

**Feminisms in Comparative Perspective:  
Gender Inequalities, (Im)Mobilities, and Transnationalisms in North America  
15-WGS-4045/7045, Spring 2013 Semester  
Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, University of Cincinnati  
Syllabus**

**Online UC Course containing an international collaborative module with the  
Universidad de las Americas Puebla (UDLAP), Mexico**

**UC course:** Feminisms in Comparative Perspective (online, advanced undergrad/grad)

**UDLAP course:** Seminario de Analisis Conyuntural (classroom, advanced undergrad/grad)

**Shared subtitle for courses:** Gender Inequalities, (Im)Mobilities, and Transnationalisms in North America and UC course and shared online module taught in English

**Co-instructors:**

UC Instructor: Anne Sisson Runyan. Professor, Dept. of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and interim director of the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center (anne.runyan@uc.edu)

UC additional instructional input: Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama, Dept. of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies (sanmigo@uc.edu)

UC Instructional Design support: Carolyn Stoll (carolyn.stoll@uc.edu)

UDLAP Instructor: Marianne H. Marchand, Dept. of International Relations and Political Science and Coordinator of Canadian Studies (marianne.udlap@gmail.com)

UC students should email Dr. Runyan for substantive course issues or problems and she will respond within 48 hours. Students on campus can also email Dr. Runyan to schedule a face-to-face appointment. Ms. Stoll can be emailed about technical problems with Blackboard or other online technologies, but UC students should cc Dr. Runyan if contact Ms. Stoll directly.

**Platforms:** UC Blackboard; UDLAP Blackboard; Shared Module on UC Blackboard

Can count for WGSS undergraduate and graduate programs as well as an elective in Human Rights, Latin American Studies, and Political Science programs. This course is a result of a COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) project sponsored by the SUNY Global Center in NYC and funded through a National Endowment for the Humanities grant designed to promote international learning through experimental cooperative cross-border instruction. We welcome you to this experiment and hope it might lead to future collaborative courses of this kind.

**(UC) Course Description**

This online course starts from the idea that "North America" as a region is socially constructed; currently, it is constructed particularly in relation to the post-North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and post-9/11 climate in which we live. Such a climate (re)produces national, political, economic, cultural, social, and mental borders that limit our thinking about rights, citizenships, social and physical mobility, local and transnational social movements, and

national and social identities. Such borders prevent the development of more inclusive societies and more equal and just relations within and across the region. Through the lens of comparative and regional feminist studies, this course takes students on virtual journeys from Mexico's interior through the Mexico-US and US-Canada borders to Canada's north to learn about national, gender, race, class, and sexuality inequities and struggles for social justice across the North American region where the Global North and South meet and where a world power lies at the center.

A unique feature of this online course is a five-week virtual collaboration with political science and gender studies students at the Universidad de las Americas Puebla (UDLAP) in Puebla, Mexico. Dr. Marianne Marchand of the Department of Political Science at UDLAP will be co-teaching during this collaboration. Through shared readings, images, google earth exercises, chat rooms, skyping, wikis, streaming videos, and online gaming undertaken prior to and during our collaboration, we will explore the barriers to and potentialities of building cross-cultural understandings and cross-national political solidarities for a more just "North America," challenging not only the borders "out there" but also those between each other and within ourselves.

### **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course and its shared module, students should be able to:

Challenge their own ethnocentrism

Collaborate with learners in another culture

Identify competing notions of "North America"

Identify the structural inequalities intensified by NAFTA and other regional agreements/policies

Understand the limitations of and on citizenship rights in the North American region

Evaluate abuses of women's and LGBT rights in the North American region

List examples of feminists organizing against NAFTA and its effects in all three countries

Analyze readings and films for their ability to raise awareness about the interconnectedness of struggles against gender inequalities and immobilities in the North American region

Recognize all sorts of borders in the North American region

Recognize the complexities of "crossing borders" for marginalized people and for social movements

Challenge borders as barriers to social, economic, and political mobility for women, racialized people, and sexual minorities in the North American region

