**WGSS 200: Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**

**Fall 2019, Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:45 pm**

**Weinstein Hall, Room 205**

**Andrea Y. Simpson, Instructor**

**Office: 202 K Weinstein Hall**

**Office Hours: By Appointment Only**

**Office Phone: 804.289.8739**

**Email: asimpson@richmond.edu**



Logo for the Women’s Studies Program at Northeastern Illinois University

Why do we study the societal implication of humans categorized as women, men, queer, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered? What questions are being asked, and answered, by scholars in this field? Why should we care? This semester, we will read, discuss, and learn together about the power of identity and the struggle for equal rights and agency by people who we place in these categorical boxes as we throw in characteristics we construct.

**Course Requirements**

**Attendance**

Students are required to attend every class, since participation is a significant part of assessing your performance in the class. I will occasionally have short writing assignments in class. If you are not there, you cannot complete the assignment. I will excuse students in cases of illnesses and family emergencies. It is important that students contact me before the class meeting missed. I report excessive unexcused absences to the appropriate Dean’s office.

***Every week I will ask one or two students to present summaries of the readings. This will be factored into your participation grade.***

**Think Pieces**

During the course of the semester, you will write **three** “think pieces” in response to readings and in preparation for discussing them.  They should be 2-3 pages in length and include citations if necessary.

Here are three "lenses," or ways to consider the *think piece*:

- as a carefully considered letter written to an interested reader.

- as a structured tool of analysis where you are asked to focus on the elements of the text, how the text fits into larger cultural negotiations, and questions of meaning making, values, and the political.

- as a structure is to think about all texts as part of a *multi*cultural conversation, where texts, places, and interactions, involve struggles over power, recognition, and identity.

**Purpose of the Think Pieces:**

* to critically read and discuss ideas
* bring an analytical lens to our current understandings of various theories about gender, sex, and race
* present our analysis, beliefs and ideas in structured, clear and concise writing.

1) A think piece is meant as a tool for analyzing a text quickly and thoughtfully.

2) Tease out key ideas in a format that gets to the heart of your response.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Participation Assignments**

We have a class blog on which I will post questions for you to answer. Questions will be uploaded on Tuesday before or after class as indicated on the syllabus—unless something exciting happens—then I will post an extra question. You have until Friday at 5:00 pm to post an answer. You do not have to post to all of the questions, but I expect you to post frequently. You may post an answer to someone else’s comment, which is how we create a learning community. This is the blog address:

<https://blog.richmond.edu/introwgss>

**Digital Portfolio**

A digital *process portfolio* is your project for the course. The purpose is to help you reflect on course materials and discussion. It is designed to be a learning tool and an assessment tool. Since your think pieces are just one page in length, the portfolio offers the opportunity to expand on that work. You can insert video clips, more writing, news articles, artwork, music, and journal entries. It can be anything that you want it to be.[[2]](#footnote-2)

We will discuss in class what platform might be best to use. A rubric is on our class blog, so be sure to check regularly for extra articles and other resources.

Honor Code

Students must adhere to the University of Richmond Honor Code. This means that on both the midterm and final exam, students must write the following, “I pledge that I have neither given nor received assistance duringthe completion of this work.” You should provide your signature after the pledge.

Students are encouraged to seek help in writing papers. However, it is a violation of the honor code to plagiarize content from any source. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else’s words without proper attribution. Paraphrasing does not exempt students from the need to cite sources. Please refer to the University of Richmond websites at <http://www.richmond.edu/about/features/honorcode.htm> and <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/source.html> for additional guidance.

**Grading Distribution:**

25% Participation: Blog posts and responses, class participation, communication practices, timeliness, responsibility for making up missed classes by increasing participation in blogposts.

30% Writing: Three two-three page think pieces. (10% each)

20% Exam: Midterm

25% Final Project: Digital Portfolio and Presentation

Texts and Readings

*Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, 3rd Edition, bell hooks

*Living a Feminist Life*, Sarah Ahmed

*Women, Race, and Class*, Angela Y. Davis

*Thick*, Tressie McMillan Cottam

All articles are available online at:

<https://blog.richmond.edu/introwgss/>

**GENERAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

1. All assignments are accepted during class on, or before the due date only. There are no make-up exams. Please submit course assignments to me at asimpson@richmond.edu.
2. All work must be typed in 12-point font and adhere to APA or MLA format style.
3. Submitted work is **only** accepted via email and before class on the due date.
4. ***Attendance will be taken.*** Take note of the following:
5. In general, I do not allow absences. University sanctioned absences must be cleared with me prior to the absence. Absences count against your participation grade.
6. If you are absent:

You are responsible for any materials you miss during a regular class meeting, including assignments given in your absence. If you miss class, get notes from a classmate and ask any questions about the missed lecture before the next class meeting. While I will not repeat lecture material, I will answer questions of clarification.

