Texas A&M University
Departmental Request for a New Course
Undergraduate ∙ Graduate ∙ Professional
• Submit original form and attach a course syllabus.

1. This request is submitted by the Department of Women’s Studies Program

2. Course prefix, number and complete title of course: WMST 649 Feminist Pedagogy

3. Course description (not more than 50 words):
   Explores how educational systems and institutions have regarded women historically and contemporarily; considers practical and theoretical writings on feminist pedagogy.

4. Prerequisite(s) EHRD/WMST 634
   Introduction to Gender and Education
   Cross-listed with EHRD 649
   Cross-listed courses require the signature of both department heads.

5. Is this a variable credit course? □ Yes ☑ No
   If yes, from _____ to _____.

6. Is this a repeatable course? □ Yes ☑ No
   If yes, this course may be taken _____ times. Will the course be repeated within the same semester/term? □ Yes ☑ No

7. Has this course been taught as a 289/489/689? □ Yes ☑ No
   If yes, how many times? _____ Indicate the number of students enrolled for each academic period it was taught.

8. This course will be:
   a. required for students enrolled in the following degree program(s) (e.g., B.A. in history)
   b. an elective for students enrolled in the following degree program(s) (e.g., M.S., Ph.D. in geography)

9. If other departments are teaching or are responsible for related subject matter, the course must be coordinated with these departments. Attach approval letters.

10. Prefix Course # Title (excluding punctuation)
    WMST 649 FEMINIST PEDAGOGY

    Lect. Lab SCH Subject Matter Content Code Admin. Unit Acad. Year FICE Code
    0 3 0 0 5 0 2 0 7 0 0 0 1 0 6 8 4 0 8 - 0 9 0 0 3 6 3 2
    0 0 3 6 3 2

    Approval recommended by:
    Claudine Nelson 9/28/07
    Head of Department Program Date

    Head of Department (if cross-listed course) Date

    Submitted to Coordinating Board by:

    Director of Academic Support Services

Questions regarding this form should be directed to Sandra Williams at 845-8836.
OAR/AS - 04/07
EHRD 649/
WMST 649
FEMINIST PEDAGOGY
GRADUATE SYLLABUS

Instructors:
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Class Meeting Times and Location:
[To be determined]

Prerequisites:
All students are required to take EHRD 634/WMST 634 Introduction to Gender and Education.

Credit Hours:
3 Credit hours

Establishing a Safe Classroom Environment:
Learning takes place best when a safe environment is established in the classroom. To this end, we will seek to support an environment that nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engaged, honest discussions. We hope that together we create a safe environment where everyone feels comfortable to share and explore ideas. In the course of class discussions, it is quite possible that disagreements will arise. We welcome disagreements in the spirit of critical academic exchange, but please remember to be respectful of other points of view, whether you agree with them or not. In this class, derogatory comments based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality will not be tolerated.

ADA Statement:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation for their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services in Room B118 of Cain Hall, or call 845-1637.
Faculty Senate Statement on Plagiarism:
The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By "handouts" I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest issue of the Texas A&M University Student Rules, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty."

Academic Integrity:
Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the time submitted is indeed the work of the student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, is sufficient grounds to initiate an academic dishonesty case.

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do."

The Aggie Code of Honor is an effort to unify the aims of all Texas A&M men and women toward a high code of ethics and personal dignity. For most, living under this code will be no problem, as it asks nothing of a person that is beyond reason. It only calls for honesty and integrity, characteristics that Aggies have always exemplified. The Aggie Code of Honor functions as a symbol to all Aggies, promoting understanding and loyalty to truth and confidence in each other.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please consult the latest issue of the Texas A&M University Student Rules, Part 1, section 20, which can be found on line at http://studentrules.tamu.edu, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty." Any suspected instances of scholastic dishonesty will be investigated and resolved according to the procedures outlined in the new Aggie Honor System http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/.

Copyright Statement:
The materials used in this course are copyrighted. These materials include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless permission is expressly granted.
Sexual Harassment:
University policy prohibits sexual harassment. For information on what constitutes sexual harassment and information on resources persons available to assist student respond to harassment, go to http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule47.htm.

Required Texts:


Recommended Texts


Course Description
Are there women’s and girls’ ways of knowing and being in society that make the experience of schooling, learning, and teaching a specific and different process? This course will examine how educational systems and institutions have regarded women historically and contemporarily.

In addition, the course will examine theoretical writings on feminist pedagogy and also will address practical issues related to teaching Women’s Studies. Participants will develop familiarity with feminist pedagogies and their significance for the field of Women’s Studies; interpret their own educational experiences within the context of feminist reflections on education; formulate their own philosophies of education; and develop and test pedagogical strategies for developing critical consciousness about social inequalities.
Course Requirements

Course grades will be awarded according to the number of points you earn throughout the semester. Possible points are listed for each course requirement.

