

Syllabus: Women's Studies 240.10
(Spring 2005; 3 credits; CRN: 61524)

Women and Public Policy

Professor Cynthia Harrison
Tuesday: 6:10-8:40 p.m.
Room: Phillips 417

Office hours: Tuesday: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. (837 22nd St.)
Also by appointment Thursday: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. (Phillips 303)

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Note: This syllabus is a guide to the course for the student. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may therefore, at her discretion, change content and requirements at any time during the semester.

Course description & objectives:

Ideas about gender, implicitly or explicitly, influence policy makers in many areas of American life. Moreover, policy decisions frequently affect women differently from men because of the continuing distinction in the social roles men and women customarily assume.

This course will examine several areas of policy, some expressly related to women and others that have significant impact on women though policy-makers may not present the issue in that way. Such study offers the opportunity to achieve a deeper understanding of the way in which "gender" functions in the policy arena. Students will also familiarize themselves with the various vehicles of policy implementation: legislation, regulations, judicial interpretation, and executive actions.

Although gender will be the primary category of analysis, discussion should incorporate awareness that gender is not a unitary category, that many factors influence the ways in which individuals view policy issues, that policy choices affect individuals differently depending on their specific characteristics, and that men and women share affiliations with other women and men based on class, race, religion, ethnicity, geography, age, political outlook, and sexual orientation as well as other identities.

As participants in a graduate course, students should anticipate learning from each other, sharing both differing perspectives and research findings.

Course requirements:

This class will devote its time principally to discussion of the readings. All students must read thoughtfully and come prepared to write briefly on the readings and to share their insights and observations with the class. Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade. Attendance is expected at all classes and will be factored into the grade for participation.

In addition, students will have the following responsibilities, described below:

- * conducting class discussions as assigned, with a fifteen-minute presentation on a related policy topic, accompanied by an original handout of three to five pages (25%)
- * one long research project: a written legislative/policy history of a specific policy issue related to women (40%)
- * a 25-minute presentation based upon the research project accompanied by a two- to four-page original handout (15%).
(See pp. 9-12 for a fuller description of these assignments.)

Classroom protocol:

All viewpoints, courteously expressed, are welcome. Robust discussion, including disagreement, makes for an interesting class.

In order to receive accommodations on the basis of disability, a student must give notice and provide proper documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services, Marvin Center 436, 994-8250. Accommodations will be made based upon the recommendations of the DSS Office. Class sessions may be taped only in cases of documented necessity.

Please consult the "policies" section of the GW student handbook for the university code of academic integrity. Note especially the definition of plagiarism: "intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information." All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity.

If you are having problems with the reading assignments, with class participation, or with any other facet of the course, please come and see me. If my office hours are not convenient for you, we will find another time that suits your schedule.

For **all** written work submitted for grading, use a font no smaller than twelve-point Courier (that is, no smaller than this typeface) **and double-space all material including footnotes and indented quotations**. Do not use 1.5 line spacing. Do not justify the type. Number your pages.

ALL WRITTEN WORK MUST BE SUBMITTED IN HARD COPY. NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED ELECTRONICALLY.

COURSE BOOKS THAT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE GW BOOKSTORE:

1. Sara Evans. *Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End*. Free Press, 2003.
2. Mary C. King. *Squaring Up: Strategies to Raise Women's Income in the United States*. 2001.
3. Gwendolyn Mink & Rickie Solinger, eds. *Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*. NYU Press, 2003.
4. N.E.H. Hull & Peter Charles Hoffer. *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History*. 2001.
5. Dorothy Roberts. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage Books, 1999.
6. John D'Emilio, William B. Turner & Urvashi Vaid. *Creating Change: Sexuality, Public Policy & Civil Rights*. St. Martin's Press, 2000.
7. AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund. *A License for Bias*. 2000.
8. Elizabeth M. Schneider. *Battered Women and Feminist Lawmaking*. Yale, 2002.

Additional readings may be assigned.

Although not required, *A Pocket Style Manual* by Diana Hacker (Bedford Books) contains concise information concerning rules of grammar, style, and citation. You should be able to find it in the bookstore. In addition, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian offers fuller citations for legal materials. (Further advice on citation appears on p. 13 of this syllabus.)

Students who would like more assistance with written assignments should consult the Writing Center, Rome 550, 994-3765. See also the sheet of "writing tips" attached to the syllabus.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

WEEK 1 (January 18): Introduction

Discussion of syllabus

Course organization

Overview of women and public policy

WEEK 2 (January 25): Feminism and the construction of public policy

Sara Evans. *Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End*. Free Press, 2003.

