**WOMEN AND WORK**

(38:578:541)

**Summer 2017**

**Fully Online course**

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**Course Overview**:

This graduate level course focuses on the experience, conditions, and impact of women in the workforce from a range of perspectives, including historical, political, economic, sociological, and psychological. We will look at the ways women’s experiences of work differ from those of men, as well as across categories of class, race and ethnicity, workplace hierarchy, sexuality and family status, and explore a variety of explanations for those differences. We will examine the causes of inequity and oppression in the workplace for women who earn low wages and those who aspire to leadership in their professional positions. We will look at the ways in which women’s work lives and personal lives, especially family responsibilities, can come into conflict, and at potential resolutions of the “work-life balance” dilemma. In addition, as we study the different contexts in which women work, we will look at how women organize and take action in these contexts to exert control over their workplaces and working conditions and to seek change in these historical patterns.

**Course Materials**

Almost all of the course materials are located in our course website on Rutgers e-college platform. You should make yourself familiar with the features of e-college during the first week of class.

The **only exception** is one book that you need to purchase:

* Caroline Fredrickson, *Under the Bus: How Working Women Are Being Run Over* (2015)

It’s available online from Amazon and B&N, as well as other book sellers.

**How will you learn in this online course?**

Most weeks you will:

* Read introductory material written by the professor on the page in the online shell. These are like lectures but much shorter, so you have more time for other learning activities.
* Read a variety of research based articles and books, look at images/charts/graphs, watch videos and listen to podcasts, as well as the assigned books.
* Participate in an online threaded discussion of the week’s materials with other students, posting at least 3 times a week.
* Post short written assignments and read other students’ posts

Because there are new assignments and discussions every week, it’s important to keep current – avoid being late, because it is very easy to fall behind and your grade in the course is based on completing the assignments in a timely fashion.

An online class is somewhat flexible with regard to your schedule but you will need to manage your time and get online each week no matter what else is going on in your life. **In general, you should sign into the class AT LEAST 4 times** **a week and check your email each** **day.**

You should inform the professor of serious personal emergencies that arise that make it impossible to get online. A trip associated with your job is not such an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels, libraries, coffee shops (Starbucks, Panera, etc.) and in campus computing facilities.

**Although the course “opens” on Tuesday, May 30, I’ve found that the course works better when we start our week on Friday and students have the weekend to complete the main reading/writing assignments. So you will be expected to start each week’s coursework on Friday and your final posts will be due by the following Thursday. The only exception is the final week because the semester ends on Wednesday, August 16. That’s when your final exam will be due.**

**Class Expectations—yes, it’s online but it is still very interactive!**

Although we will not be meeting in person, we will be forming a learning community for one another. Participating in the online class discussions is one of the best ways to learn and there will be discussion forums most weeks. (Because many of you already have significant work experience, your perspectives and responses to the material will be informed by that and I encourage you to share what you’ve learned “on the job” when it relates to our discussion topics.) Contributing to class discussions can take a number of forms, and each week you will be engaging in several of these. You may answer a question that I ask. You may ask a question of your fellow students. You may comment on another person’s contribution. Or you may try to encourage others to speak. The goal is to participate in an intellectually rigorous manner that will help us advance the discussion. You cannot do this if you are not prepared. As such, you must begin each week of class with the readings done --- and done carefully. Our online weeks will begin on Fridays and end on Thursday nights. That means you should have the readings/videos completed by Sunday night (unless I designate otherwise in the week), so that you can contribute to the forum throughout the rest of the week. If you neglect that responsibility the seminar will suffer. You’re going to be helping each other think through the materials and gain fuller understandings of the issues the course addresses. However, with responsible preparation the seminar will be interesting, informative and even fun.