Engage in cross-border dialogue for building political solidarities

Construct new ways of thinking about transnationalism and transnational feminism through studying gender issues in a North American context

### **Required Texts (available through UC Bookstore/Dubois Bookstore and Amazon)**

Runyan, Anne Sisson, Amy Lind, Patricia McDermott, Marianne H. Marchand. 2013. *Feminist (Im)Mobilities in Fortress(ing) North America: Rights, Citizenships, and Identities in Transnational Perspective*. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate. (As not out until end of Jan. 2013, pdfs of chapters will be made available under course readings later a few discounted copies will also be made available: contains a

number of pieces by UC WGSS faculty and alumnae, including the course instructors, as well as Mexican and Canadian students and faculty who came to UC on exchange)—hardback or ebook

Weber, Cynthia. 2011. *'I Am An American': Filming the Fear of Difference*. Bristol, UK: Intellect. (engaging “storybook” arraying multiple testimonials and images based on a video project)—paperback or ebook

Bayes, Jane, Patricia Begne, Laura Gonzales, Loise Harder, Mary Hawkesworth, and Laura MacDonald. 2006. *Women, Democracy, and Globalization in North America: A Comparative Study*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.--paperback

Additional readings listed in course outline and posted on Blackboard under Course Readings.

### **Course Policies for UC Students**

In this course, all informed points of view will be listened to and respectfully considered. In addition to being respectful of each other in online class discussions, students are also expected to keep up with and critically engage with the readings, activities, films, and other course materials; electronically submit completed work on time; and avoid plagiarism of any kind by appropriately documenting sources of quotations, ideas, and arguments.

Assignments must be submitted by their due dates (and times) for full credit. Late discussion board posts will generally not be accepted and papers submitted late will generally result in point deductions (.5 of a point per each day late with nothing accepted more than a week late) unless there is a documented medical or other emergency/serious problem (including technical ones) of which the instructor is informed of in advance of the due date so that adjustments can be made if warranted. Given the collaborative nature of this course, it is vital that students keep up and do their fair share on time so that they are responsive to their student colleagues and international partners and do not negatively affect the work of their student colleagues and international partners.

Blackboard support is offered by emailing [blackboard@uc.edu](mailto:blackboard@uc.edu) or calling 556-1602 with any technical questions you have or problems you might experience (see also HELP button on Blackboard). You can also contact the Instructional Design resource person ([carolyn.stoll@uc.edu](mailto:carolyn.stoll@uc.edu)) for this course on technical matters. You should also contact the instructor if you are having technical, assignment, submission, health, or other course problems by email or phone ([anne.runyan@uc.edu](mailto:anne.runyan@uc.edu), 513-556-0675, or cell in emergencies at 513-706-0125). She will respond to any of these queries within 48 hours and will usually complete grading within a week of submission. She will advise students if she will be out of contact or delayed for any longer period.

All are expected to abide by the University Rules, including the Student Code of Conduct, and other documented policies of the department, college, and university related to academic integrity. Any violation of these regulations, including acts of plagiarism or cheating, will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the severity of the misconduct. It is each student's responsibility to know and comply with the Student Code of Conduct, which defines behavior expected of all University of Cincinnati students and behavior considered misconduct. Sanctions and penalties are outlined. The Code of

Conduct is available in the college office and online at <http://www.uc.edu/ucinfo/conduct.html>  
Definitions of cheating, plagiarism, and penalties are in the Code of Conduct. The definition of plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: copying another student's work, copying materials without proper citation, paraphrasing without proper citation and failing to cite all sources used and/or consulted. Examples of unacceptable plagiarism can be reviewed at:  
<http://www.Indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html#original>

If you have any special needs related to your participation in this course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your performance in this course, you should contact the instructor to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all requirements of this course. At the discretion of the instructor, some accommodations may require prior approval by Disability Services.

Students can get help from the A & S Writing Center by calling 556-3912 to schedule an appointment or a series of appointments with a tutor. It is important to schedule in advance and not wait until the end of the semester. If, on the basis of initial assignments, the professor sees that a student needs a writing tutor, that student will be referred to the Writing Center.

