

PHIL/WGST 275  
Moral and Philosophical Issues of Gender in Society  
(Feminist Philosophy)

Fall 2018 | Tuesday and Thursday 8:00-9:15am | Stone Center 209

**Instructor:** Minji Jang (*she/they*: I personally use *she/her* pronouns but feel free to use *they/them* to address me!)

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**Office:** Caldwell Hall 206A

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 2:45-3:45pm, Thursday 9:30-10:30am, and by appointment

### Content Warning

Some of the topics and materials discussed in this course might be difficult for students from a variety of backgrounds. (These topics include but are not limited to: discussion of sexual harassment, assault, killing, and rape.) Detailed content warning will be given prior to relevant units/readings. If you have any concerns about any elements of the course, or if there is any way that we can together make things easier to bear, please contact me by email, by Zoom, or in person.

### Textbook

The required textbook for this course is *Politics of Reality* by Marilyn Frye (ISBN: 9780895940995). Other readings and videos will be made available on Sakai. If you, for any reason, have difficulty obtaining this textbook, please do not hesitate to let me know.

## 1. Course Descriptions

In this course, we will explore moral and philosophical issues related to gender and society. There are six units:

**Unit 1: (Rethinking) Gender.** We will begin by exploring the concepts of sex and gender, bi-genderism, femininity, and masculinity. What is wrong with bi-genderism? What are ‘feminine’ traits, and in what sense are they truly feminine?

**Unit 2: Oppression, Sexism, and Misogyny.** We will move on to examine the concepts of structural oppression, sexism, and misogyny. How are these concepts different? Who are the victims? How and why do they suffer?

**Unit 3: Feminism and Resistance.** In this unit, we will discuss the following questions. What does it mean to be a feminist? Can a man be a feminist? What is the meaning of righteous anger?

**Unit 4: Intersectionality.** Intersectionality is a crucial yet often overlooked component of feminist theory. In this unit, we will explore the meaning of intersectionality and its importance in understanding and resisting oppression.

**Unit 5: Sex, Consent, and Violence.** Using the conceptual tools that we have acquired from the previous units, we will consider ethical and philosophical issues surrounding sex, consent, and violence. For instance, how should we understand consent? What constitutes rape?

**Unit 6: Epistemic Injustice and Silencing.** Our final unit addresses the topics of epistemic injustice and silencing. We will discuss testimonial injustice, hermeneutical injustice, gaslighting, and microaggressions on college campuses.

## 2. Learning Objectives

This course has four learning objectives.

- You will be introduced to key topics, ideas, and theories in feminist philosophy, as well as ethical, social and legal issues arising from these topics.
- Through readings and assignments, you will learn the value of interdisciplinary scholarship and the role of philosophical theorizing in it.
- You will practice key philosophical skills, including: identifying and critically evaluating different perspectives on a complicated issue, forming your own views based on such evaluation, and clearly communicating your views in writing and in speech with interlocutors who may have different or opposing opinions while engaging in respectful dialogue.
- You will reflect on how the topics that we have discussed in class relate to issues outside of the classroom and form your own reasoned views on those issues.

## 3. Commitment to Respect and Diversity

Together as a class, we are fully committed to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment for everyone involved, irrespective of their ability, age, economic status, ethnicity, first language, gender expression and identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexuality. Personal offenses or discriminatory remarks toward others on any of these bases will not be tolerated in class under any circumstances.

*Climate Surveys.* During the semester, we will have *anonymous climate surveys* to ensure that everyone feels welcomed and respected during class discussions and lectures. If you have any concerns about the learning environment at any time during the semester, please let me know immediately.

