

FEMINIST AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORIES

Updated 25 January 2021

POL/GWS 461 - Honors (002) and Non-Honors (001) - Spring 2021

Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:45 - **Live Online!**

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Contact me by email and expect a response within 48 hours (often quicker!)

Office hours: via email or scheduling a conference

Log in to our D2L course webpage for important materials and updates

“Theory is never ‘accurate’ or ‘wrong’; it is only more or less illuminating, more or less provocative, more or less of an incitement to thought, imagination, desire, possibilities for renewal” - W. Brown

“There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not at the same time constitute [power] relations” - M. Foucault

Course Description

The primary objective of this course is to familiarize students with the politics (understood as pervasive power relations) of theorizing International Relations (IR) and how feminist perspectives challenge and advance theories of International Relations. The course will explore what theorizing involves (premises, concepts, methods); how it shapes – and is shaped by – real-world (actual, embodied) practices with material, consequential effects; and how power relations shape how and what knowledge is produced. We will survey an array of feminist theories of IR and their critical analyses of, as well as their constructive contributions to, the field of IR studies. The course focuses on how theories of IR *matter* for understanding and responding to structurally intersecting inequalities of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, class and nationality, and how feminist theories produce understandings of global governance, security issues and global political economy, including current crises shaped by neo-conservative movements and alt-right nationalisms. Gender meanings and practices permeate our lives, and a closer look at these processes is more illuminating than many anticipate, with relevance and implications for *who* we are, how we *think*, and how we *act* – as individuals, groups, communities and nation-states.

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of feminist concepts and theoretical approaches to the study and practice of international relations.
2. Recognize the diversity of human experiences, including the ways that gender, sexuality, race, class and nationality interact to shape those experiences and to affect IR.

3. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the gendered nature and effects of global governance, global security issues, and global political economy.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking about current issues in world politics, including stark inequalities within and between nations and the rise of right-wing heteropatriarchal, racist authoritarian movements.
5. Recognize the myriad ways that gender and related inequalities shape personal, local, national and international contexts and connect this knowledge to projects for personal and social change.

Course expectations and priorities

Teaching and learning in virtual courses, both ‘live online’ (synchronous, in Zoom sessions) and ‘online’ (asynchronous, without ‘live’ interactions) involves both familiar and new challenges. Our course webpage on UA’s D2L <https://d2l.arizona.edu> is where you will find the most important information for making your way through the course. The ‘Course Home’ link takes you to ‘Announcements’ (updated info) and the ‘Calendar’ (upcoming events, assignments, etc.). Under ‘Content’ you will find a list of ‘Modules’ that include Weekly course materials (including an overview of that week’s ‘theme, links to assigned readings and visual materials, etc.). You will be able to follow your grades on the D2L site, and there are additional Modules (under ‘Content’) that include supporting materials: e.g., glossaries, recommended readings, and on and off campus info and links of potential interest.

Given the ‘live online’ modality of our course, I have spent additional time selecting materials (new articles and more videos!) and preparing to teach the course in this modality (many tutorials and tech frustrations!). I am committed to making this a valuable, interactive, thought-provoking and *enjoyable* course, and I dearly hope that this ‘front end’ preparation enhances how the course experience unfolds. I look forward to working with you throughout the semester, but ultimately the success of the course *depends on active student participation*, and especially, your willingness to engage the materials and ask hard questions about the world(s) we live in. Students are expected to attend all zoom sessions and to participate in class discussions on the basis of an engaged and critical reading of each session's assignments (including items to read, listen to, watch) *prior* to sessions. I encourage you to take the course seriously and learn about some of the most current issues in theories/theorizing, feminist politics and power relations shaping knowledge, structural inequalities and international relations.

The prerequisites for this course are confusingly represented in various sources, so I generally waive them for students who are serious about taking the course. Bottom line is that an advanced 400-level course in ‘feminist and IR theories’ presupposes and requires some background in gender/feminist studies and IR. In addition, familiarity with ‘theory’ is a definite advantage! If you have *no* understanding of or background in gender/feminist/women’s studies and/or IR theory you might need to do some additional ‘catch up’ reading – but I think any remedial work will be minimal and I encourage you to assume success! I am optimistic and also hope students will help each other ensure that the class is ‘doable’ and enjoyable. (Some glossaries and ‘recommended background readings’ are posted on D2L.) Please contact me sooner rather than later if you need to discuss any concerns, or have any suggestions for improving the course!

