

PHIL 1107: Philosophy and Gender

Course Description

What is gender and how has it been treated throughout the history of philosophical thought? This course combines the history of feminist theory with contemporary issues in gender and philosophy. Following a primer on feminist history, we will move to contemporary theories, including discussions of phenomenology, epistemology, and ethics. From there, we will discuss feminist concerns in social & political philosophy, including LGBTQIA+, global feminism and decolonization, social media, women's rights, and so on. This course is designed to give students a foundation in feminist theory, and a peek into the many subfields where feminism and philosophy intersect.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will:

- Be familiar with core texts of feminist theory in philosophy.
- Develop critical thinking tools to address issues of gender and society.
- Spend time with issues that are currently impacting us in relation to gender.
- Be able to brainstorm ideas of justice and consciousness raising.

Required Texts

- All readings are provided as a PDF via the course website.
- Students are encouraged to purchase full texts of the readings they resonate with!

Course Points

Assignments for this course are meant to evaluate you on two methods of learning: comprehension and application. The former, comprehension, will be evaluated through writing and in-class discussion. The latter, application, through regular group activities and reflections.

This course is graded out of 100 points.

Assignment	Points Possible	Assignment	Points Possible
Participation	10	Reflection Papers	30
Discussion Questions	20	Micro-Presentations	20
Discussion Leader	10	Presentation Reflection	10

Course Assignments

Weekly Discussion Questions

Students are expected to submit 1-2 paragraphs in response to the assigned reading after every class. Students must 1) read the assigned texts prior to class - the assigned texts are under the date that the reading is due; 2) participate in in-class small group discussion on the reading following the class lecture; 3) respond to all the discussion questions before the start of the next class. See the course website for the discussion questions and submission information.

Participation

Students are expected to attend class and participate in active discussion with their classmates. Showing up prepared and using class time to discuss the texts further will assist students in getting a good participation grade.

Discussion Leader

Students will be asked to act as discussion leader four (4) times throughout the semester, once between weeks 2-5, once between weeks 6-8, once between weeks 9-12, and once during the micro-presentations. As discussion leader, students will have thoroughly read the reading assigned for that class, come prepared with 3-5 discussion questions, and facilitate discussion within their small group. Students will be asked to act as discussion leader during the micro-presentations by being prepared to ask questions and mediate between the presenters and the audience.

Reflection Papers

Students will be asked to submit a 2-3 page reflection paper, three times during the semester, after week 5, 8, and 12. These papers are designed for students to apply the theories that they have learned to their lived experiences or current real-world issues. Students should approach this as an "applied philosophy" assignment, wherein they are able to analyze experiences through the theories they have learned. These reflections should be creative, while still reflecting academic rigor, including primary- and secondary-text citations. See course website for more information.

Micro-Presentations & Final Reflection

As the final for this course, students will be paired with a partner for 20-minute micro-presentations. Teams will select a feminist issue of their choice, and will take contrasting "sides" to the issue. The micro-presentation should be structured similar to a light debate, and students should be prepared to present their arguments, and to rebut their partner's arguments. The debate will be followed by a student-led discussion.

To complete the final for this course, students will be asked to submit a 1-page reflection answering one of the questions that was posed by their classmates during their presentation discussion.

Extra Credit & Late Policy

Extra credit is not provided for this course. Late policy: written assignments will be deducted 1 point per day late, **up to 5 days after the deadline**. If assignments are submitted after 5 days, the assignment will not be accepted. Due to this policy, there are no extensions available.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>
1	August 31 st - September 6 th	Introduction
2	September 7 th - September 13 th	History of Gender in Philosophy
3	September 14 th - September 20 th	Frameworks & Methods
4	September 21 st - September 27 th	Social Constructionism
5	September 28 th - October 4 th	Social Constructionism
	October 4th	1st Reflection Paper Due
6	October 5 th - October 11 th	Feminist Epistemology
7	October 12 th - October 18 th	Feminist Epistemology
8	October 19 th - October 25 th	Feminist Philosophy of Language
	October 25th	2nd Reflection Paper Due
9	October 26 th - November 1 st	Decolonization & Global Feminisms
10	November 2 nd - November 8 th	Queer Theory
11	November 9 th - November 15 th	Feminist Ethics
12	November 16 th - November 22 nd	Feminist Political Philosophy
	November 22nd	3rd Reflection Paper Due
13	November 23 rd - November 29 th	Thanksgiving Break
14	November 30 th - December 6 th	Presentations
15	December 7 th - December 13 th	Presentations
16	December 14 th - December 20 th	Finals Week

Course Readings & Assignments

All readings are due for the date of the class they are listed under; all assignments are due **before the start of the **following** class, unless otherwise stated.*

**For the readings marked with [Selections], please see course website for specific page ranges and review the highlighted sections on the PDFs.*

September 1st

- Topics: Introduction to the course, what is gender?
- Readings: None
- Assignments: None

September 3rd

- Topics: History of feminism, feminist issues, feminist waves (and criticisms)
- Readings:
 - *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks
 - Introduction
 - Chapter 1: Feminist Politics
 - Chapter 2: Consciousness-Raising
 - Chapter 3: Sisterhood is Still Powerful

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- [What Are the Four Waves of Feminism?](#)
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 8th

- Topics: History of gender in philosophy, from Plato to Kant
- Readings:
 - *The Republic*, Plato, [Selections]
 - Aristotle's Conception of the Soul, [Selections]
 - "Idea for a Universal History," Kant [Selections]
 - "Master-Slave Dialectic," Hegel [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 10th

- Topics: History of gender in philosophy, from Wollstonecraft to Beauvoir
- Readings:
 - *Vindication for the Rights of Women*, Wollstonecraft [Selections]
 - *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 15th

