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WGSS 363.01: Feminist Theory and Methods

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WGSS 363

Feminist Theory and Methods TR 12:30-1:50 LA 138

Instructor Information:

Elizabeth Hubble (she/her/hers)
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Office Hours: TR 11-12:00
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Teaching Assistant: Cris Jardon (they/them/their)
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Required Texts:

Susan Archer Mann, *Doing Feminist Theory*, OUP, 2012
Mann and Patterson, *Reading Feminist Theory*, OUP, 2016
Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, UChicago Press, 2016
Additional Readings on Moodle

Course Description: WGSS 363 is an in-depth exploration of feminist and queer views and critiques of the ethics and methods of scientific, social, historical, and literary inquiry. The course includes exposure to primary sources, historical and current societal and global issues and movements, research finding, and literature exemplifying these methods of inquiry and the gendered and/or queer dimensions of such inquiry.

Students will become familiar with fundamental debates marking feminist theories in the past and today. By becoming participants in this inquiry, students will gain competence in analytical reading and writing as well as in the pertinent use of theory to examine concrete issues surrounding systems of oppression. This class will focus on putting theory into practice through class discussions and assignments, and counts as a UM Upper Division Writing course.

Feminist theory spans centuries, disciplines, genres, agendas, languages, cultures and topical foci, and this course will in no way exhaust the topics of feminist theory. Your books provide an excellent bibliography to help you further explore feminist theory.

This course is one of the core requirements for the Major and Minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. If you enjoy this course and would like to know more about the Women's and Gender Studies Program, please contact me or drop by the Women's Studies Office, LA 138A-B, or visit the [website](#).

Learning Outcomes for Writing and Thinking in Women's and Gender Studies:

- 1) Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for feminist/women's and gender studies/queer inquiry
- 2) Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information on feminist/women's and gender studies/queer issues from diverse sources
- 3) Manage multiple perspectives on feminist/women's and gender studies/queer topics
- 4) Recognize the purposes and needs of feminist/women's and gender studies/queer audiences and adopt the appropriate academic voice in writings and presentations
- 5) Understand the importance of peer review, collaboration, and revision in your written work
- 6) Follow appropriate conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation
- 7) Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

Methods: This class is designed as a seminar course. Your active participation is essential and counts as part of your grade. I will present certain biographical, historical, and cultural information to provide you with a context for your readings, discussions, and writings. I will propose my own interpretations of the readings, but you are not expected to accept these interpretations blindly. Each reader brings their own experiences to a literary text. If you disagree with my reading of a text, you should feel free to say so.

You will hear many different opinions and ideas during this course, some of which you may disagree with. One of the objectives of this class is to improve your written and oral communication skills so that each of you can become more confident in your own unique personal voice. I expect each student to respect the opinions and beliefs of their classmates and for the level of discourse in class to remain civil and academic. A failure to listen to others and to treat them with fairness and respect will have an adverse effect on your grade.

Classroom Etiquette: Students should arrive on time and not leave until class is over. All cell phones must be turned off and left off your desk or table. Students may use laptops or tablets to take notes. Students should not text while in class, and Internet use should be limited to topics related to class. First offense=tardy. Second offense=absence.

Attendance: Attendance is required. After one unexcused absence, your participation grade will be lowered one notch for each absence (A to A-). An excess of 5 unexcused absences will result in an F in the course. A failure to prepare and participate may also be grounds for being counted absent. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Two tardies will equal one absence. There will be NO make-up assignments or late submission of homework for unexcused absences. If you are sick or have some other emergency, please contact me.

Readings: In addition to the books listed above which you must buy, there are also a number of required readings on Moodle. To access the Moodle readings: Go to [Moodle](#) and use your NetID and password to login. WGSS 363 should be listed on the next page. Select that course. The readings are in PDF format.

