Student Information and Acknowledgment Form

Course: Politics 140—Gender Politics

Please read the attached syllabus, fill out the information on this cover sheet (use the back of the sheet if necessary), and sign it to indicate that you have read and understood the requirements of the course in full. This information helps me understand your needs better, and will be kept confidential. Please detach this sheet and hand it to me at the end of the first class.

NAME ___________________________________________

YEAR IN SCHOOL ____________________________________________

MAJOR (and MINOR, if any) ______________________________________

E-MAIL _________________________________________________

MAILING ADDRESS __________________________________________

PHONE NUMBER _____________________________________________

PREVIOUS CLASSES IN POLITICS _____________________________

Have you previously taken any classes that dealt with the issue of gender?

Briefly describe your reasons for taking this course.

Tell me one thing about yourself that you would like me to know (i.e. experiences, interests, political ideas)

Are there any special circumstances of which I should be aware?

I have read and understand the course requirements and conditions.

___________________

(signed)
Gender Politics

In this course we explore how politics looks when viewed through a gender-sensitive lens. The latter enables us to "see" how the world is shaped by gendered concepts, practices, and institutions. Following the metaphor of lenses: How do lenses focus our vision and filter what we "know"? How does this focusing and filtering shape our lived experience--what we think of as "reality"--and our understanding of it?

When we study gender we learn about men and women. Through a gender-sensitive lens, we see how constructions of masculinity are not independent of, but dependent upon, opposing constructions of femininity. Because of this interdependence, a gender analysis of women's lives and experiences does not simply "add something" about women but "transforms" what we know about men and the activities they undertake.

Gender shapes not only how we identify ourselves but also how others identify and relate to us and how we are positioned within social structures. The point is that divisions of gender identity (masculinity and femininity) have consequences for the differences between women's and men's experience, for example, in earning money and exercising public power.

By examining how men and women are differently affected by political processes and how gender shapes the way we think about--and in part "create"--the world, this course reframes and expands our knowledge of politics. By including women's experience--of politics, security, economics, ecology, and equity--the course generates understanding that is more comprehensive and accurate because it is less partial and distorted than conventional accounts.

Reading List (Required Books)

- Bell hooks, *Where We Stand: Class Matters* (Routledge, 2000)

Recommended Readings:


Office: Garaventa 213

Office hours: Tuesdays and (some) Thursdays 11:15-12:30 or by appointment (x4140 or plongo@stmarys-ca.edu)
"The destiny of human rights is in the hands of all our citizens in all our communities."
Eleanor Roosevelt

Course Requirements

Participation:
This course is a seminar and will succeed or fail as a consequence of your involvement. That holds true collectively--the discussion will only be as good as everyone makes it--and individually--your evaluation will depend heavily on your thoughtful and informed (but not necessarily voluminous) contribution.

What you think about the various issues we address matters. I can't stress enough how important it is that you make an effort to be an active participant in class discussions. Participation serves many functions. Since the issues we examine are often open to multiple interpretations, your participation allows you to express your own views and opinions and see how they compare with the views of others. This allows you to improve your communications skills, to sharpen your debating skills and to get used to speaking in front of a group. Furthermore, if you are consistently active in class discussions, it keeps you focused. You will retain more of what is said in class, and this will help you tremendously with your written work. It is a simple equation—the more active you are in class, the more you will learn. Because your participation is such a crucial part of the class, your grade can be improved if you consistently add to discussions.

Papers:
There will be three written assignments: two papers and a journal. Your written work must be typed, double-spaced, pt 12, carefully proofread, and with your pages numbered. Grammar and writing style are a key part of the grade. Papers are due at the beginning of class and late papers will be docked one letter grade for each day late (including weekend days).

Abstract:
Provide a 200 word abstract that summarizes your entire paper.

Critical Responses:
You will be assigned a number of critical commentaries on a topic or reading. The purpose of these essays is to a)encourage you to keep up with the readings, b)develop a synthetic understanding of course materials, and c)raise issue for discussion pertinent to these materials. They should be analytical commentaries (NOT summaries) on the readings.

NOTE: Write your essay as a personal essay using the first-person pronoun "I" ; these, however, are NOT simply "opinion papers." You are of course welcome to present your opinion (indeed, this can scarcely be avoided!)--but think of opinion as less a matter of individual taste or preference than as a point of view, a way of seeing, a perspective shaped by your subject-positioning, the politics of your own location at a particular
intersection of culture/ history/ gender/ race/ class/ ethnicity/etc.—and work these considerations into your analysis in light of our study of the politics of gender.

