Feminist Theory & Methodology     Dr. Jamie P. Ross
WGSS 412/512     CRN 44368     winter ‘14

Syllabus
T/Th 2-3:50 Ch 321

Professor: Dr. Jamie P. Ross
Office: XSB 221
Phone: 503-725-8370
E-mail: rossj@pdx.edu
(please do not email me on D2L)
Office Hours: T 10:30-12:20 and by appt.

Texts:
- Articles on E-Reserve
- Articles on D2L

Course Description:
Feminist methodology seeks to assess knowledge-generating strategies in terms of their suitability for feminist research. Feminist methodology is not to be identified with any particular object of study or specific set of theories, doctrines or knowledge claims. This type of research is an inquiry that seeks knowledge for emancipation and which challenges asymmetric and inequitable constructions. The course encourages students to recognize the value commitments that inform a variety of research methods and those value commitments that are maintained at all stages of research.

Historically, feminist research focused on subjective experiences, women’s knowledge and the feminine. We expanded our focus toward investigating gender as a category of analysis in all research. This research often focused on interpreting traditional academic material differently and critiqued the existing disciplines’ attempts to address the absence of women by simply “adding women and stirring.” We have since complimented this focus and have expanded contemporary critiques to include the investigation of the types of methods used in research, i.e., the analysis of how theories are incorporated into the research; the critique of how evidence is gathered; and what counts as truth and authority at higher levels of abstraction.

Students will come to understand how research methods direct research outcomes. And, we will develop a critical awareness for doing our own self-directed research in Senior Seminar.

These are some of the questions we will pose and try to answer:
• What counts as a feminist method? Who gets to say?
• What is a feminist question for research purposes?
How does one formulate a feminist question?
Is there a feminist mode of analysis, research and speculation?
How does it differ from traditional and other nontraditional modes?
How does one locate, compare, discuss, and evaluate a feminist method, research, scholarship, and more generally, feminist work in light of disciplinary conventions, traditions, political traditions, assumptions, and “feminist genres?”
Are there different feminist methods?
Are there interdisciplinary methods and theories other than feminist methods?
How do the methods of writers and directors of populist, liberal, and radical media use different methods than what feminist researchers would use? The same? Are there shared, embedded, or hidden assumptions? How would we know?

Course Goals:
- assess knowledge-generating strategies
- seek knowledge for emancipation
- challenge asymmetric and inequitable knowledge constructions
- recognize the value commitments that inform varieties of research projects
- analyze the value commitments that are maintained at all levels of research
- investigate the types of methods used in research
- determine how method directs outcomes
- analyze how theories are incorporated into research
- critique how data is gathered and what counts as evidence
- determine at higher levels of abstraction what counts as truth and authority

Learning Objective:
- develop a critical awareness for doing self-directed research and critiquing the research of our colleagues

Course Requirements:
1. Reading is due on the day indicated on the syllabus. All reading is required. Please have a hard/on-line copy of the article in class everyday.
2. Preparation for class including reading and daily question, attendance at class and participation in class discussions are also required and will play a role in the grade evaluation for the class. Attendance is taken. More thank two absences will lower you final grade by a whole point. More absences will lower the grade further. You may make up one absence by going to an approved event listed on D2L or research elsewhere, and with prior approval, write a 1-2 page analysis of how themes in the event overlap with themes from class.
3. Daily Questions: Each student will create, bring to class and pose in class a critical inquiry question from the reading due that day to prompt discussion for that day. Alternatively, I will provide a question that you will take 5-10 min. to answer in class. (Assessment of this activity will contribute to your participation grade.)
4. **Graduate students** will each facilitate a class/group discussion around specific readings as the term progresses. A sign up sheet will be available during week three. (15%)

5. **Papers:** There may be two short papers (4-5 pages) and one final longer (8 pages). Graduate student papers will be 8-10 pages.

6. Paper #1 will combine responses to the issues raised in class with personal reflection. (25%); (graduate students 20%)

7. Paper #2 will be a critical response to the readings. (25%); (graduate students 20%)

8. Paper #3 will be both a critical response and a personal reflection. It must combine research with a theoretical perspective and/or personal voice with theoretical concerns. (30%)

9. **Research project** using Zotero will consist of choosing a feminist topic, researching 5 sources and preparing an abstract of 100 words. **Topic choice due by 1/23/14.** A sign up sheet will be handed out for presentations if numbers of participants allow. (20%); (graduate students 15%)

10. Assignments will be distributed throughout the term in a timely manner and in detailed form. If you have any questions regarding the assignments it is your responsibility to meet with me and/or your classmates to clarify your questions.

11. All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins

12. And 12-point font using APA, MLA or Chicago style citation form

13. Put your name, my name, the course number and the question/topic that you are answering/responding to in your paper at the top of page.

14. Late assignments will receive a lowered grade each day late and may not be rewritten.

15. All on-time papers may be rewritten in an effort to receive a better grade, but they must be substantively changed and improved for any grade change not just grammar/citation changes.

16. Grading Criteria for formal assignments are divided into three main categories: Insight, creativity, and how well you express, the mechanics of the paper, i.e., form, flow, spelling, grammar, organization.

17. There is a scoring guide on D2L that will give you a very good idea of how the quality of your work relates directly to grades.

