



College of Arts and Sciences
Department of English and Modern Languages
Spring 2017
ENGL 5314
Studies in Critical Theory--Feminisms

Course Description

This course is an advanced study of the relationship between form and content in various modes of media, discourse, and criticism. The emphasis for this offering of Studies in Critical Theory is on feminist theory. Throughout the semester, you will read and learn to apply feminist theory to literature, popular culture, and pedagogy.

Dr. Adrienne Blackwell-Starnes

Office Location: Maes 42

Office Hours: MW 2:00 - 5:00 PM¹

Office extension: 8589

Email address: ablackwellst@lamar.edu²

Required Texts & Materials

Freedman, Estelle. *The Essential Feminist Reader*. New York: Modern Library, 2007.

- You will need additional books this semester, but these books are individually chosen, depending on your interests and the topic for your capstone project.

Access to your LULearn account

A backup system for your files (this may be a thumb drive or a cloud storage option)

Regular access to a computer with Internet—either your own or through a campus computer lab

Student Learning Outcomes

1. explicate the role of key feminist theorists and activists in developing feminist critical theory
2. apply feminist theory to a variety of topics, including literature, history, pedagogy, and popular culture
3. Critically assess primary works using an informed feminist perspective
4. Articulate arguments that frame primary works in a new perspective
5. Demonstrate mastery of incorporating source material into your work through quote, paraphrase, summary, and synthesis
6. Conduct research, writing, and revision with a final goal of publication

¹ These are official office hours, with exceptions made for meetings. You may also find me in my office, with exceptions for meetings and class, from 10AM – 6PM Monday – Thursday. You are welcome to drop in without an appointment at these times, though I recommend you check my calendar for meeting times prior to dropping in.

² You may elect to message me via the LULearn mail system, but you will likely get a faster response via the official Lamar email, as I do not check LULearn more than 2 times each day.

Assignment Overviews

Feminist Profiles: Each student in the class will choose a specific feminist and create a detailed profile of the selected feminist.

Discovering Feminisms Blog: Each student will contribute weekly to the course blog, with posts alternating between content posts, comment posts, and response posts depending upon the group assignment.

Capstone Project: Each student will choose a theme for their capstone project, either analysis, pedagogy, or reading, and complete an appropriate project for the selected theme.

Final Exam: Each student will complete a reflective, self assessment of their work in this course for the final course assessment.

Course Deadlines and Personal Responsibility

The deadlines for all projects this semester, excepting the course blog, is the last day of classes. This allows you flexibility to work through the course, but also requires you to set your own deadlines, consider your individual timeline, and be responsible for completing assignments. Many of the assignments allow for revisions, which should only encourage you to plan to submit assignments earlier in the semester and receive revision feedback. It is your responsibility to work toward completing the course from the beginning. I will not grant extensions for assignments or incompletes for the course simply because you are not able to manage your own time. In the case of serious personal or family emergencies, please contact me to discuss your absence and how you will get back on track for the semester.

Grading Policies

Grading for this course is on a standard 10-point scale. You have access to your grades in the Blackboard grade book. You can determine your progress at any time during the semester through the "Weighted Total" column, which provides you your most current average.³

Assignments in the course carry the following grade weights:

Feminist Profile	20%
Discovering Feminisms blog	25%
Capstone Project	50%
Final Exam	5%

Grade Discussions: I am always willing to discuss your grades and ways you can further your learning in the course. If you have a question or concern you wish to discuss, please address this issue in my office, not in the classroom. This policy is for your privacy. I respect concern for grades, but I also expect that this concern begins prior to the last weeks of class. Therefore, if you have not met with me to discuss improving your grades prior to the last 2 weeks of the semester, I will not discuss your grades with you during these two final weeks. You are responsible for keeping up with your grades throughout the semester, and concerns should be addressed soon after the grade is recorded, not at the semester end.

Grade Turnaround: I will return graded writing assignments within one week of receipt.