In sum, attendance and participation are crucial, both to avoid ‘getting lost’ or confused and to enable an interactive, *collective* learning process. We know this is more difficult via

remote settings, but please help me and your classmates by being prepared and also *participating!* To prepare for discussions, consider the following questions before class: What are the key points and arguments of the assignments? What are the terms and assumptions the author employs? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments? How do the readings/assignments relate to one another throughout the semester? And how do the assignments improve (or not!) your understanding of current events and possible responses to them?

Class meetings via Zoom. Attendance is expected at all scheduled live class sessions. It is especially important to have read, viewed, and absorbed all the course materials (that are made available through D2L) *prior to the class meeting for which they are assigned*. This will enable us to more briefly review course materials and make more time for more engaged discussions and other activities. Assigned materials are posted and hyperlinked in our course modules on D2L. If you anticipate being absent, are unexpectedly absent, or are unable to participate in class online activities, please contact me as soon as possible. If you are experiencing unexpected barriers to your success in this or other courses, the Dean of Students Office is a central support resource for all students and may be helpful.

Technical support. If you experience technical problems that interrupt your ability to complete class work, it is important that you know where to seek help immediately. If your computer crashes, or if your internet connection fails, you are still responsible for your course responsibilities. Call the D2L help desk at **520 626-6804** for problems with access to D2L and our course website, links, videos, dropbox, etc. Let me know ASAP if you are having problems that are disrupting your participation - so that technical problems do not impact being graded for your work. (Please recognize that I am not able to provide technical assistance!)

Communicating with me. I will respond to emails within 48 hours at the most, but typically in a few hours during the work week. Please review all of your course materials such as the syllabus, modules and announcements *before* writing to me to make sure your question has not already been addressed. Each email message should include the course number (461) and your first and last name in the message. So that you do not miss important information and/or updates, make sure you are checking messages appearing in your official *UA email address* (that D2L assumes).

Assignments must be completed by their due dates and times for full credit. *Late assignments will not be accepted* unless there is a documented medical or other emergency/serious problem that I am ideally informed of in advance of the due date/time so that adjustments can be considered.

Grades and Grading Policy: Again, students are expected to have done the assignments *prior to class* sessions, to bring questions you have to class, and to be ready to engage in discussion. Grade components reflect these expectations and the significance of continual participation. Your **course grade** is a combination of: 1) classroom attendance, preparation and participation [10%]; 2) ‘quizzes’ on assigned readings [30%]; discussion boards and/or short writing responses [20%]; and 3) two essay exams/papers [20, 20 = 40%]. Further details, instructions and guidelines will be posted on D2L and discussed in class. I will continually post announcements/news regarding the course on our D2L webpage so please make sure that you are able to access this site – and your official UA emails – and do check frequently.

Honors Credit. Course grade for Honors students will reflect my higher expectations of their participation and work more generally, and *additional* questions/essays/expectations to be

included when completing the essay exams/papers. Clarification will be provided on D2L and in communications with those enrolled for Honors credit.

General Grading Rubrics for Submitted Work

A work: follows assignment instructions well and creatively, uses key and compelling course content to show mastery of it in exploring and organizing ideas, uses language that is clear, fluid, and skillful with hardly any errors

B work: mostly follows assignment instructions, uses relevant course content to develop, explore, and organize idea(s), uses clear language that conveys appropriate meaning and has few errors in language or grammar

C work: minimally responds to assignment instructions, uses some course content to convey a simple idea, uses language and grammar in ways that sometimes impedes meaning and/or contains a number of errors

D work: does not sufficiently follow assignment instructions, use course content, and/or convey an idea or meaning due to many errors

F work: falls below a passing score; does not submit assignment

University of Arizona Syllabus Rules require that I include the following:

The UA's policy concerning Class Attendance and Administrative Drops is available at: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/classatten.htm>. The UA policy regarding absences on and accommodation of religious holidays is available at: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies-and-codes/accommodation-religious-observance-and-practice>.

