGSS 250A, question about Hanne Blank reading

Note: email sent after 7 pm may not be responded to until the morning, and I will not be checking email frequently on the weekends. Please give me at least 24 hours to respond, however, if you don't hear from me in 48 hours, do send a reminder email! (If you email after 7 pm on Friday, I may not reply until Monday morning).

On Campus Classroom Policies

- Per Depauw policy, masks are required in class.
- Please respect physical distancing as much as possible, while also interacting with the space in a way that best meets the needs of your body. You are welcome to sit on the floor if you need to, stand up to stretch, or take a brief break from class by stepping outside.
- Technology: computers/phones are useful tools for learning, but can also be distracting to others. Please be thoughtful and intentional about your use of computers/phones during discussion
- You are welcome to knit, draw, play with (quiet) fidgets, again just be mindful of others

Graded Assignments

35 % Active Engagement Points (attendance/extracurricular events/office hours)

20% Reading Responses (4 X 5 points each)

20% Feminist Analysis Essay

25% Learning Analysis

Grades:

A 94 and higher

A- 90-93

B + 87-89

B 84-86

B - 80-83

C + 77-79

C 74-76

C - 70-73

See Depauw's website for more info on [grading scales](#).

I will also explain in more detail what the expectations are for each assignment in the handouts and on Moodle.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

35% Active Engagement Points: These are gained through a variety of ways—attending our in person class sessions, attending my office hours, attending sexuality/gender-related virtual

events, writing a short review of a book, blog, or youtube video that is related to class topics that you have found, or by having a conversation with a friend outside of class about class topics.

This is a discussion-based course, and your participation is important. You are expected to come to class having read and taken notes on the material, and to be ready to discuss the material. The success of the class will depend on everyone sharing their ideas and perspectives. However, I know that there may be reasons during the semester when you are not able to make it to class, in which case, you can make up your AEP in other ways. Please visit me in my office hours if you are concerned about your attendance/participation due to anxiety, neurodivergence, or any other reason.

You can gather a majority of your AEP points by attending class (1 point per class = 28 possible points), and participating in-class activities, however, if you have to miss class for any reason, you can gain Active Engagement Points in other ways.

If you are sick, I want you to prioritize your health (and the health of your classmates) over coming to class. Please stay home and rest if you need to. Please chat with your classmates about what you have missed, email me if you have specific questions about readings, and/or come visit me during office hours to make up for missed class time.

See AEP Assignment for more details. **Due: Mid-semester and End of the Semester.**

20 % Reading Responses: Throughout the semester you will be required to turn in 4 reading responses. You can decide which day you complete the reading response, but you must submit at least one for the month of September, one for the month of October, and one for the month of November. These must be uploaded to Moodle the week that we discuss a particular reading. You have the option of completing the assignment in written form, audio/video form, or in a visual/artistic form, as long as it fulfills the reading response requirements. See Moodle for a full description of the assignment.

20% Feminist Analysis Essay: You will choose a piece of media, literature, or art and analyze it for feminist themes. See Moodle for more details. 4-5 pages. Due: **November 1st at 11:59 pm.**

25 % Learning Analysis: This will be a synthesis of the course, how you understand it to be constructed, what you see the argument of the course to be, what you learned from your readings, how you place yourself in the course, and overall what you have gained from taking this class. The assignment with full details and requirements will be posted on Moodle, but I will note here that the format of the assignment does not have to be a traditional paper; you can turn in a creative story, a poem, or something of your own choosing, as long as it includes the analysis of the course, answers all the questions required, and shows evidence of understanding key concepts. Written Essay: 4-5 pages. Other formats: Let's chat about length. Due Date: **December 16th at 11:59 pm.**

Reading Schedule *Professor reserves the right to change the schedule with prior warning, an updated syllabus will be maintained on Moodle*

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTIONS

Thursday, August 26, 2021

- Class cancelled, Prof V sick
- Read and Annotate the syllabus on google docs

WEEK TWO: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

Tuesday, August 31, 2021

- Adrienne Rich, *Claiming an Education* (1977) (5 pages)
- The Gender Book (39 pages, comic book style)

