Course objectives:

This course will explore the relationship between gender and nation in India, drawing upon insights from feminist legal theory, postcolonial feminist theory and critical race theory. Interrogating dichotomous categories of modernity/tradition, Western/non-Western, public/private, feminist/true Indian woman, topics will include an examination of the connections between feminism, nationalism and colonialism; the idea of citizenship and the construction of women in the discourse of post-colonial nationhood; women, religion and identity; and the legal regulation of women.

Exploring the relationship between women and the state, we will study the many ways in which women adopt strategies to renegotiate their status. The aim of the course is to highlight the complexity of the relationship between women and the state, examining how the status of women in India is both implicated in and impacted by the state discourse of modernity and nationhood.

The course will be conducted through a combination of discussions led by the instructor, student discussion/presentations, and small group discussions. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to complete the required readings for each class so that they can participate in discussions. Students will sign up to present the assigned readings and to be the discussion leaders for each class. No assignment or term paper will be accepted if the student has not attended the classes.

8 September 2013: INTRODUCTION to the course and to each other. Overview and outline of course structure.

Course materials:

Obligatory text: Instructor’s coursepack which is available for purchase from the University Bookstore. It includes the following articles:
History and Theory


Feminism, Nationalism and Colonialism


**Contemporary Issues**

**Women and Development in India**


**Women and Legal Issues**


18. Kapur “Revisioning the role of law in women’s human rights struggles”


Multiculturalism and Diaspora Issues


Additional documents:

The listed articles highlight the key themes that will form the basis for the lectures and class discussion. We may move more quickly or more slowly through certain material, and we may consider additional readings. Any additional documents will be distributed in class or posted on mycourses.

Any additions/revisions to the reading list will be announced in class and posted on the website.

Method of Evaluation: There will be two assignments each worth 40% of the final grade. Students are required to write: 1) an Op-Ed on a topic to be decided; and 2) a paper on a topic of their choice, based on the course readings, and approved by the Instructor. The paper must demonstrate an engagement with the course materials and classroom discussion. The papers must demonstrate the ability to critically discuss the key ideas presented in the readings; readings must not be merely summarized.

Format: 12 point font, double-spaced.

Length: 10 Pages. Papers over 10 pages will be graded only up to the 10 page limit. Any material beyond 10 pages will not be considered for evaluation.

Due: Assignment 1: October 25, 2013. Hand in during class time.

Assignment 2: TBA

Class participation and Presentation: 20%. Students will lead the discussion on a reading(s) of their choice, and submit a written response paper of two pages maximum. Depending on the number of students, each student may be required to do at least two class presentations, or again, depending on numbers, small
group presentations. Students will also be required to maintain a weekly class journal, which will include a reflection paragraph/s relating to each class.

**Late Paper Policy**: NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED (UNLESS THERE IS A VALID REASON SUCH AS A MEDICAL REASON).

**General Information**

**Class schedule**: Monday 11:30 am to 2:30 pm, EDUC 338
**Instructor**: Prof. Vrinda Narain
**Office**: Faculty of Law, Room 203, 3674 Peel Street
**Phone**: 514 398 4927 **E-mail**: vrinda.narain@mcgill.ca
**Office hours**: TBA

**Academic Policies**: “If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 398-6009 before you do this”. “Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students’ Rights, available online at [http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/documents](http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/documents)

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

*McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/) for more information).*