

WOMENSST 397R, Fall 2015: Sustainable Development, Women, and Gender: The Romance, Rhetoric, and Realities

Professor K. Asher (kasher@umass.edu)

Office: Bartlett 387

Class time: TuTh 10:00-11:15am

Meets in: Bartlett 121

Office Hours: Tu 11:30am-12:30 pm, Th 11:30am-1pm, or **by appointment**

Course mailing list womensst-397r-01-fal15@courses.umass.edu

The 2014 United Nations [World Survey on the role of women in development 2014](#) makes a strong case for linking gender equality and sustainable development. While neither concerns about gender equality nor sustainability are new, they are re-emerging as part of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. This upper level seminar examines perceived and existing links between economic development, women, and gender from various perspectives. Informed by feminist theories of power and politics we will engage critically with questions such as:

- ❖ How did concerns about "third world women" enter discussions about economic development and social change? And how have development institutions and interventions addressed women's needs and gender equality?
- ❖ Why and how are these discussions reemerging vis-à-vis sustainability and sustainable development, specifically vis-à-vis the "green" economy, food security, and population and reproductive rights?
- ❖ How have feminists concerned with gender and power explained and addressed the roles and needs of women?
- ❖ How have women across the world organized to address their concerns?

In the first part of the seminar, we will focus on understanding contemporary and historical definitions and debates about sustainable development and its links to gender. In the second part of the semester, we will deepen that understanding by revisiting key themes from the first part of the semester that are of particular interest to students. Throughout the semester we will be attentive to the racialized and gendered dimensions of persistent social, economic and political inequalities.

Course goals: The intended outcome of this course is to enable students to

- ❖ Contextualize 21st century concerns about sustainability within broader theories and debates about international development
- ❖ Assess how social justice and gender equity concerns intersect with issues of economic and environmental sustainability
- ❖ Become familiar with the parameters of different feminist approaches to understanding the links between economics, the environment, and society
- ❖ Develop strong analytical skills (in terms of reading, thinking, and writing)
- ❖ Become proficient in library research, use of different databases (such as Environment Index, Web of Science, Expanded Academic, JSTOR, GreenFile, ScienceDirect, GenderWatch, Academic Search Premier) and assessing academic versus other sources of knowledge and information production
- ❖ Engage critically and self-reflexively in current debates and actions for gender equality and sustainability.

Required Readings (Available via Amherst Books)

- ❖ Black, Maggie. 2002. *No-Nonsense Guide to International Development*. New Internationalist.
- ❖ Mies, Maria. *Lace Makers of Narsapur: Indian housewives produce for the world market*. (1982 edition by Zed Press, republished in 2012 by Spinifex).
- ❖ Magdoff, Fred and John Bellamy Foster. 2011. *What Every Environmentalist Needs To Know about Capitalism: A Citizen's Guide to Capitalism and the Environment*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- ❖ Additional Readings on Moodle
- ❖ A writing guide such as Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, and a style manual such as Hacker's *A Pocket Manual of Style* (both published by St Martin's Press, NY), or Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*. 4th edition. Longman.

Assignments, Grades, and Ground Rules:

- ❖ Attendance and Participation (incl. how you engage your peers) 25%
- ❖ Short Annotations (four including ungraded one) 15%
- ❖ Sustainability: A review of definitions and debates (due Oct 1) 10%
- ❖ Midterm Essay (due Oct 22) 20%
- ❖ Final Assignment (class presentations on Dec 4, 8,10, final due Dec 14) 30%

1. **Attendance:** Your physical and intellectual presence, your active and respectful engagement with the course material and your peers are imperative for the success of the seminar. Being a little late or missing a session because of illness or injury is understandable. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be marked absent. When you cannot come to class because of legitimate reasons (illness, injury, death of a loved one), let me know in writing and excuse your absence within a week of the missed session. Over three absences will result in the lowering of your overall grade.
2. **Preparation and Participation:** Read the required readings and do any assigned work before coming to class. Having a vague idea about the material and making general points does not count as participation. Good participation rests on sound preparation. So develop a practice of reading closely to identify main theme(s) and examine the premise of an argument critically. Close reading will also prepare you to answer and pose questions about the course material and the ideas raised in class. If you don't understand something or are confused, please ask. Also learn to engage respectfully with your peers and their ideas.
3. **Using smart phones in class is decidedly un-smart** as it invites me to fail you. When in class **turn OFF your mobile devices**. **You may seek permission to use your computer in class to refer to readings and notes, and to take notes. However, please do not connect to the Internet.**
4. **Class list** (womensst-397r-01-fal15@courses.umass.edu), **Moodle, and Email etiquette:** Instructions, study questions, and updates about the course will be posted on Moodle and/or sent through the class list. So learn to use and check Moodle regularly and please make sure that your **@umass.edu** email is functional. I welcome appropriate email queries and will respond to them

within a reasonable amount of time (24-48 hours is normal). For a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate email, familiarize yourself with [Emails as Professional Correspondences or Email Etiquette](#)