Grading:

Preparation and Participation (inc. quizzes):	20%
Major Paper:	50%
<i>(5% Proposal; 5% for each of 2 drafts; 5% peer reviews; 30% final draft)</i>	
Journals:	30%

Grading Scale:

93-100%	A	73-76%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
83-86%	B	63-66%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-
77-79%	C+	59% and below	F

Assignments and Assessment:

Preparation and Participation: Coming to class prepared, i.e. having read all material and ready to participate in discussions, is essential and counts for a large percentage of your final grade. Participation does not merely mean responding when called upon but showing a willingness to raise your hand and enter discussions. Conversely, students will be discouraged from dominating the discussions so that all students have a voice in the classroom. A failure to listen to and respect other voices will have an adverse effect on your grade. Classroom work will include both general discussions and small group discussions. Quizzes may be given at the beginning of class as necessary. Attendance will be taken. In order to better track participation and preparation, every other week on Thursday, you will present an item related to that week's topics to a

small group of students, based on alphabetical last names (A-L, M-Z). In your journal for each week, you must indicate what your item of interest was or what one of your classmate's items was. Possibilities: news story, book, song, advertisement, artwork, poem, website, etc.

Major Paper: For your major paper, you will be asked to identify a research question or problem related to WGSS and write a scholarly paper in response to that question. You will be required to identify a topic and submit a one-page proposal in the first three weeks of class. Over the course of the semester, you will submit two drafts of your paper for peer and instructor review. In your final paper, you must clearly identify the feminist theory which provides the lens for your analysis. Your paper must be 10-12 pages long, double-spaced. You must cite at least 4 outside sources not read for class, in addition to references to primary and secondary sources from class readings. Internet sources must be pre-approved by me. You may wish to refer to the bibliography in the textbooks for possible sources. I will provide you with a list of possible topics.

Please note: As a designated writing course, this class requires an electronic submission (via Moodle) of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the university's writing program. Your paper will be stored in a database. A random selection of papers will be assessed by a group of faculty and staff using a rubric your professor can provide you. This assessment in no way impacts either your course grade or your progression at the university.

Reading Journals: This course will raise many questions in your minds. It may challenge your personal opinions. Your reading journal is a place to share the questions, thoughts, and reactions you have to the readings and class discussions. The first journal topic is assigned. The rest of the journals should be based on the readings and discussions for that day. Journals are due each Friday at midnight, and should be 2 typed, double-spaced pages. You should write a minimum of one page for each class meeting. For each day's entry, you should:

- Identify the common theme(s) across all of the readings and class discussions
THEN
- Choose 1-2 readings for each day upon which to focus
- Summarize those readings, including the central argument or main points; what is the reading about?
- Connect the readings to class discussions
- Connect the readings to your own life and/or contemporary issues; why does the reading matter? This prompt is where you should reference either your or a classmate's item of interest.
- Provoke further thought; pose one question for class discussion

Extra Credit: You will have many opportunities over the course of the semester to submit extra credit journals. You may not submit more than three extra credit assignments. EC assignments include attending and/or participating in any event concerned with WGSS.

Disability Accommodations: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation

Plagiarism Warning: A paper or journal is not an occasion to show how well you can quote or paraphrase an author, but how well you can think as an explorer of the work and ideas of your author. Any utilization of the words or work of others (including ideas) in any assignment must be given full reference credit. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in a zero on the assignment. Plagiarism is a violation of The University of Montana Student Code of Conduct and may result in university sanctions. If you have questions about proper citation and/or plagiarism, please see me.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement: I would like to acknowledge that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people, and express the university's appreciation of that.

Content Warning: During the course of this class, some difficult topics may come up, including gender-based violence and sexual assault. There are other topics in this class that may also trigger difficult memories for you. You should feel free to talk to me about any issues you have with the topics we are discussing and ask for excused absences.

Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity: This classroom is a hate-free zone, and is part of WGSS's commitment addressing and redressing racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Blackness, and all systems of privilege and oppression in our classes, in our academic units, and in higher education.

Graduate Student Increment

Graduate students taking this course for graduate credit:

- 1) must submit a 18-20 page paper with 6+ outside sources
- 2) must facilitate one course meeting (to be selected the first week of class)
- 3) all other requirements are the same