WEEK 3 (February 1): Women and waged work

Mary C. King. *Squaring Up: Strategies to Raise Women's Income in the United States*. 2001.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. Current wage gap data
- b. Current occupational distribution

WEEK 4 (February 8): Welfare (I)

Gwendolyn Mink & Rickie Solinger, eds. *Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*. NYU Press, 2003.

Read section introductions for parts I – V.

Read documents 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31-33, 36, 39-41, 43, 46-48, 51-56, 58-59, 64, 65, 68-89, 92, 94-97, 100, 104, 105.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. Changes in federal enrollment from 1940 to 1980.
- b. Enrollment data: 1985 – current (at five year intervals)

LAW LIBRARY ORIENTATION, 8:00

WEEK 5 (February 15): Welfare (II)

Gwendolyn Mink & Rickie Solinger, eds. *Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*. NYU Press, 2003.

Read sections VI & VII entire.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. A 2004 research report on welfare outcomes from a moderate policy institute (e.g., the Brookings Institution, the Urban Institute, the Center for Law and Social Policy)
- b. A 2004 research report on welfare outcomes from a conservative policy institute (e.g., the Heritage Foundation or the Cato Institute) relevant to welfare reauthorization
- c. A 2004 research report on welfare outcomes from a feminist policy institute (e.g., IWPR or Legal Momentum) relevant to welfare reauthorization

WEEK 6 (February 22): Reproductive rights (I)

N.E.H. Hull & Peter Charles Hoffer. *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History*. 2001.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. Pending Congressional proposals regarding abortion
- b. Emergency Contraception

WEEK 7 (March 1): Reproductive rights (II)

Dorothy Roberts. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. 1999.

Discussion leaders:

Background topics:

- a. Teen pregnancy and race
- b. Unmarried motherhood and race

WEEK 8 (March 8): Public policy to end discrimination in education

AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund. *A License for Bias*. 2000.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. Findings from the Bush administration commission on Title IX
- b. Sexual harassment in schools

SPRING BREAK (March 14-18)

WEEK 9 (March 22): Violence Against Women

Elizabeth M. Schneider. *Battered Women and Feminist Lawmaking*. 2002.

Discussion leaders:

Update topics:

- a. Recent USDOJ data on violence against women
- b. VAWA reauthorization

WEEK 10 (March 29): Sexualities and Public Policy

John D’Emilio, William B. Turner & Urvashi Vaid. *Creating Change: Sexuality, Public Policy & Civil Rights*. St. Martin’s Press, 2000.

Read chapters 1-5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13-18, 20, 22, 23

Discussion leader:

Update topics:

- a. *Lawrence v. Texas*, 2003
- b. Federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act [ENDA]
- c. State and municipal statutes against discrimination based on sexual orientation

WEEK 11 (April 5): Presentations

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

WEEK 12 (April 12): Presentations

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

WEEK 13 (April 19): Presentations

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

WEEK 14 (April 26): Presentations

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

May 3: FINAL PAPERS DUE

CLASS DISCUSSIONS

The discussion should seek to analyze the readings and to connect the readings with each other and with other material familiar to students from other sources (e.g., classes, work).

Leading discussions:

For each class reading, students will be assigned to conduct the class discussion on the general reading for the class period and to prepare brief presentations on a topic related to the reading. Each speaker should take no more than fifteen minutes.

Leading the discussion should consist of making some opening remarks or observations, perhaps listing key insights of the author, and then posing questions based on the reading for the class to discuss. (See below for examples.)

Discussion leaders should remember that everyone has already read the book. *Do not recap the contents of the book in your introduction.*

Class responsibilities:

All students should come to class prepared to write briefly on the reading and to participate in the discussion. As you read each book, mark passages or sections you find unusually insightful – or ambiguous – to share or discuss with the class.

In analyzing readings, questions to be considered may include:

What thesis is the author arguing? What evidence is offered? Is it persuasive? Is there other evidence to be considered? Is the focus too broad or too narrow?

How does the author handle race/ethnicity in terms of the policy debate?

How does the author handle class in terms of the policy debate?

How does the author handle sexual orientation/gender identification in terms of the policy debate?

What assumptions about gender govern the quest for a particular policy goal? (Equality/Identity of treatment/equity/difference)

Does the author anticipate objections from other perspectives? What is omitted?

