Course Description and Objectives:
The aim of this course is to critically examine key issues, questions, and debates in contemporary feminist theory from the 1970s to the present. We begin by exploring contemporary liberal, radical, and materialist feminist thought and the socio-economic and political contexts in which these theoretical perspectives arise. Our aim in section one of the course is less about comprehensiveness and more about beginning to understand the key ideas, assumptions, and silences that motivate contemporary feminist theorists’ debates about a range of concepts including but not limited to community, equality, and liberty. Section two explores specific themes in contemporary feminist theory. We will focus on postmodern and other feminist theorists’ understandings of the body, sexuality, masculinity, and race. The final section of the course explores how contemporary feminist theorists utilize gender as a category of analysis. Chief among the questions we will explore in this section are the following: Is gender the social and cultural interpretation of male/female biological difference? Or is gender anything but divisible by two? What about claims that gender necessarily “intersects” with race, class, and sexuality? What, finally, is the relationship between how we utilize gender as a category of analysis and our feminist theory and practice in the classroom, the workplace, and the family?

Each section of the course will: 1) help develop the analytical skills necessary to think critically about feminism and gender; 2) pay particular attention to how feminist theory shapes and is shaped by other hierarchies of power including race and sexuality and 3) draw on a range of texts and films to situate feminist theory not only as an intellectual project but as a personal and an activist one. Our ultimate aim is to build the skills and background that will enable us to apply these ideas and approaches to our own intellectual and political projects.

Course Readings/Films:
The following required text is available at A Room of One’s Own Bookstore, 307 W. Johnson St. Tel: 608-257-7888: The Feminist Philosophy Reader (FPR) ISBN: 0073407399/ 978-0073407395 This text is also on reserve at the Undergraduate Library, Helen C. White Building.

The course pack/reader is available at the L & S Social Science Copy Center, 6120 Social Science Building, 1180 Observatory Drive, Tel: 262-5396

We will use Learn@UW for reflection papers. You can access Learn@UW from the University of Wisconsin’s home page.

Course Requirements:
1. Attending class and participating in class discussion (15%)
   You must sign the sign-in sheet at the beginning of every class, except for the first two classes when I will take attendance. You are allowed 2 absences. Any absences greater
than this number will drop your participation grade by one full letter grade regardless of the extent to which you participate in class discussions when present. If you miss more than half of all of the class meetings without a satisfactory explanation you will receive a failing grade for course.

2. Reflection Papers (20%)

You will submit a total of five (one page, typed, double spaced) reflection papers throughout the semester. I will draw on your reflection papers to facilitate class discussion. Each paper must address at least two of the readings assigned on a specific date. Use your reflection papers to comment on things that you find contradictory, controversial, confusing or otherwise noteworthy in the readings. Please end each of your papers with two specific questions for class discussion. Reflection papers are intended to keep you engaged with the readings. They should not be used to provide detailed summaries of the assigned texts.

You will sign up for reflection papers during our second class meeting. Reflection papers are due at 6 pm via learn@uw on the day before class. You must be present on the days when your reflection papers are due in order to help lead class discussion.

3. Two to Three Page Short Essay (10%) – Due February 14 at 3pm in my office

4. Five Page Mid-Term Essay (25%) – Due March 11 at 3pm in my office

5. Seven to Eight Page Final Essay (30%) – Due May 11 at 3pm in my office

Classroom Conduct: Cell phones, texting, Ipods, laptops, PDAs, and their accompanying earpieces are NOT allowed during class in order to facilitate a non-distracting and intellectually productive learning environment. If you are found using any of these devices your attendance will be “zeroed” for the day in question. “Testing” is not a valid excuse for using any of the above devices during class.

Email Communication: I aim to respond to student emails within a 24 hour period Monday to Friday.

Statement on Grade Related Questions and Appeals:
If you have questions about a grade, please speak to me first. If the question is not resolved, speak with the Chair, Jane Collins, or Associate Chair, Christine Ewig. They will attempt to resolve the issue informally and inform you of the Appeals Procedures if no resolution is reached informally.

I will only discuss questions about grades during office hours or by appointment - not over email or before/after class.

Final grades will be determined according to the following official UW grading scale: A 93-100; AB 88-92; B 83-87; BC 78-82; C 70-77; D 60-69; F below 60.

Late Paper Policy: Papers and exams turned in late will be penalized by ten (10) percentage points for each 24-hour period after the due date.
Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism and Cheating): This class will strictly follow and enforce the university’s policies on academic misconduct. UWS 14.03 defines academic misconduct to include acts in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation. Examples include but are not limited to: a) cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation; b) paraphrasing from the web or written texts without crediting the source; c) using notes in an exam when such use is not allowed and d) using another person’s ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one’s own.

Complete information on academic misconduct is at www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/academic_misconduct.html.

Writing Center: For additional help with papers, visit the Writing Center at any stage during the writing process. Stop by 6171 Helen C. White, call for an appointment (263-1992), or consult the Center’s resources online at www.wisc.edu/writing/.

Accessibility: Please let me know if you require any alternative accommodations or if you have any accessibility concerns that may affect your performance in this course. The McBurney Resource Center (www.mcburney.wisc.edu), 1305 Linden Dr. 263-2741, TTY 263-6393, provides assistance and documentation regarding physical, learning, sensory, or psychological disabilities.

