Course Description
This women’s health course shifts our attention to adolescent female health. We will study issues particular to or uniquely experienced in teenage girlhood in the twentieth century. We will concentrate on girls’ sexual health within physical, psychological, sociological, and reproductive contexts. “Unit I: The Fertile Body” will begin with body theory on menstruation, physical maturation, sexually transmitted diseases, and teen pregnancy. Therein, we will include medical discourses that often animate these body politics through the topics of birth control and the HPV vaccine. We will then focus on the sexually sensory body in “Unit II: The Feeling Body,” where we discuss the ‘silencing’ of girlhood sexuality through female genital mutilation, social discourses that deny girls’ sexual desire, and the absence of rhetoric for female masturbation. In “Unit III: The Self-Regulated Body” we will examine internalized sexual ideologies about adolescent bodies which often simultaneously idolize virginity/the hymen while pressuring girls toward early sexiness. “Unit IV: The Socially-Regulated Body” will examine the legal regulation of teen bodies through sex education, abstinence education, and consent laws for abortion and intercourse. Our final section, “Unit V: The Criminally-Violated Body,” will broaden to global social crimes of sex trafficking, honor killings, and rape as a war tactic. This course focuses primarily on American girlhoods where readings about global girls’ sexual health are used to better situate US politics and ideologies.

While rooted in the “biology” of the adolescent body, this course nonetheless interrogates what bodies signify as “girl” and “sexual” by attending to how girls’ sexuality is performed within and beyond the physical. How does the context of age influence sexual health politics and intersect with gender, race, and class to shape adolescent female experiences? When are girls’ sexuality, sexual ideologies, and sexual health experiences different from women’s sexual health issues? How do purity balls and honor killings mobilize ideologies of adolescent sexuality and sexual health? What debates arose in the recent legalization of the morning-after pill for minors?

Course Objectives
To isolate sexual health issues unique to female adolescence, deconstruct the politics therein, and broaden our understanding of the category “women’s health.”

Course Texts
Electronic Reserves. Available on MyUW/Library Reserves page

Assignments
Class Participation: Class sessions will involve the professor’s lectures, class discussions, scheduled student-lead discussions, and films. Across the semester, active participation in class discussion is required and essential for your success. Students are expected to attend class and complete all assigned readings in advance of lecture. More than three absences will adversely affect the final grade.
Once a week, each student is required to post a brief comment or question about that week’s reading to our Learn@UW Discussion Board. You may comment on one reading or several from that week; respond to another’s comment or start your own. Go to Learn@UW/MyCourses/gen&ws533/Communication/Discussions.

On an individually assigned day, each student will lead discussion for ten minutes with questions, prompts, and opinions the student organizes in advance around one assigned reading.

**Essay:** This course requires one essay (15 pages). Any late essays will be marked down one half grade (i.e., A to AB) for each day past the due date. No essays will be accepted past five days (including weekends) of the original due date.

**Exams:** There will be two exams. One in-class Midterm exam and one in-class Final exam will be comprised of definitions, identifications and analyses, and essays. The Final exam will not be cumulative.

**Grading:** Class participation (15%); Midterm (25%); Essay (30%); Final Exam (30%)

**Course Calendar**

**Introduction: Sample of Course Content**

**Sept 2 Tues**
- Welcome and Overview

**Sept 4 Thurs**

**Unit I: The Fertile Body**

**Menstruation in the 20th Century: The Need for ‘Sanitary Protection’**

**Sept 9 Tues**

**Sept 11 Thurs**
Physical Maturation: Girls Are Getting Older Younger
Sept 16 Tues
- Herman-Giddens, Marcia. “Navigating the Recent Articles on Girls’ Puberty in *Pediatrics*: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go From Here?” *Pediatrics* 113.4 (2004): 911-917.

Teen Pregnancy: Facts and Myths Pregnant with Meaning
Sept 18 Thurs

Sept 23 Tues

Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Medications, and Discourses: No Cure-All
Sept 25 Thurs


Sept 30 Tues


Oct 2 Thurs

• Sapphire, Push: 1-97.

Oct 7 Tues

• Sapphire, Push: 98-Life Stories.

Unit II: The Feeling Body
Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: The Removal of Sexual Desire
Oct 9 Thurs


Oct 14 Tues


“Girls Give Sex for Love and Boys Give Love for Sex”: The Silencing of Sexual Desire

Oct 16 Thurs

Oct 21 Tues
- _______. “In a Different Position: Conceptualizing Female Adolescent Sexuality Development Within Compulsory Heterosexuality.” *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 112 (Summer 2006): 71-89.

Oct 23 Thurs

Oct 28 Tues
- **Midterm Exam**

Unit III: The Self-Regulated Body
Virginty Ideology: The Hymen and the High Ground

Oct 30 Thurs

Nov 4 Tues
- Doan, Alesha and Jean Calterone Williams. “Good Girls or Dirty Whores?” Images and Behaviors of Adolescent Women.” *The Politics of Virginity: Abstinence in Sex Education (Reproductive Rights and Policy)* pp. 60-83 (already assigned first week)

Nov 6 Thurs

Nov 11 Tues

Sexy Ideology: When Did Pretty Become Sexy?
Nov 13 Thurs

Nov 18 Tues

Nov 20 Thurs

Unit IV: The Socially-Regulated Body
Legal Consent
Nov 25 Tues

Nov 27 Thurs: Thanksgiving Break
Sex Education and Abstinence ‘Education’: What’s on the Syllabus?

Dec 2 Tues


Dec 4 Thurs


Unit IV: The Criminally-Violated Body
‘Gendercide’ in Global Violence: Infanticide, Honor Killings, and Trafficking

Dec 9 Tues

- **Paper Due**

Dec 11 Thurs


Dec 14 Sun

- **Final Exam 10:05am-12:05pm**