

**WNS 210: Introduction to Women's Studies (3)**  
**Fall 2009**

**Class Times:** TTh 12:30-1:45  
**Class Location:** Evans 226  
**Professor:** Carrie Baker  
**Email:** [cbaker@berrv.edu](mailto:cbaker@berrv.edu)

**Office Location:** Evans 131  
**Office Hours:** MW 10-3 or by appt.  
**Office Phone:** 290-2169

**Course Description:** This course provides an overview of the basic concepts and debates within the interdisciplinary field of Women's Studies, focusing on the United States. 3 credit hours.

**Course Purpose:** The purpose of this course is to study gender as a fundamental category of social and cultural analysis and to understand how gender intersects with race, class, sexuality, and other aspects of identity to shape human experience. We will read a wide range of articles representing both "classic" writings in women's studies, recent women's studies scholarship, and women's accounts of their own experiences.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. To understand the origins, methods, and theories of the field of women's studies.
2. To explore the interactions of gender, race, class, and other aspects of identity in order to understand the ways in which "woman/women" is a constructed category that is historically and culturally shaped.
3. To analyze how gender operates as a system of social stratification and differentiation in major arenas of social life such as home and family, work, education, and religion.
4. To explore how gender and other aspects of identity shape our lives.
5. To develop skills in critical thinking, reading, writing, and research.
6. To sharpen our ability to engage in candid, respectful dialogue about issues that may be sensitive or controversial.

**Assessment Measures:** Achievement of these goals will be measured by satisfactory completion of course requirements, including participation at class meetings and in electronic forum discussions, research and writing assignments, and a final exam.

**Methods of Instruction:** This class has four components: lecture, discussion (class, small group, and electronic forum), reading and writing assignments, and films shown in class. The success of the course depends on everyone's willingness to share ideas and participate in meaningful dialogue. We will explore the issues together and challenge ourselves to think critically about the concepts. I expect each student to contribute to this learning experience through active preparation, contemplation, and discussion.

**Attendance Policy:** Regular, punctual attendance is necessary to achieve a passing grade in this course. Students will sign the class role at the beginning of class each day. Any student missing more than two class meetings without a written medical, athletic, or academic excuse is subject to having points deducted from their the final grade in the class. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out about and making up whatever you missed.

**Academic Integrity:** Students should abide by Berry College's policy on academic integrity at all times (see *College Catalog*, pp. 27-28).

**Accommodation Statement:** Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodation in this course are encouraged to contact the Academic Support Center in Krannert Room 301 (ext. 4080) as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Required Texts:** The following texts are required:

1. Susan Shaw & Janet Lee, *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing, 2009). Designated in syllabus as *Women's Voices*.

**Bibliography:** Available on the class Viking Website.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Participation at Class Meetings** (10%): Preparation, prompt attendance at all class meetings, and active participation in class discussions are required. Students are expected to attend every session, read the assignments for the day in advance, prepare to discuss the assignments, and participate in class discussion. There are several class assignments that are not graded independently, but will count toward your participation grade. The class participation grade will also be based on attendance and the contributions you make to class discussion. Any unexcused absence will factor into the participation grade.
2. **Electronic Discussion Forum Participation** (10%): Once a week, by 5 p.m. on Mondays, you will post a substantial comment to the class discussion board. No postings are required the first week or the last week. To count as your weekly post, your comment should:
  - raise an issue related to the class material assigned for the next week or respond to a classmate's post
  - be 2-3 substantial paragraphs in length
  - discuss in some specific way at least one of the readings assigned for the next week
  - *put the reading(s) in conversation with other material assigned for the week or with pieces we've read or issues we've discussed in previous classes.*Electronic discussion forum participation will be evaluated based on timely completion, insight, and integration of ideas from the readings and class meetings.
3. **Quizzes** (10%): There will be unannounced quizzes on the reading on a regular basis. At the start of class, I will ask 5 questions on the reading assignment for the day. If you are late, you cannot make up the quiz.
4. **Research Projects** (30%): You will conduct three research projects, and for each write up your results in a 3-4 page, double-spaced report and discuss them in class. *Each paper should incorporate course readings in a thoughtful critical analysis.* I will distribute a handout detailing each project. Due dates are listed in the schedule of classes.
  - a) **Toy Store Analysis:** Visit a local toy store and describe how the toys reflect social norms and meanings regarding gender.