What is the historical context that generates a particular discussion of gender and policy?

What role do women play in shaping the policy?

Who had shaped that policy in the past?

Were the gender implications explicit or implicit?

Who are the proponents of change? What institutions do they represent?

What are the sources of resistance? What factors favor change/resistance?

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

All written work must be typed in a font no smaller than twelve-point Courier (i.e., this size), with *all material* **double-spaced**.

- Grammar, spelling, and organization count in *all* written assignments.
- At her discretion, the instructor may impose penalties for the submission of late papers.

The three written assignments are:

- A. A handout of **three to five pages**, due on the day of the discussion, to accompany a presentation of no more than 15 minutes on an update related to a policy issue. (25 % with the class discussion)

You may complete this assignment from secondary sources, including newspapers and websites. Public interest organizations that follow these issues often provide recently updated summaries. However, you must synthesize the material in your own words, citing your sources and providing some background on the organization supplying the information, such as political orientation and academic credentials. **If you print material from a web site for a visual, be sure that it is formatted in a way that looks professional.** Reformat material to include ONLY relevant data. If you use overheads, you do not need to provide copies of your overheads or your handout for the whole class, but you need to provide a copy to the professor along with a copy of your handout.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- ***EMPHASIZE CLARITY FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT, NOT LENGTH.***
- ***WHERE APPROPRIATE, SEEK ALTERNATIVE VIEWPOINTS.***
- ***Students who supply a big batch of unfiltered information will lose points.***
- ***On an overhead or slide, LESS IS MORE. NEVER put up a full page of type.***
- ***Caution: Do not assume that the updates of other students are models; they may have gotten it wrong.***
- ***Fifteen minutes is SHORT. Don't try to include too much.***

- B. Gender and Policy: A policy chronology, briefly annotated. (40%) (See below for fuller discussion).

Due May 3, 2005 -- TWO copies

- C. A two- to four-page hand-out to accompany presentation on policy chronology.

(This paper may be single-spaced if written in outline form.) This hand-out will be considered in the grade for the presentation, which composes 15% of the grade for the class.

Gender and Policy: A policy chronology, briefly annotated

Length: 15-25 pages PLUS the cover memo.

DUE DATE: May 3, 3005. (Since there is no class on that day, papers should be left in my mailbox in WSTU [837 22nd St.] before 5 p.m.)

The list of topics below includes policy issues that have a gender component and that federal policy-makers have addressed. Students will choose a topic to write on. For your topic, you will draft a policy chronology, noting the most significant legislative or administrative or judicial events in each case. (You should include only significant changes in policy, not, for example, minor increases in budget allocations or stipends.) Keep your focus on the aspects of the topic that most implicate women and gender.

Your chronology should include, *in a single listing*, the following items:

Key Legislation

Important (e.g., first) Congressional hearings, debates, and reports

Executive orders and reports of federal commissions

Implementing regulations by the authorized agency

Supreme Court decisions

Major publications by executive branch agencies

Formation of, or activity by, important lobbying organizations

(Note that not every policy will encompass all of these items, some topics will focus heavily on one kind of policy instrument, and some will have substantial activity on the state level. However, you must consider including any of these items if relevant to your topic – i.e., you can't simply decide only to cover some kinds of events and not others.)

We will have an orientation to the Law Library for those who have not had occasion to visit it before. Research guides are available on line for many of the categories listed above. Note that information concerning implementation can be obtained from agency annual reports.

For each of the above, supply appropriate identification in the first line, starting with the date; e.g.,

1906: Food and Drug Act, P.L. 59-384

Follow with a paragraph or two [**double-spaced, 12-point type, don't justify**] describing the substance of the law, executive order, court holding, etc., as it affected women.

In a cover memorandum, describe, in **no more than 1500 words (double-spaced)** the evolution of the issue historically, including:

- * the reason the issue emerged as a political dispute when it first did;
- * the key supporters and key opponents inside and outside government;
- * the issues originally in contention;
- * major departures in the policy;
- * the nature of the current debate.

[Have the key players changed? Is the issue different?]

(Keep in mind the impact of organized feminism and organized anti-feminism.)

ADVISORY: It may help you to treat each of the above bullets as a separate section and report on them in the order listed above.

Research:

Start with secondary sources (i.e., history and policy books) in order to familiarize yourself with the subject. *You should consult more than one secondary source to ensure that you understand the issue and that you know which policy instruments to look at. You also need more than one perspective. However, in order to do this assignment, you must look at the primary documents themselves (i.e., the statutes, court cases, regulations, executive orders) --not all, necessarily, but several.* Your annotations should include some brief quotations of the relevant sections of key measures (not in every instance, but some).

