

POLI 379
Topics in Canadian Politics: Gender and Politics (Fall 2019)

Tuesdays and Fridays 16h05-17h25, DUFF THTR 1

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Course Overview and Objectives

What role does gender play in maintaining and/or challenging the status quo in Canadian politics? To what extent is gender wrapped up in (historically specific) understandings about what is “natural” and “normal”? How are our ideas of gender materialized through our bodily practices and processes? And, perhaps most importantly, what are the implications of these practices and processes on political culture, processes, and institutions in Canada?

This course will help students answer these and other questions through an examination of a variety of key thinkers and debates around gender in Canadian politics. The aim of this course is to give students the critical tools to examine the complexity of Canadian political society. Students should complete the course with a firm grasp on both the limits and possibilities of analyzing “gender” as it intersects and interlocks with other facets of identity and ideology.

Required Texts

All of the course readings will be posted on mycourses or can be found on reserve at the McGill library.

Evaluation

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| • Participation | 10% |
| • In-class midterm | 25% |
| • Election assignment | 30% |
| • Take home final exam | 35% |

Class Schedule

Week/Topics	Date	Assignments and/or Readings
Week 1: An introduction to feminism	S 3	Review syllabus
	S 6	Rosalind Delmar. 1986. "What is Feminism?" bell hooks. 2000. <i>Feminism is for Everyone: Passionate Politics</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Introduction: "Come Closer to Feminism"
SECTION I:		THEORIZING SEX AND GENDER
Week 2: The category of woman	S 10	Mary Wollstonecraft. 1790. <i>A Vindication for the Rights of Man</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Dedicatory letter o Introduction
	S 13	Audre Lorde. 1984. "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference"
Week 3: Intersectionality	S 17	Kimberle Crenshaw. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"
	S 20	Jennifer Nash. 2008. "Re-thinking intersectionality"
Week 4: Queer theory	S 24	(Conferences this week) Judith Butler. 1998. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory"
	S 27	Egg et al. 2005. "Introduction: What's Queer About Queer Studies Now?"
Week 5: Masculinities	O 1	(Conferences this week) R.W. Connell and J.W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept" (2005)
	O 4	Judith Halberstam. 2012. "Global female masculinities"
SECTION II:		FEMINISMS
Week 6: Public/private divide	O 8	(No conferences this week) Carole Pateman. 1988. <i>The Sexual Contract</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Chapter 1: "Contracting In" Susan Boyd. 1996. "Can Law Challenge the Public/Private Divide: Women, Work, and Family"
	O 11	NO CLASS

Week 7: Feminist ways of knowing	O 15 O 18	(Conferences this week) Joan Scott. 1991. “The Evidence of Experience” Patricia Hill Collins. 1986. “Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought” Jasbir Puar. 2012. “I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess”: Becoming Intersectional in Assemblage Theory”
Week 8: Feminist activisms	O 22 O 25	(No conferences this week) IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM Elizabeth Evans and Prudence Chamberlain. 2017. “Critical Waves: Exploring Feminist Identity, Discourse and Praxis in Western Feminism” R. Claire Snyder. 2008. “What is Third-Wave Feminism? A New Directions Essay”
Week 9: Contemporary feminisms	O 29 N 1	(Conferences this week) Micheale Ferguson. 2010. “Choice Feminism and the Fear of Politics” Joyce Green. 2017. “Taking More Account of Indigenous Feminism.” Jack Halberstam. 2013. <i>Gaga Feminism</i> . o Preface o Introduction o Chapter 1: Gaga feminism for beginners
Section III:		CONTESTING THE CANADIAN STATE
Week 10: Political representation	N 5 N 8	(Conferences this week) Lisa Young. 2013. “Slow to Change: Women’s Representation in the House of Commons” Melanee Thomas. 2018. In Crisis or Decline? Selecting Women to Lead Provincial Parties in Government”
Week 11: Regulating sexuality	N 12 N 15	(No conferences this week) Janine Brodie, Shelley Gavigan, and Jane Jenson. 1992. <i>The Politics of Abortion</i> Chapter 1: “The Politics of Abortion” Zakiya Luna and Kristin Luker. 2013. “Reproductive Justice” NO CLASS
Week 12: Regulating sex work/ers	N 19 N 22	(Conferences this week) Jane Scoular, The ‘subject’ of prostitution: Interpreting the discursive, symbolic and material position of sex/work in feminist theory” ELECTION ASSIGNMENT DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS DOCUMENTARY: “Status quo”

Week 13 Contemporary gender politics	N 26	(No conferences this week) Janine Brodie. 2008. “We are all equal now: Contemporary gender politics in Canada” Ethel Tungohan. 2017. “ Reconceptualizing Motherhood, Reconceptualizing Resistance: Migrant domestic workers, transnational hyper-maternalism and activism”
The backlash	N 29	TAKE HOME EXAM TO BE EMAILED OUT Jordan Peterson. 2019. “Gender politics has no place in the classroom” (access at https://nationalpost.com/opinion/jordan-peterson-gender-politics-has-no-place-in-the-classroom)
	D. 6	Final take-home exam due (hard copy must be dropped off between 1 and 4 pm in Leacock 529)

Description of Assignments and Grading

I. Participation (10%)

Active participation is central in ensuring that students understand and retain knowledge. To this end, students will be expected to participate both in larger class discussion and to attend **6 out of the 7** conference sessions (you can miss one week without being penalized).