5. **Office Hours** are for you. So if you have questions about material that is difficult to understand, want to discuss a class topic further, brainstorm research ideas, or just talk about something you read please come see me during office hours (list above and on Moodle). I welcome and encourage intellectual curiosity.
6. Academic dishonesty compromises your grades and your education. Become familiar with [the University's academic integrity policy](#), and learn to recognize and avoid **plagiarism**
7. **Accommodation for documented disability:** If you have a **documented physical, psychological, or learning disability** on file with Disability Services (DS), Learning Disabilities Support Services (LDSS), or Psychological Disabilities Services (PDS), please inform me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make necessary arrangements:
<http://www.umass.edu/disability/procedures.pdf>
8. Library research is not only key to meeting the learning goals of the seminar but will open a world of knowledge and learning. So learn to use the excellent resources at [UMASS libraries](#) (click the Menu button on the upper right)
9. Writing is a crucial tool for learning and an invaluable skill for communicating what you learn. So take the time to learn to write well. Check out some of the excellent resources available to you, including <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>, one of the most extensive lists of handouts on writing and research help. Citing sources and formatting references correctly is key for academic writing. See the links at <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/index.html> for some help.
10. Furthermore, written **assignments for this class:**
 - ❖ Should follow my writing guidelines (see pages 8-9 of the syllabus).
 - ❖ May be discussed with me during my office hours and with your peers.
 - ❖ Will be better if you workshop the drafts with your peers and/or at the [Writing Center](#). Take a copy of the assignment instructions and your draft response to your session. Engage your editing process by articulating what you want the tutor to focus on in addressing your work.
 - ❖ Must be submitted by **stated deadlines (by noon on the dates due)**. By handing in assignments late you forfeit your right to comments and lose half a letter grade for every day that your work is late. So learn to manage your time.
 - ❖ May be revised and resubmitted accepted within two weeks of receiving comments back from the instructor. Submit hardcopies of your substantially revised written work along with the original submission(s). Note that resubmitting a paper does not guarantee a higher grade. In fact, cursorily rewritten work may receive a lower grade than the original.

Course Schedule: This is a working course schedule and is subject to change. For example, readings may be added or substituted at the professor's discretion. The readings listed under each week are for that week. That is, please read the listed material before coming to class.

Week 1: Gender Equality and Sustainable Development – An introduction

Tu, Sept 8: Introduction to the class, its themes, and its participants

Th, Sept 10

- ❖ Read Chapters 1 and 2 of the UN [World Survey on the role of women in development 2014](#) (Report on Gender Equality and Sustainable Development)
- ❖ UNEP. 2004. [Women, environment and sustainable development: making the links](#), Chapter 2 in *Women and the Environment*. UNEP, WEDO, and United Nations Foundation.

Week 2: Women, Gender, development, and the Environment: An Overview

Tu, Sept 15:

- ❖ Read Chapters 3-5 of the report. Each student chooses one of the three key themes of the report – Green Economy, Food Security, Population/Natural Resources as their special focus for the rest of the semester
- ❖ **Annotation 1 (ungraded but mandatory): due in class today, Sept 15**
For your first annotation (see page 8 below for more instructions on annotations), summarize the key themes of *2014 Survey Report on Women's Role in Economic Development* (as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2). What does it say about the links between gender equality and sustainable development? Focus on one of the three thematic chapters of the 2014 Survey Report to outline how these links are illustrated or developed in the Report. What are the Report's concluding recommendations or observations? How do they speak to your concerns about women, gender, and sustainability?

Th, Sept 17:

- ❖ Read Chapters 6-7 of the report
- ❖ Braidotti et al. 1994. Chpt 5 in *Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis*. London: Zed Books. (Moodle)

Week 3: What is Development? Whither Environment and Social Justice?

Tu, Sept 22:

- ❖ Black, No-Nonsense guide to International Development

Th, Sept 24:

- ❖ Sections from WCED 1987 Report (Moodle)
- ❖ <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/Powerful-Synergies.pdf> (this report unlike the 2014 report focuses on synergies. What, if anything, does it say about tradeoffs?)