Thursday, September 2, 2021

- Emily Martin’s “Egg and Sperm” (6 pgs)
- Dean Spade, “Purportedly Gendered Body Parts” (2 pgs)
- Anne-Fausto Sterling Chapters 1-3 (21 pages)
- In class: Raising an Intersex Child (NBC) (7 mins) and Fertilization Video

WEEK THREE: Feminism is for Everybody

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

- Bell hooks, *Feminism is For Everybody*

Thursday, September 9, 2021

- Amy Baumgarden, “A Day Without Feminism”
- Johnson, Allen, “The Patriarchy” (4 pages)
- Robin Wall Kimmerer, “Skywoman Falling” from *Braiding Sweetgrass*

WEEK FOUR: Histories of Resistance

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

- *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Mary Wollstonecraft
- Seneca Falls Convention Transcript
- Ida B. Wells “The Red Record”
- (Listen) Podcast: Uncivil Episode: “The Ring”

Thursday, September 16, 2021

- Youtube video about Suffragette history
- Pat Manardi, “Politics of Housework”
- Mia McKenzie, “Resistance is the Secret of Queer Joy”

- Gay History Podcast: Interview with Sylvia Rivera

WEEK FIVE: Exploring Intersectionality

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

- Peggy McIntosh, “Unpacking the White Knapsack”
- Gina Crosley-Corcoran, “Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person”
- Audre Lorde, *Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference*

Thursday, September 23, 2021

- Gloria Anzaldua, *La Conciencia de la Mestiza*
- Combahee River Collective Statement
- Kimberlee Crenshaw TED Talk: The Urgency of Intersectionality”

Recommended (AEP): Elsa Barkley Brown's "What Has Happened Here: The Politics of Difference in Women's History and Feminist Politics"

WEEK SIX: Epistemologies of Bodies, Fatness and Disability

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

- Samantha Kwan, “Navigating Public Spaces”
- Kimberly Dark’s “Yoga, Fat and Fitness”
- Melissa Fabello, [“Let’s Talk about Thin Privilege”](#)
- [Arrested Movement Series: Male Body Positivity](#) (about 5 pages, mostly images, and short interview)

Recommended: Dorothy Allison *Two or Three Things for Sure* excerpt

Thursday, September 30, 2021

- Eli Clare, “Queerness and Disability”
- Christine Miserandino, “Spoon Theory”

WEEK SEVEN: Media Representations

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

- Ozcan, “Who is a Muslim Woman” (4 pages)
- Kameron Hurley, “We Have Always Fought’: Challenging the 'Women, Cattle and Slaves' Narrative”
- Dodai Stewart, “Racist Hunger Game Fans are Disappointed”
- Laurie Penny, “This is Not the Apocalypse You were Waiting For”

Thursday, October 7, 2021

- This Changes Everything, movie (Kanopy)

WEEK EIGHT: Women in Politics

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

- Clips from Miss Representation

Thursday, October 14, 2021

- Knock Down the House (Netflix)

WEEK NINE: FALL BREAK

Tuesday, October 19, 2021: NO CLASS

Thursday, October 21, 2021: NO CLASS

WEEK TEN: Rethinking Family

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

- Beyondmarriage.org, "Beyond Same-Sex Marriage" (5 pages)
- Monisha Das Gupta, "Broken Hearts, Broken Families" (4 pages)
- This Land Podcast "8: The Next Battleground" (CN: family separation) (34 mins, 24 seconds)

Thursday, October 28, 2021

- Rebecca Barrett-Fox "Constraints on Freedom" (4 pages)
- Caleb Luna, "Romantic Love is Killing Us"
- Angela Chen, "How to Build a Three Parent Family"
- (in class) "Sometimes" music video by Be Steadwell

