GSWS 1910 (Spring 2018)
Capstone: Feminist Theories and Methods
Wednesday 12:00pm – 2:25pm
401 Cathedral of Learning

Instructor: Dr. Julie Beaulieu
Email: jrb107@pitt.edu
Office Hours: Thursday 12:30-2:00 & Thursday 4:00-5:30 (or by appointment)
Office Location: 402B Cathedral of Learning

Required texts

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (Editor), *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer* (second edition) (FRP)

Course description

This course is an introduction to feminist research, theory, and methods. We will explore the following questions: what defines feminist research? How is feminist theory used across the disciplines? What is the role of the feminist researcher? Course readings and discussions will also focus on the methodological and theoretical similarities and differences between feminist methods and other approaches with shared histories and politics, including queer and trans theory. Course assignments focus on the application of various feminist methods across the disciplines. Over the course of the semester, students will work on self-designed research projects, applying a mixed-method approach.

Course objectives

· Identify and use key methods in feminist theory and research
· Construct original readings of topics in feminist theory and research
· Foster a critical understanding of feminist methods and practice
· Understand various interdisciplinary approaches to feminist theory and practice
· Produce research that clearly demonstrates an understanding of feminist theory and method

Assignments

Participation: 10%
GSWS Event Review: 10%
Discussion Leader: 10%
Research Reflections (5 total): 30%
Final Research Proposal: 20%
Final Reflection: 20%

Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted in courseweb/blackboard

Course information & policies

Attendance

Attendance is required. Please come to class on time and prepared. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to contact me about missing work and subsequent assignments. "Excused" absences will be given if you provide documentation. Please expect your grade to reflect your commitment to this course. If you miss 2 or more classes, you forfeit a portion of your attendance grade. If you miss 3 or more classes, you risk failing the course.

Assignments

You are responsible for keeping up with your work. Assignments and readings are due on the day that they appear on the syllabus. If you fail to submit an assignment by the deadline, please contact me. If you are absent, your work is still due. Late assignments will be marked down 10% per day.

Please submit hard (paper) copies of your work (no email copies).

All written work must be proofread. Please use MLA in-text citation for all sources. You must submit a final in order to pass the class.

Assignment descriptions will be passed out in class and uploaded to courseweb (under documents) one week before they are due. Please contact me if you have any questions about the assignments.

Required readings

All required readings are listed on the syllabus. PDFs can be found in courseweb under documents. Please bring the readings to class. All readings on the syllabus are required.

Participation

Thoughtful participation is expected, appreciated, and part of your grade.

"A" participants: maintain solid attendance; contribute to the class environment by being awake, alert, and engaged; demonstrate a willingness to participate in productive, academic, and relevant ways; refrain from private conversations during class time; do not use a telephone or any other electronic device for anything besides coursework; contribute to class discussions during every class.

University and GSWS Program Policies and Statements

Disability resources and services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz, exam or paper will be imposed. For the full Academic Integrity policy, go to: www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html.

Violation of the Academic Integrity Code requires the instructor to submit an Academic Integrity Violation Report to the Dean's Office.

"Turnitin"

Students agree that by taking this course all required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Classroom recording policy

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

E-mail policy

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address.

Please give me time to respond to emails. I will do my best to reply to emails within 24 hours (M-F).

I will respond to weekend emails when time permits; I will reply to urgent weekend emails as soon as possible, but otherwise please wait until Monday for a response. Email is ideally used for quick questions/clarifications. All other concerns—questions about your progress, written work, your grade, class in general—should be addressed during office hours.

Please feel free to send a reminder/follow up if I have missed an important email.

Cell phone and laptop policy

All cell phones and other electronic communication devices are to be turned to the off setting during class. Laptops are to be used for note-taking & PDF reading only.

Non-discrimination policy

As an educational institution and as an employer, Pitt values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. For more information, visit http://cfo.pitt.edu/policies/documents/policy07-01-03web.pdf

Gender-inclusive language guidelines

Aspiring to create a learning environment in which people of all identities are encouraged to contribute their perspectives to academic discourse, the University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program provides guidelines and resources regarding gender-inclusive/non-sexist language (gsws.pitt.edu/node/1432). Following these guidelines fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment, strengthens academic writing, enriches discussion, and reflects best professional practices.

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (e.g. first-year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

These guidelines fulfill the best intentions of the University of Pittsburgh's Non-Discrimination Policy: https://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-01-03.html.

Content warning and class climate

Our course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. As with any course in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program, course topics are often political and personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach your instructor ahead of time if you'd like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or

unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with me and/or seek help from the counseling center.

Sexual misconduct, required reporting, and Title IX

The University is committed to combatting sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University's Title IX office so that the victim may be provided appropriate resources and support options. What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware.

There are two important exceptions to this requirement about which you should be aware:
A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report/confidentiality

An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University's Title IX office.