## 4. Course Assignments and Assessment

The required assignments for this course are as follows:

Due Date	Assignment	Percentage
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Daily	Attendance & Participation	10%
Daily	Reading Responses	20%
9/18 (Tues)	Summary and Analysis (2 pages)	10%
10/2 (Tues)	Outline for Paper I (1-2 pages)	2%
10/12 (Fri)	Paper I (4-6 pages)	18%
11/6 (Tues)	Outlines for Paper II (1-2 pages)	2%
11/16 (Fri)	Paper II (4-6 pages)	18%
12/13 (Thurs)	Final Exam	20%

I am required to assign you at least 10 pages of written work, not including in-class examinations. Your papers assignments will suffice to meet this requirement.

### Attendance & Participation (10%)

You will meet this requirement in part by attending class regularly. But you will also need to regularly participate in discussion and in-class group activities to get full points. There will be alternative ways of earning some participation points; we will discuss a guideline for these assignments on the first day.

*Cold-calling.* In class, I will occasionally “cold-call” you and ask if you would like to contribute your thoughts. You can always feel free to “skip” a particular question, or “opt-out” of being cold-called at any point during the semester for a particular class, a unit, or the entire semester.

*Mid-semester Estimate.* In the mid-semester, I will release an *estimate* of your participation grade—this does not count toward your overall grade and only serves to give you a sense of how you’ve been doing so far. If what you see is not the grade you expected or wanted, come talk to me and we’ll discuss the ways to boost your participation grade!

### Reading Responses (20%)

We will begin nearly every class by writing a short response to that day’s reading. Typically, I will ask you to answer one of the short reading guidance questions released prior to the class meeting. The goal is to give you an incentive to do the readings on time and come to class. There will be 23 in total, which I’ll grade pass/fail. I will drop your lowest 3, and the remaining 20 will count toward your grade. You will fail the reading response if it is clear that you failed to properly do the reading. You will pass the reading response if it is clear that you properly did the reading.

*Make-up Assignment.* You can make up for *maximum two* missed reading responses by writing a reflection paper on a film, a novel, or an article. The list will be updated during the semester.

## Papers and Final Exam

For each paper assignment (Summary and Analysis, Paper I, Paper II) and the final exam, there will be a separate guideline on Sakai, including the prompts and expectations for the given assignment.

## 5. Grading and Other Class Policies

Each assignment will be marked out of the number of percentage points that it contributes to your overall grade. This will give you a total score of 100, which I'll convert to your final letter grade:

<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
94	90	87	84	80	77	74	70	67	60	0-59

For papers, I will also give you a corresponding letter grade. We will look at grading criteria closer to the due dates, but here is a rough description of what these letter grades signify<sup>1</sup>:

**A:** “*Mastery* of course content at the *highest level* of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development.”

**B:** “*Strong* performance demonstrating a *high level* of attainment for a student at a given stage of development.”

**C:** “A *totally acceptable* performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development.”

**D:** “A *marginal* performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment [at a given stage of development].”

**F:** “For whatever reason, an *unacceptable* performance [at a given stage of development].”

Pluses and minuses will be given to papers that fall in between these descriptions.

### Anonymous Grading

I will grade the papers and the final exam *anonymously*. This means that you shouldn't put any identifying information on them, other than your PID number. Make sure to include your PID number *both* in the body of your paper *and* in the file name.

### Page Limit Policy

The papers are subject to strict page limits (excluding the reference list). To standardize length, all submissions should be: 12pt font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. If you have a nonstandard formatting, I will convert it to standard formatting to check for length. *I will dock a third of a letter grade for each half of a page you are over or under the required page range.*

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<sup>1</sup> These descriptions are from UNC's official “Explanation of Grading System” (<https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/>).

## Late Policy

Each paper is due at **11:59pm** sharp on the dates indicated below.

*Late days.* You are given “three late days” that you can freely use on any of the paper assignments (not applicable to reading reactions or the final exam). You can use all three days on a single assignment, or spread them out on several assignments. (For instance, you may turn in Paper I three days late, or turn in Paper I an hour late and Paper II two days late without getting a late penalty. Turning in an assignment an hour late will use up a whole late day.)

