WOMEN'S GLOBAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The slogan, “Healthy Women, Healthy World” embodies the fact that as caretakers of family health, women play a unique role in maintaining the well being of their families and communities. A woman’s access to quality basic health care, family planning and obstetric services can be improved through commitment to basic human rights. This course will take a human rights approach to provide an overview of health issues within the context of a woman's life cycle – childhood, adolescence, reproductive years, and aging. We will pay special consideration to the socio-cultural and economic factors that play a role in the woman’s access to quality basic health care. Particularly important will be to understand women's capacities to have good health and manage their lives in the face of societal and cultural pressures and obstacles. Attention will be given to critical issues of women's health such as the demeaning of women, poverty, unequal access to education, food, and health care, and gender based violence. Such issues as maternal mortality, sexually transmitted disease, violence, harmful traditional practices, and sex trafficking will be discussed.

Course materials will draw from a wide variety of sources, including information about women's organizations inside and outside the US. After the second week, each consecutive week will be devoted to a particular phase of a woman's life and/or a health issue related to that phase. At the end of the semester, students will conduct a Women’s Conference focused on a particular country on the topic of Women’s Health and Human Rights. Beginning in early October, students will meet in small groups to discuss pertinent topics from that week and to prepare for a Women’s Health Conference. Assignments will be designed to teach students how to think critically on gender, health, and human rights in a contemporary global context.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

1. To understand women’s health as a basic human right.
2. To explore the following questions:
   How does gender affect health and health care?
   How do gender stereotypes influence our recognition and management of women’s health issues?
3. To introduce critical health issues affecting women globally in terms of cultural, social, and economic contexts.
4. To familiarize students with some of the strategies and programs that NGOs are using
to address women's health issues.
5. To learn how to advocate effectively for global women’s health and human rights.
6. To communicate a sense of personal empowerment and connection with women globally.

**Required Readings:**


All books for the course are available for purchase at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 307 W. Johnson St. Books will also be on reserve at H.C. White (College Library) and at the Steenbock Library.

**Handouts and Additional Materials:** Throughout the semester, we will use Learn@UW to post important information (handouts, required readings, additional readings to supplement the required materials, links to useful research and writing resources, etc.). The information posted online will NOT be distributed in class. It is your responsibility to check the site for updates.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY**
**Discussion and participation.** Class sessions will involve discussions, student presentations, in-class exercises, lectures (including guest lecturers), and films. Active participation in class discussion is required and essential for the success of the class. For the required readings, students will prepare discussion questions in advance and will have to use them in their group as a guide for facilitating class discussions. Students are expected to regularly attend class and complete all assigned readings in advance of lecture in order to facilitate discussion. More than three absences will adversely affect the final grade.

**Two Midterm exams:** in-class exams. More specific guidelines will be provided in lecture.

**Final paper:** For the final paper each student will complete a two-part paper. The first part will be a 10-15-page (20-25 for grad students) analysis on a women’s health issue. The topic could be either a domestic U.S. issue or an international issue that focuses on one country or region. The second part of the paper will be a 2-page memo to a policymaker of the relevant government(s) making recommendations for the improvement of women’s health.
UN Women’s Conference “A Healthy Future for Women and Girls” Detailed instructions will be posted on Learn@UW

Failure to attend lecture will affect grades as follows:
A 0-1 absences   C 5 absences
AB 2 absences    D 6 absences
B 3 absences     F 7 or more absences
BC 4 absences

Letter Grades will be based on the following scale:
A 93-100   C 70-77
AB 88-92   D 65-69
B 83-87    F under 65
BC 78-82

General Course Grading and Important Dates:
Midterm 1 20% Monday March 7th
Midterm 2 20% Monday April 18th
Discussion and Participation 20% On-going, every Monday
One Paragraph Paper Proposal 20% Monday March 28th
Women’s Conference 20% Preparation & Final Presentation
Final Paper 20% (hard copy in my office Tuesday, May 10th 11:00-1:00PM. and a downloaded copy on Learn@UW)

Late, Missed, or Incomplete Work: Except for reasons beyond your control such as serious illness or emergency, your grade will be reduced each day an assignment remains incomplete or not turned in. After a week, I will not accept late, incomplete, or missed work, and you will receive an "F" for that portion of your grade.