- ❖ Follow UN Conference on Sustainable Development in New York, 25 Sep 2015 - 27 Sep 2015: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/summit>
- ❖ Annotation 2: hard copy **due in class**.

Week 4: What is Sustainability and Sustainable Development? Whither Women/Gender?

Tu, Sept 29:

- ❖ Sen and Mukherjee. 2013. [No Empowerment without Rights, No Rights without Politics: Gender-Equality, MDGS, and the post 2015 Development Agenda. Working Paper Series.](#)
- ❖ Student selected readings on Sustainability and sustainable development

Th, Oct 1: Sustainability: A review of definitions and debates due in class

Write a review of definitions and debates about sustainable development or sustainability as understood in your major. Your review should address the following questions and issues

- ❖ How is sustainability or sustainable development defined in your major discipline (sociology, education, women's studies, etc.)? Note that there may not find an explicit definition.
- ❖ What are major debates about it in the literature in your major?
- ❖ Where did you find that literature? Are sustainability and gender issues linked in those definitions or debates – explicitly or implicitly?
- ❖ Compare and contrast these definitions, debates, and links with those in the 2014 report.
- ❖ Finally, reflect on these debates vis-à-vis your learning goals.

Your review should be 5-6 double-spaced pages long and include a list of references cited in your review. You may also include an additional bibliography of sources from your major. Make sure you follow the writing guidelines for the course. The guidelines for short annotations will also be useful. Hand in a hard copy of your review in class. In addition, please bring to class a short list of key parameters of sustainability as defined in your major to guide our class discussions.

Week 5: Women-in-Development: Equity, Efficiency and Integration

Tu, Oct 6

- ❖ Magdoff & Foster. What every environmentalist needs to know about capitalism.

Th, Oct 8

- ❖ Boserup, E. 1970. Women's Role in Economic Development (Moodle)
- ❖ Kanji, N., Tan S., and C. Toulmin. 2007. Introduction: Boserup Revisited. Pp. v-xxvi in Women's Role in Economic Development. Earthscan Publ. [Moodle]
- ❖ Reread Braidotti et al., pp. 78-81, and chpt on Food Security in 2014 UN Report
- ❖ Annotation 3: hard copy **due in class**.

Oct 13: Monday schedule, No class

Week 6, Th, Oct 15: The Gendered and Raced Global Economy

- ❖ Mies, Lace Makers of Narsapur
- ❖ [2012 newspaper article on lacemakers of Narasapur](#)
- ❖ Kloppenburg, pp. 22-27 (Moodle)
- ❖ Annotation 4: hard copy **due in class**.

Week 7: Revisiting course themes by workshopping your midterm

Tu, Oct 20:

- ❖ Bring two hardcopies of your essay drafts
- ❖ Reread 2014 World Survey, Black, and Magdoff and Foster

**Gita Sen's lecture *Women's Human Rights: Promises and Pitfalls of a Globalized World*
7pm Mt Holyoke College**

Th, Oct 22:

- ❖ Midterm Essay due in class (prompts and guidelines on Moodle)
- ❖ Discuss parameters for the student-led sessions

Week 8: Development, Environment, Alternatives and Activism,

Tu, Oct 27:

- ❖ Asher, *Black and Green*, Introduction, Chpt 2, 5 (ebook on reserve via Moodle)

Th, Oct 29:

- ❖ Asher, *Black and Green*, Chpts 3 and 4 (ebook on reserve via Moodle)

Week 9: Sustainable Development and Public Health

Tu, Nov 3:

- ❖ Hartmann, B. 1997. Women, Population and the Environment: Whose Consensus? Whose Empowerment? Pp. 295-301 (excerpt) in N. Visvanathan et al, eds. *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Zed Books.
- ❖ Doyal, Lesley. 2000. Gender equity in health: debates and dilemma. *Social Science & Medicine* 51: 931-939

Th, Nov 5: Library work on Student-led sessions.

- ❖ Meet with Beth Lang in Calipari Library Instruction Room

Week 10: Bodies, sexualities and development

Tu: Nov 10:

- ❖ Weeks, Jeffrey. 1996. The Body and Sexuality. Pp. 363-394 in *Modernity: An introduction to modern societies*, Stuart Hall et al., eds. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- ❖ Sasser, Jade. 2011. Justice for All? Youth Environmental Activism and the New Framings of Social Justice. *Different Takes* 72. <http://popdev.hampshire.edu/projects/dt/72>

Th, Nov 12: Writing session with WGSS writing tutor Elise Swinford

- ❖ Bring a preliminary list of references from your research on your topic, and from your Oct 1 assignment and Oct 22 midterm.