You don’t have to tell me in advance, and I won’t ask any questions! If you submit the paper late, I will simply deduct the day(s) from the remaining late days you have. *Once you have used up the late days, late papers will be docked a full letter grade (10%) for each calendar day (or part of a day) that they are late.* So, use the late days wisely.

*Extension.* You may earn an additional extension beyond the three late days given, if you make a reasonable request for an extension *at least 72 hours in advance* of the paper due date.

## Electronics

Electronics—laptops and tablets, but no phones—are allowed in class for accessing the electronic copies of the readings and note-taking. Please note that I reserve the right to rescind this permission if they become of a distraction. Whether you bring a laptop to class or not, you should bring paper and something to write with in order to complete in-class exercises and activities.

*Recording.* No recording devices are permitted for the classroom use. Exceptions can be made with a request from the Accessibility Resources & Services Office.

## Plagiarism and the Honor Code

You are expected to abide by UNC’s Honor Code, and refrain from any kind of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism. At UNC, plagiarism is defined as “deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.” This includes *unintentionally* stealing another person’s work or failing to give credit to someone else’s idea *by accident*.

Just as you are bound by the Honor Code not to plagiarize, I am bound by it to report suspected cases of academic dishonesty of any kind to the Honor Court. If you are ever in any doubt as to whether something constitutes plagiarism, check with me first!

## 6. Resources

### Accommodations

If you need special accommodations for class assignments, please register with the Accessibility Resources & Service Office (<https://ars.unc.edu/>). Once I receive an official request from the ARS Office, I'd be happy to make the arrangements!

## Counseling and Psychological Services

CAPS (<https://caps.unc.edu/>) is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, both for short-term and long-term needs.

## Writing Center

To ensure the anonymous grading, I will not read the paper drafts. But you can always set up an appointment with one of the coaches at the UNC Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/>) to improve your paper at any stages of writing—from brainstorming to polishing a full draft.

## Title IX Resources

Any students impacted by acts of discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, stalking, and related retaliation are encouraged to report the incident and seek resources on campus or in the community.

Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Rebecca Gibson: [rmgibson@unc.edu](mailto:rmgibson@unc.edu)), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential: [caps@unc.edu](mailto:caps@unc.edu)), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (confidential: [gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu)) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at <https://safe.unc.edu/>.

## 7. Reading Schedule (Subject to change)

Date	Topic	Reading / Assignment
8/21 (Tues) Week 1	Introduction	Syllabus <i>Ted talk</i> : Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “We should all be feminists” (2017)
Unit 1: (Rethinking) Gender		
8/23 (Thurs) Week 1	Sex and Gender	Georgia Warnke, “Sex and Gender” in <i>Debating Sex and Gender</i> (2011)
8/28 (Tues) Week 2	Rethinking Gender	Miqqi Gilbert, “Defeating Bi-genderism: Changing Gender Assumptions in the Twenty-First Century” (2009)
8/30 (Thurs) Week 2	Rethinking Gender, cont'd	Talia Mae Bettcher, “Trans Women and the Meaning of ‘Woman’” in <i>Philosophy of Sex</i> (2013) <i>NYT Opinion</i> : Elinor Burkett, “What Makes a Woman?” & Responses to Elinor Burkett (2015)