Sally Moffitt ([sally.moffitt@uc.edu](mailto:sally.moffitt@uc.edu)) is the UC Langsam librarian specializing in women's, gender, and sexuality studies resources and you contact her about any research assistance you might need.

Grading (points/percentages) will follow the University schema: 93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 67-69 = D+; 63-66 = D; 60-62 = D-; below 60 = F

Any alerts about new course information/instructions will be done through Blackboard announcements and/or email.

### **Course Outline (subject to some change)**

**Note: All submitted course assignments due by 11:55 EST on Sunday nights at end of each week for which assignment is made with the exception of final paper and evals due on April 23 at 11:55 EST.**

#### ***UC Module One: North American Border-Crossings***

Learning Objectives:

Challenge US ethnocentrism in the North American context

Recognize all sorts of borders in the North American region

Recognize the complexities of crossing borders in North America for marginalized people and for social movements

Challenge borders as barriers to social, economic, and political mobility for women, sexual minorities, and racialized peoples in the North American region

#### **Week 1 (Week of January 7) Course Introductions: Crossing Personal/Identity Borders**

Readings:

Weber, Chapter 1

Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1999. "Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan" (Chapter 2, pp. 37-45) in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Assignment:

Introduce yourselves on the Blackboard discussion board in terms of your immigrant (or indigenous) heritage and what brought your family to North America; your gender and race or ethnicity identification; and what you think makes you an "American" (and/or not an "American"). Worth 5%.

## **Week 2 (Week of January 14) Crossing National Borders**

Readings:

Weber, Chapter 3

Runyan et al, Chapter 5 (Lind and Williams)

Pratt, Anna and Sarah K. Thompson. 2008. "Chivalry, 'Race', and Discretion at the Canadian Border." *British Journal of Criminology* 48: 620-40.

Luna-Firebaugh, Eileen M. 2002. "The Border Crossed Us: Crossing Issues of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas." *Wicazo Sa Review* 17 (1): 158-81.

Solomon, Alisa. 2005. "Trans/Migrant" in *Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings*, ed. Eithne Luibheid and Lionel Cantu, Jr. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, pp. 3-29.

Assignment:

Post on the Blackboard discussion board images of "borders" that you photograph or find on the web along with explanations of what kinds and dimensions of borders your image(s) represent. Each of you must respond to one other student's posting in terms of how well it elucidates how borders operate to limit and divide based on the readings thus far. Worth 5%.

## **Week 3 (Week of January 21) Crossing Socio-Cultural, Economic, and Political Borders**

Readings:

Weber, Chapter 4

Carillo, Teresa. 2002. "Cross-Border Talk: Transnational Perspectives on Labor, Race and Sexuality," in Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, eds. *Gender in a Transnational World*, pp. 535-540. New York: McGraw Hill.

Wright, Melissa. 1998. "Maquiladora Mestizas and a Feminist Border Politics: Revisiting Anzaldúa," *Hypatia* 13 (3): 114-131.

Assignment:

Post on the Blackboard discussion board a reflection on the "borders"/differences between yourselves and the Mexican students who you will encounter later in the course especially in terms of what barriers—social, cultural, political, linguistic, issue prioritization, etc—there might be to your working together on a common activity and a common issue. Worth 10%.

## **UC Module Two: Regional Gender Politics: Inequalities and Rights in "North America"**

Learning Objectives:

Identify competing notions of "North America"

Identify the structural inequalities intensified by NAFTA and other regional agreements/policies

Understand the limitations of and on citizenship rights in the North American region  
Evaluate abuses of women's and LGBT rights in the North American region  
List examples of feminists organizing against NAFTA and its effects in all three countries

**Week 4 (Week of January 28) Constructing “North America”: Gendered Inclusions and Exclusions**

Readings:

Bayes et al, Introduction

Runyan et al, Introduction and Chapter 1(Hodes)

Assignment:

Set up a Skype account and post your Skype address on the Blackboard discussion board; Also Friend each other on Facebook (set up a Facebook account if don't already have one)

**Week 5 (Week of February 4) Women's/LGBT Rights in North America in Comparative Perspective**

Readings:

Bayes et al, Chapters 2, 3, 4

Runyan et al, Chapter 7 (Gomez Rossi)

Assignment:

Practice Skyping with at least one other member of the class by sharing your thoughts on the similarities and differences in the struggles for women's rights in Mexico, the US, and Canada.