Week 11: Preparing for the final assignment

Tu, Nov 17: **Clarify what you learnt about sustainability and gender equality**

- ❖ Everybody comes ready to discuss ONE reading from the class that they find to be key to their interest. Please email the class by Sunday, Nov 15 indicating which reading they want the class to revisit.
- ❖ Begin checking out the links below

Th, Nov 20: **Clarifying what MORE you WANT to learn and how you will do so**

Prepare for your final assignment (a grant proposal) by

- ❖ Clarifying your research question by revisiting what you know
- ❖ Research the resources available for undergraduate research:
<http://www.umass.edu/ours/>; <http://guides.library.umass.edu/grants>
- ❖ Researching HOW to write a grant proposal:
<http://undergraduateresearch.duke.edu/summer-research-funding-writing-successful-proposals>
- ❖ Detailed handouts on the final assignment will be given in class

Week 11.5:

Tu, Nov 24: Independent work on your assignments

Nov 26: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 12:

Tu: Dec 1: Workshop drafts of your grant proposal. Bring two hardcopies of your proposal to workshop with your peers

Th, Dec 3: Student Presentations: Sustainability, Justice, and Alternatives
(Kate, Carolyn, Ben)

Week 13:

Tu, Dec 8: Student Presentations: Sustainability and Health, Sexual Politics
(Emily, Sam)

Th, Dec 10: Student Presentations: Sustainability and Food
(Meera, Victoria)

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE SEMINAR

Short Annotations hard copies due in class (Four required, others optional)

Write brief annotation (500-800 words) of the week's readings. For more on annotations see <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/annotated-bibliography>.

1. Begin with a full citation of all readings you annotate. Use the ayp (author-year-page style) http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. If there is more than one reference, single-space your citations, but double space between them.
2. In a sentence or two summarize the topics of the week. Quote briefly from the text/s to illustrate the argument or debate. This is NOT the place for an exhaustive summary of all the theories. To write a succinct and clear summary, learn to be a good reader closely
<http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading>
3. Next, contextualize (when, why and to whom is/are the authors speaking to?) and assess the argument (how is the argument substantiated? What are the sources and analytical parameters of the author's claims?).
4. Conclude with a statement about the work's relevance for the course themes, and/or pose a question or two about the reading in order to foster discussion. How do these readings enter into conversation with others we have read, or how do they further our understanding of the course's themes?
5. If you don't understand something, reread the piece, then articulate what you don't understand – the argument, its analytical parameters, or how it is being substantiated.

Final Assignment: An Annotated Bibliography, Review Essay, or Essay Exam

The final assignment for the semester will involve 10-12 pages of writing in which you describe, review and critically evaluate the debates and topics discussed in the seminar. The form of this assignment will be determined later in the semester after I have read and evaluated your shorter writings. Decided on a Grant Proposal.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING WRITTEN WORK

- A = a well organized, lucidly written paper free of mechanical errors that indicates your thorough understanding of the material and your interesting insights or critical responses to it. In a phrase, an A paper is a "perfect 10" paper.
- B = a paper (or presentation) that offers evidence of your understanding of the material, but in which your points are obscured due to mechanical errors, lack of organization, inadequate evidence and/or insufficiently developed arguments.
- C = a paper in which the student's understanding and response to the material is unclear or largely obscured due to any one or more factors listed under B.
- D, F = indicate that students are submitting unacceptable work.

WOMENSST 397R, Fall 2015: Midterm Take Home Essays (worth a total of 20% of your course grade): Hardcopy due at the beginning of class on Oct 22. Craft TWO essay responses to address the following questions. Each essay should be 500-600 words long (4-5 double spaced pages total, including your reference list). **Please indicate clearly which questions you are addressing and follow the writing guidelines at the end of the questions.**

1. How do Black (2003/2007), the WCED Report (1987), and Magdoff and Foster (2011) conceptualize and assess “sustainability” and/or “sustainable development”? Do they explicitly touch on gender equality and women’s roles in sustainable development? If yes, how so? If not, are women and gender issues an implicit part of their discussions? How do their discussions of sustainability parallel or depart from your understanding of sustainability as outlined in your Oct 1 assignment?

For your second response CHOOSE between 2A and 2B

- 2A. Why does the *UN Survey on Gender Equality and Sustainable Development report* (2014) make the case for putting gender equality at the center of the search for sustainable development? Draw on one of the themes (chapters) of the report to discuss how they explore their linkage between gender equality and sustainable development. Draw on at least two other readings (for example the other UN reports, or Boserup’s work) from the class to supplement what you learn from the 2014 Survey Report. Do any of these themes and linkages speak to the specific topics you want to explore in the second half of the semester? If yes, how so? If not, how would you bring them into conversation with the Survey Report’s discussions of sustainability and gender equality?

