

AS.363 (STUDY OF WOMEN, GENDER, & SEXUALITY)

AS.363.201. Introduction to the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. 3 Credits.

This course offers an introduction into the fields of Women's Studies, Gender Studies, and Sexuality Studies. It explores why we need these fields of inquiry, how they have emerged historically, what some of the major and most interesting contributions are and where we might go from here. The course is meant as a preparation for the other WGS core courses.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.363.303. Feminism and Queer Theory: 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House'. 3 Credits.

As a Black lesbian woman, Lorde denounced white feminism for being complicit with patriarchy by not acknowledging marginal women's experiences as a source of strength and creativity. Inspired by the title and impetus of Lorde's essay, this course seeks to ask what happens when we start seeing the world through unfamiliar, alternative, tools or sensibilities? What different pictures of critique—ones that don't merely focus on replacing the master's house with other strong edifices—are allowed to emerge? With these questions in mind, the main objective of this course is to expose us to alternative sensibilities and ways of thinking offered by voices that experience gender and sexuality beyond conventional Western norms and counter-norms.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.305. Feminist & Queer Theory: Feminist Queer Theories: Past & Present. 3 Credits.

This course offers a range of transnational and US feminist and queer theories, starting from the present with which we are familiar and moving backwards into history. It is designed to facilitate deep engagement with feminist and queer theoretical language/s and concepts, as well as critical approaches applicable to further discourses beyond the class in other disciplines and outside them. The course is divided into 5 units, which roughly organize the reading thematically around the topics of: 1. language and cultural translation, 2. feminist critique, and thinking through the lenses of 3. queerness, 4. race and 5. class. The organization reflects the focus of each unit, yet the topics are intertwined. Students are encouraged to be patient with themselves and the readings and, especially if encountering theoretical discourses for the first time, not to expect to understand everything immediately but rather to acclimate to the radically different thinking of others throughout the course of the semester.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.306. Feminist and Queer Theory: Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality-Intersectional Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.

In this course, we will get to know intersectional feminist philosophy through the lens of a Black feminist epistemology. What does this mean? That means that we will focus on how the contributions of Black feminist authors can bring out the specific political and philosophical nature of an intersectional theoretical framework.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.307. Feminist and Queer Theory: Family Matters: Queer and Feminist Responses to Family Life. 3 Credits.

This course examines the historical development of feminist and queer critique, focusing on how the concept of family life has been understood by generations of writers, activists, and theorists. We will read important early works on western forms of kinship and family structure, and investigate how contemporary developments in reproductive technology, queer marriage, and workplace integration have produced new imaginings of familial belonging and its alternatives.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.316. Health, Medicine, Gender, and Sexuality: Gender, Sexuality, and AIDS in Africa. 3 Credits.

This course uses historical sources to connect constructions of gender and sexuality in Africa from the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods to the epidemiology, politics, and culture of the AIDS epidemic.

Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

Writing Intensive

AS.363.327. Gender and Sexuality beyond the Global West: Feminism and Homosexuality in the Islamic World. 3 Credits.

This course explores the emerging discourses on gender and sexuality in Islam. As minorities, women and homosexuals developed a shared interest in exegetic tools challenging the dominant narratives that shaped a so-called Muslim tradition. We will investigate disruptive narratives that take place within theological debates but we will also grapple with discourses that have been produced on women and homosexuals in the Islamic world. We will deal with the question of imposing on Muslims a specific conception - that a good amount of scholars have identified as being western - of homosexuality and feminism. A set of questions will guide us through our readings: does sexuality constitute an identity or refer to a practice? Should equality be reduced to identity or can it be understood differently? Are agency and freedom best manifested through subversion and opposition?

Area: Humanities

AS.363.328. Beyond the Global West: Gender/Sexuality, Post-colonialism & Global Capitalism: Feminist Inquiries from Asian Perspectives. 3 Credits.

This course examines gender and sexuality issues in both East and South Asian Societies and situates subject matters in the broader contexts of post-colonialism, state formation, revolution and global capitalism.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.329. Gender and Sexuality Beyond the Global West: Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Art in North Africa and the Middle East. 3 Credits.

This course aims to explore how gender and sexuality is situated in contemporary artistic practices in the geographical Middle East, through concepts of religion, war, revolution, resistance, nation-state, post-colonialism, and neoliberalism, especially as written and observed firsthand by artists, curators and scholars from the Middle East and North Africa region and their diasporas. Every week, under an overarching topic, notions of gender and sexuality will be questioned through works of selected artists across the region, as well as texts that provide the historical, theoretical, sociological and political background.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.330. Gender and Sexuality Beyond the Global West. 3 Credits.

The course is an exploration of issues of gender and sexuality beyond the Global West.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.331. Gender and Sexuality beyond the Global West: Stitching Women-Sewing and Gender, Labor, and Art. 3 Credits.