³ Do not hesitate to inquire about assignments, grades, or other class related topics. I maintain an open door policy; if I am in my office, please drop in! If I am not, do not hesitate to email me and set up an appointment.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is required for success in this course. Defining regular attendance in an online course is different from a face-to-face course; however, we will work with the following attendance policies for this course:

- The first two weeks of this course, attendance will be based on your creating a Wordpress account, publishing your first post, and choosing your feminist for the Feminist Profile assignment.
- All subsequent weeks in the course, attendance will be based on participation in the course blog, according to your group's assignment for the current week. You can find your group and assignments in the Discovering Feminism section of this course. You must post each week for your attendance to count. You may not make up a previous week's attendance with extra posts.

You are required to be active in the course *every week* to be considered in attendance. If you are inactive for 3 weeks throughout this course, your final grade will be dropped by one letter grade. If you are inactive for 4 weeks throughout this course, you will fail the course.

Military Community Members: I recognize the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. If you are a member of the military community, please inform me if you are in need of special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. I encourage veterans to stay in contact with the Veterans Affairs Office (VA@lamar.edu), and active duty military to stay in contact with the Center for Military Services (military@lamar.edu). These offices have Dedicated Military Officers who can further assist you with questions and complications that may arise as you pursue your education.

Disability Accommodations

Lamar University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is located in the Communications building room 105. Office staff collaborate with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.⁴

For students:

- If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact the DRC at 409-880-8347 or drc@lamar.edu to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the DRC to explore possible options regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- If you are registered with DRC and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, we encourage you to contact our instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

⁴ I want to be clear that neither the DRC nor myself considers registering for accommodations as a sign of weakness nor as a plea for special treatment. Rather, course accommodations for special needs make the course equally accessible for special needs students and students who need no accommodations.

Academic Honesty

Students are specifically warned against all forms of cheating and plagiarism. The *Lamar University Student Handbook* clearly reads: “Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subjected to disciplinary action. Punishable offenses include, but are not limited to, cheating on an examination or academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of source materials.” One aspect of the *Handbook’s* definition of cheating includes “purchasing or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm.” Plagiarism is defined as “the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or ideas into one’s own and submitted for credit.” Faculty members in the College of arts and Sciences investigate all cases of suspected plagiarism.

Course Policy: In this course, any occurrence of academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the course and will be filed on your academic record.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University’s website’s homepage (www.Lamar.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for severe weather or violence/active shooter, fire, or chemical release can be found at: <http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>. Following are procedures for the first two:

Severe Weather

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
- Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

Violence/Active Shooter (CADD)

- **CALL** - 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 9-1-1 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
- **AVOID**- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- **DENY**- Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
- **DEFEND**- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

Important Semester Dates**Census Date** (Six Drop Rule does not apply)

01 February 2017—Census Date/12th Class Day. Students may drop or withdraw without consulting with their Instructor, Department Chair or the Records Office. The Six Drop Rule does not apply to students who drop before 5:00p.m. on 01 February 2017.

Drop Dates (Six Drop Rule applies)

20 February 2017: Last day to drop or withdraw from the course without academic penalty and receive a Q. Six Drop Rule applies beginning on 02 February 2017. Students should consult with Instructor and the Records Office to initiate a drop between the dates of 02 February 2017 and 20 February 2017.

03 April 2017: Last day to drop or withdraw with academic penalty. Student must be passing the course at the time of the requested drop in order to receive a Q. The drop form, including all required signatures, must arrive in the Records Office by no later than 4:00p.m. on 03 April 2017. Six Drop Rule applies.

Note Any student seeking to drop after 03 April 2017 must submit a fairly thorough written explanation, including supporting documents if applicable, of the extenuating circumstances for which the action is being requested. The explanation must be shared with and approved by the Instructor, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the college before the drop form will be sent to the Senior Associate Provost for a final review and decision.

Link to Academic Calendar

<http://events.lamar.edu/academic-calendar-listing.html>⁵

⁵ If you're reading this footnote, you're off to an excellent start to the semester!