Grades will be determined by and TA based on the following criteria:

- Has the student consistently attended and voluntarily participated in conferences (i.e. asking questions, suggesting themes for discussion during class, giving examples)?
- Has the student enhanced the learning environment by participating respectfully in classroom discussion with their colleagues?

II. In-class midterm (25%) (October 22nd)

An in-class closed-book midterm exam will include:

- A “short answer” section graded on the degree to which the answers offered correctly identify and discuss the meaning and importance of chosen concepts, ideas, and issues;
- A “long answer” section graded on the student’s ability to demonstrate a strong understanding of the concepts/ideas/authors discussed, a clear thesis, compelling evidence, and a thoughtful consideration of key elements and perspectives.

III. Election assignment (30%) (due November 22nd)

Each student will write a 2000-3000 word paper applying a feminist theory discussed in class to an election event (debate, interview, incident, campaign event, etc.). More details will be given in class and a more detailed breakdown of the assignment will be posted on mycourses.

V. Take home final exam (35%) (due December 6)

Questions for the take home final will be distributed on the last day of class (November 29). More details will be given in class.

Other Key Issues to Note

In a class context, we all depend on a climate of mutual respect and engagement to make this a productive and exciting intellectual environment. Please respect these basic guidelines:

Deadlines: Exceptions are only made for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. Each day of late submission will result in a penalty of 5% per day (weekend included). University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness be supported by a medical certificate. No assignments will be accepted via email.

Email policy: Email will be answered during normal business hours of the University. While an effort will be made to respond in a timely manner, please allow 1-2 days for a reply. No extensions will be granted via email.

Electronic devices: As per McGill's courtesy policy, cell phone use, texting, emailing, and surfing the Internet are prohibited during class time. If you need your cell phone on because you have children or need to remain in contact with someone because of a medical emergency, please inform the professor at the beginning of the class and please leave your cell phone on vibrate.

Class discussion: Please respect your fellow students by listening attentively during classroom discussions and lectures. Students talking repeatedly during lectures will be asked to leave. Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or other discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.

Class time: Students who come late to class or leave early disrupt both the flow of discussions and the lectures. Please respect class time. If you have to leave early due to extraneous circumstances, please inform the professor prior to class.

- **Sexual Assault Survivor Support and Allyship:** Should you or someone you know need support as a survivor of sexual assault, harassment and/or discrimination on campus, please contact McGill's Sexual Violence Response Advisor, Émilie Marcotte, at 514-398-4486 or by email at: osvrse@mcgill.ca, situated in the new Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support and Education (located at 550 Sherbrooke, suite 585) for assistance. They also offer drop-in hours during the school year (the schedule is online). For more information on their office, sexual violence support and reporting options visit: www.mcgill.ca/saap. The Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Student's Society (SACOMSS) offers peer counseling and support to students who have experienced sexual violence and their allies, as well as outreach and education. You can find out more about them at <http://www.sacomss.org/wp/>. Their hotline number is: (514) 398-8500 and they offer drop-in hours as well (the schedule for which is online).
- **Accommodations:** If you require accommodations due to special circumstances, challenges or disabilities, please notify both the professor and the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) as soon as possible. The OSD provides a broad range of support and services to assist students, faculty, and staff with disabilities (3100 Brown Student Services Bldg., 398-6009 (voice), 398-8198 (TDD) (<http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>). Every effort will be made to accommodate students with special needs arising from learning challenges and disabilities.
- Please note the above commitment to accommodate applies equally to survivors of sexual assault and/or harassment on or off campus. Survivors are encouraged to consult the resources provided by the Students' Society of McGill University (<https://ssmu.ca/resources/sexual-violence/>), the Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students' Society (<http://www.sacomss.org/wp/>) and the McGill Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support and Education (<https://www.mcgill.ca/osvrse/>).

McGill Policy Statements

Language of Submission:

"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. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives."

« Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue). »

Academic Integrity:

“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)

Text-matching Software:

Text-matching software is used in this course. Item 2 of the text-matching policy states, in part:

2. Students shall also be informed in writing before the end of the drop/add period that they are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative way of attesting to the authenticity of their work. Instructors shall provide students with at least two possible alternatives that are not unduly onerous and that are appropriate for the type of written work.

If you prefer that an alternative way of attesting to your work's authenticity be used, you may choose from these alternatives:

- a) submitting copies of multiple drafts;
- b) submitting an annotated bibliography;
- c) submitting photocopies of sources;
- d) taking an oral examination directed at issues of originality;
- e) responding in writing to a quiz or questions directed at issues of originality;
- f) providing a written report regarding the process of completing the work; other alternatives devised by the instructor, provided that they are not unduly onerous, that they are meant to attest for authenticity of the written work, and that they meet the approval of the Dean or Disciplinary Officer in the faculty in which the course is offered.