

WOMEN AND LABOR MOVEMENTS:  
A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE  
(37:575:335 or 01:988:335)  
Spring 2012  
Thursdays, 12:35-3:35 p.m.  
Labor Education Center – Room 166

Professor Dorothy Sue Cobble  
Office Hours: Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 or by appointment.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Despite their lack of full political, social, and economic rights in many countries, working women around the world are organizing to improve their lives as well as the lives of those around them. What are the goals of these movements? How have they organized to achieve their goals? Where and why have they been successful? Who are their allies and their adversaries? This course looks at how unions are responding to the needs and aspirations of working women and how working women themselves are transforming unions and society.

**COURSE READINGS:** All required readings are available electronically through the Rutgers University sakai website. Please print out all readings and bring them with you to class the day they are assigned.

**PART 1: MOVEMENTS, THEORIES, INSTITUTIONS**

**Class 1 (January 19) INTRODUCTIONS**

**Class 2 (January 26) LABOR MOVEMENTS, OLD AND NEW**

Reading:

\*Dan Gallin, "Transnational Pioneers: The International Labor Movement," in *Global Activism Reader* (2011), pp. 73-80.

\*Ronaldo Munck, "Labour in the Global," in *Globalisation and Labour* (2002), 1-23.

\*Katie Quan, "Women Crossing Borders to Organize," in *Sex of Class: Women Transforming American Labor* (2007), 253-271.

Weekly Response Paper #1 Due.

Group 1 Responders

**Class 3 (February 2) WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND NETWORKS**

Reading:

\*Aili Mari Tripp, "The Evolution of Transnational Feminisms: Consensus, Conflict, and New Dynamics," in *Global Feminism* (2006), 51-75.

\*Melinda Adams, "Regional Women's Activism: African Women's Networks and the African Union," in *Global Feminism* (2006), 187-218.

\*Rosalva Aida Hernandez Castillo, "Toward a Culturally Situated Women's Rights Agenda: Reflections from Mexico," In *Women's Movements in the Global Age: The Power of Local Feminisms* (2010), 315-342.

Weekly Response Paper #2 Due.  
Group 2 Responders

## **PART 2: SECTORAL PERSPECTIVES ON WORK AND ORGANIZING**

### **Class 4 (February 9) GENDER, MIGRATION, AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY**

Reading:

\*Ronaldo Munck, "Gender and the Global Economy," in *Globalization and Social Exclusion* (2005), 81-101.

\*Arlie Hochschild, "Love and Gold" in *Feminist Politics, Activism, and Vision* (2004), 34-46.

\*Michele Gamburd, "Breadwinners No More: Masculinity In Flux," In *Global Woman* (2002), 355-366.

Weekly Response Paper #3 Due  
Group 3 Responders  
Reports from Region 1

### **Class 5 (February 16) CARING, INTIMATE, AND DOMESTIC LABOR**

Reading:

\*Jane Lewis, "Legitimizing Care Work and the Issue of Gender Equality," in *Care Work* (ILO, 2001), 57-75.

\*Sarah Swider, "Working Women of the World Unite?: Labor Organizing and Transnational Gender Solidarity among Domestic Workers in Hong Kong," in *Global Feminism* (2006), 110-140.

\*Kate Hardy, "Incorporating Sex Workers into the Argentine Labor Movement," *ILWCH* 77 (Spring 2010): 89-108.

Weekly Response Paper #4 due.  
Group 4 Responders  
Reports from Regions 2&3

### **Class 6 (February 23) CHILD LABOR**

Reading: \*Michael Lavalette and Steve Cunningham, "Globalisation and Child Labour: Protection, Liberation or Anti-Capitalism?" in *Labour and Globalisation* (2004), 181-225.

Optional Response Paper for Extra Credit Due.  
IN-CLASS QUIZ #1

## **Class 7 (March 1) SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND THE “INFORMAL” ECONOMY**

Reading:

\*Swasti Mitter, “On organizing women in casualised work: a global overview,” in *Dignity and Daily Bread* (1994), 14-52.

\*Renana Jhabvala, “The Self-Employed Workers Association,” in *Dignity and Daily Bread* (1994), 114-139.

\*Naila Kabeer, “Globalization, Labor Standards, and Women’s Rights: Dilemmas of Collective (In)Action in an Interdependent World,” *Feminist Economics* 10 (2004), 3-15.

Weekly Response Paper #5 Due

Group 5 Responders

Reports from Regions 4&5

## **Class 8 (March 8) FACTORY WORKERS AND NEW FORMS OF ORGANIZING**

Reading:

\*Andrew Ross, “The Rise of the Second Anti-sweatshop Movement,” in *Sweatshop USA* (2003), 225-246.

