

Advanced Seminar in Sociology
Feminist Theory
(Soc 503/Fall 2009)

Instructor: Zakia Salime

Place: Lucy Stone Hall A256

Livingston Campus

Time: Th: 4.10-6:50

Place: Seminar room

Office Hours: or by appointment *Thur 3-4, 7-8*

Office number: A263 Lucy Stone

Email: zsalime@sociology.rutgers.edu

Required Books

Uma Narayan and Sandra Harding, 2000. *Decentering the Center: Philosophy for a Multicultural, Postcolonial, and Feminist World*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Referred to as (DC)

Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim, Eds. 2003. *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. Routledge. (FTR)

Myra Marx Ferree, Judith Lorber, Beth Hess, Eds. 1999. *Revisioning Gender*. Sage Publication. (RG)

Mino Moallem. 2005. *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister*. University of California Press

Zillah Eisenstein. 2004. *Against Empire*. Zed

Mernissi Fatema. 2001. *Scheherazade Goes West*.

Other readings will be available on Sakai and will be referred to as (Sakai)

Course Description: Feminist theory has uncovered the structural, institutional, social, cultural and global forces shaping gender identifications, differences and hierarchies. It has shown that gender is an organizing principle of societies, culture, politics and the economy. Analyses of gender are linked to analyses of power. Since power is inherent to the production of knowledge, the course themes are organized as debates among liberal, postmodern, postcolonial, and transnational feminist perspectives on knowledge/epistemology, methodology and practice, structure and agency, body and body politics, sex and sexualities, politics and political economy, race and empire. These debates reflect the way in which race, culture, class, sexual identity and localities shape other hierarchies within feminist theory itself and contribute to its development.

Course Objectives: This course will allow students (1) become familiar with the main conceptual and theoretical framework in feminist theory; (2) improve their critical thinking through cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary analyses of gender dynamics in different contexts and historical moments; (3) locate their own work and interests within wider perspectives; (3) understand feminist theory as a field of power and struggles over recognition, territory and legitimacy among feminist voices and scholarship. By the end of the semester students will be able to identify, critique, compare and chose among these perspectives ones that best respond to their interests.

Class Format: The class is organized as a seminar with students taking an active role in the learning process. This involves reflecting on the readings, leading class discussions and bringing provocative thoughts and questions to the class.

Course Requirements: The students are expected to (1) read all assigned texts and write one page comments addressing the content and concepts on the reading. You may bring outside sources but the main focus should remain on the readings. (2) Present their comments in class and bring provocative questions to the rest of the class; (3) Post their comments and questions on Sakai every Wednesday before noon

2) Twice during the semester students will present a proposal for their final paper. The goal of these presentations is to help the students reflect on one another's work and explore possibilities to integrate the themes and readings to their research area.

3) A term paper.

Your grade is divided between all these assignments. You will get 40% of your grade on your weekly comments and class participation and 60% on the final paper. The final paper is due the last day of class.

Attendance: Your Grade will automatically drop to B if you miss two classes.

My policy on plagiarism is to award an F for the course.

Schedule (Subject to Revision)

September

Week one/ Sep 3

Introductions

Week two/Sep 10

(FTR) Part one: Definitions, Hartman, Narayan, lorde, Gwendolyn

Week three/ Sep 17

(DC) / Jaggar, Code, Mediator, Hurtado, Collins, Cudd,
Stacy and Thorne (Sakai)

Week four/Sep 24

(FTR) Mani, Scott, Butler, Calhoun, Hartsock, wittig

October

Week 5/Oct 1

(RG) Intro, Roschelle, Acker, Collins

Week 6/Oct 8

(RG) Walters S; Rothman K. B; Connell; Lorber; Dworkin and Messner

Week 7/Oct 15

No reading: Meeting with students

Week 8/Oct 22

Moallem

Week 9/Oct 29

Politics of Piety (chapter 1 and 5) Sakai.

November

Week 10/ Nov 5

Moallem

Week 11/Nov12

Eisenstein

Week 12/Nov 19

Students' presentations

Week 13/Nov 26

No class (Thanksgiving)

December

Week 14 /Dec 3

Mernissi

Week 15/Dec 10

Final Papers Due