

Spring 2024
WGSS 101. Sec. 80
ONLINE

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Office Hours: Fridays, 10-11 am

WGSS 101. Introduction to Women's Studies: Sex, Power & Politics

Course Description

This course is a multidisciplinary introduction to contemporary feminist studies in the context of the United States. We will draw on feminist methodologies that understand inequalities of gender, race, class, sexuality, nationality, and ability as interlinked structures affecting the lives of women, men, and non-binary folk.

Like many social science courses, this class is not about providing hard and fast answers. It is about raising productive questions about gender in a modern world, and equipping you with tools to articulate your own views in a compelling and thoughtful manner. The course requires upper division standing and passage of the WST. Beyond that, we presume only an interest in the subject, a willingness to consider new ideas, and a respect for views other than your own.

As a General Education course, this class is intended to develop your writing skills. Assignments include various discussion, writing, and creative assignments.

Required Texts & Films:

- Babak Anvari, *Under the Shadow*, 2016.
- Sarah Banet-Weiser, *Empowered: Popular Feminism & Popular Misogyny*, 2018. (See Canvas.)
- Bryan Forbes, *Stepford Wives*, 1975.
- Bong Joon Ho, *Parasite*, 2018.
- Anna Rose Holmer, *The Fits*, 2015.
- Johanna Isaacson, *Stepford Daughters*, 2022. (See Canvas.)
- Toshio Meronek & Miss Major, *Miss Major Speaks: Conversation with a Black Trans Revolutionary*, 2023. (<https://www.versobooks.com/products/2787-miss-major-speaks>)
- David Robert Mitchel, *It Follows*, 2014.
- Shannon Sun-Higginson, *GTFO*, 2015.

Most required readings will be provided on SJSU's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. Please expect to spend between \$20-25 on films and books for this course.

Course Format

This is a fully online course composed of five modules between 2-4 weeks in length. Most modules, except Module #5 will involve several Discussion Posts & Chats and at least 1 Creative Project. There are no exams or quizzes in this course! However, you will do quite a bit of reading, writing, and screening of assigned material. You can expect to spend around 6-9 hours per week on this course. The final exam for this course is a project. You choose between making a trailer for a feminist horror film or constructing a feminist haunted house. The focus of either project will be the ghosts, terror, and trauma that exists on the SJSU campus.

Grading Information

Late work is accepted. Everyone receives a 2 day grace period on every assignment. If you need more than 2 days, please contact the professor for an extension. You will receive an extension, especially if you are asking

on or before the due date. I do not grade anything more than 14 days late. I do not accept any late work after May 13th.

Grade Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 859</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

SJSU Studies Area S Learning Outcomes (GELO)

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe how identities are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality. Examples include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, age, generation, regional origin, national identity, language, intersectionalities.
2. Analyze historical, economic, political, or social processes that shape diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S. and reflect on one's own identities and positions within these structures.
3. Evaluate social actions which have or have not led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S.
4. Engage in constructive interactions about social issues in the U.S. within the framework of equality and inequalities.

GE Course prerequisite: Prerequisite is completion of Core GE and upper division standing. Completion or co-registration in 100W is strongly recommended.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. Students will write at least 3000 words.

- **8 Discussion Posts & Chats** @ 31.25 per assignment for a total of 250 points or 25% of your total grade.
- **2 of 3 Creative Projects** @ 200 points for a total of 400 points or 40% of your grade.
- **1 Zoom Conference** for Final Project @ 50 points or .5% of your grade.
- **1 Annotated Bibliography** for Final Project @ 50 points or .5% of your grade.
- **1 Final Project** @250 points or 25% of your grade.

Discussion Post & Chat – You will need to complete 8 of the 10 scheduled Discussion Posts & Chats. Anything more than 8 will count toward extra credit. Most posts will involve responding to assigned readings and films. You will also need to leave comments and respond to comments left on your post by the professor and peers within 48 hours. The word count on discussion posts will vary, but probably be around 300-700 words.

Creative Project – Select 2 of the 3 Creative Projects assigned in the course. These projects invite you to apply what you are learning in a specific module in a way that is less linear, more kinesthetic, and imaginative. Please see the specific project for objectives and goals.