Section One: Roadmaps to Contemporary Feminist Theory

Introduction
January 18:
- Meet and Greet
- Review Syllabus

January 20:
- Audre Lorde. “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” (FPR)
- Charlotte Bunch. "Not by Degrees: Feminist Theory and Education"
- Maria Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman. "Have We Got a Theory for You: Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for 'The Woman's Voice"

Liberal Feminisms
January 25:
- Martha Nussbaum. “Feminism, Internationalism, Liberalism”
- Marilyn Friedman. “Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women” (FPR)

January 27:
- NOW Statement of Purpose
- Susan. Okin. “Vulnerability by Marriage” (FPR)
- Judith Jarvis Thomson. “A Defense of Abortion”

Radical/Cultural Feminisms
February 1:
- Shulasmith Firestone. “Dialectic of Sex”
- Radicallesbians. “The Woman Identified Woman”
- Marilyn Frye. “Oppression” (FPR)
February 3:
- Jane Alpert. “Mother Right”
- Carol Gilligan. “Moral Orientation and Moral Development” (FPR)

February 8
- Catherine McKinnon “Difference and Dominance”
- Denise Thompson. “Differences among Women”

**Materialist Feminisms**

February 10:
- Heidi Hartmann. “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism”
- Angela Davis. “The Prison Industrial Complex” (FPR)

*Short Essay – Due February 14 at 3pm in my office*

February 15:
- Film Clip - Fast Food Women
- Nancy Fraser. “After the Family Wage: Gender Equity and the Welfare State” (FPR)

**Section Two: Themes in Contemporary Feminist Theory**

**Bodies, Sexualities, and Sexual Practices**

February 17:
- Ann Ferguson. “Sex War: The Debate Between Radical and Libertarian Feminists” (FPR)
- Persimmon Blackbridge, Lizard Jones, and Susan Stewart. “Kiss and Tell: Questioning Censorship” (FPR)
- Catherine MacKinnon. “Sexuality” (FPR)

February 22:
- Marilyn Frye. “Willful Virgin or Do you Have to Be a Lesbian to Be a Feminist?”
- Chris Cuomo. “Claiming the Right to Be Queer” (FPR)

February 24:
Film clip – Killing us Softly 4
- Susan Bordo. “Reading the Slender Body”

March 1:
- Oyeronke Oyewumi. Visualizing the Body: Western Theories and African Subjects” (FPR)
- S. Wendell. “Toward a Feminist Theory of Disability” (FPR)

**Race, Post-Coloniality, and the Politics of Representation**

March 3:
- Suan Okin. “Gender inequality and Cultural Difference”
- Cynthia Enloe. “Updating the Gendered Empire” (FPR)

March 8: Mid-Term Review

March 10: Film – Under One Sky
Midterm – Due March 11 at 3pm in my office

March 22:
- Chandra Mohanty. “Under Western Eyes”

March 24:
- Andrea Smith. “Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide” (FPR)
- Maria Lugones. “Playfulness, ‘World’-Travelling, and Loving Perception” (FPR)
- JeeYeun Lee. “Beyond Bean Counting”

March 29:
- Gloria Anzaldua. “La Conciencia de la Mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness” (FPR) & "Haciendo Teorias"
- Patricia Hill Collins. “Distinguishing Features of Black Feminist Thought”

Masculinity and the Politics of Feminist Theorizing
March 31:
- Judith Gardiner. “Introduction”
- bell hooks. “Reconstructing Black Masculinity”(FPR)

April 5:
- Jewel Woods. “Black Male Privileges Checklist”

April 7:
- Diane Richardson and Victoria Robinson. “Theorizing Women's Studies Gender Studies and Masculinity: The Politics of Naming”
- T. Modleski. “Postmortem on Post-feminism”

Section Three: Complicating Gender as a Feminist Category of Analysis

Intersectionality
April 12:
- Elizabeth V. Spelman. “Gender & Race: The Ampersand Problem in Feminist Thought” (FPR)
- Kimberlé Crenshaw. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color” (FPR)

April 14:
- Peggy McIntosh. “White Privilege and Male Privilege” (FPR)
- Alison Bailey. “Locating Traitorous Identities: Toward a View of Privilege-Cognizant White Character” (FPR)

April 19:
- Ange Marie Hancock. “Intersectionality as a Normative and Empirical Paradigm”
- Kimberlé Crenshaw, Nira Yuval-Davis, and Michelle Fine. “A Conversation with Founding Scholars of Intersectionality”
Deconstructing the Tale of Two Genders?
April 21:
- Joan Scott. “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” (pages TBA)
- Judith Lorber. “Introduction”

April 26:
- Film Clip - Juggling Gender
- Judith Butler. “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution” (FPR)

Theorizing Transgender
April 28:
- Anne Fausto-Sterling. “Should There Be Only Two Sexes?” (FPR)

May 3:
- Judith Halberstam. “Transgender Butch: Butch/FTM Border Wars and the Masculine Continuum” (FPR)

May 5 - Conclusion/Review

Final Exam - Due May 11 at 3pm in my office