This course explores the ways in which the social, political and cultural construction of sexual difference influences the nature and practice of political life. It will examine both theoretically and empirically the ways in which power is gendered and how gender has served as a basis for political organization, the distribution of power, and the boundaries of public life.

Many themes will be examined in the course in order to understand the political and economic context of struggles around gender issues; including the mobilization of women’s movements; the interaction of religion and culture; the gendered nature of the state; the institutional nature of particular women’s movements and struggles; and feminist methodologies. Although the focus of the course will be on the “political” in the context of comparative politics and the larger discipline of political science, it will also draw heavily from the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, women’s studies, and political economy, among others. Intentionally, the course includes a balance between empirical knowledge of particular cases and theoretical debates on gender and politics. Students will be expected to master both theoretical and empirical dimensions of the course.

The course is focused on the assigned readings and classroom presentations and discussions. The weekly reading assignments vary in length and difficulty and the core of the course will lie in discussion of the reading materials. Completing the weekly assignments on time is the most important assignment in the course. The other requirements of the course include a short reflective essay on the importance of gender as a category of understanding and a research paper (ten-fifteen pages, not including reference material) on a critical moment in political life which demonstrates how a gendered analysis challenged the status quo and structures of power. There will also be a midterm and two very short (two-page max) analytic reviews of two of the week’s reading materials after the midterm. These two analytic reviews will be due on the Monday class, and discuss either the books by Singerman, Gole, or Bouvard. It is up to the students to decide which weeks to chose.

Grading for the course will be calculated in the following manner: informed and thoughtful classroom participation (10%); first essay (15%); midterm exam (25%) and final research paper (35%) and two short analytic essays on the major readings after the midterm (15%). Occasionally, course assignments will be altered for various reasons as the course progresses. Please consult the online version of the syllabus on Blackboard as the final authoritative version of the syllabus. Check to see that your email works within the Blackboard course page and check your email regularly for class updates. Late work will be penalized and please communicate by email or telephone about any attendance problems or other difficulties throughout the semester.

Academic Integrity Code

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code. It is expected that all examinations, tests, written papers, and other assignments will be completed according to the standards set forth in this code. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this code.
The following texts are available in the American University Campus Store and are on reserve at Bender Library:


**Week One, January 14-18: Introduction**

Monday: Introduction


**First Writing Assignment due Thursday, January 24th, in class.** In a three-page brief analytic paper, describe the ways in which taking the notion of “gender” seriously has helped you to understand either: 1) an important issue in your personal experience; or 2) a major issue or situation in the larger world. In this essay discuss how the notion of gender has helped to illuminate the various dimensions of your issue. Without the notion of “gender” how would one understand your dilemma or issue? Consult “Writing Tips” and other information under Assignments on Blackboard for required formatting and reference styles.

**Week Two, January 21-25: Gender**

Monday, January 21: No Class (Martin Luther King Holiday)


**First Writing Assignment due Thursday, January 24th, in class.**
Week Three, January 28- February 1: Feminist Methods


Research Paper due Monday, April 29th in class: After careful consideration and a preliminary estimation of available sources, write a research paper (ten-fifteen pages, not including reference material) on a critical moment in political life which demonstrates how a gendered analysis challenged the status quo and structures of power. This “moment” need not have led directly to obvious and measurable change or “success” of a movement, but explain and analyze in your paper the fundamental challenge that this campaign raised. You may chose an American or international topic to write about; one that is quite contemporary or more historical in nature. You must include at least five primary source documents in your paper and at least five scholarly sources (in a Works Cited List) and incorporate the various constituencies affected by your issue. Explain the changing macro and micro forces that influenced how and why gender became central to this challenge and the nature of the problem itself. This paper should also incorporate several of the theoretical issues raised throughout the course and certainly can use online sources (properly referenced) as well. Use parenthetical references in your paper and a Works Cited list. Paper Topic, Main Questions, and Preliminary Bibliography due Throughout the Course.

Week Four, February 4-8: The State, Institutions, and Dependency?


Thursday: Discussion Groups. Class will meet in smaller sections for general discussion of the assigned reading and the issues they raise.

Paper Topic Due in Discussion Groups including a paragraph explaining the objective and thesis question of the paper.

Week Five, February 11-15: The Second Wave of Feminism, American Style


Week Six, February 18-22: American Feminism (cont.)


Thursday, 2/22: Works Cited List of the paper due in class; including at least ten sources that are a mix between primary sources, scholarly sources, magazines, memoirs, etc. You are encouraged to use online sources, but must also use printed material.

**Week Seven, February 25 - March 1: The Gendered Economy and the Sexual Division of Labor**


**Week Eight, March 4-8: Economic Power and Motherhood**

**In-class Midterm Exam: Thursday, March 8th**

**Spring Break: March 10-17**

**Week Nine, March 18-22: The Household, Informal Politics, Networks and Political Exclusion**


**Week Ten, March 25-29: Informal Politics in Egypt (cont.)**

Recommended Background Reading: Phillipe Fargues, "From Demographic Explosion to Social Rupture," Democracy without Democrats, pp. 156-182 & Arab Society, 75-83.


Analytic Two-page essay on Avenues of Participation due Monday in class. During this half of the class students will chose to write two two-page (double-spaced) essays on either Singerman, Gole, or Bouvard.

**Week Eleven, April 1-5: Gender, Religion, and Symbolic Politics and Veiling**


**Week Twelve, April 8-12: Gender, Modernizing Secularism, and Islam: The Case of Turkey**


Analytic Two-page essay on *The Forbidden Modern* due Monday in class. During this half of the class students will chose to write two two-page (double-spaced) essays on either Singerman, Gole, or Bouvard.

**Week Thirteen, April 15-19: Gender, Religion, and Masculinities**


**Thursday: Discussion/Presentation of the Research Papers.**

**Week Fourteen, April 22-26: The Military, Motherhood, and Resistance**


Analytic Two-page essay on *Revolutionizing Motherhood* due Monday in class. During this half of the class students will chose to write two two-page (double-spaced) essays on either Singerman, Gole, or Bouvard.

**Week Fifteen, April 29**

Conclusions: Monday Class Meets.

**FINAL EXAM:** May 6th, 11:20a-1:50p 11:20-1:50 Ward 107. Please arrange your travel plans accordingly, there is no flexibility in rescheduling this exam except due to a dire emergency.