Zoom Conference – Everyone will schedule a short 10 minute appointment with me on zoom during week 14 to discuss the final project. Please see Canvas for details on what you need to prepare.

Annotated Bibliography – Set of sources you or your group assembled to develop the story for your film trailer or structure your haunted house. Please see Canvas for details.

Final Exam/Project – Either by yourself or with a group of no more than 4 people make a trailer for a feminist horror film that takes place on the SJSU campus and involves concepts discussed from Isaacson's *Stepford Daughters*.

If not a trailer, then a feminist haunted house with a focus on the SJSU campus. Please see the prompt on Canvas for details and requirements.

Class Protocol

- **This is an online course.** However, I encourage you to drop in to my office hours Fridays, 10-11 am on zoom.
- **Late work is accepted.** Everyone receives a 2 day grace period on every assignment. If you need more than 2 days, please contact the professor for an extension. You will receive an extension, especially if you are asking on or before the due date. I do not grade anything more than 14 days late. I do not accept any late work after May 13th.
- **Communicate.** Ultimately, I like teaching, and I am here for you. If you communicate a specific need to me *before* an assignment is due, I will accommodate you. However, I can't help you when you don't communicate with me or communicate with me after you miss an assignment. Use the Course Schedule to stay on top of your work, and let me know when you hit any roadblocks, and I will certainly try to help. Just remember that I am a person in the world too. I have other classes, family, rent to pay, etc.
- **Please do not change what is asked for on an assignment.** If you need a modification, please consult the professor before making the modification. Otherwise, failure to follow instruction will result in a less than a passing grade for the altered assignment.
- **Pronoun Use:** How we refer to each other is a basic sign of respect, both names and pronouns. Students in this class will be referred to by the name and pronoun they prefer, and with the proper pronunciation, by faculty and other students. Please advise me as soon as possible if your name and pronoun differ from my course list (mysjsu) so that I and the class may address you properly.
- **The content of this course is for mature audiences.** Unfortunately, violence against women, girls, and aggrieved communities persists. I try my best to conduct a class that grapples with violence, yet tries not to consciously perpetuate it. You can help me by speaking up whenever you are uncomfortable. I don't want to shy away from difficult topics. However, I am not interested in traumatizing folks, so do what you need to do to take care of yourself. Also, feminist readings may fundamentally challenge one's moral or religious upbringing. Please approach course material with an open mind.

Email Communication

Sending an email through Canvas is typically the best way to reach me. Your email should begin with “Dear Apryl” or “Dear Lecturer Berney” and include a brief message that begins with your primary reason for contacting the instructor; and is signed with your full preferred name (e.g. – Diamonté Quiava Valentin). Allow a minimum of 48 hours for the return of emails that will be sent primarily during business hours (Monday – Friday between 9 am – 5 pm).

Plagiarism & ChatGPT

Plagiarism is the academic dishonesty of presenting someone else’s work as your own, and it will not be tolerated. For better or worse, *do your own work*. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. If you are unclear about this, please see the library Plagiarism tutorial linked in our top Canvas module.

ChatGPT is a wonderful tool! However, over use of it on assignments for this course will result in a less than passing grade.

University Policy & Resources

There are lots of resources at this public university if you need assistance! Tutoring, health center, writing center, Accessibility Center, Library--see the list at the top module on Canvas for links. Also, see the link below for university policies as well.

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services are listed on Syllabus Information web page. (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>) hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

And finally, this is an introductory course required for the WGSS major and/or minor. Our **WGSS Program Learning Outcomes** state that upon graduation, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies students will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, class, and nation social and institutional contexts.
2. Identify and describe major theories and political movements central to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, placing contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and embodied contexts.
3. Describe the global span of feminist movements and the connection among gender and sexual minorities around the world.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking and research skills through written, oral and creative means.

The WGSS Minor requires only 15 units and is a terrific critical-thinking complement to majors in the Arts, Humanities, Science, Business, or the Social Sciences.

