New Course Request

Check Appropriate Boxes:  
- Undergraduate credit ☑  
- Graduate credit ☐  
- Professional credit ☐

1. School/Division: Liberal Arts and Sciences  
2. Academic Subject Code: WOST  
3. Course Number: 360 (must be cleared with University Registrar)  
4. Instructor: Laidinsky, April  
5. Course Title: Feminist Theory  
   Recommended Abbreviation (Optional): Fem. Theory (limited to 22 Characters including spaces)
6. First time this course is to be offered (Semester/Year): Fall 2006
7. Credit Hours: Fixed at _______3____ or Variable from _______ to _______
8. Is this course to be graded S-F (only)? Yes ...... No ......
9. Is variable title approval being requested? Yes ...... No ......
10. Course description (not to exceed 50 words) for Bulletin publication: This course is an introduction to feminist theory. Using primary and secondary texts, this course will introduce students to the main debates in feminist theory and provide students with the skills to choose and use feminist theories to interpret a wide range of sources on women's lives.
11. Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at _______3____ or Variable from _______ to _______
12. Non-Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at _______ or Variable from _______ to _______
13. Estimated enrollment: _______20____ of which _______0____ percent are expected to be graduate students.
14. Frequency of scheduling: _______every other year____ will this course be required (for majors)? _______yes____
15. Justification for new course: _______Required for the major in Women's Studies____
16. Are the necessary reading materials currently available in the appropriate library? _______Yes____
17. Please append a complete outline of the proposed course, and indicate instructor (if known), textbooks, and other materials.
18. If this course overlaps with existing courses, please explain with which courses it overlaps and whether this overlap is necessary, desirable, or unimportant.
19. A copy of every new course proposal must be submitted to departments, schools, or divisions in which there may be overlap of the new course with existing courses or areas of strong concern, with instructions that they send comments directly to the originating Curriculum Committee. Please append a list of departments, schools, or divisions thus consulted.

Submitted by:  

[Signature] Date 3/1/05

[Signature] Date 5/24/05

[Signature] Date

Dean of Graduate School (when required)  
Chancellor/Vice-President  
University Registrar

After School/Division approval, forward the last copy (without attachments) to the University Registrar for initial processing, and the remaining four copies and attachments to the Campus Chancellor or Vice-President.
Feminist Theory
W360, Spring 2006

Professor April Lidinsky
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Email: alidinsk@iusb.edu
Office Hours: Tues. 1-2:30 p.m., W 8:30-9:45 a.m., and by appointment

Course Description:
This course is an introduction to "feminist theory" – that is, a body of writing that attempts to describe and explain the condition of women's lives. We will consider the following questions: What are the many types of feminist theories? What is the relationship between theory and one's personal experiences, and between theory and social change? How does feminist thinking re-conceptualize issues of identity, equality, oppression, and resistance? How do feminist theorists redefine the differences of race, gender, class, and nation?

Using primary and secondary texts, this course will introduce students to the main debates in feminist theory and provide students with the skills to choose and use feminist theories to interpret a wide range of sources on women's lives. Students will write frequent short, analytical pieces, and two longer essays (one on a figure in feminist criticism and one on a feminist issue with an application to a test case) that allow for independent research and application of theories. Additionally, students are expected to participate actively in class discussion, and to present orally on course material and on their own research and writing projects for the course.

Course Objectives:
This course aims to give students a broad background and understanding of the historical and cultural contexts of feminist theory. Students should emerge from the course with an understanding that feminist theory is not a recent phenomenon, nor is it simply a western phenomenon. Through frequent analytical writing, students will practice critiquing and applying theories we learn in class. Additionally, students will gain practice in scholarly research on topics that interest them in the course. Students will be given support and instruction on developing their skills in research, annotated bibliographies, proposals, drafts, workshopping, and oral presentations on their research.

Required Course Materials:
The following books are available at the IUSB bookstore:

1) Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives by Carole R. McCann, Seung-Kyung Kim
Participation: This course will operate centrally through discussion in large and small groups, so when you come to class, you need to be prepared to talk, not merely to watch. This means you need to do more than merely read the material for the day; you must think about it and come prepared to share your ideas about what you have read. We will use the short writing assignments and small group work as a way for you to have an active role in shaping our discussion through your insights and questions for one another. Some of the material we discuss is controversial, and there may be strong opinions voiced in class. I expect students to interact respectfully with one another, to listen carefully, and not to talk when others are talking. Monitor yourself in class discussion so that you give everyone in class a chance to participate, please.

Attendance: You must be present and engaged for every class. It matters to me that you are here, and you will be rewarded for your participation. The maximum number of absences allowed is three. Tardiness counts as half an absence. For every absence beyond three, your final grade will drop one-half a grade. Please contact me if you have any concerns about this policy. (Please do come and talk with me if you are concerned about missing class. If you know you will be absent, please let me know ahead of time, if possible, so we can make arrangements.)

