

TITLE OF COURSE AND COURSE NUMBER: **Global Perspectives on Women's
Lives WS 420 3 Credits**

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

This course addresses the social, sexual-reproductive, economic, political, and cultural dimensions of women's lives from a global perspective. We scrutinize the status of women and girls, identifying the consequences of globalization for life in societies, in communities and of individuals.

Our critical feminist standpoint encompasses three interconnected stages: description of conditions and theoretical framing of issues; development of visions of social justice leading to liberation from oppression; and planning and engagement in action necessary to create such social and personal change. Here, we are particularly interested in finding ways to connect activism at the local level to activism at the national and global levels.

COURSE CONTENT:

Overview of the general geographical and geopolitical characteristics of nations in the five continents: America, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Europe.

1. The historical expansion of the patriarchal capitalist system and the connection to Western colonization of nations in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific Islands. Overview of this global economic and political history and trends in the 20th Century, including:
 - a. Modernity and the creation and demise of centrally planned socialist states in the Soviet Union, China, Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Chile, Grenada and Nicaragua; the capitalist wars against national liberation struggles and the role of women in them, for example, in Nicaragua, Chile and Argentina.
 - b. Dependent capitalist development efforts in the Third World, after WWII' s the economic boom, including manufacturing for internal consumption and for export, and agricultural development; gender, class and race/ethnicity related effects of development on women and families.
 - c. Transfer of manufacturing from advanced economies to the Third World, creating "the global assembly line" where young women have provided a pool of cheap labor globally;
 - d. Impact of information technologies on the intensification of globalization and capitalist appropriation of financial, labor and natural resources around the globe;
 - e. Militarism, military industry and commerce, wars and their impact on prostitution and violence against women.
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 - g. Role of international financial and lending institutions, such as the World Bank, in imposing neoliberal economic models and the impact of structural adjustment policies on women and children.
2. Analysis of life histories--with special attention given to domestic labor and labor market employment, sexuality and reproduction, health, and education of women and children from diverse backgrounds from selected and especially targeted countries from different regions of the world, particularly from the Third World and non-Western nations. For example, women

from Afghanistan, Thailand, Malaysia, India, South Africa, Sierra Leon, Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Israel, Haiti, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Chile. Also stories from women in countries in transition to capitalism such as Bosnia and Russia, and indigenous women in advanced capitalist nations such as Australia, New Zealand, the U.S. and Canada. Stories are told by the women themselves in works of fiction and nonfiction and in video documentaries and they are examined in terms of institutional issues such as domestic and labor market employment, sexuality and reproduction, health and education.

3. Feminist and women's activism and their agenda worldwide;
4. Leadership role of the United Nation and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in setting international laws and policies affecting the rights of women, including the results of the U.N. Decade of Women and resulting international conferences, particularly the 1995 Beijing Conference and its platform of action.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

At the end of the course, students will demonstrate having the ability to:

1. Research the geographical, geopolitical, historical, social, political and economic characteristics of countries and describe the status of women and minorities, using library and Internet resources.
Assessment: Student will do an oral presentation of a research project on one country.
2. Analyze the lives of women taking into consideration social, cultural, historical, economic and political factors, and identifying issues concerning domestic and labor market employment, sexuality and reproduction, health and education.
Assessment: Student will contribute to classroom discussions and write response papers to readings.
3. Articulate the impact of the historical trends of the 20th century on women in developed and developing nations.
Assessment: Student will take formal examinations and will contribute to classroom discussions.
4. Plan a course of action to bring about social and personal change concerning women's issue of global dimension and implication.
Assessment: Student will prepare a written plan for activism and will write journal of activism documenting steps taken towards the fulfillment of the plan.

TEACHING METHODS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The suggested class format is that of a seminar. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the topics in the readings, and to be responsible for the direction of the discussion. Students will also be involved in projects that will result in oral presentations, and will have the opportunity to interview guest speakers as well as watch videos about various topics. Use of the world wide web will be an important tool in this class, as well as participation in activist events, in particular during Women's History Month. The professor will take the role of learning facilitator and will lecture as appropriate to instruct, make connections, and clarify concepts.

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND READINGS:

Atlink, Sietske. Stolen lives. Trading women into sex and slavery. London: Scarlet Press, 1995.

"Beijing and beyond. Toward the twenty-first century of women." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Spring/Summer, vol. Xxiv, no. 1 & 2., 1996.

Burn, Shawn Meghan. Women Across Cultures: A Global Perspective. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co., 2000.

Butwell, Ann et al. The globalization of hope. Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean in the new millenium. Washington D.C.: EPICA, 1999.

Dangaremba, Tsitsi. Nervous conditions. A novel. Seattle: Seal Press, 1988.

