

GSWS Graduate Courses – Fall 2023

Version 2 – Mar 29, 2023

The following courses are recommended for anyone and fulfill requirements for the MA- and PhD- level GSWS certificates. For more information on the certificate program, see <https://www.gsws.pitt.edu/academics/graduate-studies>.

Courses Based in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program

GSWS 2240 Special Topics: Indigenous Feminism

CN 22570

Mo 3-5:30 pm, 402E CL

Naima Mohammadi

The main purpose of this course is to provide students with a deeper understanding of indigenous global feminism and the forms of oppression, marginalization, and misrecognition that it is designed to oppose. Focusing on indigenous women and femmes as well as members of sexual minorities, we will examine the resources offered by intersectional and decolonial feminist approaches as they are formulated and practiced in different parts of the world. We will also examine some emerging indigenous social movements and explore ways of producing emancipatory knowledge in the service of decolonization and indigenous sovereignty. Students are invited to bring their disciplinary expertise to the course and will have the opportunity to develop projects that are aligned with their research interests and commitments as well as the course’s focus and materials. Some of the topics likely to be addressed in the readings are reproductive coercion, child marriage, polygyny, forced pregnancy, female genital mutilation, and controversies about veiling.

GSWS 2252 Theories of Gender and Sexuality

CN 32042

We 2:30 – 5 pm, 402E

Shaun Myers

This course provides an overview of important current topics and controversies in gender and sexuality studies, emphasizing emerging directions in scholarship and the foundational readings that have prepared the way for them. Gender and sexuality studies are interdisciplinary fields in conversation with feminist theory and queer theory as well as a host of academic disciplines. Drawing on readings from a variety of disciplines and sampling a range of methodologies, this course works through some of the key moments, movements, and problems that shape contemporary thinking about gender and sexuality. The course invites students to think through materials and ideas in relation to their own research, interests, and commitments.

Courses Based in Other Departments But Cross-Listed with GSWS

COMMRC 2220 Readings in Critical Theory: Media, Rhetoric, Psychoanalysis

CN 31737

Th 2-4:30 pm

Calum Matheson

Currently undergoing a renaissance in Communication and allied fields, psychoanalysis has played an outsized role in shaping contemporary theories of language, race, sex, gender, and ideology. This course is designed to acquaint graduate students with important concepts in psychoanalytic thought with a particular emphasis on the work of Jacques Lacan as applied to media, rhetoric, and culture. Course readings attempt to balance Lacan's primary works with important background texts and psychoanalytically inspired scholarship in an effort to encourage students to make their own judgments and conclusions. Major themes include: media and paranoia, figure and trope, sex and gender, power and desire, capital and ideology, culture and subjectivity. This class is cross-listed in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies and may count toward a GSWS certificate.

COMMRC 2215 Rhetoric and Human Rights

CN 31537

Lester Olson

TH 6-8:30 pm, 1414 CL

This graduate course focuses on key concepts which are useful for describing, analyzing, and interpreting significant public texts and symbols concerning human rights controversies domestically and internationally. The central objective is to strengthen the seminar participants' awareness of qualitative techniques for interpretive and critical studies of public advocacy about human rights. It concentrates on 20th-century controversies within the US concerning "hate" or bias crimes. Considerations of race, sexuality, gender, sex, and economic class will be interwoven throughout the materials and discussions.

EDUC 2303 Technology in Context

CN 29845

Beatrice Dias

Web-based

In this course, we will engage in critical discourse about the historical roots, present-day manifestations, and speculative futures of technological innovations. We will explore and be in conversation with scholarly texts and media that provide a critical lens on the values, ideologies and social structures encoded in technological systems. Based on this foundation, we will interrogate applications of technology in our everyday lives and education spaces, and pursue

lines of inquiry about the implications of these technologies on society. Our scholarship will build on the wealth of research conducted by women and people of color to analyze the implications of everyday technologies across race, gender, class, ability and other intersections of identity. We will explore a broad range of topics, including algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI), digital surveillance and science fiction. Our goals will be to follow our questions to find new questions, play with ideas, think deeply, and create scholarly artifacts that grapple with technology in the context of our collective humanity.