Oncourse: I do use this resource regularly for class announcements, so be sure to check Oncourse consistently. This is a class requirement.

Late assignments: Late assignments will be docked two points for every day they are late. Missing class on the day an assignment is due does not automatically mean I will accept it late without penalty.

Plagiarism: Any student in this course who is caught plagiarizing (using another’s work or words as one’s own without proper acknowledgment of the source -- this includes the Internet) will receive at least a failing grade for the assignment, and may receive a failing grade for the course. Do not do it. If you have any questions about how to properly document any kind of source you use for an assignment, I’ll be very happy to talk with you about how to document it.

Grades:

Your final grade for the course will be determined according to the following breakdown:

- 6 Short Analysis Responses 60 points (10 points each)
- 5-page paper and bibliography 30 points
- 6-page issue/application essay 35 points
- Participation, informal work 15 points
- Opening class discussion: 10 points

Total number of points you can earn for the course: 150

Grade scale:
- 139-150: A (> 147: A+)
- 135-138: A-
- 124-134: B (> 131: B+)
- 120-123: B-
- 109-119: C (> 116: C+)
- 105-108: C-
- 94-104: D (> 101: D+)
If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Course Calendar

Please note: This syllabus is subject to slight modifications, as our needs arise. I will update the assignment for the next class every day on the board.

Week One:
T Jan 11: Introductions. Of what use is theory? What is it?
Th Jan 13: Read three Prefaces to Donovan's Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions (FTTIR), and bell hooks' “Theory as Liberatory Practice” (handout), and the Introduction to Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives (FTR). What key issues and ideas emerge in these readings?

Week Two:
T Jan 18: Read and be ready to discuss Chapter 1 on “Enlightenment Liberal Feminism.” Read Mary Wollstonecraft’s introductory material to Vindication of the Rights of Woman: http://www.swan.ac.uk/coli/texts/wollstonecraft/vindia.htm
Th Jan 20: Read Stanton’s “We Now Demand Our Right to Vote” [http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/b1_1848_stanton1.htm] Be ready to discuss how Donovan’s ideas in Chapter 1 are exemplified in Wollstonecraft’s and Stanton’s writing.

Week Three:
T Jan 25: Read and be ready to discuss FTTIR Chapter 2, “Nineteenth Century Cultural Feminism.”
Th Jan 27: Short Analysis #1 due: Read and apply Donovan’s ideas in Chapter 2 to either Gilman’s “Women and Economics” [http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html] OR Crystal Eastman’s “Now We Can Begin” [http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/b1_eastman_crystal_1920.htm] You should read and be prepared to discuss both Gilman’s and Eastman’s essays, even though you won’t write about both of them.

Week Four:
T Feb 1: Read and be ready to discuss FTTIR Chapter 3, “Feminism and Marxism.” Bring in an article from the news that brings up issues of class and be prepared to talk about the role gender might play in the issue.
Th Feb 3: Read Hartmann’s “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism” in the Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives (FTR), pp. 206-221. Short Analysis #2 due: apply Hartmann’s ideas to Donovan’s Chapter 3.

Week Five:
T Feb 8: Read and be ready to discuss FTTIR Chapter 4, “Feminism and Freudianism.” Also read
de Beauvoir's "Introduction to The Second Sex" (FTR, pp. 32-40). Discuss annotated bibliographies and first paper.

**Th Feb 10:** Read and be ready to discuss Koedt's "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm" (FTR pp. 242-248) and Wittig's "One Is Not Born a Woman" (FTR pp. 249-254). **Short Analysis #3 due:** apply either Koedt's OR Wittig's ideas to Donovan's Chapter 4.

**Week Six:**

**T Feb 15:** Read and be ready to discuss FTTIR Chapter 5, "Feminism and Essentialism."

**Proposal due for 5 page annotated bibliography and issue paper on early figure in feminist criticism.**

**Th Feb 17:** Read and be ready to discuss de Beauvoir's "Conclusion" to The Second Sex [http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/debeauv4.htm] and handout from Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology.*

**Week Seven:**

**T Feb 22:** Read and be ready to discuss FTTIR Chapter 6, "Radical Feminism," Kreps' "Radical Feminism 1" (FTR pp. 45-49) and the first chapter of Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex [http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/fireston.htm] Discuss annotated bibliography progress. What issues are arising in the materials you are gathering?

**Th Feb 24:** Read and be ready to discuss Bunch's "Lesbians in Revolt" (FTR pp. 83-87) and Lorde's "I Am Your Sister..." (FTR pp. 249-254) and the Redstocking Manifesto: http://fsweb.berry.edu/academic/hass/csnider/berry/hum200/redstockings.htm. **Draft due of annotated bibliography and short paper on early figure in feminist criticism.** Bring in copies for workshopping.