Plagiarism: all work submitted must be the student's own. The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism available at: <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>. Students are expected to adhere to the UA Code of Academic Integrity as described in the UA General Catalog. See: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/academic-integrity/students/academic-integrity>.

Threatening behavior by students is not permitted at any time; you are responsible for being familiar with the University's policies in this regard: <http://policy.web.arizona.edu/~policy/threaten.shtml>

Students with special needs who are registered with the S.A.L.T. Center (<http://www.salt.arizona.edu/>) or the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.arizona.edu/>) must submit appropriate documentation to the instructor if they are requesting special accommodations. Please *let me know how I can be helpful*.

UA Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment policy: <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

UA Academic policies and procedures are available at: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/aaindex.html>

Student Assistance and Advocacy information is available at: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-assistance/students/student-assistance>

Confidentiality of Student Records: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm>

Note: Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice. **Any new or revised information will be posted on our D2L course webpage, so make sure that you check the site and emails (sent to your official UA email address) frequently.** If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions

regarding the course, please share them with me *sooner rather than later!*

Texts and Schedule of Assignments

Only **one textbook is required**: Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Politics* (2019), 5th Ed. New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis. As we will read all of it, this book is *required* and I hope many of you obtain hard copies (better for studying). The book is available at the UA bookstore, and as an e-book through the UA library (on D2L course webpage select 'Library Tools' on NavBar> login to UA access>look in box top right 'Unlimited-Use Ebooks' and click on link to our text). Be sure to purchase only the correct 2019, 5th edition!

All **additional assignments** (listening, reading, watching) will be posted on D2L and accessed through links in the relevant Modules. **NOTE**: When an entire article or chapter is not required, you are *only responsible for the pages indicated in bold* on the syllabus and on D2L. Please also note that posted on D2L (under Content>Additional Materials) are various items that are not required but are relevant to course topics (glossaries, powerpoints, suggested readings, videos, etc.) or for further exploration of specific issues.

Schedule of Assignments Calendar

Again, you are expected to have *completed the assignments* (listening to, reading, watching) *prior* to, and be ready to discuss them on the dates shown below. I advise reading/watching them in the order presented for each date. Quizzes will typically cover ALL of the assigned materials (and count for a significant portion of your course grade!).

Jan 14: Introductions and getting started. No reading assignment, but we will begin discussion on key topics and your attendance is crucial!

Jan 19: Who and what are taken seriously?

Rich, Adrienne. 1979. Claiming an Education. [Pp. 22-25] ****Please give this a thoughtful read.**
hooks, bell. 2015. Preface and Introduction (pp. vii-xiv). *Feminism is for Everybody*. New York: Routledge.

Enloe, Cynthia. 2013. Who is taken seriously? In *Seriously!* University of California Press. Pp. 1-18.

Jan 21: Introduction to 'Gender and International Relations' (IR)

Shepherd, Laura J. 2015. Sex or gender? Bodies in global politics and why gender matters. In *Gender Matters in Global Politics*, ed. Shepherd. Pp. 24-35.

Peterson, V. Spike. 2018. Problematic premises: positivism, modernism and masculinism in IPE. In *Handbook on the International Political Economy of Gender*. **Read only pp. 23-29.**

Jan 26: Getting into *Global Gender Politics*

Runyan, Chapter 1 ****Requires careful reading** or you will be confused for the rest of the book!

Jan 28: Current feminist concerns

Watch: Enloe, Cynthia. 2017. Feminism in the age of Trump 27'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfRgsKz2kdk>

Feb 2: Gender(ed) lenses on global politics

Runyan, Chapter 2 ******Important for thinking critically about how we see, 'know' and act

Feb 4: A queer lens on global politics

Peterson, V. Spike. 2014. Family Matters: How Queering the Intimate Queers the International. 2014. *International Studies Review*, 16, 4: 604-608.

Feb 9: Gender and global governance

Runyan, Chapter 3

Feb 11: Recognizing how power operates

Burk, Martha. 2005. Power plays: Six ways the male corporate elite keeps women out. [In Shaw & Lee 2012, 3pp.]