**Week 6 (Week of February 11) NAFTA, Globalization, and Gendered Restructuring in North America**

Readings:

Bayes et al, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8

Assignment:

Submit an individual reflection paper (double-spaced and in Word; 3-4 pages for undergraduates and 5-6 pages for graduates) which addresses generally why and how gendered inequalities have increased in a post-NAFTA, Fortress(ing) North America. Worth 20%

***UC Module Three: Gendered Citizenships, Immobilities, and Violence in “North America”***

Learning Objectives:

Understand the limitations of and on citizenship rights in the North American region

Evaluate abuses of women's and LGBT rights in the North American region

Analyze readings for their ability to raise awareness about gendered inequalities and immobilities in the North American region

**Week 7 (Week of February 18) Citizenship Denied**

Readings:

Runyan et al, Chapter 3 (Norman)

Bhandar, Davinda. 2004. “Renormalizing Citizenship and Life in Fortress North America.” *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 3: 261-278.

Assignment:

Familiarize yourselves with how to create a Wiki through Blackboard instructions and choose a partner to produce one with and begin developing a shared approach to your collaboratively-created 5-7 page analytical

paper. Your paper should address some aspect(s) of the broad theme of “Gendered Implications of the Neoliberalization and Securitization of North America” and must draw from the course readings (at least one each from Modules One, Two, and Three). You should use Skype, Facebook, and/or email to find a partner and agree upon your approach, procedures, timelines of drafts, and (equal) divisions of labor.

### **Week 8 (Week of February 25) Labor, Reproductive, and Sexual Immobilities**

Readings:

Runyan et al, Chapters 2 (McDermott and Sanmiguel-Valderrama), 4 (O’Leary and Gardea), 8 (White)

Assignment:

Collaboratively develop your analytical paper in Wiki form with one partner from the class.

### **Week 9 (Week of March 4) Gendered Violence**

Readings:

Wright, Melissa W. 2010. “Necropolitics, Narcopolitics and Femicide: Gendered Violence on the Mexico-US Border,” *Signs: Journal of Women, Culture, and Society* 36 (3): 707-731.

Bohrman, Rebecca and Naomi Murakawa. 2005. “Remaking Big Government: Immigration and Crime Control in the United States.” In *Global Lockdown: Race, Gender, and the Prison-Industrial Complex*, ed. Julia Sudbury, pp. 109-126. New York: Routledge.

Thobani, Sunera. 2007. “The Welfare of Nationals” (Chapter 3, pp. 105-140) in *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Assignment:

Submit your analytical paper (5-7 pages, double-spaced) done as a Wiki and produced collaboratively with one other person in the class. Worth 20%.

### **UC-UDLAP Shared Module Four: Transnational Feminisms in “North America”**

Learning Objectives:

Collaborate with learners in another culture

Engage in cross-border dialogue for building political solidarities

Analyze films for their ability to raise awareness about the interconnectedness of struggles against gender inequalities and immobilities in the North American region

Construct new ways of thinking about transnationalism and transnational feminism through studying gender issues in a North American context

### **Week 10 (Week of March 11) Transnational Encounters**

Readings:

Runyan et al, Chapter 9 (Rosser and Trujillo)

Sampaio, Anna. 2004. “Transnational Feminisms in a New Global Matrix: Hermanas en la lucha,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 6 (2): 181-206.

