

PHIL/WGS 336: FEMINIST ETHICS, GENDER, SEXUALITY AND SOCIETY

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Winter 2020

Instructor

Daniel Story

Email: dstory@calpoly.edu

Office: Bldg. 47 Rm. 34E

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 2:40pm-3:40pm

Pronouns: He, Him, His

Course Spatiotemporal Location

- Class Number 8046: T/R 4:10pm-6pm, Room 021-0205
- Class Number 8047: T/R 6:10pm-8pm, Room 010-0222

Course Description

This course is an introduction to feminist ethics. Feminist ethics can be roughly characterized as an approach to ethics that is sensitive to the ways in which considerations of gender have affected or should affect ethical theory and methodology. In the course, we will be concerned with major trends and issues within the contemporary scholarly literature on feminist ethics. Students will learn about feminist challenges to traditional ethical frameworks, about feminist perspectives on applied ethical topics, and about conceptual advancements in ethical theory that arise out of feminist thought. By the end of the course, students will possess a well-rounded understanding of feminist ethics as it is practiced today.

Course Prerequisites

- Completion of Freshman Level GE
- Completion of Lower-Division Philosophy Course

Course Texts

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* (OUP, ISBN-10: 0199249474)
- Supplementary Articles will be available on PolyLearn

Tentative Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Week 1: Introduction and Survey of Trends in Feminist Ethics

- Tong and Williams, “Feminist Ethics” (PolyLearn, you may skim this)

Week 2: The Politics of Work and Family

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 1
- Bianchi et al., “Housework: Who Did, Does or Will Do It, and How Much Does It Matter?” (Polylearn)
- Bianchi et al., “Is Anyone Doing the Housework? Trends In the Gender Division of Household Labor” (PolyLearn, optional reading)

Week 3: Sexual Harassment

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 2
- Catharine MacKinnon, “Where #MeToo Came From, and Where It's Going” (PolyLearn)
- Chiche et al., “We defend a freedom to annoy, essential to sexual freedom” (PolyLearn)
- Allyson Hobbs, “One Year of #MeToo: The Legacy of Black Women’s Testimonies” (PolyLearn)

Week 4: Pornography

- Caroline West, “Pornography and Censorship” Section 1 (PolyLearn)
- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 3

Week 5: Standards of Feminine Appearance

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 5
- Eugenia Kaw, “Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery” (PolyLearn)

-----**In Class Written Exam, Thursday February 6th**-----

Week 6: Intersectionality

- Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics” (PolyLearn)
- Jennifer Nash, “Re-thinking Intersectionality” (PolyLearn)

Week 7: Respect for Other Cultures

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 9
- Martha Nussbaum, “Judging Other Cultures: The Case of Genital Mutilation” (PolyLearn)

Weeks 8-9: Feminism, Science, and Epistemology

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments* ch. 8
- Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, chs. 1, 7 (PolyLearn)

Week 10: Feminism and Transgender Identities

- Sophie-Grace Chappell and Holly Lawford-Smith, “Transgender: A Dialogue” (PolyLearn)

Final Exam for Class Number 8046: March 19th, 7:10pm-10pm

Final Exam for Class Number 8047: March 17th, 7:10pm-10pm

Assignment and Attendance Details

- Students will be required to complete two in-class writing exams on topics provided by the instructor (a list of topics will be distributed a few days before the exam). These exams are designed to test comprehension and writing skills and will have both an expository and a critical component.
- Students will be required to submit six short reading reflection assignments to PolyLearn at certain times during the quarter. These assignments will always be due on a Monday at midnight and will concern the week’s readings. The assignments will be graded for completion, so a good faith effort will merit full credit. No late assignments will be accepted, however.
- Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed to have one unexcused absence; every unexcused absence after that will result in a 15% reduction in your attendance grade. A list of considerations that can excuse an absence can be found at:
<https://academicprograms.calpoly.edu/academicpolicies/class-attendance>

Grading Distribution

Attendance: 15%

Reading Reflections: 25%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 35%

Academic Integrity

Students have an obligation not to cheat or plagiarize on any academic assignment. Students caught cheating on an assignment in any capacity will receive no credit for that assignment, and, depending on the severity of the case, risk broader consequences. Since you have an obligation to not cheat or plagiarize on your writing assignments (and not just an obligation to *try* not to plagiarize or to not plagiarize *intentionally*), you should make sure you know what constitutes cheating and plagiarism according to the university by asking your instructor or checking the website of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (link below).

Technology Policy

Computers and other electronic equipment may only be used in class and section for course-related purposes. When sending emails to anyone in this class, please write respectfully and clearly. You should expect a response from your instructor within two business days. If you do not receive a response within that timeframe, please resend your original email.

Accommodations

If you have a disability or other special circumstance for which you may need special accommodations in this course, contact me (Daniel) within the first two weeks of class and/or contact the Cal Poly Disability Resource Center (email: drc@calpoly.edu) so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Online Resources

- Disability Resource Center: <https://drc.calpoly.edu/>
- Writing and Learning Center: <https://writingandlearning.calpoly.edu/center>
- Campus Health and Wellbeing: <https://hcs.calpoly.edu/>
- Academic Integrity Policies: <https://osrr.calpoly.edu/academic-integrity>