Morgan, Robin. Sisterhood is global. New York: The Feminist Press, 1996.

Reinfelder, Monika. Amazon to Zami: towards a global lesbian feminism. Cassell Academic, 1997.

Sajor, Indai Lourdes. Common grounds. Violence against women in war and armed conflict situations. London: Zed Books: 1997.

Sohoni, Neera Kuckreja. The burden of girlhood. A global inquiry into the status of girls. Oakland: Third Party Publishing Company, 1995.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Adler, Nance J, and Izraeli, Dafna N. Competitive frontiers: women managers in a global economy. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1994.

Afkhami, Mahnaz. Faith and freedom: women's human rights in the Muslim. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995.

Ahlberg, Beth Maina. Women, sexuality, and the changing social order: the impact of government policies on reproductive behavior in Kenya, Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, c1991, 1994 printing.

Ballerino, Colleen et al. Al. Beauty queens on the global stage: gender, contests and power. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996.

Basu, Amrita. The challenge of local feminisms: women's movements in global perspective. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

Bhattacharyya Gargi. Tales of dark-skinned Women: Race, Gender and Global Culture. Taylor & Francis, 1995.

Inc. Baumslag, Naomi and Michels, Dia L. Milk, money, and madness: the culture and politics of breastfeeding. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1995.

Bernard, Jessie Shirley. The female world from a global perspective. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Bonacich, Edna et al., editors. Global production: the apparel industry in the Pacific Rim. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.

Boris, Eileen and Pugl, Elisabeth. Homeworkers in global perspective: invisible no more. New York: London: Routledge, 1996.

Brook, James and Boal, Iain, A. Resisting the virtual life: the culture and politics of information. San Francisco: City Lights; Monroe, OR: Subterranean Co., 1995.

Bunch, Charlotte and Reilly, Niamh. Demanding accountability: the global campaign and Vienna Tribunal on violations of women's human rights. New Jersey: Center for Women's Global Leadership; New York: United Nations development fund for Women, 1994.

Chapikis, Wendy and Enloe, Cynthia, editors. Of common cloth: women in the global textile industry. Amsterdam; Washington: Transnational Institute, 1983.

Center for Women's Global Leadership. Gender violence and women's human rights in Africa. New Brunswick, New Jersey: The Center, 1994.

Dalla Costa, Mariarosa and Dalla Costa, Giovanna F. Paying the price: Women and the politics of international economic strategy. London: Zed Books, 1995.

D'Amico, Francine and Beckman, Peter R, editors. Women in world politics: an introduction. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 1995.

Fuentes, Annette. Women in the global factory. New York, NY: Institute for New Communications; Boston, MA: South End Press, 1983.

Gordon, April A. Transforming capitalism and patriarchy. Gender and development in Africa. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 1996.

Hazou, Winnie. The social and legal status of women: a global perspective. New York: Praeger, 1990.

Human Rights Watch, Women's Rights Project. The Human Rights Watch global report on women's human rights. New York: Human Rights Watch. 1995.

Isis International Health Networking Team Women's perspectives on population issues: information kit, Quezon City, Philippines: Isis International, 1994.

Koblinsky, Marge, Timyan, Judith and Gay, Jill. The Health of women: a global perspectives. Boulder: Westview Press 1993.

- Mies, Maria. Patriarchy and accumulation on a world scale. Women in the international division of labor. London: Zed Books, 1986.
- Newland, Kathleen. Women in politics: a global review. Washington: Worldwatch Institute, 1975. Series Worldwatch paper; 3.
- Penn, Michael. Desecration of the temple: the global problem of violence against women and girls. Rowman & Littlefield, 1997.
- Peters, Julie and Wolper, Andrea. Women's rights, human rights: international feminist. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Peterson, V. Spike and Runyan, Anne Sisson. Global gender issues. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.
- Readon, Betty A. Women and peace: feminist visions of global security. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.
- Rhodie, Eschel M. Discrimination against women: a global survey of the economic, educational, social, and political status of women. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, c1989.
- Racine, Marie M.B. with Ogle, Kathy. Like the Dew that Waters the Grass. Words from Haitian Women. Washington, DC: EPICA, 1999.
- Rosenbloom, Rachel, ed. Unspoken rules. Sexual orientation and women's human rights. London: Cassel, 1996.
- Shiva, Vandana. Close to home: Women reconnect ecology, health and development worldwide. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1994.
- Tice, Karin Elaine. Kuna crafts, gender, and the global economy. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.
- Valdivia, Angharad N. Feminism, multiculturalism, and the media: global diversities. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, c1995.
- Vickers, Jeanne. Women and world economic crisis. London: Zed Books, 1991.
- Ward, Kathryn. Women workers and global restructuring. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, c1990.