You should read at least *The Washington Post* every day to make sure that you're aware of pending measures related to your topic. Check current status of pending legislation on thomas.loc.gov.

Tone:

Prepare this chronology as if it were for a member of Congress who needs to know the background on a pending matter. Make your tone reportorial and neutral. (Labeling motives or outcomes as "sexist" or "patriarchical" will not persuade anyone who doesn't already agree with you and may cause some readers to dismiss your research out of hand.)

Style (See also writing tips, below):

When referring to judicial decisions, you **must** specify the court you are talking about -- not "the court," but, e.g., "The U.S. Supreme Court," or "The New York State Court of Appeals."

Whenever you refer to a member of Congress, first mention should include first name and last name, followed by state and party in parentheses: Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D., Md.).

When you refer to a federal agency, use its proper name in the initial mention: "U.S. Department of Labor," not "DOL" or "Labor."

I STRONGLY URGE THAT YOU READ THROUGH THE "WRITING TIPS" AT THE END OF THE SYLLABUS. IT CONTAINS MOST OF THE PROBLEMS I ROUTINELY ENCOUNTER IN STUDENT PAPERS.

Consultation:

Plan to meet with me as you progress on your papers to make sure you are on the right track and to address questions that might arise.

Paper grades will depend on the content of the paper and the degree to which the writer followed instructions for preparations AND on the quality of the writing.

You will not have the opportunity to submit drafts to me. However, you may want to consider trading drafts with a classmate in advance of handing in your final paper.

Topics

(You may propose additional topics)

Child care funding

Constitutional equality

Family (pregnancy/maternity) leave (cover federal employees and federal legislation and court cases)

Federal advisory/policy-making bodies on women

Federal funding for job training

Gay marriage (state, national, international)

International family planning funding from the U.S.

International treaties on women's rights

Jury service

Military service

Nationality/Citizenship laws for married women

Old age pensions under the Social Security Act for married women

Policy regarding research on women's health issues

Sex education

Sex trafficking

Suffrage

Treatment of women in penal institutions

Vocational education for women (displaced homemakers, discrimination protection)

Women and immigration policy

PRESENTATIONS (AND HANDOUTS):

Each student will have an opportunity to discuss her/his research project with the class during the last four meetings for 25 minutes. Students should plan to divide the presentation between speaking (about 15 minutes) and questions and answers. A student may choose to give an overview of the topic or to focus on a specific statute, court decision, or administrative action (such as an executive order or a presidential commission). Students must leave time for discussion of their topics; those who do not will be penalized. Twenty-five minutes is not a long time. Don't try to pack too much in either your talk or your handout.

This exercise has three goals:

- * to acquaint the class with a larger variety of policy areas than the class can study as a group and to consider the variety of policy instruments employed to effect policy outcomes;
- * to provide feedback from the class to assist the writer in revising the paper;
- * to give students an opportunity to hone presentation skills.

Recommendations for preparing presentations:

Treat this assignment as a formal presentation; you will stand at the front.

Dress professionally, as you would if presenting a talk at work.

Prepare notes to help you recall what you expect to say (but, if possible, avoid reading a written paper).

Plan some audio-visual aids.

Don't chew gum.

Enunciate clearly.

Humor is fine, but avoid too many colloquialisms (e.g., "I'm like 'Hel-looo!'?").

Look pleasant, but avoid nervous smiles.

If you need to pause to collect your thoughts or find your place, do so silently rather than filling in the silence with "umm." If you don't look nervous, everyone else will be calm as well.

End your sentences firmly rather than letting them trail off.

Drop your pitch at the end of your sentence, which sounds authoritative, rather than raising your voice, which makes you sound tentative.

At the end of your talk, as an exit line, say: "Thank you very much for your attention. I'll be happy to take questions and I'm most interested in hearing your comments."

Say this line as if you meant it!

INTERNET AND WORLD WIDE WEB

Students *must* have e-mail accounts. All GW students are entitled to a GW account and you should secure one, even if you routinely use another. With a GW account, faculty, administrators, and other students can locate you on our directory; if you wish, you can re-route your mail so that it goes to your other account. Gelman Library and CIRC offer workshops on web browsing; consult the reference or help desk to find out times.