- b) **Media Analysis:** Select 10 images of gender in popular media and analyze these images using concepts from the class.
- c) **Religion Research Project:** Choose one religious group, investigate this group's ideas about women, and analyze these ideas in light of the themes of this class.
5. **Women's Studies Events Attendance (10%):** Throughout the semester, you will attend 3 events sponsored by the women's studies program or approved by me (prior approval is required) and write up a two page response paper, describing your reaction to the event. A schedule and description of the events is located through the Women's Studies webpage at [http://www.berry.edu/academics/humanities/womens\\_studies/index.asp](http://www.berry.edu/academics/humanities/womens_studies/index.asp). Due on the last day of class.
6. **Take Home Final Exam (30%):** This exam will consist of essay questions that will require you to pull together the themes of the semester, integrating your intellectual response to the various issues, topics, and questions raised throughout the course in the texts, lecture, films, and discussion. Due on the day of the class exam period.

**Course Evaluation:** Grading for this course will be based on successful completion of the required assignments. Final grades will be based on a 1000 point scale in the following manner: A = 934-1000; A- = 900-933; B+ = 867-899; B = 834-866; B- = 800-833; C+ = 767-799; C = 734-766; C- = 700-733; D+ = 667-699; D = 600-666 with the following possible points per assignment:

Class Participation	= 100 points
Electronic Forum Participation	= 100 points
Quizzes	= 100 points
Research Projects 3@100 pts. each	= 300 points
Women's Studies Events	= 100 points
Take Home Final Exam	= 300 points

### Schedule of Classes

*Note: The syllabus is subject to change, with notice.*

*Please complete the readings and assignments for the day next to which they are listed.*

August 25	Introduction to the Class
August 27	What is Women's Studies? <i>Women's Voices: Chapter 1</i>
September 1	Systems of Privilege and Inequality in Women's Lives <i>Women's Voices: 59-91</i>
September 3	<i>Women's Voices: 91-122</i>
September 8	Learning Gender in a Diverse Society <i>Women's Voices: 124-155</i>

- September 10 *Women's Voices*: 155-169
- September 15 Toy Store Paper Discussion  
**Toy Store Analysis Paper Due**
- September 17 Sex, Power, and Intimacy  
*Women's Voices*: 170-203
- September 22 *Women's Voices*: 203-222
- September 24 Inscribing Gender on the Body  
*Women's Voices*: 223-254
- September 29 *Women's Voices*: 254-295
- October 1 Media Analysis Paper Discussion  
**Media Analysis Paper Due**
- October 6 Health and Reproductive Rights  
*Women's Voices*: 296-335
- October 8 *Women's Voices*: 336-377
- October 13 Fall Break
- October 15 Family Systems, Family Lives  
*Women's Voices*: 378-404
- October 20 *Women's Voices*: 404-425
- October 22 Women's Work Inside and Outside the Home  
*Women's Voices*: 426-464
- October 27 *Women's Voices*: 464-497
- October 29 Women Confronting and Creating Culture  
*Women's Voices*: 498-527
- November 3 *Women's Voices*: 528-554
- November 5 Resisting Violence Against Women  
*Women's Voices*: 555-587
- November 10 *Women's Voices*: 587-610
- November 12 State, Law, and Social Policy

*Women's Voices: 611-641*

November 17 *Women's Voices: 641-668*

November 19 Religion and Spirituality in Women's Lives  
*Women's Voices: 669-706*

November 24 Discuss Religion Research Papers  
**Religion Research Paper Due**

December 1 Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures  
*Women's Voices: Chapter 13*

December 3 Final Discussion  
**Women's Studies Events Papers Due**

December 9 **Take Home Final Examinations Due**  
Due by 12:30 p.m. to my office in Evans 131 or my mailbox in Evans 109