WS471/571 Global Feminisms     Winter 2010

Monday evenings, 5:30-9:00pm, Clay 204
Prof. Sally McWilliams
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Office hours: by appointment

"[A]s feminists we need to attend both to issues within particular nations and to urgent transnational or international issues if we are to achieve greater justice within particular nations, and greater global justice in an increasingly interdependent world."

--Uma Narayan, Dislocating Cultures 39.

Course Overview: The contours, complexities, and contributions of global feminism demand our attention. We will begin our analysis of global feminism by exploring the different geographic, historical, political, economic, and social spaces women inhabit. We will analyze the conditions that promote and inhibit activism around women's lives taking into account how gender is defined, deployed, and deconstructed. From this space of local praxis we will see how cross-cultural and transnational connections are built. This look at local/global relations will help us understand the shifting connotations for the term "feminism" and what it means to speak about "global feminism." Our work is to examine how local and transnational feminisms that attend to the kaleidoscopic range of factors--class, migration, sexual politics, race, religion, geopolitics, to name only a few--comment on, critique, challenge, and in many cases creatively change the day-to-day situations women confront in this era of globalization.

Objectives:
1) interrogate the definition of feminism from various geographic and cultural locales;
2) examine the multiple forms of women's/feminist activism;
3) develop an understanding of the relationship between local and global forms of women's activism;
4) comprehend the relationship between political and economic structures to women's lives and their responses to these structures;
5) demonstrate a comprehension of how indigenous women's activism complicates and extends the concept of global feminism; and
6) become self-reflective regarding our own views and relationships to local and global issues affecting women's lives and various forms of feminist activism.

Texts:
1) Dislocating Cultures, Uma Narayan
2) Women's Activism and Globalization, Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, eds.
3) Selected essays posted to our Blackboard class website
**Course Requirements:** This course will be run as a seminar which means that you are obliged to be an active and prepared participant for each class session. Descriptions of the written papers are provided in separate handouts available on our Blackboard webpage. You are required to accomplish the following:
1) Regular participation in discussions about assigned readings and videos;
2) three assigned response papers; 3) Research Paper; and 4) in-class final examination.

**Conferences:** I would also encourage each of you to see me throughout the term to discuss any issues that you find perplexing (these issues might be related to course content or classroom activities and dynamics).

**Grades:**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response papers (3)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Late Paper Policy:**
Response papers are due on the assigned dates (see Reading Schedule). A late paper will drop one grade point and will be accepted only during the week they are assigned (i.e., no later than 5pm Friday of the week in question).
Research papers are due no later than the assigned due date (see Reading Schedule). Please see me in advance of due dates if you have extraordinary complications in meeting the deadlines.

**Paper Format:** All writing done outside of class must be typed unless I tell you otherwise. Be sure to keep a copy of all the typed work you give me on the off chance that the original is lost.

**Academic Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations such as note-taking, taped lectures, test accommodations, etc., please contact the Disability Resource Center, [http://www.drc.pdx.edu/](http://www.drc.pdx.edu/), located in Smith Memorial Union, (503) 725-4150; email: drc@pdx.edu.

**Women’s Resource Center:** A great resource space is the WRC, located in the basement of the Montgomery Building. The WRC provides a student lounge and event space, a Leadership in Action program that gives students the chance to get involved with grass roots feminist activism, The Empowerment Project which provides resources to non-traditional women students, and sexual assault and domestic violence advocacy and information. [wrc.pdx.edu](http://wrc.pdx.edu) 503-725-5672

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the presentation of other people’s work as your own, whether or not the writer has given you permission. It is never acceptable and is cause for failing this course. Bottom line: Always credit your sources--theorists we’ve read; internet sources you’ve consulted; your peers if you use one of their ideas in your writing. If you are
feeling pressured about getting the assigned work done, come and see me *before* you get overwhelmed.

**Classroom environment:** We're all here to study global feminisms, and we don't have much time in a 10-week term to do so. This means that outside distractions aren't very conducive to serious study so . . . turn off the cell phones, pagers, palm pilots, Ipods, etc. Plus, take care of your personal needs (food, water, etc.) prior to coming to class so you can focus on the work ahead of you. We'll take a break each session, not to worry.

Thanks.