Collect all of your responses in a folder (each should have the date of when it was written). This folder will become part of your “portfolio” that you will turn in at the end of the semester.

Service Learning

Pledge

“Because we recognize a gap between our society’s values and our current reality and because we believe that when a person is hurting, we all suffer, then we, as participant in this service-learning project, pledge ourselves to engage in effective action and thoughtful reflection in order to find solutions to our communities’ problems, narrow this gap and build a better future.”

The goal of this requirement is the understanding of what is required of a citizen in a democracy. A democratic society depends on citizens who will

- take individual responsibility and participate actively
- confront the unresolved problems of the society
- work through democratic processes toward the fuller realization of America’s highest ideals
- secure opportunity for all our citizens

A particular strength of the class is that it does not simply respond to social needs in accordance with the charity model of assistance such as soup kitchens and homelessness, but also focuses on the justice/citizenship model. This model fosters the social transformation of students into persons who are committed to rectifying political, economic and social problems, such as the widening gap between the wealthy and the poor, and at the same time cultivates strong participatory democratic instincts in student service-learners toward structural change. All our efforts support the notion that Adlai Stevenson once laid before the educated class of his day:

The privilege and the penalty of your education and the position you hold in your community is that, over the coming decades, as in the past, you will be the pacesetters for political and social thought in your community. You may not accept this responsibility, but it makes no difference. It is inescapable. If you decide to set no pace, to forward no dreams, and to have no vision you will still be the pacesetters. You will simply have decided there is no pace.

In Journey Through Economic Time, John Kenneth Galbraith suggests that the future of our nation will turn on the outcome of the continuing conflict between the social and
economic autonomy of the self and our larger community. He argues that it will depend on the outcome of the quiet and perhaps not so quiet war between the comfortable and the underclass. According to Robert Booth Power, author of *The Dance with Community*, the intellectual struggle going on in our universities and communities today is about recognizing that our impoverished neighborhoods and the people that live in them are important to us all, and ignoring them by stereotyping, often results in a loss of our humanity and the core principles of who we are as a country. In other words “all men [women] are created equal” has to mean something. Equal opportunity has to mean something. Things like the necessity of low cost housing is real, not just some radical’s idea that people should have a right to decent housing. We will discuss the above issues in class and compare what we learn with what is really going on outside our classroom.

There is no correct way to effect change. You can do the most good by choosing your own channels where you can be effective. Take a look around and see what you are not happy with, whether it be war, homelessness, violence against women, racism, labor unfair practices. There is probably an organization of some people who are as unhappy as you are, and then you can work to make a stand on that and work for social change.

The service-learning project requires:

- At least a 30-hour time commitment that immerses you in an area of social need.
- Involvement in direct, face-to-face contact with the people being served.
- A written field journal.

Team work is strongly recommended. During the first week of class you will be provided information about possible service sites and the logistics involved in dealing with the various issues arising from your service activity.

Community service is a required activity of this course. If you cannot or are not willing to make the time commitment to this component of the course, you cannot be in the class. **Students who do not complete this requirement in a satisfactory fashion will not pass the course**, no matter how well they have done on the classroom or written parts of the course requirements.

**Principles and Good Practices of Service-Learning:**

1. Those being served control the services provided.
2. Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions.
3. Those who serve are also learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned.

The above principles are rooted in the belief that all persons are of unique worth and have gifts to share with others.
Classroom Policies:

Cell phones and pagers must be turned off prior to entering class. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in class throughout. If you must arrive late or leave early, please notify me in advance.

Academic Conduct:
By its content and nature, the course material may be controversial. Therefore, there are some guidelines that I would like us to follow: 1) during your discussion, please listen to others' opinions and treat their opinions with respect; 2) everyone should not talk at once--only one at a time; and 3) try to frame your opinions and/or questions in a manner that will not intentionally offend others. We should all keep in mind, however, that the nature of the subject matter may, at times, offend someone. While that is not the purpose of the course, it may be impossible to avoid in an atmosphere of open dialogue and discussion. Remember that we can all benefit from experiencing different viewpoints.

Plagiarism:
A plagiarized paper yields a failing grade on the paper, perhaps for the semester. Plagiarism is dishonest work. It includes not only the exact use of another’s words, word for word, line for line, but also a close paraphrase or the use of the same words unacknowledged. In case of doubt, give a citation to the author you are using. No professor will ever lower the grade because a student was influenced by an author. The citation mainly acknowledges that influence. Aristotle was influenced by Plato, St. Thomas Aquinas by Aristotle, St. Thomas More by Aquinas, the Founding Fathers by Montesquieu, and your professor by writers too numerous to count. If you like the particular phrasing of an author, yet do not think you can capture the essence of the idea in your own words, set each gem inside quotation marks where it will be secure from accusation of plagiarism.