Spring Course Schedule¹

Week	Topic	GELO & PLO
Module #1: Greetings & Keywords		
1 - 1/22-1/26 Greetings & Keywords	READ: Course Syllabus.	GELO- #1, 4 PLO - #1, 4
2 – 1/29 – 2/2	READ: The Keywords Feminist Editorial Collective, <i>Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies</i> , 2012. (Free SJSU Library.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post #1 - Introductions & Keywords – 2/2 	
Module #2: Empowered		
3 – 2/5 – 2/9 Empowered	READ: Introduction + The Funhouse Mirror, from Sarah Banet Weiser’s <i>Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post & Chat #2 – 2/9 	GELO-#1-4 PLO - #1-4
4 – 2/12- 2/16	READ: Shame + Confidence, from Sarah Banet Weiser’s <i>Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post & Chat #3 – 2/26 	
5 – 2/19 – 2/23	READ: Competence + Rage, from Sarah Banet Weiser’s <i>Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny</i> . WATCH: Shannon Sun-Higginson, <i>GTFO</i> , 2015. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Empowerment or Misogyny Advertisement Analysis – 2/16 	
Module #3: Stepford Daughters		
6 – 2/26 – 3/1 Stepford Daughters	READ: Isaacson, “Introduction,” from <i>Stepford Daughters</i> . WATCH: Bryan Fordes, <i>Stepford Wives</i> , 1975. (Free on Tubi.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post & Chat #4 – 3/1 	GELO-#1-4 PLO - #1-4
7 – 3/4-3/8	READ: Isaacson, “Chapter 1: It’s Coming from Inside/Outside the House: Horror as Care Strike,” from <i>Stepford Daughters</i> . WATCH: Babak Anvari, <i>Under the Shadow</i> , 2016. (Free on Netflix; #3.99 Apple) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post & Chat #5 – 3/8 	
8 – 3/11 – 3/15	READ: Isaacson, “Chapter 2: It’s Coming from Inside the Boss’s House: Horror and Waged Domestic Work,” from <i>Stepford Daughters</i> . WATCH: Jayro Bustamante, <i>La Llorona</i> , 2019. (Roku for FREE; Google Play \$2.99) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Discussion Post & Chat #6 – 3/15 • DUE: Creative Project #2: Domestic Horrors – 3/15 	
9 – 3/18 – 3/22	READ: Isaacson, “Chapter 3: The Telltale Managed Heart: Service Labor & the Emotional Labor in Contemporary Horror,” from <i>Stepford Daughters</i> . WATCH: Bong Joon Ho, <i>Parasite</i> , 2018. (Amazon \$2.99) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Discussion Post & Chat #7 – 3/22 	
10 – 3/25 – 3/29	READ: Isaacson, “Chapter 4: Coming of Rage: Teens Entering the Futureless Future in Contemporary Horror,” from <i>Stepford Daughters</i> . WATCH: Choose Between: <i>It Follows</i> (2014); <i>Assassination Nation</i> (2018); <i>The Fits</i> (2015); <i>The Lure</i> (2015). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Discussion Post & Chat #8 – 3/29 	
11 - 4/1-4/5	SPRING BREAK	

¹ Schedule is tentative and is subject to change.

Module #4: Miss MAJOR!		
12 – 4/8 – 4/12	READ: “Stonewall Never Happened” + “Fuck a Butterfly. Embrace the Caterpillar” from <i>Miss Major Speaks: Conversations with a Black Tans Revolutionary</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Discussion Post & Chat #9 – 4/12 	GELO-#1-4 PLO - #1-4
13 – 4/15 – 4/19	READ: “The Keys to Our Fucking Survival” + “Miss Major Futurism” from <i>Miss Major Speaks: Conversations with a Black Tans Revolutionary</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Discussion Post & Chat #10 – 4/19 • Due: Creative Project #3: Fake ID – 4/19 	
Module #5: Feminist Haunted House or Horror Trailer		
14 – 4/22- 4/26	Work on Project – Zoom Conference Week	GELO - #1-4 PLO- #1-4
15 – 4/29 – 5/3	Work on Project – Annotated Bibliography Due	
16 – 5/6 – 5/10	Work on Project	
17 – 5/13	5/13 is final day of instruction.	
5/15-22	Final Exams – Project is DUE!	