What's radical about stitching? And how did sewing come to be viewed—across centuries, cultures, regions, and political epochs—as (in embroidery artist Hannah Hill's words) “women's work”? This course will analyze and discuss how work with needle and thread has been associated with women, their bodies, and the domestic space where the repetitive labor of mending, the mixed opportunity for making, and the devalued practice of the “applied arts” took place. Looking at histories of work, fictions, and visual objects, we will explore stitching's gendered past and its potential for oppressive normativity and radical, creative expression alike. Over the semester, our course follows the “red thread” of stitching via four short response papers (or one Unessay), one in-class presentation, and one final oral history/research project on an interdisciplinary discussion related to the (often radical) politics and poetics of women's lives and works. Authors and artists may include Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Gaskell, Virginia Woolf, Alice Walker, Carol Ann Duffy, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Tracey Emin, Louise Bourgeois, Elaine Reichek, Silvia Federici, Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Kyung-Ah Ham, and Project Runway.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.333. Poetics and Politics: Eros & Literature. 3 Credits.

What does it mean to love? From Antiquity to now, from Plato to Jeanette Winterson, writers have staged conversations on love and sex. In this way, they provide us with a “science of sex” (to use Foucault's notion) that, though fully attuned to the power differentials that inhabit our most intimate physical experiences, gives free range to the imagination of desires. With Plato, the legend of Tristan and Isolde, and the study of a few Renaissance love lyrics as a backdrop, we will delve into stories of desire that chart new configurations and break away from “normative heterosexuality.” Readings involve novellas by Balzac, George Sand, Colette; stories by Woolf, by Proust, and selected from *Gender Outlaws* as well as two films *M. Butterfly* and *Call Me by Your Name*. Meshing such stories with fundamental concepts in gender theory will enable us to chart ever changing configurations of desire from the double perspective of queerness and of sexual politics.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.334. The Poetics and Politics of Sex: Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth Century European Empires. 3 Credits.

This course explores themes around sexuality and empire in nineteenth and twentieth century European empires, including (but not limited to) the gendered policies of colonial regimes, how colonialism encouraged ideal forms of femininity and masculinity, and nationalist feminisms in the era of independence.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.336. The Poetics & Politics of Sex: Feminist Separatism & Its Afterlives. 3 Credits.

In 1977, feminist theorist Marilyn Frye asked, “What is it about separation, in any or all of its many forms and degrees, that makes it so basic and so sinister, so exciting and so repellent?” Her essay, “Some Reflections on Separatism and Power” was a response to the emergence and persistence in the 1960s of a feminist separatist politics, as well as its many detractors, both from outside the feminist movement and within (many black feminists, for example, critiqued the movement's essentialism and its positioning of gender and sexuality above considerations of race). Today, Frye's question still remains a live one; think, for example, of the now commonplace exclamation that one will “move to Canada” (or “leave Earth” as Tina Fey has it) in the face of an ominous political possibility. In a less facetious form, one might consider the separatism latent in the emergence of queer futurity politics, safe space discourse, and a more general pessimism about reform and assimilation as satisfying answers to a continually oppressive status quo. In this course, we will consider the ongoing salience of the idea of separatism, particularly as it is engaged within politics of gender and sexuality.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.337. The Poetics & Politics of Sex: Struck From the Record: Reclaiming Women's Contribution to the Global March Towards Modernity. 3 Credits.

The course examines claims that present women's historic role as limited to confinement in the home, and bearing children. Students will gain an understanding of the complexity the world's path to modernity and the important, and until recently, silent roles that women have played.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.338. The Poetics and Politics of Sex: Feminist Utopia in Theory and Fiction. 3 Credits.

This course examines the historical development of feminist utopia in theory and fiction. Readings will center Indigenous, Black, postcolonial, diasporic, and transnational perspectives that engage the topic of feminist utopia.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.340. Costumes and Masquerades of the Self. 3 Credits.

An introduction to some of the fundamental texts and concepts of gender theory through the study of representations, literary and art historical, of dress. From cross-dressing in Shakespeare and George Sand, Baudelaire's Dandy, to Woolf's notion of “frock consciousness,” Hwang's *Mr. Butterfly*, and Cindy Sherman's parodies. Theoretical readings in Barthes, Laqueur, Lacan, Garber, Butler, Potts, Lee.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.341. The Making of Modern Gender. 3 Credits.

Gender as we know it is not timeless. Today, gender roles and the assumption that there are only two genders are contested and debated. With the binary gender system thus perhaps nearing its end, we might wonder if it had a beginning. In fact, the idea that there are two sexes and that they not only assume different roles in society but also exhibit different character traits, has emerged historically around 1800. Early German Romanticism played a seminal role in the making of modern gender and sexuality. For the first time, woman was considered not a lesser version of man, but a different being with a value of her own. The idea of gender complementation emerged, and this idea, in turn, put more pressure than ever on heterosexuality. In this course, we will trace the history of anatomy and explore the role of literature and the other arts in the making and unmaking of gender.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.400. Feminist Modernisms. 3 Credits.