Incomplete grades will not be given EXCEPT in situations of serious illness or family emergency, which must be documented.

Accessibility: Please let us 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 useful assistance and documentation for a range of needs and concerns.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others without giving them credit. It is your responsibility to learn what constitutes plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources. In general, if your paper implies that you are the author, the ideas and words must be your own.
Examples of **Academic Misconduct** include but are not limited to: cutting and pasting portions of a text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation; paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source; using another person’s ideas, words, or research and presenting it as your own by not properly crediting the originator; signing another person’s name to an attendance sheet. For more details refer again to the Dean of Students’ web page: [www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm](http://www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm) This Website also has useful information on what do to if you are charged with academic misconduct.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Key for readings:
- WGH Women’s Global Health
- LTD Learning To Dance
- FOC From Outrage to Courage
- FF Forsaken Female

**Week 1 Mon 1/24**
- **Introduction. Women’s Rights are Human Rights** Introduction and overview of the course; rationale, structure, and context; expectations. Review of requirements.
  - Learn@UW Lisa Oldring and Scott Jerbi, “Advancing a Human Rights Approach on the Global Health Agenda.”
- **Abuse of Women’s Rights: Abuse of Women’s Health**
  - WGH Ch. 1 “Global Women’s Health and Human Rights.”; Ch. 32 “Gender Equality Is Not Just a Women’s Issue, But a Development and a Human Rights Issue”

**Week 2 Mon 1/31**
- **Women’s Health and Human Rights.** What is there about women's health that makes it a significant topic for study? Definitions and beyond.
- **Relativism vs Universalism to understand Women’s Rights**
  - WGH Ch. 8 “Going Negative: How Reproductive Rights Discourse Has Been Altered from a Positive to a Negative Rights Framework in Support of ‘Women’s Rights’”

**Week 3 Mon 2/7**
- **How does gender affect health and health care?** How do gender stereotypes influence our recognition and management of women’s health issues?
  - LTD “Introduction: Advancing Women’s Reproductive Health and Well-Being from the Perspectives of Public Health and Human Rights.”
- **Women, Water, Sanitation and Health**
  - WGH Ch. 33 “Water and Sanitation”; Ch. 39 “Women’s health in a Multicultural World:
Challenges and Progress in Africa.
FOC “Prologue: Darkness and Light”

**Week 4 Mon 2/14**
- **Born a Girl.** Critical issues of girls’ childhood.
  WGH Ch.18 “The Impact of Chronic Kidney Disease on the Girl-Child”; LTD Case Study # 3 “Access to Health Care.”
  FOC Ch. 1 “Women’s Health, Poverty, and Rights.”
  FOC Ch. 3 “Childhood: The Hope of Education and the Persistence of Discrimination.”
- **Intro to FM/C: a Health and Human Right Issue**
  WGH Ch. 36 “FGM—The Clinician’s Perspective.”
  FF “Female Genital Cutting.” 69-93

**Week 5 Mon 2/21**
- **FGC (Cont.)**
- **Adolescence and Vulnerability** Adolescence: reproductive health
  WGH Ch. 17 “Sexual and Reproductive Health”; Ch. 25 Infectious Diseases and Women’s Human Rights”; Ch. 35 “A Woman’s Sexuality.”

**Week 6 Mon 2/28**
- **Gender-Based Violence in Global Context.**
  WGH Ch. 2 “Violence Against Women and the Girl-Child”; Ch. 9 “More Than 100 Million Women Are Missing.”
  LTD Case Study # 4 “Gender-Based Violence.”
- **Gender-Based Violence: a Health Issue**
  FOC Ch. 2 “From the Beginning, A Deadly Preference”
  FF “Femicide: Infanticide and Feticide” 53-67; FF “Intimate Partner Violence” 151-173
  FF “Honor Killing.” 173-191
  FOC Ch. 6 “Violence Against Women: Abuse or Terrorism.”

**Week 7 Mon 3/7**
- **Rape and the Violation of Women’s Health**
  (Discussion & preparation for EXAM)
EXAM, written in-class midterm, essay format.

