Spring 2016 Course Offerings:

FGSS 2010  Introduction to Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
TR       10:10-11:25        L. Ramberg

Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is an interdisciplinary program focused on understanding the impact of gender and sexuality on the world around us and on the power hierarchies that structure it. This course provides an overview of key concepts, questions, and debates within feminist studies both locally and globally, focusing mainly on the experiences, historical conditions, and concerns of women as they are shaped by gender and sexuality. We will read a variety of texts—personal narratives, historical documents, and cultural criticism—across a range of disciplines, and will consider how larger structural systems of both privilege and oppression affect individuals’ identities, experiences, and options. We will also examine forms of agency and action taken by women in the face of these larger systems.

FGSS 2220  Drugs and Social Justice
MW       2:55-4:10         S. Hodzic       GLO, ISO, LGBT

Drugs can heal you or poison you, set you free or land you in prison, depending on who you are and your place in the world. The course sheds light on structural inequalities that result from the production, circulation, and regulation of drugs, focusing on questions of social justice. Topics include: Bodies on Drugs (pharmaceutical drugs for trans* subjects; the medicalization of gendered bodies; bioscience and race); Drugs and Global Health (global inequities in access to drugs; colonial legacies in drug production and clinical trials); Drugs and Everyday Racism and Sexism (how people’s experiences and lifeworlds are shaped by racialized and gendered dimensions of drug use and illegality); and Drugs, Law Enforcement, and Mass Incarceration (how the war on drugs intersects with racism in the US to produce the world’s highest incarceration rates, while fostering violence across the globe). Throughout the course, we will examine how human rights and social justice activism shape public debates about drugs; we will also meet with local activist groups. This multi-disciplinary course is grounded in feminist studies, medical anthropology, and critical race theory, and draws on history, political science, legal studies, films, and art.
This course offers a broad understanding of the active and dynamic cultural, economic, and social, and political roles played by Chinese women. By challenging the dominant stereotype of the passive and victimized Chinese woman, this course aims to examine women’s struggles, negotiations, and challenges of the normative discourse of femininity and domesticity in terms of various disciplines, including philosophy, anthropology, history, and literature. Through a combination of reading original texts with secondary scholarship, this course will discuss the issues of Confucianism and patriarchal family, the female body and sexuality, education and self-expression, women’s economic status and religious life, gender and the state, the modernization of women, etc.

This course focuses on African American Women in the 20th century. The experiences of black women will be examined from a social, practical, communal and gendered perspective. Topics include The Club Woman’s movement, suffrage, work, family, black & white women and feminism, black women and radicalism and the feminization of poverty.

This course investigates the rich body of Roman laws on slaves, crime, and women and children. Students will explore the evolution of power over marginalized groups and penalties for crimes at the beginnings of the Western legal system in order to consider ideas of identity, agency, responsibility, and punishment from a cultural and historical perspective. Through an examination of the legal sources (in translation) and the study of the rise and changes of governmental institutions of justice, this course will examine the evolution of jurisprudence: the development of conceptions of power and shifts in the understanding of just punishment. The course is designed as an introduction to these topics suitable for all students.

Prerequisite: FGSS 2010. This course will work across and between the disciplines to consider what it might mean to think 'as a feminist' about many things including, but not limited to ‘gender’, ‘women’ and ‘sexuality’. We will approach theory as a tool for analyzing relations of power and a means of transforming ways of thinking and living. In particular, we will investigate the cultural, social, and historical assumptions that shape the possibilities and problematics of gender and sexuality. Throughout we will attend to specific histories of class, race, ethnicity, culture, nation, religion and sexuality, with an eye to their particular incitements to and challenges for feminist thinking and politics.
FGSS 3530  Monsters A-X  
TR       10:10-11:00      K. Long

This course will explore the classical, medieval, and early modern sources for our notions of monsters, including strange beasts, wild men, demons, witches, and cyborgs. What do these figures tell us about our own attitudes towards racial and gender differences, towards other species and towards nature more generally? Finally, what do these figures tell us about our idea of what constitutes life? Texts to be considered will include Aristotle’s On the Generation of Animals, Pliny’s Natural History, Chrétien de Troyes Yvain, Ambroise Paré’s On Monsters and Marvels, Beowulf, Bram Stoker’s Dracula, and various episodes of the X-Files (Detour, Bad Blood, Il Mundo Gira, etc.), as well as critical material from Donna Haraway (Simians, Cyborgs, and Women and Primate Visions), Judith Butler (Gender Trouble), and Julia Kristeva (Pouvoirs de l’horreur).