\*Gay Seidman, “Transnational Labor Campaigns: Can the Logic of the Market Be Turned Against Itself?” *Development and Change* 39 (2008), 991-1003.

\*Jennifer Bickham Mendez, “Creating Alternatives from a Gender Perspective: Transnational organizing for Maquila Workers’ Rights in Central America,” in *Women’s Activism and Globalization* (2002), 121-141.

Weekly Response Paper #6 Due

Group 6 Responders

Reports from Regions 6&7

## **MARCH 15 NO CLASS-- SPRING BREAK**

## **PART 3 TRANSFORMING SOCIETY, TRANSFORMING UNIONS**

### **Class 9 (March 22) WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND UNIONS**

Reading:

\*Hafidha Chekir and Khedija Arafoui, “Tunisia: Women’s Economic Citizenship and Trade Union Participation,” in *Making Globalization Work for Women* (2011), 71-92.

\*Nora Wintour, “Achieving Equality Through Quality: Public Services and the Role of Public-Sector Unions,” in *Making Globalization Work for Women* (2011), 191-200.

\*Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, “Minjung Feminism: Korean women’s movement for gender and class liberation,” in *Global Feminisms Since 1945* (2000) 119-138.

Weekly Response Paper #7 Due

Group 7 Facilitators

Reports from Regions 1, 2 & 3.

### **Class 10 (March 29) UNIONS AND SEXUAL POLITICS**

Required Reading:

\*Suzanne Franzway, "Sexual politics in (Australian) labour movements," in *Gender, Diversity, and Trade Unions* (2002), 275-291.

\*Neva Makgetla, "Women's Leadership in the South African Labor Movement," *Making Globalization Work for Women* (2011), 245-288

\*Dorothy Sue Cobble and Monica Bielski Michal, "On the Edge of Equality? Working Women and the US Labour Movement," in *Gender, Diversity, and Trade Unions* (2002), 232-256.

Weekly Response Paper #8 Due

Group 8 Facilitators

Reports from Regions 4, 5, 6, & 7.

### **CLASS 11 (April 5) UNIONS AND SEXUAL POLITICS (CONTINUED)**

**Optional** reading:

\*Ben Selwyn, "Trade Unions and Women's Empowerment in North-East Brazil," *Gender and Development* (July 2009), 189-201.

\*Jasna Petrovic, "Women Save the Union," *South-East Europe Review* (2000).

\*Valentine Moghadam, "Toward Economic Citizenship: The Middle East and North Africa," In *Making Globalization Work for Women* (2011), 25-46.

\*Jo Morris, "Women's Rights and Leadership: A Central Trade Union Agenda," In *Making Globalization Work for Women* (2011), 169-190.

\*Marian Mann, Sue Ledwith, Fiona Colgan, "Women's self-organising and union democracy in the UK: Proportionality and Fair Representation in UNISON," in *Strife: Sex and Politics in Labour Unions* (1997), 194-221.

\*Bianca Beccalli and Guglielmo Meardi, "From Unintended to Undecided Feminism? Italian labour's changing and singular ambiguities," In *Gender, Diversity, and Trade Unions* (2002), 113-131.

\*Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten, "Changing Gender Relations in German Trade Unions: from 'Workers' Patriarchy' to gender democracy?" In *Gender, Diversity, and Trade Unions* (2002), 132-153.

\*Kaye Broadbent, "Sisters Organizing in Japan and Korea: the Development of women-only unions," *Industrial Relations Journal* 38 (2007), 229-251.

Optional Response Paper Due on **ONE** of the optional articles above for extra credit.

IN-CLASS QUIZ #2

GROUPS MEET FOR FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

**Class 12 (April 12) NO CLASS: RECOMMENDED ATTENDANCE AT THE NEWARK CONFERENCE ON DOMESTIC WORK**

**Class 13 (April 19) FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**

**Class 14 (April 26) FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**

**FINAL PROJECT PAPER DUE MAY 3.**

**EXTRA CREDIT PAPER ON NEWARK CONFERENCE DUE MAY 3.**

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **CLASS ATTENDANCE (10 percent).** Students can get a total of 3 points for each class and a total of 42 points for the semester. Points are awarded as follows: 3 points: present, full class; 2 points: present but late; 1 point: present for half the class; 0 points: absent.