Alexander, M. Jacqui. 2005. Chapter 5 “Remembering *This Bridge Called My Back*: Remembering Ourselves (pp. 257-286) in *Pedagogies of Crossing*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

hooks, bell and Amelia Mesa-Bains. 2006. “Afterword” chapter (pp. 131-146) in *Homegrown: Engaged Cultural Criticism*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Assignment: Create, post, and take Google Earth/virtual tours of UC and UDLAP followed by discussion board postings (one per student) on what parts of their campus are significant to them—with one response posting by each student to a posting by a student from the other country. Worth 5%.

#### **Week 11** (Week of March 18) UC SPRING BREAK

#### **Week 12** (Week of March 25) **Transnational Gazes**

Reading:

Runyan et al, Chapter 10 (Runyan)

Films to view: “Seniorita Extraviada” (Netflix/free access) and “Finding Dawn” (online url/free access)

Assignment: Pairs of students (one from each country) will post reactions to the films on the UC discussion board. Worth 5%.

#### **Week 13** (Week of April 1) **Transnational Migrations**

Assignment: Engage in an online role-playing “game” in which individual students adopt personas (two different ones: a rural poor Mexican woman seeking to gain “unskilled” work in US and a US working class lesbian of color seeking to join Canadian partner to live and work in Canada) and attempt to cross North American borders (Mexico-US and US-Canada). Built into the game will be barriers to try to surmount in order to cross, stay, and/or return. After individually playing game with as two personas who attempt to cross two borders, students will post a reaction to their game playing on the UC discussion board. Worth 10%.

#### **Week 14** (Week of April 8) **Transnational Feminism(s)**

Readings:

Mendoza, Breny. 2002. “Transnational Feminisms in Question.” *Feminist Theory* 3(3): 295-314.

Nagar, Richa and Amanda Lock Swarr. 2010. “Introduction: Theorizing Transnational Feminist Praxis.” In *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*, ed. Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar, pp. 1-20. Albany: SUNY Press.

Weber, Chapter 5

Assignment: Organize (through Skype, Facebook, email) into groups of 4 (consisting of 2 from each country) to identify a transnational feminist movement topic in the context of North America or US-Mexican relations specifically to research online and prepare an 10-12 page plus bibliography joint research paper through a Blackboard wiki that is due during UC exam week on April 23. Collaborative research and writing should be ongoing from this point to complete and submit by the deadline. Papers can focus on a particular transnational/cross-border feminist/LGBT movement/organization directed towards social, cultural, economic, or policy change in North America or its member countries or be a comparative study or two to three such movements/organizations or examine transnational feminist/LGBT movement strategies (ranging from the interpersonal and organizational to the use of media and social media such as blogging, crowdsourcing, etc) as they are applied in and/or across particular movements. In addition to web research to identify and flesh out movements under study and online resources from such



sources as Google Scholar, the UC library, and the UDLAP library, relevant course readings can and should be used as to help frame the research and as research sources.

**Week 15** (Week of April 15) **Transnational Feminist Organizing**

Readings:

Staudt, Kathleen and Irasema Coronado. 2010. "Binational Civic Action for Accountability: Antiviolence Organizing in Ciudad Juarez/El Paso." In *Making a Killing: Femicide, Free Trade, and La Frontera*, ed. Alicia Gaspar de Alba with Georgina Guzman, pp. 157-181. Austin: University of Texas.

Martinez, Lisa M. 2010. "Mobilization Matters: Moving Immigrant and Latina Women into the Public Sphere." In *Contours of Citizenship*, eds. Margaret Abraham et al., pp. 127-145. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate.

Simmons and Copeland. 2010. "Innovative Transnational Remedies for the Women of Ciudad Juarez." In *Terrorizing Women: Femicide in the Americas*, ed. Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, pp. 195-224. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Assignment: Groups of 4 students (consisting of 2 from each country) finish constructing a 10-12 page, double-spaced paper plus bibliography on a wiki page on a transnational feminist movement in the North American context of their choice (Skype/Facebook/email collaboration as needed to produce). Worth 20%.

**Week 16** (Week of April 22) UC EXAM WEEK

Transnational Feminist Movement Collaborative Wiki Paper due 4/23.

UC online course evaluations via survey monkey for UC students due 4/23.