WEEK ELEVEN: Reproductive Justice

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

- Kathy E. Ferguson, "Birth Control" (4 pages)
- Excerpts from "Electric Dirt: Queer Appalachia Zine"
- PODCAST: On the Media called "Body of Law: Beyond Roe"

Thursday, November 4, 2021

- Dykes to Watch Out For (comic)

WEEK TWELVE: Eco-Feminism and Queer Nature

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

- Joni Seager, "Rachel Carson Died of Breast-Cancer"
- Anna Tsing, "Mushrooms as Companion Species"

Thursday, November 11, 2021

- Jaffi, "Not Your Eco-Princess"
- Podcast episode "Ginko Love" by Outside/In
- Queer Nature Instagram posts

Recommended: Tara Santora, "'Black Women Who Bird' Take the Spotlight" (5 pages), How to Survive the End of the World Podcast interview with Queer Nature

WEEK THIRTEEN: Gendered and Sexual Violence

Content Note: This week's reading includes discussions of violence and sexual assault

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

- Striped Leopard, "The Kissing Soldier" (blog, 1 page)
- Victoria Banyard et al, "Friends of Survivors" (7 pgs)
- Brad Perry, "Hooking Up with Healthy Sexuality" (6 pages)

Thursday, November 18, 2021

- Mia McKenzie, "On Rape, Stuebenville and Cages" (5 pgs)
- Dean Spade, "Their Laws Will Not Protect You"
- Interview with Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, "Don't Call Me Baby" street artist

WEEK FOURTEEN: Gender, Sexuality and the Labor Market

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

- Marlene Kim, "Policies to End the Wage Gap" (6 pgs)
- Why has Covid Been Especially Harmful to Working Women" (8 pages) (link, also PDF below)
- Janet Mock, Redefining Realness, Chapter 15 (CW: description of sex work, robbery at knife point) (18 pages)

Thursday, November 25, 2021

NO Class-Thanksgiving

WEEK FIFTEEN: The Girl Who Drank the Moon

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

- Kelly Barnhill, The Girl Who Drank the Moon

Thursday, December 2, 2021

- Kelly Barnhill, The Girl Who Drank the Moon

Recommended: Sam George-Allen, The Feminist Magic of the Older Witch from Yes Magazine

WEEK SIXTEEN: Final Week of Classes

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

- TBA

Thursday, December 9, 2021

- Final Class Wrap-Up

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES:

Citations:

It is important as scholars and writers that we respect the work of others, and that we make sure to cite our sources. I like to think about citations as a way to give credit, as a way to guide a reader to more information, and as a way to be a part of a community conversation.

If you are unsure of how to properly cite your information and how to avoid plagiarism please refer to online guides on MLA, APA and Chicago Style formatting. I do not have a preference for which one you use, but please pick one and use that consistently throughout an assignment. If you still need help with citations, please set up an appointment to talk with me.

Access Statement (words by Mimi Khúc):

"Everyone's access needs matter, and we will try collectively to meet them as they arise. Access needs are needs that when met enable participation in the course to the fullest--therefore they are wide-ranging and can be met in wide-ranging, creative ways. I am committed to making participation as accessible as possible. Please let me know if anything comes up that makes participation feel hard. Perhaps you are unused to thinking about access needs--no worries, that's what this course is supposed to help you develop. We are taught not to have needs, that needs mean we are "weak"; resist this impulse. That is the biggest lesson I want you to take away from this class."

"Access, as Aimi Hamraie has taught me, is relational. This means that creating access and accessibility is something we do together, in relationship and community. It requires a shared commitment to each other's wellbeing and participation in the community space, and requires communication and negotiation and flexibility. We learn each other's needs and try to meet them as best we can, so that we can all participate as much as possible in this classroom space. Everyone has access needs, and these needs change over time. I will try to anticipate as much as possible but I cannot know everyone's needs at all times. When you become aware of your access needs, please communicate them to me. I do not require any documentation or working with any university support services--I believe you, and will work with you to generate structures to meet your needs as much as possible. I repeat: I believe you."