Points translate to grades as follows:

40-42 points = A+

38-41 points = A

34-37 points = B+

31-33 points = B

25-30 points = C+

21-24 points = C

17-20 points = D

Below 18 = F

2. **CLASS PARTICIPATION (15 percent).**

- a. **CLASS DISCUSSION (5)** Students are expected to participate actively in class discussion. You should be prepared each week to articulate the main ideas in the readings and to offer your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the readings. You should also come prepared to raise your own questions related to the topic under discussion. The quality of your comments is of more importance than their frequency. You will not be judged on whether or not I agree with your opinions but on whether your ideas are informed by the week's readings and/or substantiated by other evidence and examples. Your personal experiences are an important place to begin but should be evaluated in light of the experiences of others and the generalizations and research of the authors we will be reading. Students are expected to help raise the level of class discussion by contributing their own informed responses and by interacting with others to help clarify and extend their comments. (5)
- b. **FIRST RESPONDERS (5)** Each student will be part of a group who will be asked to share their response to the reading for that day. First responders will be expected to 1)turn in their weekly response papers by Wednesday

evening on SAKAI and 2) locate a short video or website relevant to the week's topic to show to the class.

- c. **REGIONAL GROUPS** (5) Beginning on week 4, students will be part of a group specializing in a particular region of the world. Groups are expected to become knowledgeable about some of the various countries in their region of the world, the problems working women face, and how they are organizing to address their problems. During Part 2 of the class, groups should begin to familiarize themselves with the economy, politics, and culture of some of the countries in their particular region as well as the conditions of women workers in their region. In Part 3 of the class, students should begin to identify and evaluate the best practices and strategies being used by labor movements in their region to address the needs of working women. Regional groups will be asked to share their knowledge with the class.

Regional Groups:

1. Africa
2. Asia & the Pacific
3. Europe and the United Kingdom
4. Central and South America (including Mexico) & the Caribbean
5. Middle East
6. North America
7. Russia and former Soviet Republics.

### 3. **1-2 PAGE WEEKLY RESPONSES TO THE ASSIGNED READING (30 PERCENT).**

Student should submit a 1-2 page paper responding to each of the required readings for **EIGHT** of the class sessions. A paragraph on each reading should be sufficient. For each reading, the student should 1) identify the main idea(s) or main arguments and 2) identify one concept or idea that you found of interest and worth discussing in class. Weekly response papers should be typed, double-spaced, and posted on SAKAI BEFORE the class meeting in which the readings are discussed. Late papers will not be accepted.

The weekly responses will be graded pass/fail. Responses that show evidence of engagement with each of the readings will pass. Each paper receiving a pass will receive 1 point. Points translate to grades as follows:

- 8=A
- 7=B+
- 6=B
- 5=C+
- 4=C
- 3 =D+
- 2 = D
- 1 or 0=F

EXTRA CREDIT OPTION: Students may choose to turn in a response paper for class 6 (February 23) and/or class 11 (April 5) for up to 2 additional points. Students may also choose to attend the Newark Conference on April 12 and write a one-page paper summarizing and evaluating one of the speakers or panels for an additional one point.

**4. TWO SHORT QUIZZES (15 each) (30 percent total).**

An hour and a half of class time will be set aside for the quiz. These quizzes are designed to help you retain, integrate, and apply the information and ideas we will be covering over the course of the semester. The quizzes will consist of identification of significant terms, concepts, and events, as well as short essays that require you to integrate reading and respond to the broader questions discussed in class. The grade for the first quiz will be counted **ONLY** if the grade received is higher than the grade on the second.

**5. FINAL PROJECT: BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDY (15 percent)** Students will identify what they see as a successful collective effort to advance the needs of working women in their region and write a 5-page paper answering the following questions: A) Why did you choose this particular case? B) What did this collective effort accomplish? C) How do you explain the success of this effort? D) Are there other countries or regions where this model of social change might be successfully adopted? Why or why not?

Students will present their findings and conclusions to the class during the last two weeks of the semester. The class room presentations will be a preliminary version of the final paper and will be structured to allow for the class to offer constructive feedback and suggestions for the final written paper. The final project is designed to allow students to deepen their knowledge of a particular country or region and to apply what they have learned over the course of the semester in the context of a concrete example of social reform.

Students are expected to rely on relevant assigned readings from the syllabus as well as additional readings identified by the student. Students should use at least some scholarly sources in preparing their final projects. Students are encouraged but not required to work in groups of two or three for the classroom presentation and final paper. In most cases, all group participants will receive the same grade.

PLEASE NOTE: Papers you have written or are writing for other classes are not acceptable submissions for this course. In addition, using phrases from another's writing without quotation marks, or paraphrasing another's ideas without crediting the source of the idea is plagiarism. Plagiarism or any form of cheating can result in failure in the course and disciplinary action through University channels.

INCOMPLETES ARE GRANTED IN ONLY THE MOST EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES AND ONLY WITH PRIOR PERMISSION.