FGSS 3685  Growing up Latina/o  
MW       2:55-4:10      M. Brady

Spy Kids, Dora the Explorer, Jane the Virgin give us Hollywood visions of what it is like to grow up Latin@ in this country. Sandra Cisneros, Junot Diaz, Sonia Sotomayor and DREAMers provide another set of representations. In this course we will read fiction, poetry, and memoirs about the experience of growing up in the U.S. We will consider the narratives that migrant farmworkers, actors, novelists, and activists produce as they think about how children learn and navigate the processes called racialization, sexualization, and gendering. We will also compare this literature to the work of visual artists like Ana Mendieta as well as filmmakers like Robert Rodriguez.

FGSS 3720  Food, Gender, Culture  
TR       11:40-12:55      K. McCullough

In addition to nourishing the body, food operates as a cultural system that both produces and reflects cultural values and hierarchies as well as group and individual identities. In this class we will examine foodways — the behaviors and beliefs attached to the production, distribution, and consumption of food — in order to explore the way food practices help shape our sense of our gender, race, sexual orientation, and national identity. In doing so we will analyze a variety of texts from across the disciplines, focusing primarily on literature and film but ranging into the fields of anthropology, sociology, and history as well. Some questions under discussion will be: How does food function symbolically? How does it work to either preserve or transform cultural identity? How do factors such as gender, class, race, and religion shape the foods we eat and the circumstances in which we eat them? How does food serve both to produce community and to alienate? Why might a novelist or filmmaker choose to focus on food (or a chef) in order to tell a particular tale? How do writers use the language of food to explore issues such as gender, sexuality, class and race? What can a study of food tell us about these identity categories and others in the contemporary US?
FGSS 3820  The Gendered Workplace
W  2:55-4:10  I. DeVault

This course will examine the range of issues surrounding the experience of gender in the modern workplace. Topics may include the historical role of women in the workplace; sex segregation in the workplace; norms of masculinity; the intersectionality of issues including race, lgbtq, and disability; gendered legal issues; work-family issues; pay equity; gender discrimination; harassment and bullying; union representation; and many others. Students will be exposed to both research and practical applications of various topics. This class will have a different guest speaker each week. Each speaker will assign readings for their topic, to be read before their class meeting.

FGSS 3991  Undergraduate Independent Study
TBA  TBA  Various

Individual study program intended for juniors and seniors working on special topics with selected reading or research projects not covered in regularly scheduled courses. Students select a topic in consultation with a FGSS faculty member who has agreed to supervise the independent study. Prerequisites: FGSS 2010 or FGSS 3000, and one additional 3000-level FGSS course. 1-4 credits.

FGSS 4201  Gender and the Brain
M  7:30-8:45  S. Dietz  LGBT

In this course, we will delve into the neuroscience of gender difference. Reading the original scientific papers, we will ask whether we can find measurable physical differences in male and female brains, and what these differences might be. Do men and women solve spatial puzzles differently, as measured physiologically? Do nonhuman animals display sex-specific behaviors mediated by brain structure, and can we extrapolate these findings to human behavior? Are there physical representations of sexual orientation in the brain, and how are these related to gender identity? And how are scientific studies represented and misrepresented in popular debate? In each class period we will read original scientific literature and discuss how the design and execution of the studies may have influenced the outcomes they measured. We will also read news and opinion articles based on the science we are discussing.
Although the wounded, often feminine, body is the most powerful way of imagining border space in both the Indian subcontinent and the Americas, it is seldom coupled with the embodied practices and performances through which borders define everyday life and shape geographical and historical consciousness in the two regions. Drawing upon texts, media, and theory generated from South Asia and Latin America, the course will develop new comparative approaches to the constitutive role that bodies play in creating, maintaining, and imagining borders in the global South.

This course will explore women, gender and sexuality in hip hop music and culture, addressing both the consumption and the production of hip hop. We will draw on texts that analyze misogyny in hip hop music and music videos, while also looking at how both mainstream and marginalized female hip hop artists contest sexually exploitative images of women. The course will utilize Black feminist theory, consumption theory, queer theory, and youth culture theory to help students interpret and critique the ways in which sexual identities are represented in hip hop music, art, fashion, and dance, and in its surrounding culture. Considering analyses of African American, Caribbean, Asian-American, South African, and Latino interactions with hip hop, the course will investigate how youth construct gender and ethnic identities as they negotiate notions of African Diasporic belonging vis-à-vis hip hop. We will employ ethnographic, historical, sociological, literary, and interdisciplinary texts to explore questions such as: What do the sexual politics of rap music reveal about broader gender constructions? How can we compare the portrayal of women in hip hop to representations of women in related musical genres? How are hetero-normative gender ideologies reinforced in hip hop culture? Does hip hop allow a space for alternative femininities? The course will also address broader questions related to representations of Black femininity, minorities in the media, gender and sexual identity construction.