LATE POLICY:

I will always accept late work, however, I will not always have time to provide the same level of feedback on late-work as I provide on work that is turned in on time. Work turned in within 24

hours of the deadline will not be penalized. Work turned in after this 24 hour grace period will lose 10 percent of the full amount of points possible.

FERPA and Confidentiality

FERPA, the federal law that guards student privacy, prohibits me from discussing your performance in this class with anyone except you without your permission, which must be on file with the university, not simply told to me. To ensure compliance with this law, I will not respond to emails from students unless they originate from university email addresses. Out of respect for the privacy of your classmates, do not record or screenshot any part of this class for use outside of this class, even if you omit identifying information about the speaker or poster.

Camera/Mic Policies If We Need to Shift to Zoom

- I encourage but do not require cameras to be on
- Please upload a photo or avatar on your zoom profile if possible
- Please mute your mic when not speaking
- Chat/Text is an excellent way to communicate

If possible, I would like for folks to have their cameras on during any video-conference class sessions. For me, personally, it is easier to engage if I can see people's faces on the screen, and this enables us to try to recreate the sense of being in person while connecting remotely.

However, I understand that there are many reasons someone might not want to, or be able to use their camera, therefore, I do not require cameras to be turned on. Likewise, it's lovely to hear your voices, but the chat is also an excellent way to communicate.

How to Get Help: There are different resources for different problems you may encounter. Be sure to contact the right resource to get help. If you contact the wrong person, this will delay getting your problem solved.

- For help understanding a concept from the course, contact me via email.
- If you have a question about an assignment requirement, like a due date, post your question in our Student Lounge, the forum dedicated to students answering each others' questions, or email or message a classmate.
- For technical problems with Moodle, like not knowing how to upload an assignment, please contact moodle@depauw.edu for support.
- For all other technical problems with online systems at the university, like how to access your grades, contact our Tech Help at HelpDesk@depauw.edu or 765-658-4294.
- For help dropping or adding a course, contact your advisor or the registrar's office at 765-658-4141.
- For help locating resources for your research project, contact a research librarian by phone at (765) 658-4444, email at library@depauw.edu, or via chat by going to the library's website: <https://libanswers.depauw.edu/>

- For help finding a peer tutor for this class, *email acadpeer@depauw.edu for an appointment or sign up here:* <https://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-resource-center/>
- To improve your writing, set up an on-campus or remote meeting with a writing tutor from our writing center. *Sign up using the left-hand menu here:* <https://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-resource-center>
- For support with presentations, public speaking, or even discussion skills, you can find a peer tutor through the S-Center: *Sign up using the left-hand menu here:* <https://www.depauw.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-resource-center>
- For help with food insecurity, there are a few options in Greencastle, including: Putnam County Emergency Food: 600 Tennessee St, Greencastle, IN 46135. Contact: [\(765\) 301-4431](tel:(765)301-4431)
- For an appointment with a mental health counselor, contact our campus counseling center. *They are currently using an online telehealth approach to their services. To schedule a virtual appointment, please email counselingservices@depauw.edu or call 765-658-4268.*
- If you would prefer to text someone regarding mental health, text NAMI to 741741. If you would like to talk to someone about domestic violence or sexual assault you can contact:
 - Elizabeth Gertz (Coordinator of Sexual Assault/Interpersonal Violence Prevention/Education, Phone: 765-658-1088, Email: elizabethgetz@depauw.edu)
 - Sarah Ryan, (director of the Women's Center) Phone: 765-658-4173, Email: sryan@depauw.edu.
 - **SASA (Sexual Assault Survivor Advocate) Support is available 24/7 at 765-658-4650.**

If you would like off-campus support: Family Support Services of West Indiana has DV programs: <https://fsswci.net/domestic-violence>. If you want to speak to someone anonymously you can call the National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE. Or RAINN's National Sexual Assualt Hotline: 1-800-656-4673 or chat: <https://hotline.rainn.org/online>

- If there are other resources you need but don't know where to find, please ask!