- Topics: Intersectionality, what is discrimination?
- Readings:
 - "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," Crenshaw
 - *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks
 - Chapter 7: Feminist Class Struggle
 - Chapter 10: Race and Gender
 - *Women, Race, and Class*, Davis [Selections]
 - [Crenshaw Ted Talk](#)
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 17th

- Topics: Oppression, privilege, and injustice
- Readings:
 - "Oppression," Frye
 - "Five Faces of Oppression," Young
 - *Women, Race, and Class*, Davis [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 22nd

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- Topics: Introduction to metaphysics of gender
- Readings:
 - “One is Not Born a Woman,” Wittig
 - “On Being Objective and Being Objectified,” Haslanger
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 24th

- Topics: Judith Butler, theories of performativity
- Readings:
 - *Gender Trouble*, Butler [Selections]
 - *Bodies that Matter*, Butler [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

September 29th

- Topics: Social constructionism, social positions
- Readings:
 - “Ontology and Social Construction,” Haslanger
 - “Yep, I’m Gay,” Debroff and Saint-Croix
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 1st

- Topics: Phenomenology and the body
- Readings:
 - “Throwing Like a Girl,” Iris Marion Young
 - *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks
 - Chapter 5: Our Bodies, Ourselves
- Assignments:
 - Discussion questions, see course site.
 - **1st Reflective Paper Due October 4th by 11:59PM!!!**

October 6th

- Topics: Social power, systems of power, individual power
- Readings:
 - “The Subject and Power,” Foucault
 - Epistemic Injustice, Fricker [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 8th

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- Topics: Intro to epistemology, standpoint theory, gendered knowledge
- Readings:
 - “Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology,” Harding
 - “Knowing communities: An investigation of Harding's standpoint epistemology,” Pohlhaus
 - “Epistemology,” SEP [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 13th

- Topics: Feminist epistemology, epistemic injustice, testimonial injustice
- Readings:
 - *Epistemic Injustice*, Fricker [Selections]
 - NYT Article, “#WhyIDidntReport”
 - NYT Article, “The Limits of ‘Believe All Women’”
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 15th

- Topics: Feminist epistemology, hermeneutical injustice, silencing & gaslighting
- Readings:
 - *Epistemic Injustice*, Fricker [Selections]
 - “One Too Many: Hermeneutical Excess as Hermeneutical Injustice,” Dular
 - “Hermeneutical Dissent and the Species of Hermeneutical Injustice,” Goetze
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 20th

- Topics: Consent & language
- Readings:
 - *Rape and Resistance*, Alcoff
 - Ch. 5: Decolonizing Terms
 - Ch. 7: The Problem of Speaking for Myself
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

October 22nd

- Topics: Feminist philosophy of language, speech act theory
- Readings:
 - “Authority and Gender: Flipping the F-Switch,” Tirrell
 - [“Words That Do: An Introduction to John Searle’s Speech Act Theory,” Medium](#)
- Assignments:

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- Discussion questions, see course site
- **2nd Reflective Paper Due October 25th by 11:59PM!!!**

October 27th

- Topics: Global feminism, decolonization
- Readings:
 - *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks
 - Ch. 8: Global Feminism
 - “The Coloniality of Gender,” Lugones
 - “Ethnocentrism and Coloniality in Latin American Feminisms,” Minoso
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site

October 29th

- Topics: Global feminism, decolonization, continued
- Readings:
 - *Decolonizing Universalism*, Khader [Selections]
 - *The Invention of Women*, Oyěwùmí [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 3rd

- Topics: Queer theory, gender and sexuality
- Readings [TBD]:
 - “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence,” Rich
 - *Foucault’s The History of Sexuality*, Taylor, [Selections]
 - “What Is Sexual Orientation?,” Dembroff
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 5th

- Topics: Queer theory, continued
- Readings [TBD]:
 - *Gaga Feminism*, Halberstam [Selections]
 - *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick [Selections]
 - *Queer Phenomenology*, Ahmed
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 10th

- Topics: Introduction to ethics, feminist criticism of traditional ethics, ethics of care

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- Readings:
 - *Doing Ethics*, Vaughn
 - Chapter 5: Consequentialist Theories
 - Chapter 6: Nonconsequentialist Theories
 - Chapter 7: Virtue Ethics: Be a Good Person
 - Chapter 8: Feminist Ethics and the Ethics of Care
 - “The Ethics of Care,” Gilligan
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 12th

- Topics: Feminist ethical questions, ethics of care, sex work, prostitution
- Readings [TBD]:
 - “Trafficking, Prostitution, and Inequality: The Centrality of Gender,” MacKinnon
 - “On Pornography: MacKinnon, Speech Acts & ‘False’ Construction,” Macgowan
 - “A Critical Race Feminist Perspective on Prostitution & Sex Trafficking in America,” Butler
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 17th

- Topics: Feminist political philosophy, political issues of gender
- Readings:
 - “Feminist Political Philosophy,” SEP
 - *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*, MacKinnon [Selections]
- Assignments: Discussion questions, see course site.

November 19th

- Topics: Abortion, misogyny, individual rights
- Readings [TBD]
 - *Abortion, Three Perspectives*, Tooley, Jaggar, Devine & Wolf-Devine
 - *Entitled*, Manne [Selections]
- Assignments:
 - Discussion questions, see course site.
 - **3rd Reflective Paper Due November 22nd by 11:59PM!!!**

November 24th

- No Classes, Thanksgiving Break

November 26th

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- No Classes, Thanksgiving Break

December 1st

- Micro-presentations Round #1

December 3rd

- Micro-presentations Round #2

December 8th

- Micro-presentations Round #3

December 10th

- Micro-presentations Round #4

Finals Week

- No in-person final
- **Micro-presentation reflection due December 20th**