  SPRING BREAK March 13-19

**Week 8 Mon 3/21**
- **Reproductive Health; Maternity Health.**
  WGH Ch. 21 “Maternal Mortality: The Eye of the Storm”; Ch. 22 “Ensuring a Woman’s Right to Survive Childbirth: Preventing Mortality from Postpartum Hemorrhage.”
• **Reproductive Health; Breastfeeding**
  WGH Ch. 20 “Cervical Cancer Mortality”; Ch. 24 “Vaccines and Women: Cultural and Structural Issues for Acceptability”; Ch. 31 “Breastfeeding: A Biological Ecological, and Human Rights Imperative for Global Health.”

---

**Week 9 Mon 3/28**

**ONE PARAGRAPH PAPER PROPOSAL!**

• **Reproductive Health (cont.)** Infertility. Access to abortion and family planning.
  Ch. 23 “Infertility in Developing Countries.”
  FOC Ch. 5 “The Maternity Dead Road.”
  LTD Case Study # 5 “Maternal Mortality.”

• **HIV/AIDS**
  WGH Ch. 7 “Shadows on the Sunshine of Women’s Global Health and Human Rights”; Ch. 11 “The AIDS Pandemic and Women’s Rights”; Ch. 12 “Poor, Black, and Female: The Growing Face of AIDS in the United States.”

---

**Week 10 Mon 4/4**

• **Women in War and Refugee Situations.**
  WGH Ch. 3 “Impact and Effects of Terrorism on Women and the Girl-Child”; Ch. 4 “War, Women, and Girls”; Ch. 5 “Women and Children in War and Complex Emergencies.”

• **Women’s Health and Special Needs in Times of War and/or Conflict.**
  LTD Case Study # 2 “Internally Displaced Persons.”
  FOC Ch. 7 “Women Caught in Conflict and Refugee Situations.”

---

**Week 11 Mon 4/11**

• **Globalization, Women’s Health and Women’s Work**
  WGH Ch. 6 “Human Trafficking: A Modern Plague”; Ch. 10 “Globalization, Development, and Health”; Ch. 37 “Practice and Problem in Occupational Health for Women.”
  LTD Case Study # 1 “Sex Trafficking.”

• **Sex Trafficking and Health**
  FF “Sexual Violence” 115-135; “Trafficking in Women.” 135-151
  FOC Ch. 8 “Laboring in a Globalized World.”

---

**Week 12 Mon 4/18**

• **Aging and the End of Life** Growing older: menopause; widowhood, poverty; access to services.
  WGH Ch. 13 “Cardiovascular Disease in Women”; Ch. 14 “The Global Scourge of the 21st Century—Diabetes—and Worse for Women”; Ch. 15 “Neurological Disorders”; Ch. 16 “Women’s Musculoskeletal Health”; Ch. 19 “Breast Cancer in Women: A Public Health Perspective”; Ch. 29 “Older Women’s Access to Health and Human Rights”; Ch. 30 “Palliative Care and End-of-Life Issues.”
  FOC Ch. 9 “Aging in a Man’s World.”
Pre-Preparation for UN Women’s Health Conference “A Healthy Future for Women and Girls Globally”

EXAM 2, in class exam, essay format.

**Week 13 Mon 4/25**
Preparation for UN Women’s Health Conference.
- **Capabilities Approach to Women’s Health and Human Rights.** Pre-preparation for UN Women’s Health Conference.
  Learn@UW “Capabilities Approach”
- **Making a Difference and Choosing Priorities** Women’s Rights and Women’s Health across cultures, political systems, ideologies and religions.
  WGH Ch. 38 “Women Engagement: Essential to Building the Culture of Peace”; Ch. 41 “From Alma-Ata to Millennium Development Goals: Status of Women’s Health in the 21st Century”; Ch. 42 “Promoting a Human Rights-Based Approach to Women’s Health.”
  FOC Ch. 10 “Turning the World Rightside Up.”
  FF “Part III: Consequences and Possibilities.”

**Week 14 Mon 5/2**
Women’s Health Conference “A Healthy Future for Women and Girls Globally”

HAVE A TERRIFIC SUMMER FULL OF ACTIVISM FOR WOMEN’S HEALTH AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS!!!!