1. Attendance and Participation
(150 possible points; 10 points for each class period)
Regular attendance and participation are expected of each student, since much of our learning will take place in class. More than two unexcused absences will lower your final grade for the course, no matter how many points you accumulate by the end of the semester. If you arrive late or leave early, you will not receive the full number of points for that class period.

In preparation for class, you should take notes on your reading and endeavor to answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about the author and his/her perspective? What can you infer about the author and his/her assumptions?
2. What is the author’s major purpose and thesis?
3. How does the author support or defend his/her thesis? What arguments, examples, or illustrations does he/she use?
4. From your perspective, what is the author’s strongest argument? Why?
5. From your perspective, what is the author’s weakest argument? Why?
6. Identify a passage that was particularly thought-provoking or insightful to you. Explain your response to the passage.
7. Identify a passage that was particularly troubling or objectionable to you. Explain your response to the passage.

Although your answers to these questions will not be collected, you should come to class prepared to share your answers to these kinds of questions. Always bring your reading and writing assignments to class with you.

2. Weekly Participation on WebCT/Vista
(110 total possible points; 10 possible points for each weekly entry)
Prior to each class session you will present one of the following items on the Discussion Board for this course in WebCT/Vista:

a. a carefully-formulated discussion question relating directly to the reading(s) assigned for the week. Your question may ask for clarification of terms, concepts, or ideas; it may question the author’s assumptions; it may explore the implications of an author’s assertions; or it may endeavor to relate reading assignment(s) to other materials. If your question refers to a specific passage in a reading assignment, provide the quotation and page number.
b. pertinent information (approximately 1 paragraph) that directly complements the reading(s) assigned for the week ("Hypertextual" Information). First provide the page number and quote the passage in the assigned reading that sparked your curiosity, and then provide the pertinent information that you discovered. Give references to your sources of information. For example, you might indicate in your message that on p. 14 of No Angel in the Classroom, Fisher mentions that the work of Ella Baker is foundational to feminist pedagogy. Then, your message would continue with a paragraph (3-5 sentences) describing in your own words who Ella Baker was and the contributions she made, according to the research you did. Web links to sources of information would be helpful but not sufficient.

3. Personal Narrative or Statement of Teaching Philosophy (200 possible points) Due:
Week 4 Complete one of the following writing assignments:

a. Personal Narrative
One key aspect of feminist pedagogy involves encouraging students to make connections between personal, subjective experience and theoretical perspectives. To facilitate making these connections, you are asked to reflect critically on your own educational experiences within the context of some aspect of feminist pedagogical theory. Write a personal narrative on some facet of your educational experiences AND interpret your story with the assistance of a theoretical perspective introduced in our class or discovered through your own research. (Make sure to carefully document your sources.) In other words, identify a specific feminist pedagogical idea or theoretical perspective, and use it to interpret some facet of your own educational experience. You should present an essay of 5 pages in length.

However, if you wish, you may write a poem, make a drawing, or create another kind of artistic work. If you create an artistic work, you must include a 3-4-page written analysis of the purpose of your artistic work as well as discussion of the theoretical perspective that informs your work.

In preparation for completing this assignment, read Making a Difference: University Students of Color Speak Out, chapter 4: "The Tellers, the Tales, and the Audience: Narratives by Students of Color" by Debbie Storrs and Julia Lesage, pp. 95-112. This chapter may stimulate ideas regardless of whether or not you choose to focus on issues of race in your personal narrative. (This assignment was adapted from a similar assignment created by Dr. Vivian May of Syracuse University, Women’s Studies.)

b. Statement of Teaching Philosophy (5 pages)
Write a statement of your teaching philosophy as it relates to the population and subject matter you teach or would like to teach (elementary students/mathematics, special education high school students, high school family science students, undergraduate literature students, undergraduate women’s studies students, medical patients, etc.). Your statement should address some of the following: your motivations for teaching; the instructional challenges you face and how you meet them; your pedagogical values, goals, strategies, and/or methods. Your statement should explicitly reflect on the ways in which you employ (or do not wish to employ) principles of feminist pedagogy. Describe how you understand feminist pedagogy and how you may wish to incorporate principles of feminist pedagogy in your teaching. Your statement of teaching
philosophy should display evidence that you have gained insight from course materials and/or other sources identified through your research. Make sure to document your sources carefully.

For additional ideas for writing the statement of your teaching philosophy, see the following websites:
http://www.utep.edu/~cetal/portfolio/wrietps.htm#implicit (University of Texas at El Paso)
http://www.cte.iastate.edu/tips/philosophy.html (Iowa State University)

4. Learning Activity/Practical Exercise (100 possible points)
Along with other students in the course, you will design and implement one short (approximately 15 minutes) learning activity, or practical exercise, aimed to increase awareness of power structures within society (e.g. white privilege, sexism, compulsory heterosexuality, ableism, ageism, and/or classicism); to encourage meaningful reflection on “feminism” or “womanism”; or to promote reflection on strategies for social change. Although this activity may be most suitable for another learning context (e.g. an undergraduate course, a middle school classroom, a meeting of a community organization), you should plan the activity and carry it out in our class; after we participate in the exercise or activity, we will reflect together on its strengths and limitations.