***Spring Break***

**Week Eight:**

**T March 8:** Read and be ready to discuss Donovan's Chapter 7, "The Moral Vision of Twentieth-Century Cultural Feminism" and hooks' "Feminism: A Movement to End Exist Oppression" (FTR pp. 50-56).

**Th March 10:** Paper/annotated bibliography due on early figure in feminist criticism.

Discussion of findings. Raising issues for the second half of the semester.

**Week Nine:**

**T March 15:** Read and be ready to discuss Donovan's Chapter 8, "Into the Twenty-First Century," Aflatu's "We Egyptian Women" (FTR pp. 26-31), and Martinez's "La Chicana" (FTR pp. 41-44).

**Th March 17:** Read and be ready to discuss Basu's "Globalization of the Local/Localization of the Global" (FTR, pp. 68-77) and Dutt's "Some Reflections on..." (FTR, pp. 197-203) **Short Analysis #4 due:** Based on this week's readings, what are the benefits and challenges of international feminist theorizing and organizing?

**Week Ten:**

**T March 22:** Read and be ready to discuss in FTR: Sturgeon, Corcoran-Nantes, and Stetz. Bring
in a news article that speaks to these issues.

**Th March 24:** Discuss issue/application paper. Read and be ready to discuss in *FTR* pp. 164-178, on race and nation issues.

**Week Eleven:**
**T March 29:** Read and be ready to discuss in *FTR* pp. 179-196, on race and nation issues. **Short analysis #5 due:** topic TBA.
**Th March 31:** Read and be ready to discuss Lim and Molyneux on class issues, *FTR* pp. 222-231. Bring in some ideas for the issue/application paper to develop in class.

**Week Twelve:**
**T April 5:** Read and be ready to discuss Gopinath and Aguilar-SanJuan on sexuality issues, *FTR* pp. 260-276. **Short analysis #6 due:** topic TBA.
**Th April 7:** Standpoint theory. Read and be ready to discuss in *FTR* pp. 278-317. Be ready to discuss strengths and problems of this theory with some specific examples. Also be ready to discuss in *FTR* pp. 318-352 (Hill Collins and Calhoun on standpoint theory.).

**Week Thirteen:**
**T April 12:** **Proposal due for issue/application paper.** Bring in copies to workshop.
**Th April 15:** Read and be ready to discuss Lata Mani’s “Multiple Mediations ...” (pp. 356-377). Bring in a newspaper article about a current international issue to consider in light of Mani’s ideas.

**Week Fourteen:**
**T April 19:** Read and be ready to discuss Carolyn Sorisio’s essay, “A Tale of Two Feminisms” (*FTR* pp. 428-436). Come to class ready to apply her ideas to specific cases in your experience.
**Th April 21:** **Draft due for issue/application paper:** Bring in copies to workshop.

**Week Fifteen:**
**T April 26:** Presentations on final papers, discussion. Future plans for applying theory? **Final paper due Friday, April 29th.**

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Extra Readings of interest: June Jordan’s “Report from the Bahamas” and Adrienne Rich’s “Notes Toward a Politics of Location” (*FTR* pp. 447-458), and JeeYeun Lee’s “Beyond Bean Counting” (*FTR* pp. 472-476).

* Guidelines for Short Analysis Assignments: 2-page typed, double-spaced pages in which you respond to prompt on the syllabus. Be sure to quote specific passages from the text that illustrate your claims, and explain in detail what you find of interest in the language of the quotation.

  Use MLA citation style and proofread for grammatical errors. For example:

  Simone deBeauvoir argues, “The subject [of women] is irritating, especially to women; and it is not new” (32).

NOTE: 2-page short analyses assignments will be evaluated on a 1-10 scale, based on the following guidelines:

6 or lower = failing to fulfill the assignment in length, development of ideas, specific and accurate quotations from texts and analysis of those quotations, and analysis of connections.
between the texts in question

7 = fulfilling the assignment in length, development of ideas, specific and accurate quotations from texts and analysis of those quotations, and analyzing connections between the texts in question

8 = more than fulfilling the assignment with very rich development of ideas, detailed analysis of the quoted passages and detailed analysis of the connections between the texts in question.

9 = especially strong fulfillment of the assignment with very rich development of ideas, very detailed analysis of the quoted passages and detailed analysis of the connections between the texts in question.

10 = exceptional performance on all aspects of the assignment listed above.

Guidelines for Opening a Class Discussion:

Each student will take a turn opening up a class discussion on the day's readings. A sign-up sheet will be distributed early in the course. You will be responsible for remembering when it's your turn, and for preparing carefully.

You should be prepared to introduce us to the day's readings for a few minutes, with the following goals in mind: 1) Pointing us to some key passages that you think are important to understanding the reading for the day. 2) Explaining the significance you see in the passages, with attention to the specific language used and ideas raised. 3) Posing two or three questions that will open up the reading to class discussion (you may ask us to discuss in small groups or as a large group, or you may design another activity for us to do). In particular, you should shape questions that will allow students to make connections to ongoing concepts in the course.