There are hundreds (maybe thousands) of web sites relevant to policy topics. A few of them are listed below:

Women and public policy:

www.asa.ugl.lib.umich.edu/chdocs/womenpolicy (Univ. Michigan)

www.now.org (NOW)

www.wlo.org (Women Leaders Online)

www.feminist.org (Feminist Majority)

www.aclu.org (ACLU)

www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp (Center for the American Women and Politics, Rutgers)

www.welfareinfo.org (Welfare Information Network)

www.iwpr.org (Institute for Women's Policy Research)

www.childrensdefense.org (Children's Defense Fund)

www.clasp.org (Center for Law and Social Policy)

www.nglftf.org (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force)

www.hrc.org (Human Rights Campaign)

Government information:

Census data: www.census.gov

Justice statistics: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs

Labor statistics: www.bls.gov

Legal information:

www.findlaw.com

www.law.cornell.edu (Cornell)

www.house.gov (U.S. House of Representatives)

www.uscplus.com (U.S. Supreme Court decisions)

Legislative information:

thomas.loc.gov/ (Library of Congress)

Writing tips:

1. Use active verbs – have the subject of the sentence perform the action. Use "to be" in all its forms sparingly.
Passive voice: "Class time was devoted principally to discussion of the readings. All students were expected to read thoughtfully and to share their insights and observations with the class."
Active voice: "This class devoted meeting time principally to discussion of the readings. Students shared insights and observations with the class."
Note that "passive voice" and "past tense" are different.
"He threw the ball" uses an active verb in the past tense.
"The ball is thrown" uses a passive verb in the present tense.
In the first sentence you know who is performing the action; you don't know who is throwing the ball in the second sentence.
2. Avoid using "this" as pronoun; follow it with a noun to eliminate confusion about what you mean.
Vague: "Despite data to the contrary, the American public believes that women receiving welfare have a higher birth rate than non-recipients. This is because the media focus on women who do not represent the average welfare mother accurately."
Clearer: "Despite data to the contrary, the American public believes that women receiving welfare have a higher birth rate than non-recipients. This misperception comes from a media focus on women who do not represent the average welfare mother accurately."
NEVER use the phrase "This is because . . ." It is both vague and syntactically irregular. ("This is so because . . ." fixes the syntactical problem but it remains vague.)
3. Avoid labels, jargon, slang, colloquialisms. Use the word "incredible" only when you mean the person genuinely can't be believed.
4. Quotations: Whenever you use someone else's words, you must indicate that you are doing so. Enclose short quotations in double quotation marks. If the selection is longer than five lines, indent *instead of* using quotation marks. (Don't use italics to indicate a quote. Italics denote foreign phrases, court cases, and titles; they are also used for emphasis.) You must also include a citation to the source, including a page number. You should use direct quotations from sources rarely – only when the precise wording is essential to your point. Otherwise, synthesize and paraphrase. However, when you do quote from either a secondary or a primary source, you must introduce the quoted material in the text by explaining who the speaker is; don't just drop it in without warning.
Examples of introductions:
As historian Alice Kessler-Harris noted: ". . ." [or]
In the words of political scientist Cynthia Burack, ". . ."
In addition, quotations must fit syntactically in the sentence. Add words in brackets or delete words and use ellipses, if necessary. A quotation within a quotation requires single quotation marks; quoted material within the body of an indented quotation requires double quotation marks.
5. Ellipses: Omit ellipses at the beginning and end of quotations. Use three periods, each separated by a space [. . .], for omissions within sentences and four periods [. . . .] for omissions that include the end of a sentence. (Do not include the brackets.)
6. Don't repeat yourself. Vary your choice of words. (See examples of introductions to quotations, above.)
7. Spell out numbers of one or two words; use numerals for others, except at the beginning of a sentence. If you must use a number as the first word in a sentence, spell it out. Use numerals with "percent" and spell "percent" rather than using the percent sign.
8. Use apostrophes to denote possession EXCEPT for "its." "It's" means ONLY "It is." The possessive form of "its" has no apostrophe. Plurals do not use apostrophes. E.g. "The Harrisons came to dinner." But: "This is Professor Harrison's class."
9. Avoid the word "things," as in "Things changed rapidly." Use a specific phrase: "The political context changed rapidly."
10. Avoid the first person in formal writing ("I think the evidence fails to support the thesis"). The statement "The evidence fails to support the thesis" suffices. If you must include your own response, use the third person: "This reader finds that the evidence fails to support the thesis."
11. Avoid contractions in formal writing.