9/4 (Tues) Week 3	Femininity	Sandra Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" in <i>Femininity and Domination</i> (1990)
9/6 (Thurs) Week 3	Masculinity	Michael Kimmel, "Welcome to Guyland" and "Bros before Hoes: The Guy Code" in <i>Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men</i> (2008)
<b>Unit 2: Oppression, Sexism, and Misogyny</b>		
9/11 (Tues) Week 4	Oppression	Young, "Five Faces of Oppression" in <i>Justice and the Politics of Difference</i> (1990)
9/13 (Thurs) Week 4		Marilyn Frye, "Oppression" in <i>The Politics of Reality</i> (1983) Steinem, "If Men Could Menstruate" (1978)
9/18 (Tues) Week 5	Sexism	Marilyn Frye, "Sexism" and "The Problem that Has No Name" in <i>PR</i>  <b>Summary &amp; Analysis due 9/18 (Tue)</b>
9/20 (Thurs) Week 5	Misogyny	Kate Manne, Chapter 1 and 2 in <i>Down Girl</i> (2017)
9/25 (Tues) Week 6		Kate Manne, Chapter 3 and 8 in <i>DG</i>
9/27 (Thurs) Week 6	<i>Paper Writing Workshop I</i>	None
10/2 (Tue) Week 7	Psychological Oppression	Sandra Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression" in <i>FD</i>  <b>Outline for Paper I due 10/2 (Tue)</b>
<b>Unit 3. Feminism and Resistance</b>		
10/4 (Thurs) Week 7	Feminism	bell hooks, "Feminist Politics: Where We Stand" in <i>Feminism is for everybody</i> (2000) Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" in <i>Sister Outsider</i> (1984)
10/9 (Tues) Week 8		Sandra Bartky, "Toward a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness" in <i>FD</i>
10/11 (Thurs) Week 8	Righteous Anger	Marilyn Frye, "A Note on Anger" in <i>PR</i>  <b>Paper I due 10/12 (Fri)</b>
<b>Unit 4. Intersectionality</b>		
10/16 (Tues) Week 9	Intersectionality	<i>Ted talk</i> : Kimberlé Crenshaw, "The Urgency of Intersectionality" (2016) Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" in <i>SO</i>
10/18 (Thurs) Week 9	Fall break – no class!	None
10/23 (Tues) Week 10	Privilege	Marilyn Frye, "On Being White" in <i>PR</i>
10/25 (Thurs) Week 10	<i>Unit 1-4 Review Session</i>	None

Unit 5. Sex, Consent, and Violence		
10/30 (Tues) Week 11	Sex	Greta Christina, “Are We Having Sex Now or What?” in <i>The Erotic Impulse: Honoring the Sensual Self</i> (1992) <i>Ted talk</i> : Peggy Orenstein, “What young women believe about their own sexual pleasure” (2017) Optional: John Stoltenberg, “How Men Have (a) Sex” in <i>Refusing to be a Man</i> (1989)
11/1 (Thurs) Week 11	Consent	Rachel Bussel, “Beyond Yes and No: Consent as a Sexual Process” in <i>Yes Means Yes!</i> (2008)
11/6 (Tues) Week 12	Consent, cont’d	Quill (Rebecca) Kukla, “That’s What She Said: The Language of Sexual Negotiation” (2018) <b>Outline for Paper II due 11/6 (Tue)</b>
11/8 (Thurs) Week 12	Violence	Catharine MacKinnon, “A Rally on Rape” and “Sex and Violence” in <i>Feminism Unmodified</i> (1987)
Unit 6. Epistemic Injustice and Silencing		
11/13 (Tues) Week 13	<i>Paper Writing Workshop II</i>	None
11/15 (Thurs) Week 13	Epistemic Injustice	Miranda Fricker, Chapter 1 and 2 in <i>Epistemic Injustice</i> (2007) <b>Paper II due 11/16 (Fri)</b>
11/20 (Tues) Week 14		Miranda Fricker, Chapter 7 in <i>EI</i>
11/22 (Thurs) Week 14	Thanksgiving – no class	None
11/27 (Tues) Week 15	Gaslighting	Kate Abramson, “Turning up the Lights on Gaslighting” (2014)
11/29 (Thurs) Week 15	Microaggressions	Saba Fatima, “On the Edge of Knowing: Microaggression and Epistemic Uncertainty as a Woman of Color” (2017) <i>The Atlantic</i> : Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt, “The Coddling of the American Mind” (2015) (Optional) Bradley Campbell and Jason Manning, “Microaggression and Moral Cultures” (2014)
Exam Preparation		
12/4 (Tues) Week 16	<i>Final Exam Review Session</i>	None
12/13 (Thurs) Week 17	<b>Final Exam – 8:00-11:00am at Stone Center 209</b>	