OR

- 2B. Both Ester Boserup (1970) and Maria Mies (1982/2012) researched the role of “third world women” in “economic development.” Give a brief overview of their central claims and findings to explain why their work is considered pioneering in the field of women and development. Discuss each of their assessment of women’s “oppression” or “inequity” with reference to the analytical parameters of their explanatory framework. How does their work speak to the specific sustainability topic you want to explore in the second half of the semester?

Each response should

1. Be no more than **4-5 double-spaced pages** (including your bibliography).
2. Be based on analysis and critical reflection and not solely on your personal opinions.
3. Be organized and draw on specific examples from the text(s) (clearly indicating the time period, issues, places, people, and ideas in question).
4. AVOID over generalized, rhetorical or unsubstantiated claims about economic

- development, sustainability, and the approaches you use to discuss them.
5. FOCUS and explain CLEARLY and CONCISELY your understanding of the different terms and perspectives you mobilize to address the essay question(s).
 6. Go BEYOND BINARIES to show how interconnections, complexities, and contradictions may be at play in the situations and strategies you describe.
 7. REFRAIN from solving the problems or settling the debates about “sustainable development” or “gender equality.”
 8. Use the active voice and follow the writing guidelines appended below.

General writing guidelines

1. Put your name, course name and number, discussion section, and the date on your exams (single-spaced and in the upper left hand corner of the first page).
2. Type and DOUBLE SPACE your writing and use a legible font type and size.
3. Use at least 1-inch margins and a 12-point font.
4. NUMBER the pages and staple all pages together (NO PAPER CLIPS)
5. DO NOT include a cover page with your exam.
6. Append a correctly and consistently formatted reference list of all sources that you consult and cite in your answer. [Prof Asher prefers the ayp (author-year-page style) http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html]
7. Do NOT insert double-returns between paragraphs.
8. Edit your exam to remove any double returns between paragraphs, make sure that it is free of the passive voice, repeated errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and check that your sentences do not run on like this one does. That is, use short sentences.
9. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. To learn more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, go to (<http://www.umass.edu/writingprogram/geninfo/plagiarism.html>)
10. LATE EXAMS OR SUBMISSIONS VIA EMAIL WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

This is an open book assignment and you may

- ❖ Refer to your books, class notes, and prior assignments.
- ❖ Discuss your questions and responses with your peers
- ❖ Ask the instructor for clarification on the questions.
- ❖ Consult the Writing Center or the WGSS writing tutor.

Checklist for Written Work for Prof Asher, AKA her 20 COMMANDMENTS!

1. I have a central argument or a main point and I state it clearly.
2. I define the key terms on which my argument is based.
3. I have developed my argument systematically and organized my points clearly. That is, my points follow from each other and speak to my central argument.
4. I substantiate my claims with supporting evidence, and cite relevant sources using a correct and consistent format. Prof Asher prefers the author-date style:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
5. By the middle of my paper, I have lost neither clarity nor focus.
6. I make clear transitions between my points and between paragraphs and sections.
7. The passive voice has not been used by me. Instead, I use the active voice.
8. I have edited my paper and it is free from repeated errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and I have used short sentences and made sure that my sentences do not run on like this one does.
9. My sources are formatted correctly and consistently, as is my Reference List.
10. In my introductory and concluding remarks, I neither over generalize nor make banal claims. Rather, I begin and conclude with insightful remarks about my topic.

Logistical and Mechanical details checklist

1. My paper has a title. It tells my reader what my paper is about.
2. My name, course name and number, type and number of the assignment, and the date of this paper appear single-spaced in the upper left hand corner of the first page.
3. I have used a legible font, double-spaced my writing, and used 1.25-inch margins.
4. There are NO double-returns between my paragraphs.
5. I have numbered all the pages of my assignment
6. I have STAPLED all the pages of my assignment. Prof Asher will not accept paper clipped papers.
7. As per Prof. Asher's instructions, I am NOT including a cover page or a report cover with my assignments.
8. I am submitting a hardcopy of my paper on time. I know that Prof Asher does not accept email submissions and that late papers lose half a letter grade for each day the paper is late.
9. I understand what plagiarism (<http://www.umass.edu/writingprogram/geninfo/plagiarism.html>) means and have avoided it.
10. I have conferenced this assignment at the Writing Center (<http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/>) if necessary, or at the very least I have read and addressed the issues in Section V of Strunk and White's The Elements of Style.