EPIDEM 2709 Epidemiology of Women's Health

CN 29753

Janet Catov

Mo 1-2:50, 116 CL

This overview course on women's health is designed to introduce the student to a variety of health conditions that are unique to, more common in, or more severe in women. We present these features within a health equity lens. A range of health topics will be covered including reproductive outcomes, maternal outcomes, cardiovascular disease, depression, and ageing. This course will also introduce to students the concept of life course epidemiology and its implementation in women's health research. A life course approach assesses the biological and social factors at each stage of life that affect health during adulthood. This course will review study designs appropriate for a variety of life course research questions related to women's health and health equity.

FR 2505: Gendered Monies: Affective and Sexual Regimes in 19th Century France

CN 31227

Wed 3:30PM-6:00PM

Giuseppina Mecchia

In the first half of the nineteenth century, France slowly underwent a radical shift in affective and sexual semiotics. From a feudal socio-economic regime and signifying system, and its attendant model of gendered behaviors and expectations, the culture slowly started to incorporate the imperative of the capitalist form of social organization in its affective functioning. Literature, and the novel in particular, is the exemplary form of expression for this changing semiotics, at all levels: commercial production, creative processes, audience building and social circulation. We will study this essential passage in five novels dating from about 1820 until 1860, by authors such as Madame de Charrière, Madame de Duras, Stendhal and Honoré de Balzac. Our critical insights will be mostly framed in 21st century post-Marxist cultural criticism, gender studies and the work of Jacques Rancière.

Course taught in French. Cross-listed with GSWS and Cultural Studies.

FR 2767: African Feminisms
CN 31997
Thurs 2:30PM-5:00PM
Astou Gueye

“We Should All Be Feminist” claimed Nigerian writer and feminist activist Chimamanda Adichie, but what does it mean to be feminist in Africa? How do African writers, cultural critics, and activists relate to feminism? What does “gender” mean in this context? African feminism(s) is an interdisciplinary seminar at the intersection of Cultural studies and Gender and Women’s studies that uses a transmedial approach to reflect on Feminism in Africa. The seminar centers African perspectives to investigate the socio-political and cultural implications of feminist discourse and practice on the African continent and its diaspora. We will engage theoretical texts, examine authors whose work embraces feminist politics, and discuss the praxis of feminist activism to contextualize feminist studies in Africa. Course taught in English. Cross-listed with GSWS.

HPS 2245: Eugenics and Social Darwinism
CN 30755
Wed. 3-5:30 PM
Laura Lovett, Dept of History

This course will consider the global history of efforts to "improve" humans through "better breeding" over the course of the twentieth century. We will frame the history of eugenics in terms of scientific and popular conceptions of reproductive control and heredity. We will consider how ideas of race, gender, ethnicity and ability informed notorious eugenic policies, including sterilization, marriage restriction, and immigration restriction policies. We will also critically examine so-called “positive eugenic” efforts to selectively promote reproduction among those considered to be “fit” in social policies not normally associated with eugenics like housing, maternal health, urban planning and educational subsidies.

We will contrast eugenics in the early twentieth century with post-war and contemporary efforts to ensure the "genetic health" of different segments of the population and to regulate reproduction and population size locally and globally. Students in this course will engage with both primary and secondary sources. Evaluation will be based on presentations, short archival assignments and historical analysis papers.

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**PHARM 5844 Queerness and Health
CN 31917**

Victoria Grieve

Mo, 6:00-6:50 pm, G103 Salk Annex

Note: This course carries 1 credit rather than 3

This course will prepare the student to assess and guide comprehensive medical treatment for queer individuals. This includes gender affirmation, healthcare considerations for queer-specific risk factors, and general primary care not associated with gender and sex. Core concepts to be addressed include cultural competency and inclusive language, screening and diagnosis, gender affirming hormone therapy, gender affirming surgeries, psychotherapy, primary and preventive care, and empathy with the queer experience.

PIA 2551 Gender and Development

CN 31550

Mihriban Finkel

Tu 9 am -12 pm, 3911 Posvar Hall

This course seeks to critically examine how development processes affect women, men and gender relations. By doing so it aims to contribute to an ongoing policy discussion on the meaning and operationalization of diverse, inclusive, and equitable development. The course begins with theoretical approaches to gender and development, development economics, feminist critiques, and their methodological implications for mainstreaming gender into development practice. In the second half, the course studies how gender relations are impacted by social change in the form of positive or negative development. In this policy applied section, the discussions focus on a set of policy issues including reproductive health, migration, climate change, ITCs, work, citizenship and leadership. The overarching goal in both sections is to encourage students to review and debate what we already know and what we still don't know about policies designed to close gender gaps globally. The course concludes with a discussion in the form of a mini-conference on the progress record of the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

PIA 2507 Human Rights and Social Change.