This seminar reads pivotal theoretical works in feminist anthropology critically. We will follow the development of anthropological theory with specific reference to sex, sexuality and gender, beginning with Margaret Mead and building toward the most recent efforts to theorize how gender constructs the sexed worlds of women and men around the world and how global changes are affecting those worlds.
FGSS 4440  Historical Issues of Gender and Science
M 12:20-2:15  M. Rossiter  ISO

A one-semester survey of women’s role in science and engineering from antiquity to the present, with special emphasis on the United States in the 20th century. Readings include biographies and autobiographies of prominent women scientists, educational writings and other primary sources, and recent historical and sociological studies. By the end of the semester, students attain a broad view of the problems that have faced women entering science and those that still remain. There are no formal prerequisites for the course, although some knowledge of women’s history and the history of science would be helpful. The course welcomes the participation of students from scientific and non-scientific backgrounds alike.

FGSS 4455  Gendering Enlightenment
T 2:30-4:25  D. Boucher

Women have from the beginning been integral members of Buddhist traditions. But their voices have often been silenced by male clergy. This course will explore ways in which images of women and the feminine have been manipulated within normative literature to serve a variety of ends. We will also look at the lives of real Buddhist women in premodern and contemporary times as we think about the complex ways women have made space for their own interests.

FGSS 4491  Feminism and Philosophy
R 2:30-4:25  K. Manne

Feminist approaches to questions in metaphysics, epistemology, language, and value theory. Prerequisite: one philosophy course or one course in feminist theory (FGSS). Enrollment limited to sophomores and up.
Toni Morrison was an editor at Random House, has produced work in several literary genres, and is a gifted essayist. However, she is best known for her body of novels that began with publication of The Bluest Eye in 1970. We will focus on reading novels by Morrison, including The Bluest Eye, Sula (1973), Song of Solomon (1977), Beloved (1987), Jazz (1992), Paradise (1998), Love (2003) and A Mercy (2008). The presentation of her novels in trilogy form and her contributions to the genre of historical writing will be given some consideration. We will explore the author’s stylistic innovation and expansion of this genre. We will consider topics such as how to read novels critically. We will pursue our study with some attention to major public work of Morrison, from her art projects as a curator at the Lover to the Toni Morrison Society; “Bench by the Road” project and it 2008 conference in Charleston, South Carolina, and upcoming Paris meeting in summer 2010. In an era in which the literary tastes and standards of valuation in popular contexts and academic ones can be quite contrary, Morrison is among the writers who have sustained audiences at both levels, which is evident. For instance, in the selection of her novels for Oprah’s book club several times and in their consistent appeal within reading groups and book clubs. In this course, we will examine some of the distinctions between how novels are discussed and written about in popular and academic contexts.

An understanding of performance as object and lens, modality and method, is integral to scholarship and research across the humanities and social sciences. Charting the defining principles and interdisciplinary history of performance studies, this course examines performance as a means of creative expression, a mode of critical inquiry, and an avenue for public engagement. This approach privileges both the practice of performance – as gesture, behavior, habit, event, artistic enactment, and social drama – and the study of performance – through ethnographic observation, spectatorship, documentation, reproduction, analysis, and writing strategies. Attending to research paradigms and key issues related to performance, we will explore not only what this highly contested term "is" and "does," but when and how, for whom, and under what circumstances. We will study a range of foundational texts (1950s – 1990s) and end the term with an analysis of several recent, award-winning books that are redefining the field.
To graduate with honors a major must complete a senior thesis under the supervision of a faculty member in Feminist, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, and defend that thesis orally before an honors committee. Students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in all course work and a 3.3 average in all courses applying to the FGSS major. Interested students should consult the DUS in the spring semester of their junior year or very early in the fall semester of their senior year. Prerequisite: successful completion of FGSS 4990.

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An understanding of performance as object and lens, modality and method, is integral to scholarship and research across the humanities and social sciences. Charting the advent and defining principles of performance studies, this course explores the interdisciplinary history of the field, including its association with anthropology, visual studies, theater, gender studies, sociology, psychology, literature, philosophy, and critical race studies. This class examines performance as a means of creative expression, a mode of critical inquiry, and an avenue for public engagement. We will attend to both the practice of performance - as gesture, behavior, habit, event, artistic expression, and social drama - and the study of performance - through ethnographic observation, spectatorship, documentation, reproduction, analysis, and writing strategies. Through a study of research paradigms and key issues related to performance, we will explore not only what this highly contested term “is” and “does,” but when and how, for whom, and under what circumstances. (HTC)

Independent reading course for graduate students on topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses. Students develop a course of readings in consultation with a faculty member in the field of Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies who has agreed to supervise the course work.

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