

Fall 8-15-2018

WST 2309G-003: Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies

Jeannie Ludlow
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2018



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ludlow, Jeannie, "WST 2309G-003: Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies" (2018). *Fall 2018*. 89.
https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2018/89

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2018 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fall 2018 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

Intro to Women's and Gender Studies
Fall, 2018
Dr. Jeannie Ludlow

WST 2309G sect. 003, CRN 91034
3:30-4:45 pm TR, Coleman 3609

Office: 3139 Coleman Hall
Email: via D2L, please
Mailbox: 3155 Coleman Hall
Office Hours: MW 1-3pm, TR 2-3:15 pm.,
and by appointment

The best way to reach me is via email on D2L. Please expect about 24 hours answer-time.

Course Description for WST 2309G:

From Undergraduate Catalog: "Examines gender roles and development in a historical context from a variety of theoretical and disciplinary perspectives and within a variety of frameworks: political, economic, cultural, religious, and social." In this section of WST 2309G, we will examine these frameworks through a focus on several embodied experiences of gender: trans/LGBTQ+ experiences; sex positivity and sexuality; reproductive justice and health care. As we discuss these embodied experiences, we will pay particular attention to the ways race and class (socioeconomic status) shape experiences and activism. We will also honor the activists, thinkers, and public figures who have worked to raise awareness about these experiences.

WST 2309G is a Social Sciences General Education course that fulfills the cultural diversity requirement. As such, this course aims to foster "responsible citizens[hip] in a diverse world" through "understanding [of] society and the individual. In these courses, students will have the opportunity to apply various methods of inquiry and analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, to the study of the human condition. These sciences emphasize the importance of understanding the diversity of human cultures, their socio-historical context, and one's personal responsibility for being not only a good citizen, but also a steward of the environment" (Undergraduate Catalog http://catalog.eiu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=16&pooid=1865&bc=1).

Course Format: This is a writing-intensive, discussion- and participation-oriented course; assignments function as preparatory work for and the bases of the learning process, not as ends in themselves. Students have primary responsibility for

the focus and tone of class discussions. Written work may be revised at the discretion of the professor and within a reasonable time frame. **In sum:** PLEASE do your readings before class, so we can spend time on the experiences you want to discuss and learn about.

Course Expectations: It is my educational philosophy that each student is responsible for their own education; the role of the professor is to guide and facilitate learning, not to tell students what (or how) to think. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class having done all assignments, fully prepared to engage in discussions, activities, etc., that revolve around the assigned materials. We will be discussing ideas and information that might make some people uncomfortable (e.g., racism, sexuality). It is absolutely necessary, if we are to learn, to ask questions (especially the difficult ones), to express opinions, and to be respectful of others, especially when we do not agree with them. All opinions and ideas are encouraged in this class; it is never expected that students will agree with everything they read, see or hear. Students will not be evaluated on their opinions but on their ability to analyze and evaluate situations and concepts, clearly and thoughtfully. Critical thinking and articulation of disagreements and difficulties are encouraged.

Please note: Several of the works we will read or discuss this semester include very frank representations of a variety of embodied experiences, from the joyful (including first love, sexual experiences, pregnancy decision-making, activism) to the traumatic (including sexual assault, war, oppression). **I do not issue "trigger warnings";** please be aware that you will be reading these frank representations and do what you need to do to take good care of yourself both inside and outside of the classroom. If you need to talk, to debrief, to decompress with someone, I am 100% available to you for this. I care about your success and your ability to experience fully the amazing ideas we will be learning about together.

Student Learning Objectives for WST 2309G—in this course you will:

1. demonstrate critical thinking about gender issues;
2. articulate how political, social, economic, and/or religious factors influence gender role expectations;
3. demonstrate awareness of comparative gender differences within and across cultures and subcultures;

4. demonstrate an appreciation of the diverse experiences and perspectives that shape human culture, in service of global citizenship;
5. improve your public speaking skills through course discussions and in-class presentations;
6. improve your writing skills through formal and informal writing assignments

Special circumstances: Any student who needs disability accommodations for this course should please speak with me as soon as possible. Please note that the University's Office of Disability Services (581-6583) will help with designated learning needs, mobility needs, etc.