Feb 16: Gender and global in/security

Runyan, Chapter 4

Feb 18: Pondering insecurity

Johnson, Allan. 2016. What are we afraid of? Blog [3 pp.]

Feb 23: Viewing an event intersectionally

Peterson, V. Spike. 2007. Thinking Through Intersectionality and War. *Race, Gender & Class* 14, 3-4: 10-27. ******Might need to google Abu Graib for background?

Feb 25: No class UA 'break day'

Mar 2: Complex politics

Watch: Tarana Burke. 2019. Me Too is a movement not a moment. 16'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zP3LaAYzA3Q>

Mar 4: EXAM/PAPER (details to be posted on D2L)

Mar 9: No class UA 'break day'

Mar 11: Gender and global political economy

Runyan, Chapter 5

Mar 16: A history of inequalities and current effects

Peterson, V. Spike. 2020. State/Nation Histories, Structural Inequalities and Racialized Crises. *New Political Economy*. ******Important for historical background relevant today

Watch: Roy, Ananya. 2013. Global poverty. 13'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rtySUhuokM>

Mar 18: Imperial race-making and enduring effects

Danewid, Ida. 2017. White Innocence in the Black Mediterranean. [7 pp.]. ******Important for

thinking about immigration

Mar 23: Empire-constructing processes and enduring effects

Levine, Phillipa. 2004. Sexuality, Gender and Empire. Pp. 134-155. ****Important for effects of European imperialism on gender, sexuality and racism shaping today's world politics**

Mar 25: Decolonizing

Watch: Carson, Quetzala. 2017. Pedagogy of decolonizing. 12' ****Watch this to the end, for key points we need to understand.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN17Os8JAR8>

Mar 30: Empire-constructing processes and enduring effects

Sinha, Mrinalini. 2004. Nations in an imperial crucible. In *Gender and Empire*, ed Phillipa Levine. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. 180-202.

Apr 1: Family connections

Hill-Collins, Patricia. 1998. It's all in the family: intersections of gender, race and nation. *Hypatia* Pp. 62-82.

Apr 6: Postcolonial perspectives; race and racism in IR

Zvobgo, Kelebogile and Merideith Loken. 2020. Why race matters in international relations. *Foreign Policy* [4 pp.]

Persaud, Randolph B. and Alina Sajed. Introduction: Race, gender and culture in International Relations. 2018. In *Postcolonial Perspectives*. Pp. 1-18.

Apr 8: Postcolonial perspectives; race and racism in IR

Rutazibwa, Olivia Umurerwa. (2016) From the Everyday to IR: In Defense of the Strategic Use of the R-word, *Postcolonial Studies*, 19:2, 191-200.

Apr 13: Neo-conservative movements, alt-right nationalisms today

Dietze, Gabriele and Julia Roth. 2020. Right-Wing populism and gender. [10 pp.]

Lynch, Conor. 2018. Angry young white men, the "incel rebellion" and an age of worldwide reaction. [3 pp.]

O'Hehir, Andrew. 2014. White privilege: An insidious virus eating American from within. [4 pp.]

Apr 15: Neo-conservative movements, alt-right nationalisms today

Naber, Nadine. 2019. Here we go again: saving Muslim women and queers... [5 pp.]

Apr 20: Analyzing the power relations of privilege

Peterson, V. Spike. 2020. Critical Privilege Studies [8 pp.]

Apr 22: Analyzing the power relations of privilege

Watch: Johnson, Allan. Interview at WSU 2013 **view first 60'** ****A remarkably clear 'overview' of how privilege is problematic for everyone.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSy1gR4HbDE>

Apr 27: Alternative analyses

Smith, Andrea. 2013. The problem with 'privilege.' [8 pp.]

Johnson, Allan. 2014. Proud to be white? Blog [3 pp.]

Apr 29: Another view

Birdsong, Mia and Nicole Rodgers. 2015. Another 1% white privilege. [3 pp.]

May 4: Last class! Engendering global justice

Runyan, Chapter 6

May 12: FINAL PAPER/EXAM