On the night that you carry out this activity, you will provide each member of the class with a written description of the activity, a statement of the goals of the activity, a statement of the intended participants in this activity (e.g. undergraduate students, elementary school students, etc.), as well as a statement of the perceived strengths and limitations of the activity. You should also credit any sources (e.g. books, articles, professors, friends) that you used to develop the activity. If you wish, you are welcome to implement ideas found in the textbook *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. This book can provide helpful and stimulating ideas.

To carry out this assignment, students will be assigned to groups (usually three students per group); dates for the learning activities will also be assigned. Please contact me to request a change, if necessary, in the assigned groups or dates.

5. Teaching Unit Project (400 possible points)  
Due: Week 14
This assignment requires you to develop ideas and compile a list of resources for a curricular unit you would like to teach as part of a class, for a meeting of a community organization, or within a particular professional setting. This curricular unit should relate directly to women’s studies and/or teaching for diversity and social justice; it should also display reflection on principles and techniques of feminist pedagogy.

I strongly suggest that you select a topic that interests and excites you; I also suggest that you develop a teaching unit that you actually would like to implement. Sample topics include the following: a unit on Muslim feminism for an undergraduate course on women & religion; a unit on racial disparities in the death penalty for an undergraduate course on feminist ethics; a unit on domestic violence for a meeting of clergy; a unit on drug rape for high school students; a unit on women in Texas history for a middle school history course; etc.
Your teaching unit (a paper of 10-12 pages in length) should include the following: a) a statement of your topic, your intended audience, and your reasons for selecting the topic for your audience, b) the purpose(s) of your teaching unit (your goals and intended outcomes), c) selected basic background information on your topic, d) a description of the specific learning activities you would implement (exercises, lectures, films, discussion questions, etc.) and a rationale for implementing those activities, e) reflection on the strengths and possible limitations of your approach, f) a list of appropriate materials on the topic (books, articles, Internet sites, films, etc.), and g) thoughtful reflection on your understanding of feminist pedagogy and how its values and principles shaped the development of your teaching unit. If it is possible for you actually to teach your teaching unit during the semester, your paper also could include reflections on your experience.


Your project will be evaluated according to both content (cogency of the argument, thoughtfulness of presentation, depth of reflection, research) and form (grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and consistency in following the MLA style).

6. Other assignments (40 points possible)

a. Syllabus evaluation (20 possible points)
Locate, read, and evaluate at least 3-5 different syllabi for similar Women’s Studies courses (Introduction to Women’s Studies, Feminist Theories, Women and Religion, Women and Literature, Psychology of Women, etc.). These syllabi can be easily found on the Internet by using a search engine or by going to sites like the following:

Select one syllabus that you find to be particularly creative, stimulating, strong, or helpful. Write a detailed evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the syllabus you select (1 to 2 typewritten pages, single-spaced). Make sure to include the course name, instructor name, and source of the syllabus (website address, etc.) on your evaluation. Make a copy of your evaluation page for each member of your group (6 students) as well as for me. Bring two copies of the syllabus with you to class.

b. “Talking Points” Handouts (10 points each; 20 points total)
You will briefly present the key points of an assigned article to other students in the class. You will create a “talking points” handout (1 page) to accompany each of your presentations. This handout should list the key points in your assigned article.

7. Additional Work Requirement (50 points)
• Write a thoughtful essay responding to Christine Stolba’s “Lying in a Room of One’s Own: How Women’s Studies Textbooks Miseducate Students” (http://www.iwf.org/pdf/roomononesown.pdf). Your essay (15 pages) should include your own survey and analysis of Women’s Studies textbooks. A collection of introductory Women’s Studies textbooks can be studied in the Women’s Studies Program conference room. This essay will be evaluated according to both its content and form.

**Grading**

Grades for the course will be determined as follows:

- A   1000-900 points
- B   899-800 points
- C   799-700 points
- D   699-600 points
- F   below 600 points

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**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Week 1 Introductions**

1. Introduction to course and class participants
3. What is pedagogy? What is feminism? What is feminist pedagogy?

**Week 2 What is Feminist Pedagogy? Key Values, Principles, & Questions**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - Carolyn M. Shrewsbury, “What is Feminist Pedagogy?” (packet)
   - Fisher, *No Angel in the Classroom*, pp. 1-109
     (Our discussion should center on our reading of Fisher’s book.)
2. Discussion of learning activity assignment: “Systems of Privilege and Inequality: Observations and Reflections about Texas Woman’s University” (Read: Patricia Hill Collins, “Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection,” and be prepared to share your observations of TWU with the class.)