Materials:

PLEASE NOTE: You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. Four texts for this course were ordered from Textbook Rental, listed, below. Some required readings will also be available only online or via D2L.

TRS TEXTS—in order of use

- Andrews, Arin. *Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen*. 2014.
 Gay, Roxane. *Bad Feminist: Essays*. 2014.
 Launius, Christie, and Holly Hassel. *Threshold Concepts in Women's and Gender Studies*. 2015.
 Treacy, Mary Jane. *Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor, and the New Woman*. 2015.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Readings on D2L or online, as required.
 You will need regular access to a computer and the ability to use D2L. If you need help with this, let me know. Please note: "My computer wouldn't access this reading" or "my printer is out of ink" are not excuses for incomplete homework. If your computer isn't cooperating, go to the library lab and download, read, or print there.

IN ORDER TO PASS THIS CLASS,
 YOU MUST COMPLETE FOR GRADING:
 THREE EXAMS, FOUR EXPRESSIONS,
 AND A FINAL PRAXIS PROJECT.
 EXCESSIVE ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN
 AUTOMATIC FAILURE OF THIS COURSE.

GRADES will be earned through the following components, each of which will be assigned a letter grade:

25% Participation (includes attendance, in-class writing, in-class activities, quizzes, and discussion, and successful completion of all reading and out-of-class assignments)

- 30% Three exams (10% each)
 20% Four expressions (5% each)
 25% Praxis project

NOTE: There will be no makeups for participation credit, including attendance, in-class writing assignments or quizzes. Makeups for other assignments (expressions, exams) may be permitted in cases of documented hardship or emergency. If you experience hardship or emergency, please let me know as soon as is reasonable.

LATE POLICY: Late work is strongly discouraged. However, late is better than not at all. Work will depreciate in value one letter grade for each school day it is late, beginning at the beginning of class on the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the time noted in the schedule.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: You should make your own choices about attending class; do remember that any choice one makes comes with consequences. In this class, the consequence for absence is lower grade or failure of the course. I take attendance using a student sign-in sheet. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to remember to sign the sign-in sheet at the end of class that day; if you forget, you will be counted absent. When you are counted absent, you earn an F in participation that day. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed (from a friend or during my office hours) and for making sure that you get copies of handouts, worksheets, etc., from me or on D2L. Please do not email your professors and ask, "did I miss anything?" and please do not interrupt the whole class to ask about something you missed.

Email guidelines: (NOTE: this is good advice for emailing all your instructors) Communication with your instructors, whether by email, by phone, or in person, is a professional exchange. Please be sure to reflect this professionalism in your communication. All emails must have: an appropriate salutation ("Dear Jeannie," "Hello, Dr. Ludlow," etc.); the course info in the subject line (e.g. WST2309G); and a recognizable signature. Your emails should be written with complete words and in complete sentences ("May I schedule an appointment with you?" not "Can I C U?"), not in textpeak; this is true even if you are sending the emails on your phone. Also, please note that I only check my email two or three times each school day. It often takes me one full school day (24 hours, M – F) to answer any email message—I typically do not check my campus email

on weekends. ALL COURSE-RELATED EMAILS SHOULD BE SENT TO ME ON D2L.

CLASSROOM BILL OF RIGHTS AND

RESPONSIBILITIES—the following constitutes an agreement between the students and professor for this course.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to work in a harassment-free, hostility-free environment; harassment of others and explicit or deliberate hostility are not tolerated.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times, even in the midst of heated disagreement.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to behave as a competent adult and to be open and polite to one another.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and academic guests) has the responsibility to come to every class fully prepared to listen, to participate, to learn and to teach.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to work together to create, in this class, an environment in which active learning, including responsible and respectful questioning, is encouraged.

The professor has the responsibility to treat all students fairly and to evaluate students' work accurately, in terms of the skills that any student in this course is expected to gain.