SMC Students with Disabilities Policy:

Students with disabilities:

• Have the right to self-identify

• Must register with the Office for Academic Support and Achievement (ASAP)

• Will provide the appropriate notice from ASAP for accommodations which specifically involve the faculty.

Students with disabilities receive services from the Office for Academic Support and Achievement (ASAP), located in Siena Hall (Phone Extension 4358). The coordinator’s name is Jeannine Chavez-Parfitt.
Tardies:
I know 8 o’clock in the morning seems an awfully early time to start a class. However, the lively discussion will probably wake you up and get you going for the day (you may bring coffee, if you wish). Each time you show up late, it disrupts the discussion and I may have to repeat announcements I made at the beginning of class. This tends to annoy me (and other students). Arrive on time and be respectful of others. Your punctuality will also help your overall grade.

Absences:
If you miss three or more classes you are encouraged to drop the course, since your grade will be severely affected. If you are not in class you cannot participate--don't deprive the class of your valuable contributions! Absence is at times unavoidable; nonetheless your grade is likely to suffer. You are responsible for making up missed work and for finding out what happened in your absence. Ask your classmates first and come to me only for information they cannot provide.

Grading Policy:
Your grade will be based on both participation in class (and at pertinent events on campus), and written work. I reserve the right to adjust grades either up or down, depending on such things as trajectory, effort, special circumstances, and so on. You need to complete each component to pass the course.

Assignments must be turned in the date they are due. Critical commentaries on the readings will not be accepted after 8:30 a.m. on the due date. Papers may be turned in one day late for a maximum grade of C. I will not accept papers that are more than one day late and they will receive an automatic F.

Grades for the semester will be determined on the basis of the following percentages:

- 20% for participation/attendance in class and at specific events
- 25% for mid-term paper
- 30% for the final paper
- 25% for the field journal and class presentation
GRADE DEFINITIONS AND CRITERIA

A= Clearly stands out as an excellent performer. Has unusually sharp insight into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines; anticipates next steps in progression of ideas.

"A" work should be of such a nature that it could be put on reserve for all students to review and emulate. The "A" student is, in fact, an example for others to follow.

B= Grasps subject matter at a level considered to be good to very good. Participates actively in class discussion. Writes well and speaks well. Accomplishes more than the minimum requirements. Produces high quality work.

"B" work indicates a high quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a high grade.

C= Demonstrates a satisfactory comprehension of the subject matter. Accomplishes only the minimum requirements, and displays little or no initiative. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for a college student. Has an acceptable understanding of all basic concepts.

"C" work represents average work. A student receiving a "C" has met the requirements, including deadlines, of the course.

D= Quality and quantity of work is below average and barely acceptable.

"D" work is passing by a slim margin.

F= Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable. Academic credit is not earned for an F.

"F" work does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of course work.
# Grading for Critical Responses

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<th>1 Point</th>
<th>0.5 Points</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content and Development</strong></td>
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<td>Paper is clear, focused and interesting with a clearly defined purpose statement. It includes relevant material, effective research, and/or well-developed support for opinions. Writer demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and shows the ability to link theories to practical experience. Paper is thorough and demonstrates originality.</td>
<td>Paper is mostly clear and focused, though the writing does not particularly engage the reader. Efforts are made to use relevant material and research to support findings; support for opinions has not been thoroughly developed. Understanding of subject matter appears limited, practical experience is not well linked to theories, and the paper lacks substance and originality.</td>
<td>Paper is unclear on central purpose and/or requires that the reader make inferences based on sketchy details. Information is limited, missing or unsupported, and the writer fails to demonstrate basic understanding of subject matter. Practical experience is not adequately addressed.</td>
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| **Organization** | | |
| The paper’s organization emphasizes the central theme or purpose and demonstrates an accurate audience analysis. Sequencing and transitioning of ideas is logical. Appropriate sections including an introduction, body and conclusion lead the reader toward understanding. | The reader can readily follow what is being said, but the paper’s overall organization is at times, a stiff formula or lacks a consistent pace. The introduction and/or conclusion is weak. The sequence of ideas is not smooth and/or logical. | The paper’s organization is haphazard and disjointed. Writing lacks direction and continuity among ideas, details, and support material. The lack of organization distorts or obscures the paper’s main point and confuses the reader. Introduction and/or conclusion are missing. |