CN 19973

Lisa Alfredson

Fr 12-3 pm, 3610 Posvar Hall

Human rights are powerful and important tools in governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental work across a range of fields -- from international development, to politics and public administration, to security and justice. This course provides students with analytical and policy skills in human rights, using an interdisciplinary approach which engages human rights in law/policy, politics and society, philosophy and ethics. It provides students with essential

understanding of international human rights laws as tools of individual empowerment, and as evolving social norms shaped by individuals seeking to create fairer societies. We learn to interpret international human rights laws and underlying principles, to grapple with debates and controversies in diverse contexts and cases, and to apply theories of how international human rights create social change in domestic settings worldwide. Questions driving this course include: How can international human rights law (IHRL) help to solve chronic domestic policy problems? What specifically are states' obligations under IHRL? What are the obligations and roles of nonstate actors? What are some common myths and misunderstandings about human rights? Why do some countries comply with human rights while others do not? How can obstacles to implementation be overcome in specific settings? In particular, how do NGOs and other non-state actors participate in human rights change? How do nonstate and transnational actors utilize human rights to promote justice and to combat harmful state and societal actions? What are some processes and strategies of human rights change? We use case studies to illustrate and give depth to a wide range of intersectional human rights issues, such as health, harmful social practices, education, poverty, hunger, policing and justice. We focus in particular on discriminated groups such as children, the poor, women, indigenous, racial, ethnic, and LGBTQIA+ groups.

SOC 2429 – Sociology of Gender

CN 31851

Melanie Hughes

We 6-8:30 pm, 2200 Posvar Hall

This graduate seminar surveys the Sociology of Gender as terrain of study, research, and theory.

SWGEN 2058: Feminist Social Work

CN 29206

Martha Selleck

Tu 6-8:50 pm, 206 CL

This course focuses on gender and social work, beginning with a critical examination of the concept of feminist practice, with attention to oppression, power, and privilege in helping relationships and in women's lives more broadly. It explores meanings of gender as it intersects with race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, and ability in the lives of women in general and specifically as social workers and clients. Taught in a seminar format, this course examines topics such as work, welfare, family, violence, justice system involvement, health, mental health, and women as agents of change and is appropriate for students concentrating in micro or macro levels of practice.

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THEA 2216 Advanced Theory and Methodology: Critical Disability Studies
CN 30981
Patrick McKelvey
Mo 3-5:30, 1627 CL

Disability studies and performance studies share numerous theoretical and methodological commitments. Both fields engage questions of embodiment, representation, temporality, infrastructure, and worldmaking. Despite these convivialities, theatre and performance scholars have yet to become fully attuned to disability studies' critical insights. This course will survey prevailing currents in critical disability studies with attention to the affordances of disability lines of analysis and crip critique for performance research and allied fields of inquiry. We will give particular emphasis to recent developments in Black, trans, and queer disability studies. Potential authors include Dennis Tyler, Cameron Awkward-Rich, Arseli Dokumaci, Ryan Lee Cartwright, Hershini Bhana Young, and Julie Avril Minich.

Previous engagement with performance studies or disability studies is neither presumed nor required.

THEA 2202: Theories of Theatre and Drama: Activism and Performance
CN 28450
Michelle Granshaw
We 3:00-5:30 pm

Activism and Performance examines the role of performance in activist actions and movements, with a particular focus on activism related to social justice. On local, national, and global levels, we will examine how performance and activism operate in relation to political and cultural movements as well as within the arts and theatrical communities. Drawing on Black, feminist, queer, and performance studies, we will investigate historiographies, theories, and methodologies shaping interdisciplinary conversations and performance practices. We also will explore and question how to research and write about activism and performance in our current moment. We will read scholars including Christine L. Garlough, Julius Fleming, Marcela A. Fuentes, D. Soyini Madison, Sara Warner, and Hongwei Bao.