Course Description:
This course examines the experience of American women and work both in the paid workforce and in the home. We will explore how the socialization of girls effects their future employment as women. The role of popular culture, especially media and advertising images, will be examined for the ways in which it perpetuates gender stereotypes. Students will develop an understanding of the current status of women in the workplace and the gender barriers that continue to impede them from reaching full equality. We will discuss issues of work and family and the efforts women make to seek balance in their daily lives. Finally, we will address women’s efforts to crack the glass ceiling and raise themselves off the sticky floor of low wages and poverty.

Course Readings:


Additional Readings:

On sakai-
“A Fabulous Child’s Story”, Lois Gould
The Price of Motherhood (2010) Crittenden
Additional readings may be assigned. The course schedule may be altered at the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance and Assignments:

Regular attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course. Assignments are due on the dates scheduled in the syllabus. If you cannot complete an assignment on time please see the instructor prior to the scheduled due date for any special consideration. Office hours are available on appointment.

If you have any special needs as a student please speak to the instructor before the second week of class.

All cell phones, pagers and electronic devices must be turned off prior to class. Please make every effort to arrive on time to class and to stay until the class is dismissed.

Evaluation:

Three Generations of Women and Work in Your Family

This paper will include interviews with your grandmothers, mother and yourself. Your inquiry should include childhood dreams and goals for the future, educational opportunities, cultural messages, roles of men and women, work experience (at home and/or in the office) and messages of encouragement or discouragement from others. Ask your foremothers about changes that they have seen in the roles of women during their lifetime. Do they envy today’s young woman or are they glad they had their life experience. Include your personal education, career and family goals and what advantages or disadvantages you believe your gender may play in their achievement. If you cannot interview your grandmothers or mother, you may select other women from the same age cohort. You may find that you need to research the historical time period of the family member you interview in order to put their experiences into a broader context. Please cite your reference sources if necessary.

Paper due 2/12

Gender Stereotypes in Advertising

Please find four advertisements: one of a man in the workplace, one of a woman in the workplace, one stereotypical male image and one stereotypical female image. Please try to avoid using images from the Internet. Further elements for the paper will be explained in class.

Women Don’t Ask

In class group report and role play on women and negotiation.

A worksheet will be provided for individuals to be handed in and to facilitate group discussion.
Nickel and Dimed and Lean In Reactions and Analysis

Write a paper on your response to the books which incorporates your readings, class discussion, personal reactions and experience. Please include the economic and social consequences of your suggestions as to how America’s women can balance work and family needs. Working poor and working affluent women are represented in the two bestselling books how do the points of view of Ehrenreich and Sandberg impact the majority of middle class workers? Paper due 4/21 25%

Final Exam

The exams will include terminology and material from class discussion and readings. The format will largely be short essays.

20%

Grading Criteria:

A 92-100%
B+ 87-91%
B 81-86%
C+ 77-80%
C 71-76%
D 65-70%
F 64% and below

Course Schedule

1/20 Introduction to Working Women in American Society

Read Dubeck pp.1-12

Sakai: “A Fabulous Child’s Story”

Assign Three Generations of Women paper due 2/10
1/27 Discuss “A Fabulous Child’s Story”
   Early gender socialization
   Extra Credit in-class assignment

2/03 Gender Culture and Socialization
   From Mother Goddess to Second Class Status
   View “Gender Wars”
   Read Dubcek pp.28-36

2/10 Socialization in Schools
   Dateline tapes
   Gender Bias in Education
   Discussion of Three Generations Paper
   Read Dubcek pp.73-82

2/17 Workplace Inequality – Sex Segregation and Earnings Differences
   Read Women Don’t Ask for 3/5
   Understanding issues of pay equity

2/24 Gendered Structures and their Consequences
   Gender Stereotypes in Advertising and the Media
   View “Gender Guise”
   View “Killing Us Softly”
   Assign ad analysis paper due 3/12

3/03 Women and Negotiation
   Graded group discussion/worksheet on Women Don’t Ask.
   Read Dubcek pp.125-167
   Price of Motherhood on sakai for 3/10

3/10 Problems Facing Working Parents
   Read Lean I and Nickel and Dimed for the second half of this class

3/17 Spring Break
3/24  Legal Issues Impacting Women in Education and the Workplace
      Title IX and Sexual Harassment

3/31  Class Discussion of Lean In

4/07  Class Discussion of Nickel and Dimed

4/14  NJ Family Leave Act and the FMLA
      Guest speaker Karen White
      Read Dubeck pp.340 -350

4/21  Final paper due
      Discussion of paper findings
      Review for final

4/28  Is there a War on Women, If So- How Should Women Respond?
      Review for final exam