The professor has the responsibility to make assignment requirements and evaluation criteria clear.

Students have the right to feel confident that their work is being evaluated on its own merits, not on the basis of the students' personal opinions.

Students have the responsibility to view their professor as a partner in their education, not as bent on causing students anxiety and frustration.

Students have the responsibility to understand that the professor is not primarily responsible for making students understand; it is students' job to study, ask questions, and learn.

Students have the responsibility to keep an open mind and to try to comprehend what the professor and the texts are trying to get across to them.

Students have the responsibility to read the assignments carefully, noting important ideas and rephrasing information in their own words.

Students have the responsibility to work through examples in the assignments and in class discussions or lectures and to ask questions if they do not understand concepts or examples.

Students have the responsibility to do every bit of assigned homework with proper attention and thought.

Students have the responsibility to ask for help when they need it; help is available from the professor, from other students, from the Writing Center, the Student Success Center, and the Reading Center, and from other resources on campus.

Students have the responsibility to accept that their work will be evaluated in terms of the skills any student in this course is expected to gain.

Students have the responsibility to try to integrate the information from this course into other courses and into other areas of their lives.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In this course, we will comply with EIU's academic integrity policy (please see your catalog). I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. Please note that "plagiarism or cheating" includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. **quoting** from a source without citing that source and/or without using quotation marks
2. **paraphrasing** from a source without citing that source
3. turning in a paper with an incorrect or incomplete **works cited list**
4. **falsifying** data
5. turning in **someone else's work** as your own—this includes (but is not limited to)
 - a. **copying** another's work from a quiz or assignment
 - b. turning in work that **someone else wrote**
 - c. using online or hard copy **paper mills**
6. turning in **your own work that was written for another course**, without prior permission from both professors.

Violations of EIU's academic integrity policy will result in an **automatic failing grade** in this course and notification of the Office of Student Services. For more information, see www.eiu.edu/judicial. **In this class, you may use either MLA, APA, ASA, or Chicago citation styles. Whichever style you choose, you must use it consistently and correctly.**

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

All in-class writing for grade (quizzes, exams, daily writings) will be hand-written in ink. All out-of-class

writing will be typed, double-spaced, in a standard font, with your name and page numbers on every page and submitted via D2L. **Please do not include cover pages and do not submit paper copies to me, if you can avoid it—we are all responsible for conserving natural resources.** When you submit papers via D2L, please be sure that all parts of the paper are in one document; never submit the Works Cited as a separate document. I will do my best to acknowledge receipt of your submission very quickly, so you know that your emailing was successful. If you don't see confirmation, please ask!

PARTICIPATION

Participation consists of regular attendance and productive participation in class discussions and in-class activities. The items in **bold** are the most important.

A = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **active and substantive participation in class discussions, explicitly about the materials assigned for that day or unit,** involving obvious **critical thought** and making connections to other materials or examples; avoidance of “side” conversations in class; leadership role in group activities and discussion; professional interactions with others in class, even when disagreeing strongly, and in all communications with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;

B = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **consistent participation in class discussions and activities, even when confused or struggling with ideas;** professional behavior in class (including not carrying on “side” conversations and not being rude) and in all communication with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;

C = consistent attendance with full preparation of course materials but **little to no verbal participation in discussions** unless required; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; consistent “follower” role in group activities; OR consistent enthusiastic participation in discussions and activities, **with no explicit evidence of full preparation of course materials;** professional behavior in class and

in all communications with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;
D = frequent tardiness; unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior in class or on discussion boards (including, but not limited to, doing homework for other classes, reading newspapers, “side” conversations, etc.)
F = absence; disruptive or hostile behavior in class or on discussion boards; frequent attention to cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices for non-class-related activities.

EXAMS

Exams give you an opportunity to show off your understanding of course materials and concepts when you to answer particular questions in a focused and extended way. You will have three exams in this class:

Exam #1 will be an in-class exam, combining short answer and short essay questions, on Thu, Sept. 20.
Exam #2 will be a take-home essay exam, due before the beginning of class on Thu., Oct. 11.