18. **Disability Notice:** It is the University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (503-725-4150 or drc@pdx.edu) in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Once you have registered with the DRC, please schedule a time to talk to me so that we can discuss your needs for the term. Please be aware that the accessible tables and chairs in this room should remain available for students who need to use this furniture.

19. University policy calls for **sever sanctions for plagiarism** or any other form of academic dishonesty. While I encourage you to discuss your assignments with other people, the final product must be your own, containing full citations to any work upon which you draw, including course material.
20. Please **do not “come and go” during class.** Take care of personal items before you come to class, i.e., Pee before you come to class. We will take a break during class.

21. Please turn **off your cell phone** and all other technology other than for taking notes, etc. before coming to class or you will have to sing karaoke to the class.

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**Required Reading**

**WEEK ONE**

**I. Is There a Feminist Method?**


**WEEK TWO**

*(wgss candidate job talks. 1. The distinction between feminist methods and feminist methodologies and/or 2. The complexity of feminist methodologies.)*


- “An invitation to feminist research” / Abigail Brooks and Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (FRPP)

- Zotero videos for self-teaching reviewed. Assistance from WGSS librarian Sarah Beasley is always available @ <bvsb@pdx.edu>

1. [http://guides.library.pdx.edu/content.php?pid=348602&sid=2852026](http://guides.library.pdx.edu/content.php?pid=348602&sid=2852026)

2. [http://www.zotero.org/support/start](http://www.zotero.org/support/start)

**II. What Do We Need To Do in Feminist Research?**


- Jennifer Terry – “Lesbians under the medical gaze: scientists search for remarkable differences” JM

**WEEK THREE**

*(wgss candidate job talks. 1. The distinction between feminist methods and feminist methodologies and/or 2. The complexity of feminist methodologies.)*
III. Feminist Empiricism  
1/21/14  -Feminist empiricism: challenging gender bias and "setting the record straight" / Denise Leckenby (FRPP)  
-Lorraine Code – “Incredulity: experimentalism, and the politics of knowledge” JM

IV. Feminist Standpoint Theory  
1/23/14  -Feminist standpoint epistemology: building knowledge and empowerment through women's lived experience / Abigail Brooks (FRPP)  
-Harding, Sandra. “Borderlands epistemologies” JM  
-Research Project Topic Due  
-Hand out Paper #1 & graduate student presentation sign-up sheet

WEEK FOUR  
V. Feminist Postmodernism  
1/28/14  -Feminist postmodernism and poststructuralism / Patricia Lina Leavy (FRPP)  
-Donna Haraway – “Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective” JM

VI. In-Depth Interviewing  
1/30/14  -The practice of feminist in-depth interviewing / Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (FRPP)  
-Paper #1 Due

WEEK FIVE  
VII. Oral History and Focus Groups  
2/4/14  -The practice of feminist oral history and focus group interviews / Patricia Lina Leavy (FRPP)  
-Call For Papers (CFP) for WGSS Student Research Colloquium – 4/18/14

VIII. Ethnography  
2/6/14  -The feminist practice of ethnography / Elana D. Buch and Karen M. Staller (FRPP)  
WEEK SIX

IX. Content Analysis
2/11/14  -The feminist practice of content analysis / Patricia Lina Leavy (FRPP)
          -Linda Tuhinai Smith – “Research through imperial eyes” JM

X. Mixed Methods – Quantitative/Qualitative
2/13/14  -Feminist approaches to mixed-methods research / Denise Leckenby and
          Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (FRPP)
          -Karen Messing – “Don't use a wrench to peel potatoes: biological science
            constructed on male model systems is a threat to women workers' health” JM
          -rewrites of paper #1 with original - due
          -handout paper #2

WEEK SEVEN

What Are We Trying Not to Miss?
2/18/14  -Lourdes Beneria – “Paid and unpaid labor: meanings and debates” JM

          -W.A. Rogers – “Evidence-based medicine and justice: a framework for
            looking at the impact of EBM upon vulnerable or disadvantage groups” JM

2/20/14  -Venla Oikkonen, Venla. 2013. “Narrative analysis as a feminist method:
          -Paper #2 Due

WEEK EIGHT

XII. Survey Research
2/25/14  -Feminist survey research / Kathi Miner-Rubino and Toby Epstein
          Jayaratne (FRPP)
          -Diana Strassman – “Not a free market : the rhetoric of disciplinary
            authority in economics” JM

XIII. Community Based Participatory Research
2/27/14  -Patricia Maguire – “Feminist participatory research framework” JM
          -Jessica Gregg. “Beliefs about Pap Smears Among Mexican Immigrants”
            (on D2L)

WEEK NINE

XIV. Praxis
3/4/14   -Putting it together: feminist research praxis / Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber
          (FRPP)
3/6/14   -ABSTRACT/ZOTERO Presentations and/or article hangovers
          -rewrites paper #2 due
          -hand out paper #3
WEEK TEN
3/11/14  -ABSTRACT/ZOTERO Presentations
3/13/14  -ABSTRACT/ZOTERO Presentations

WEEK ELEVEN
3/17/14  (MONDAY) Final Paper Due in my mailbox at XSB 150 at 10:15 am