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

- Title IX Office: 412-648-7860
- SHARE @ the University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 (8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)

If you have a safety concern, please contact the University of Pittsburgh Police, 412-624-2121. Other reporting information is available here: http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report-0

List of readings & assignments

Week One: Introduction to the course

Wednesday 1/10

- Introduction to the course

Week Two: Defining feminist research

Wednesday 1/17

- Read: FRP Chapters 1 & 2 "A Re-Invitation to Feminist Research" & "Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory"
- Read: Sara Ahmed, "Introduction: Bringing Feminist Theory Home" (CW)

Week Three: Feminist Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, and Critical Theory

Wednesday 1/24

- Read: FRP Chapter 3 "Feminism Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, and Critical Theory"
- Read: Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (excerpt) (CW)
- Assignment Due: Research Reflection # 1 (field site critique)

Week Four: Dyke Methods & Trans Reading

Wednesday 1/31

- Read: Jane Ward, "Dyke Methods: A Meditation on Queer Studies and the Gay Men Who Hate it" (CW)
- Read: Cameron Awkward-Rich, "Trans, Feminism: Or, Reading Like a Depressed Transsexual" (CW)

Week Five: Feminist/Queer Historiography

Wednesday 2/7

- NOTE: Class meets @ Hillman Special Collections from 12-1; return to 402 CL for the rest of class
- Read: Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" (CW)
- Read: Tim Hitchcock, "The Reformulation of Sexual Knowledge in Eighteenth-Century England" (CW)

Week Six: Archives

Wednesday 2/14

- Read: Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings* (excerpt) (CW)
- Read: Kate Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn in Feminism* (excerpt) (CW)
- Assignment Due: Research Reflection # 2 (archive/historical analysis)

Week Seven: Feminist Media Analysis

Wednesday 2/21

- Read: FRP Chpt. 9 "Feminist Media Research"
- Read: feministing.com "editor's picks" (readings TBD by class vote)

Week Eight: Feminist Ethnography

Wednesday 2/28

- Read: FRP Chpt. 5 "What is Feminist Ethnography?"

- Read: Jennifer Wies, "Feminist Ethnography with Domestic Violence Shelter Advocates" (CW)
- Assignment Due: Research Reflection # 3 (participant observation or survey group)

Week Nine: Spring Break

Wednesday 3/7

o No class

Week Ten: Ethics and Feminist Research

Wednesday 3/14

- Read: FRP Chpt. 4 "Ethics and Feminist Research"
- Read: Tiffany Page, "Vulnerable Writing as a Feminist Methodological Practice" (CW)

Week Eleven: Oral History and the Lived Experience

Wednesday 3/21

- E. Patrick Johnson, "Put a Little Honey in My Sweet Tea: Oral History as Quare Performance" (CW)
- Andrea Long Chu, "On Liking Women" (CW)

Week Twelve: Feminist Methods of Interviewing

Wednesday 3/28

- Read: FRP Chapt. 7 "Feminist Approaches to In-Depth Interviewing"
- Assignment Due: Research Reflection # 4 (interview)

Week Thirteen: Feminist Surveys and Data

Wednesday 4/4

- Read: FRP Chpt. 10 "Feminist Survey Research"
- Petra Doan, "To Count or Not to Count: Queering Measurement and the Transgender Community" (CW)

Week Fourteen: Feminist Theory/Queer Theory

Wednesday 4/11

- Hannah McCann, "Epistemology of the Subject: Queer Theory's Challenge to Feminist Sociology" (CW)

- Andrew King and Ann Cronin, "Queer Methods and Queer Practices: Re-examining the Identities of Older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Adults" (CW)
- Assignment Due: Research Reflection # 5 (mixed method analysis)

Week Fifteen: Mixed Methods

Wednesday 4/18

- Read: FRP Chpt. 12 "Feminist Approaches to Mixed Methods Research"

Week Sixteen: Final Due

Wednesday 4/25

- **Assignment Due**: Final due by 4pm (see assignment description for more details)

WRITTEN WORK RUBRIC

Excellent: A+/A/A-	Acceptable: B+/B/B-/C	Unacceptable: D/F
Follows the assignment and supports an argument	Responds in some part but not directly to the assignment, question, and/or prompt	Does not respond to the assignment
Appropriate length to develop a specific idea clearly and fully	Appropriate length, but idea developed is vague or incomplete	Does not meet the length requirement and/or does not develop an argument
Well structured, organized, logically sequenced sentences, written in formal language	Structure is present but organization needs to be revised	Lacks structure
Document is thoughtful, analytical, and original	Shows evidence of understanding of the text, but analysis needs to be developed or presented with more clarity	Lacks depth, or clarity, and/or shows little understanding of the assignment and/or reading
Author shows understanding of the text		Written in informal language
Assignment is carefully edited and free of grammatical/spelling errors	Some grammatical/spelling errors	Assignment needs to be proofread
Submitted on time	Submitted on time	Submitted late
MLA style citation	MLA style citation	No/incorrect MLA style citation