| **Word Choice and Voice** | | |
| The words used convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way. The writing is full and rich, yet concise. The writer is writing for the reader, using powerful verbs, active voice, and appropriate vocabulary. Ideas are stated with conviction. | The language used does convey the message. However, it is quite ordinary and often contains “generic” words, phrases, and jargon. The writing lacks detail, precision, conviction, and although understandable, rarely captures the reader’s attention. | The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary and is unable to convey meaning. Words are imprecise, inadequate, or incorrect. Language is vague, abstract, or redundant and relays only general messages. |

| **Sentence Structure and Conventions** | | |
| Sentences are well constructed with consistently strong, varied structure that makes reading easy. The paper demonstrates a strong grasp of standard writing conventions and includes no more than two total errors in spelling, punctuation, word usage and/or grammar. The writer uses proper sentence structure and conventions to enhance the paper’s readability. | Sentences are more mechanical than fluid and occasional awkward construction forces the reader to slow down or reread sentences. The writer shows good control over simple sentences, but struggles with complex syntax. The paper contains between three and six total errors in spelling, punctuation, work usage, and/or grammar. | Numerous errors in usage, sentence structure, spelling, or punctuation repeatedly distract the reader. Irregular sentence patterns make the text difficult to follow. Many sentences seem disjointed or awkward. Spelling and basic punctuation are often incorrect. |

| **Documentation and Use of Sources** | | |
| The paper contains no more than two errors in application of APA or MLA writing standards. There is a clearly documented connection between theory and practice. The paper demonstrates use of several sources beyond basic course requirements. | The paper contains between three and six errors in application of APA or MLA writing standards. Documentation of connection between theory and practice lacks clarity and/or balance. The paper demonstrates use of few sources beyond basic course materials. | The paper contains more than six errors in the application of APA standards. There is a limited or no connection between theory and practice. The paper demonstrates use of limited or no sources beyond basic course materials. |
Class Schedule:

February 10  Introduction and discussion of the course requirements

The Women’s Movement and American Gender Politics

February 12  Strom, Women’s Rights (chs. 1-3)
Recommended Video: Not For Ourselves Alone

Monday, February 16  7 p.m. Soda Center:
bell hooks [mandatory attendance]

February 17  Strom, Women’s Rights (chs. 4-6)
Journal Entry # 1 due

February 19  Strom, Women’s Rights (chs. 7-9)
Recommended Video: Rosie the Riveter

February 24  Strom, Women’s Rights (chs. 10-13)
Recommended Video: When Abortion was Illegal

February 26  Strom, Women’s Rights (chs. 14-15)
Journal Entry # 2 due

Intersecting Inequalities: Gender, Class and Race

March 2  bell hooks, Where We Stand (pp. 1-49)

March 4  bell hooks, Where We Stand (pp. 50-88)

March 9  bell hooks, Where We Stand (pp. 89-130)

March 11  bell hooks, Where We Stand (pp. 131-164)

March 16  Gagne and Tewksbury, The Dynamics of Inequality (Chapter 1)

March 18  Gagne and Tewksbury, The Dynamics of Inequality (Ch. 2: 1, 4-6)

March 19  First Assignment Due: Interview Paper (in my office by 10 a.m.)

March 23  Gagne and Tewksbury, The Dynamics of Inequality (Ch. 3: 1-5)

March 25  Gagne and Tewksbury, The Dynamics of Inequality (Ch. 4: 1, 3-5, 7-10)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gagne and Tewksbury, <em>The Dynamics of Inequality</em> (Ch. 4: 11-16)</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
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<td>Gagne and Tewksbury, <em>The Dynamics of Inequality</em> (Ch. 4: 17-21)</td>
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<td>April 3-12</td>
<td><strong>Easter Recess</strong></td>
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<td>April 13</td>
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<td>Gagne and Tewksbury, <em>The Dynamics of Inequality</em> (Ch. 4: 22-28)</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
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<td>Gagne and Tewksbury, <em>The Dynamics of Inequality</em> (Ch. 5: 1-4, 7)</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
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<td>Gagne and Tewksbury, <em>The Dynamics of Inequality</em> (Ch. 6)</td>
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**Women and Grass-Root Politics**

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<tr>
<td>April 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 1-2)</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
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<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 4 and 10)</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
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<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 6-7)</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
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<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 8-9)</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
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<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 5 and 11)</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
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<td>Naples, <em>Community Activism and Feminist Politics</em> (Chs. 12-14)</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td>Presentations of Service-Learning Projects</td>
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<td><strong>Service-Learning Journals Due</strong></td>
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<td>May 18</td>
<td>8-10 a.m.</td>
<td>Presentations of Service-Learning Projects</td>
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<td><strong>Final paper due</strong></td>
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