**Week 3 What is Feminist Pedagogy? Key Values, Principles, & Questions**

1. Discussion of reading:
   - Fisher, *No Angel in the Classroom*, pp. 111-190
2. Presentation on the history of and controversy over coeducation at TWU
3. Discussion of questions and accompanying readings (as time allows): Is single-sex education beneficial or harmful to women and to men? Should single-sex education be legal in publicly supported institutions? Should professors sometimes teach men and women separately? Should they have the right to do so if they wish?
Discussion of readings:

- selections from Helen M. Stoddard, *To the Noon Rest: The Life, Work and Addresses of Helen M. Stoddard* (packet),
- selections from Leslie Miller-Bernal, *Separate by Degree: Women Students’ Experiences in Single-Sex and Coeducational Colleges* (packet)
- Adrienne Rich, “Taking Women Students Seriously” (packet)

Recommended reading:


**Week 4 Libratory Pedagogies & Movements for Social Justice: An Introduction to Paulo Freire**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - Fisher, *No Angel in the Classroom*, pp. 191-221
   - Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 11-86 (introductory materials and chapters 1-2)
2. Learning Activity, Group 1-A

**Week 5 Libratory Pedagogies & Movements for Social Justice: An Introduction to Paulo Freire**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 87-124 (chapter 3), skim 125-183 (chapter 4)
2. Learning Activity, Group 1-B

**Week 6 Education as the Practice of Freedom: bell hooks**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - Boxer, *When Women Ask the Questions*, pp. 100-125
   - hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, pp. 1-110
2. Learning Activity, Group 2-A

**Week 7 Education as the Practice of Freedom: bell hooks**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, pp. 111-207
   - *Making a Difference: University Students of Color Speak Out*, pp. 153-175
2. Learning Activity, Group 2-B

**Week 8 Personal Narrative Essay or Statement of Teaching Philosophy Due**

1. Discuss your essay with other members of the course.
2. Learning Activity, Group 3-A

**Week 9 Challenges Presented by Teaching Introductory Women’s Studies Courses**

1. Discussion of readings:
   - Mytheli Sreenivas, “Teaching about ‘Other’ Women: Developing a Global Perspective on Gender in the Classroom” (packet)
• Barbara Scott Winkler and Carolyn DiPalma, eds., *Teaching Introduction to Women’s Studies*, Chapters 2, 5, 6, 8, 9
  (Book chapters will be placed on reserve in the library; the book can also be read in the
  Women’s Studies Program conference room, HDB 307.)

2. Learning Activity, Group 3-B

**Week 10 Approaches to Teaching Women’s Studies: Evaluation of Syllabi**

1. Discussion of reading and writing assignment:
   • Three chapters of interest from Part II (Curriculum Designs), in *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*
   • Syllabus evaluation assignment due

2. Learning Activity, Group 4-A

**Week 11 Criticisms of Feminist Pedagogy**

1. Discussion of readings:
   • Boxer, pp. 191-224 (chapter 8)
   • Daphne Patai and Noretta Koertge, *Professing Feminism: Education and Indoctrination in Women’s Studies* (2003), chapter 4

*Optional Writing Assignment Due: Response to Stolba’s “Lying in a Room of One’s Own,” based on your own evaluation of Women’s Studies textbooks. (Copies of Women’s Studies textbooks can be found in the Women’s Studies Program conference room.)*

2. Learning Activity, Group 4-B

**Week 12 An Introduction to Disability Studies & Its Impact on Transforming the Curriculum**

1. Discussion of reading:
   • Simi Linton, *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity*

2. Learning Activity, Group 5-A

**Week 13 Post-Positivist Realism in Feminist Classrooms**

Discussion of Amie A. Macdonald & Susan Sánchez-Casal, eds., *Twenty-First-Century Feminist Classrooms: Pedagogies of Identity and Difference*, specific chapters to be assigned. Each student will make a brief presentation based on one of the chapters and will formulate a “talking points” handout.

Recommended reading: Paula M.L. Moya, “Postmodernism, ‘Realism,’ and the Politics of Identity” (packet)

**Week 14 Teaching Unit Project Due**

Come to class prepared to give an overview of your teaching unit project to other members of the class. Your presentation (approximately 10 minutes in length) should provide an overview of your project, including the purpose & rationale for the teaching unit, the teaching methods you selected, and the resources you identified. Provide each member of the class with a 1-2 page handout that complements your presentation.
Teaching Feminist Activism: Discussion of Nancy A. Naples and Karen Bojar, eds., *Teaching Feminist Activism: Strategies from the Field*, specific chapters to be assigned. Each student will make a brief presentation based on one of the chapters and will formulate a "talking points" handout.