

Philosophy 275: Introduction to Feminist Philosophy

UNC Summer II, 11:30-1:00

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00-2:00 and by appointment.

Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the history of, and contemporary issues within, feminist philosophy. We explore a number of prominent answers to the question ‘what does it mean to be a feminist?’ At first, this question seems to have an easy answer: feminists are people who think that women and men ought to be treated equally. As we will soon see, however, there has been great debate over what it means to be ‘equal’. Is equality achieved when the law grants women the same rights as men, or when women and men have same earning power? Does it require women to give up certain stereotypically feminine behaviors and occupations? And what is the relationship between gender inequality and other forms of inequality and oppression?

Required books

Theorizing Feminisms, a Reader (referred to as **TF** on course schedule)

Edited by Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger

ISBN13: 978-0-19-515009-4

The Politics of Reality: essays in feminist theory (referred to as **PR** on course schedule)

Marilyn Frye

ISBN-13: 978-0895940995

All other readings will be made available on Sakai or the internet.

Course Requirements

Preparation: You are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings carefully and critically.

Attendance and Participation: Seminars are only as good as the discussions that happen in them. To do well in this course, you must regularly participate in class discussion. Be ready to ask questions and raise objections about the assigned readings.

In this class, we will be discussing controversial and sensitive issues. As such, it is absolutely essential that you treat your classmates respectfully. Please actively listen to them when they’re speaking, be careful not to interrupt others during discussion, and refrain from making derogatory comments or personal attacks. Finally, do your best to remain open to changing your mind on various topics in light of the course readings and class discussions. You may find yourself disagreeing with a reading, and there’s nothing wrong with that, but disagreement does not give you license to dismiss; you will still have to critically engage with ideas in order to fully participate in class.

Electronics: Please do not bring laptops to class. You won't need them to take notes (the note-taking requirements in this seminar will be very minimal), and we all know that they just turn classes into an extended Facebook sessions. Please also turn off tablets, smartphones, beepers etc. before the beginning of class.

Assignments

Assignment	Weight
Class participation	10%
Homework questions (each work 2%)	8%
Paper #1 (4-5 pages)	20%
Paper #2 (6-8 pages)	27%
Midterm exam	15%
Final Exam	20%

Class Participation: To gain full participation, you must regularly participate in class discussion. Simply attending class is not enough. **If you think that you will have any issues fulfilling this requirement, please let me know.**

Homework Responses: Periodically throughout the course, I will post homework questions on Sakai. They will pertain to the next day's reading, and you will be required to bring a copy of a hardcopy of your answers to class. They can be handwritten or typed.

Papers: You will write two papers, one 3-5 pages long, and one 5-7 pages long. You will be graded on both the content of your paper and your writing. A good philosophy paper requires more than simply summarization: instead, you will be expected to critically engage with the arguments presented in the material relevant to your essay prompt.

Midterm Exam: This will be a short answer exam on the material covered in the first half of the course. I will distribute potential exam questions three days before the midterm.

Final Exam: This exam will consist of several short answer questions and a longer essay question. It will cover material discussed in class after the midterm.

Marking Policies

Blind Grading: All assignments will be blind graded. Please do not put your name on your papers—just write your student number.

Due Dates: Due dates for assignments are firm. I allow extensions only when arrangements are made in advance. If you think you will need an extension, please email me *at least* 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Assignment Submission: Please bring a hard copy of your papers to class, and email me an electronic copy by the end of the day they are due. Late papers will be docked 5% for each 24-hour period overdue. Late homework questions will not be accepted. If you have made prior arrangements with me about an extension, these policies do not apply.

Honor Code: All students are expected to abide by the Honor Code at all times. You are responsible for understanding the terms of the Honor Code, and for understanding what constitutes plagiarism.

For more information on the Honor Code, please visit <http://studentconduct.unc.edu>.

Grading Scale:

A grade in the 'A' range (90-93=A-, 94-96=A, 97-100=A+) demonstrates an impressive mastery of and insightful engagement with the course material. The A student is able to reconstruct philosophical arguments with precision and accuracy, develop criticisms that are original, persuasive, and well-developed.

A grade in the 'B' range (80-83=B-, 84-86=B, 87-89=B+) denotes competent mastery of and reasonable insight into the course material. The B student is able to reconstruct philosophical arguments accurately and develop criticisms that are reasonably persuasive and well-developed.

A grade in the 'C' range (70-73=C-, 74-76=C, 77-79=C+) denotes adequate comprehension and engagement with the course material. The C student is able to reconstruct philosophical arguments with some errors and develop criticisms that are generally relevant to the course material, if not convincing.

A grade in the 'D' range (60-63=D-, 64-66=D, 67-69) denotes a lack of comprehension of and engagement with the course material. The 'D' student is unable to accurately reconstruct philosophical positions or develop critiques relevant to the course material.

Course Schedule

Given time constraints, this schedule is subject to change. I will announce all changes in advance via email.

Date	Assignment
6/22 (M)	<i>None</i>
6/23 (T)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> selections (Sakai)</p>
6/24 (W)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Mill, “The Subjection of Women” (Chapter 1) (TF)</p>
6/25 (Th)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> (Introduction) (TF)</p>
6/26 (F)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> (Introduction) (TF)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>Paper 1 assigned</p>
6/29 (M)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Friedan, <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> (Introduction) (Sakai)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>1st homework question due</p> <p>Paper 1 assigned</p>
6/30 (T)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Young, “Humanism, Gynocentrism and Feminist Politics” (TF)</p>
7/1 (W)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Matchar, <i>New Domesticity</i> (excerpt) (Sakai)</p>
7/2 (Th)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Held, “Birth and Death” (Sakai)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>2nd homework question due</p>
7/3 (F)	NO CLASS

7/6 (M)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Frye “Sexism” (PR)</p> <p>Truth “Ain’t I a Woman?” (TF)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>Paper 1 due in class</p>
7/7 (T)	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Haslanger, “Gender and Social Construction: Who? What? When? Where? How?” (TF)</p>
7/8 (W)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Frye, “A Note On Anger” (PR)</p>
7/9 (Th)	<p>Assignment:</p> <p>3rd homework question due</p>
7/10 (F)	<p>Midterm Review: No Readings</p>
7/13 (M)	<p>Assignment:</p> <p>In-class midterm</p>
7/14 (T)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Frye, “Oppression” (PR)</p>
7/15 (W)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>MacKinnon “Desire and Power” and “Sex and Violence: A Perspective” (TF)</p>
7/16 (Th)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Young, “Five Faces of Oppression” (TF)</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <p>4th homework question due</p>
7/17 (F)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Grillo, “Anti-Essentialism and Intersectionality: Tools to Dismantle the Master’s House” (TF)</p>
7/20 (M)	<p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Student-Chosen Topic—Reading TBD</p>
7/21 (T)	<p>Required Reading:</p>

	Student-Chosen Topic—Reading TBD
7/22 (W)	<i>Required Reading:</i> Student-Chosen Topic—Reading TBD <i>Assignment:</i> Paper 2 due
7/23 (Th)	Exam Review
7/27	Final Exam