Prize Teaching Fellowship seminar. Triangulating feminist psychoanalysis and theories of embodiment and subjectivity with art criticism and case studies of artistic practice (primarily painting), this course comparatively investigates the routes modernism takes after the Second World War and decolonization (1945/1947). We will be interested in specific postcolonial and postwar contexts where modernism in the domain of the visual arts was mounted as a feminist project. Each week will pair readings that establish conceptual frameworks with close analyses of works by specific artists, including those represented by the Library's Special Collections and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Texts include Freud, Spivak, Butler, Irigaray, Kristeva, and Mahmood.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.415. WGS Internship Practicum: The Carceral State, Gender, and the Family. 3 Credits.

This class will examine the U.S. government's use of incarceration, parole, and house-arrest as default forms of social management, in lieu of social welfare policy. We will explore the origins of the "carceral state" and its impact on targeted communities. The class will focus on often neglected aspects of the ongoing crisis of mass-incarceration in the U.S., in particular its debilitating effects on single-mother households, children who grow up with incarcerated family members, and the extreme violence and deprivation of basic medical needs faced by incarcerated women and LGBTQI individuals. Topics will include black-feminism and "black matriarchy," the relationship between domestic violence and mass-incarceration in communities of color, women and non-gender conforming prisoners, the "school-to-prison pipeline," the psychological effects of policing on targeted communities, and the fiscal interests served by mass-incarceration. We will engage sociological, historical, and philosophical materials, as well as literature, film, and past and present social movements.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.416. WGS Internship/Practicum: Feminist Animals: Sex, Nature, and Nonhumans. 3 Credits.

Introducing feminist approaches to ecology and nonhumans, this course considers the interconnections between heteropatriarchal domination and the domination of nonhuman animals and ecologies. What different sensibilities and ways of seeing sex and gender open up when attention shifts to nonhumans? What tensions within and between feminism, animal liberation, and ecological concern come to the fore when each approach is alongside the others? How does the study of nonhumans extend the promise of feminism, and vice versa? In responding to these questions, we will see the real breadth of issues that the theory and practice of feminism can address.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.418. Internship Practicum: Feminist Ethnographic Methods and Social Justice Organizations. 3 Credits.

This course is for students who are working with social justice organizations. It will introduce students to ethnographic research that is informed by feminist methodologies of listening, care, ethics, and structural analysis. Methods will be oriented to the "inside" and "outside" of organizations. "Inside" the organization might refer to listening to marginalized voices, examining the place of bureaucracy and paperwork, and engaging with activist research and records. Reaching beyond the organization proper, we will learn to analyze localities, and less tangible zones such as social media, political networks, and the state.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.419. Internship/Practicum: Dividing the Divisions. 3 Credits.

This course examines the essentially political ways in which class, race, and gender relate to one another in the context of social division of labor, resources, and representation. It intends to show how reflection and transformative practice can best change the instances of social injustice through introducing new divisions within the existing imposed divisions in a manner that will make ineffective and inoperative the latter. With the help of the analytic of the central modern notion of class and class relations, we will revisit the relations of gender and race in concrete situations. The course is twofold, practical and theoretical within the framework of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. In one fold, students will have the chance to engage in some kind of practical-social activity out in an actual community with people who are committed to all sorts of social work. This can span from LGBTQ or immigrant workers to addiction among women. In the other fold, we will undertake theoretical reflections on various aspects of these activities. We will read texts mainly in feminist and Marxist traditions. How these two folds relate to one another will be one key question of the whole course.

Area: Humanities

AS.363.445. Reading Judith Shakespeare: Women and Gender in Elizabethan England. 3 Credits.

If Shakespeare had a sister who went to London to be a writer, what would she write? Virginia Woolf's account of the thwarted career of Shakespeare's hypothetical sister, Judith, in *A Room of One's Own* frames our reading of plays and poetry by Shakespeare and contemporary women writers, including Isabella Whitney, Elizabeth Cary, Mary Sidney, Aemelia Lanyer, and Mary Wroth. Working within a selected historical context, students will create fictional biographies of "Judith Shakespeare," including her perspective on our identified authors and a sample or description of Judith's own literary accomplishments. Secondary course readings will reflect contemporary economic, political, and religious contexts.

Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

AS.363.502. Independent Study. 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.363.601. WGS Graduate Colloquium.

Presenting new scholarship and art, the WGS Graduate Colloquium will catalyze intellectual discussions in which gender and sexuality concerns play important roles. The seminar includes lectures by invited speakers and a film series. Graduate students are encouraged to develop critical and comparative approaches to the study of gender and sexuality—often in interaction with related issues such as race, class, violence, law, medicine, art, and emotionality. This seminar can be taken for credit or audit.

Area: Humanities