Exam #3 will be a combination: a take-home essay, due in class, at the beginning of our Final Exam period, which is at 2:45 pm on Tue., Dec. 11; plus an in-class exam, combining short answer and short essay questions, to be completed during the final exam period on Tue., Dec. 11, from 2:45-4:45 pm. Each exam essay will be graded on the following criteria:

- how strong and clear your thesis statement is and whether it is an arguable thesis;
- how consistently your argument is presented throughout the paper;
- how well you use course materials and course concepts to answer the question (i.e., show that you have done your reading and thought about it);
- how well you use examples to support your thesis;
- how well your paper is written to your audience of readers (your audience is made up of smart people who have not taken Women's Studies classes, unless otherwise indicated in the essay prompt);
- if your paper fulfills all the requirements of that particular assignment (e.g., length, focus, required readings, etc.);
- how well you document your sources.

All papers must include citations of course readings and works cited lists in correct citation format (either MLA or APA). Any paper without citations and a works cited list will **fail automatically**. If you

have questions about the paper assignments, please ask them in class, via email, or in my office hours.

EXPRESSIONS

You will produce four expressions (short, informal, public essays) throughout the semester. An expression is a **written or artistic work** that aims to share with a non-WST audience something that you have learned in this class (caution: really reflect on our course materials. For example, "Disney princesses reinforce gender stereotypes" is something that you all already know, so it does not make a good topic for your expressions. Go deeper). Your expressions could be: a newspaper or magazine report; a blog post; a YouTube video; a poster or painting or sculpture; a comic strip or story; a musical composition; a webpage; or just about anything else that you create (no memes or gifs, nothing derivative) to share your new knowledge. Each expression will address in some way a key concept or idea from our course materials. Your expression will be graded on how well it: expresses your understanding of the concept or idea as it is defined in our course materials (and not in dictionaries); shares knowledge with people who have not had a WGS course; and uses at least one concrete example to help make the concept clear. Your example can come from anywhere: popular culture, literature, politics, materials you have read in other classes, etc. A good example to look at is Roxane Gay's blog post about the concept of "victim" at <http://the-toast.net/2014/12/10/bad-victims/> or this one on the phrase "like a girl" by Tracy Moore: <http://jezebel.com/always-ad-about-like-a-girl-taunt-will-make-you-cry-lik-1598187426> Notice that both blogs start with the concept and then use specific stories and examples to get us to think a little differently about it. For more information about this assignment, please look for the document titled "Expressions" in D2L.

CLASS PROJECT

For this assignment, you will all work together as a class. You have two choices: 1) agree as a class to play the Educational Role Playing game, "Greenwich Village, 1913"; or 2) work together to design an activity about some important (to you) concept or concern that we learn about in class. You will decide, as a class, during the third week of classes.

TOPICS

Based on your activity on the first day, the topics with the most interest/votes are (NOTE % = checkmark):
 sex positive 12* 1% / sex positivity 8* / sex workers 8* 2% / slut shaming 3* 1%
 prochoice 12* / abortion 5* / Comstock Law and BC access 3* 2% / access to healthcare (global) 3*
 trans/lgbtq+ 11*
 famous women in history 9* (could also include movements started by women 6*; women's suffrage 4* 3%; evolution of music by women 3* 3%; women in law/ politics 3* / women's roles in politics 1%; Title IX 3*; women in civil rights 1* 1%)
 womanism vs feminism 9* (could also include famous women in history; Title IX; women in civil rights)

PARTICIPATION BOOST: STUDY GROUPS

You are strongly encouraged to participate in out-of-class study groups for this class. We will discuss this in class during week 2. If you want to boost your participation grade, you may do so by maintaining and meeting out-of-class in a study group on a regular basis. I will help you set up study groups. I will meet with individual study groups when I can. Each group is required to meet at least two times in the first four weeks of class. After that, if your group continues to meet, your participation grade will be boosted.