Working Women in American Society  
37:575:309:03  
Fall, 2012  

Hours: Mondays, 9:15 -12:15  
Location: Regina B. Heldrich Science Building, 204, Cook/Douglass Campus  
Instructor: Elizabeth Nisbet  
enisbet@work.rutgers.edu  
Office hours are available by appointment.  

Course Overview  
This course considers the experience and conditions of women in the workforce from a range of perspectives, including historical, political, and economic, as they differ from those of men and across categories of class, race and ethnicity, hierarchy, and family status. We will look at some of the forces that shape the workplace, and condition women’s experience in particular, including public policy, unions, corporations and other employing organizations, and global competition and economic cycles. These all help to determine what jobs look like for women especially – and create pressures that can lead to lesser-quality work particularly in the post-recession economy. We will examine the status and causes of inequity and oppression in the workplace, with a particular focus on women who earn low wages. In addition, as we study the different contexts in which women work, we will look at how women take action in these contexts to shape their workplaces and to seek change in these historical patterns.  

Class Grade  
Your grade is based on the following distribution:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classwork and attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers (3)</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Assignments  
A mid-term will include a mix of short answer and short essay responses covering classes 1 through 8.  

For response papers, we will divide the class into three groups on the first day of class. Every member in each group will individually prepare a response paper on the topics covered in the class and include at the end three possible discussion questions on the readings that you think could help guide discussion for the class that day. In addition, each week I will select one or more persons (depending upon the total number in the class) from the group submitting response papers to lead small-group discussions.  

Papers must be submitted by 5 pm the evening before class via the sakai drop box, but I ask that you also bring a stapled and (if possible) two-sided hard copy to class.
The response papers are intended to help you think critically about the work we discuss in class. Each paper is to be an analysis of the readings, rather than a summary, an unsupported critique, or a personal opinion. Your ability to do this will affect your grade. In addition, I do take points off for incorrect grammar and punctuation, so please take care with this.

In general, the response papers should explore one main idea from the readings. Please begin with an opening paragraph that introduces the paper, in your own words, and then develop the concept, using data and evidence from each of the readings that week. You may also refer to outside readings or materials if you wish.

You may explore questions such as:
- How does this work complement or challenge previous work we have read?
- How does this work refine understandings of women and work?
- What are the implications of this reading for public workforce policy or for internal workplace policies?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s arguments?

Each paper should be no more than 4 to 5 pages in length, typed and double spaced, with a font of Times New Roman #12, and should draw specifically on course material with proper in-text citations.

We will create three groups on the first day of class for the purpose of assigning response papers. The groups also will examine three domains in which policies and practices that affect women and work are created, challenged, and changed and present a group project to look at examples of how women are working to reshape the workplace – through unions, management and organizational change, or public policy. Groups will have an opportunity to meet early in the semester to identify a topic collaboratively, and will submit a one-page outline partway through the term. Examples of group projects may include:

- For group 1 (unions): presenting to the class on recent developments in women’s leadership within unions or a particular organizing campaign focused on a women-dominated occupation.
- For group 2 (public policy): presenting to the class on a campaign to change a public policy at the local, state, or federal level that affects women’s work situation, or a profile of a policy that is benefiting women.
- For group 3 (management and organizational change): presenting to the class on examining organizational policy changes to improve work-life balance, retention of women, women’s leadership, or pay equity.

Groups will present their work on day of class indicated in the syllabus and must hand in an explanation of how each member of the group contributed to the effort.
# Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week and date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues in the Workplace</td>
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http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=fasch_rpt | response paper: Group 2 |
| October 15 |  |
| October 22 |  |
response paper: Group 1 |
| October 29 |  |
smlr.rutgers.edu/cww-report-giving-voice  
The Women’s Committee of 100: “An Immodest Proposal: Rewarding Women’s Work to End Poverty.”  
http://www.wc100.org/displays.html | MIDTERM EXAM |
| November 5 |  |
| November 12 |  |

What shapes women’s experience in the workplace, and how do women resist?

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What shapes women’s experience in the workplace, and how do women resist?
• Adequate response paper: Group 2 |  
• Adequate response paper: Group 3 |  
• Adequate GROUP PRESENTATION (group 1) |  
• Domestic Workers United report. TBD.  
• Adequate GROUP PRESENTATION (group 2) |