This course is dedicated to the study of essays in feminist theory, focusing both on classics from the 70s and 80s and newer contributions from the 90s to the present. It is arranged by theme. We will start with broad questions about how to understand the oppression of women, move through a discussion of women’s experience and the feminist perspective, consider the roles of science and culture in explaining sexual difference, and close with feminist approaches to issues like romantic love and the emotions. Topics discussed along the way will include the intersection of sexism and racism, the Western nuclear family, Marxism, eating disorders, and romantic love.

The lectures and assignments will focus on close reading and analysis of the texts—we will pay special attention to structure and argument, focusing on the ways that feminist theorists frame their questions, single out central topics, and develop them into a wide range of analyses and calls for action.

**Schedule of Readings**

**Sept. 4** Introductory class (no readings)

*Describing the Problem 1: Oppression, Intersectionality, and Privilege*

Sept. 9  “Sexism,” Ann Cudd & Leslie Jones
         “Oppression,” Marilyn Frye
Sept. 11 “Five Faces of Oppression,” Iris Marion Young
Sept. 16 “Introduction to The Second Sex,” Simone de Beauvoir
Sept. 18 “Black Women: Building Feminist Theory,” bell hooks
Sept. 23 “Contesting Cultures,” Uma Narayan
Sept. 25 “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” Peggy McIntosh
         “Psychological Oppression,” Sandra Bartky

*Describing the Problem 2: Gender Roles, Economy, and Family*

Sept. 30 “The Traffic in Women,” Gayle Rubin
Oct. 2  “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism,” Heidi Hartmann
Oct. 7  “The Psychodynamics of the Family,” Nancy Chodorow
Oct. 9  “Woman’s Place in Man’s Life Cycle,” Carol Gilligan
Oct 14 No class. Happy Thanksgiving!

*Experience and Knowledge 1: Feminist Consciousness*

Oct. 16 “Toward a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness,” Sandra Bartky
        “Male Feminism as an Oxymoron,” David Kahane
Oct. 23 “Defining Feminist Thought,” Patricia Hill Collins
Experience and Knowledge 2: What is a Woman? Science, Objectivity, and Social Construction
Oct. 28  “Ontology and Social Construction,” Sally Haslanger
Nov. 4  “Situated Knowledges,” Donna Haraway
Nov. 6  “Performativity Acts and Gender Constitution,” Judith Butler

Romance and Sexuality
Nov. 11  “Feeding Egos and Tending Wounds,” Sandra Bartky
Nov. 13  “Sexuality,” Catharine MacKinnon
Nov. 18  “Thinking Sex,” Sandra Bartky
Nov. 20  “Lesbians in Revolt,” Charlotte Bunch
           “Some Reflections on Separatism and Power,” Marilyn Frye

Emotions and the Body
Nov. 25  “Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology,” Alison Jaggar
Nov. 27  “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity,” Susan Bordo
Dec. 2  “Throwing Like a Girl,” Iris Marion Young

Review and Concluding Remarks
Dec. 3  “Feminism, Utopianism, and the Role of the Ideal in Political Philosophy,” Drucilla Cornell

REQUIRED TEXT
Coursepack available from the McGill University Bookstore.

EVALUATION
- 20% Short paper (approx. 600 words)
- 35% Longer written assignment (approx. 1400 words)
- 35% Take-home final exam
- 5% Reading quizzes and in-class assignments
- 5% Conference participation

CONFERENCES
The course includes weekly, discussion-based conferences. They are an important part of the course, and attendance is required. You will need to sign up on Minerva.

LATE PAPERS AND EXTENSIONS
Written assignments are due in conferences. Extensions for papers will only be granted under unusual circumstances and will normally require supporting documents (e.g. doctors’ notes). Late papers will lose one third of a grade per day (e.g., a paper that would normally have gotten an A- will get a B+ if it’s handed in the day after the due date). Missed quizzes and in-class assignments cannot be made up.

In order to pass the course, students must submit both written assignments and write the exam.
Grade Appeal Policy
In order to appeal a grade, you must submit a one-page request to the instructor, explaining why you think the original grade is inappropriate. The paper will be re-evaluated, and the grade may go up or down.

McGill Policy Statements
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 www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

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.