1. If you are absent on a day when an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to get the assignment to me by class time in order to earn credit for the assignment.
2. If you are absent during an in-class assignment, you cannot make up those points.
3. Arrive to class on time. Excessive tardiness will be reflected in your final grade.
4. Consistent attendance and timeliness ***will be*** weighed into your final grade.
5. If you have a documented disability and require any accommodations, please let me know immediately so that your learning needs can be met in a timely manner.
6. Engage openly and respectfully during class discussions. We will examine ideas that may challenge your ways of being and knowing. I ask that each of us critically examine all beliefs. Feel free to challenge ideas openly, but focus on the argument. As you engage in class, you may not use discriminatory language.
7. Remember the following:
8. Take responsibility for your own learning. Ask questions, complete assignments on time, arrive to class on time, and solicit any help you may need in a timely manner. If you need something from your classmates or me, let us know so that we can create an optimal learning environment.
9. Feel free to challenge ideas. All ideas are open for questioning, but the person who asserts, must support her/his argument(s).
10. Don’t take critical dialogue personally. My philosophy of education includes the belief that we are here to learn about ideas, how to argue in favor of our ideas and how to raise our consciousness.

All cell phones must be turned off prior to entering the classroom. You may use computers *only* to take notes. I may request you to close your laptops during certain discussions or class activities.

**Section 1: Introductions**

T- 8.27 Introduction to Class and Each Other

Th- 8.29 Davis, Chapters 1-4

**Section 2: Why Study Women, Gender, Sexuality, and Race?**

T- 9.3 ***Rowan Cai,*** Recap Davis 1-4

Davis, Chapters 5-13-***Helen Calderon-Zuniga* and *Chris Cassellas***

Th-9.5 Exploring WGSS Primary Sources-

Meet in Boatwright in Seminar Room 2 on the 1st floor

T-9.10 *Feminist Theory*, hooks, Chapters 1***—Cameron Cloud***

*Feminist Theory*, hooks, Chapters 4 through 7-***Krystal Corral***

Thu-9.12 *Feminist Theory*, hooks, Chapters 8 and 9-***Lindsay Emery***

**BLOG POST DUE THIS WEEK, FRIDAY, 9.13**

T-9.17 *Feminist Theory*, hooks, Chapters 10-12-***Amaya Jackson***

Thu-9.19 Introduction through Chapter 2, Ahmed-***Josie Holland***

T-9.24 Chapter 3-, Ahmed-***Violet Jetton***

Th-9.26 Chapters 4-6, Ahmed-***Meredith Moran***

**BLOG POST DUE THIS WEEK, FRIDAY, 9.27**

T-10.1 Chapters 7-9, Ahmed-***Rob Rolfe***

Th-10.3 Conclusions, Ahmed-***ProfSi***

T-10.8 Review for Exam-

Thu-10.10 Midterm Exam-In Class-Open Notes-***Please bring laptops.***

**BREAK BEGINS FRIDAY, 10.11 after classes; RESUMES THURSDAY, 10.17**

Thu-10.17 Discussion: Midterm/Where Do We Go from Here?

**Section 3: Intersectionality**

T-10.22 Cottom, Chapters 1-3-***Jordyn Lofton***

Th-10.24 Cottom, Chapters 4-6-***Kelly Severino***

**SECOND THINK PIECE DUE TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24**

T-10.29 Cottom, Chapters 7-8-***Clair Silverman***

Th-10.31 Traister, “Ladies, We Have a Problem”

Straus-Kahn, “The DSK Maid Speaks”

Thompson, “After Losing Their Freedom, Some Immigrants Lose Their Children”-***ProfSi***

**BLOG POST DUE THIS WEEK, FRIDAY, 11.1**

T-11.5 Ernst, et. al, “Citizen Control at the Welfare Office”

Shields, “Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective”

Bilge, “Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality

Studies”-***Sally Watanabe***

Th-11.7 Moore, “Intersectionality and the Study of Black, Sexual Minority Women-Meta Tessema

**THIRD THINK PIECE DUE THURSDAY, 11.7**

T-11.12 Snapp, et. al, “Messy, Butch, and Queer: LGBTQ Youth and the School-to-Prison Pipeline-***Ellie Yoon***

Th-11.14 “Out in the Night,” POV Documentary

**Section 4: Presentations of Student Portfolios**

T-11.19 Presentations

Th-11.21 Presentations

T-11.26 Presentations

**THANKSGING BREAK BEGINS, TUESDAY, 11.26, CLASSES RESUME 12.2**

T-12.3 What have we learned? What are the questions that have yet to be answered?

Th-12.5 Review for Exam

Standards

A Range: Excellent work. Your work thoroughly surpasses the minimum requirements. You have

gone above, and beyond the call of duty, presenting interesting, compelling and rigorous

work. The arguments made are strong, well thought out and effectively supported. You show a clear grasp of the material, are able to effectively interpret and critique the material, and extend it beyond its basic applications. The class learned something valuable from you.

B Range: Very good work: You have done more than was required on the assignment and have no

more than one or two minor problems with the work. The arguments are somewhat strong, but lack some necessary support. You show that you know the material and understand it; however, more work on application, interpretation and critique is needed to move the assignment into the A range.

C Range: Average work. You have done what was required of you competently with only a few

minor problems. The arguments are basic and meet the minimal requirements for effective argument. You show that you are familiar with the material and reflect your understanding, ability to apply, interpret and critique the material at a basic level.

D Range: Below average. You have done less than the minimum requirement with many minor

problems and/or one major problem. The arguments are seriously lacking in organization and support. You do not demonstrate your knowledge of the material nor is there evidence of application, interpretation and critique.

1. https://canvas.brown.edu/courses/202417/pages/writing-assignment-number-1-think-pieces [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.edutopia.org/blog/11-essentials-for-excellent-eportfolios-vicki-davis [↑](#footnote-ref-2)