The materials we cover consider the relationship of gender to other important lines of difference in society, including race/ethnicity, social class, level of education, political orientation and geographic location. Some of the materials covered may be controversial, and I anticipate that we will sometimes disagree in our discussions. We all must be committed to work hard to create a class culture that will welcome and support each student’s participation, even when our interpretations and opinions differ. You will be expected to RESPECT each of your classmates and their comments, and demonstrate that respect at all times. Remarks that are dismissive of other students, personal attacks on anyone in the class, or excessive reliance on personal experiences to the point of ignoring the readings will not be tolerated and will severely reduce your participation grade. Please do not be concerned that taking a perspective different from mine will in any way negatively affect your grade. **What I seek to create in this seminar is an environment where you can be free to ask questions and share thoughts without fear of censure or ridicule.**

**Grade Distribution (out of 1,000 points)**

Course Information Sheet: 50 points

Ice Breaker (Week 1) 50 points

Forums (Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) 560 points (70 points each)

Final Exam 340 points

**Assessment of online forums**

There will be forums EACH WEEK (except final exam week) throughout the semester. You will always have to post a piece of writing and most weeks you will also participate in discussions of each other’s posts as well as the course materials. You will have an ICEBREAKER forum starting the FIRST day of class to help you get comfortable with the online discussion format and to allow you to start getting to know your fellow students. The forums are found in each of the units they are associated with. Each of the forums will start on Friday (the day our week begins) and end on the following Thursday (the day our week concludes). **There are specific dates and times within the week when you will need to post to the forum (these may they change from week to week).** The assignment and posting details are explained in each forum. Forums are the MAIN way I will evaluate your understanding of the materials and your ability to apply them.

**\*\*\*NOTE—FOR ALL THE FORUMS YOU WILL NEED TO POST YOUR FIRST COMMENT BEFORE YOU CAN SEE OTHER STUDENTS COMMENTS\*\*\***

Your forum contributions will be evaluated as follows:

**How much you participated in a substantive way.** (Simply repeating the content of a reading or saying “I agree” or “I disagree” with another student’s post without further elaboration is not substantive.)

**Was your participation ongoing and interactive?** You can interact with others by asking or answering questions, or by agreeing or disagreeing with them, but remember you must also strive to move the discussion forward. Your responses to other students’ comments should explain why you agree or disagree, offer a new example, open up a new topic of discussion, or ask a new question. EACH FORUM WILL HAVE SPECIFIC DATES BY WHICH YOU NEED TO POST AND A MINIMUM NUMBER OF TIMES YOU NEED TO POST OVER THE COURSE OF THE WEEK IN ORDER TO KEEP THE DISCUSSION FLOWING. BE SURE TO CHECK THIS IN THE FORUM.

**Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings and audio-visual materials?** Did you understand the ideas or did you make errors? Did you connect the ideas in the readings to those of previous weeks? In other words, what was the quality of your comments?

**Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence?** Persuasive opinions are backed by a variety of types of evidence –from other academic sources, from current events, and from personal experiences and observations.

**Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately?** Please don’t “flame” in these forums. Informality is OK, but use standard written English of the sort that would be appropriate in a work setting.

**Forum Groups--**

You are assigned to a Forum group at the beginning of the semester. While there are often dozens of students enrolled in a course, you will only interact with your group. Each week you will have to write a minimum number of responses to other students’ posts (the number changes from week to week), but you are expected to read ALL the posts in every forum and you are always invited to comment more than the minimum number of times.

To identify your group letter, look to the left of the screen under any unit tab in the course. You will only be able to see your group – Example: Group C. At the beginning of the course, make sure you memorize your group letter. It may be referred to by the instructor in weekly messages when she wants to bring something from one group to all students in the class!

**Final Exam:**

The exam is based on the weekly readings and discussions. The exam will require you to construct informed and thoughtful answers to the questions. It will be open book and you will have one and half weeks to complete it. Directions will be placed in the course shell.

***Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity! Your written questions will be submitted to “Turnitin.com” to insure that your answers are yours alone – not answers from another student, from the web, or another source. Be careful not to “copy” phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. (If you think you need to quote a source to make your point, make sure you use quotation marks!) The goal is to put the ideas into your own words!***

**General Instructions for Forum Posts and Final Exam**

The written assignments are to be your own original work. You should use the readings and your notes as a reference. Be sure to cite any direct quotations that you use. You may discuss ideas with other students in the class, but the final product must be your own work. Any papers that are conspicuously similar are automatically sent to the Dean. The focus is on how what we have read and talked about in class can be used in order to critically examine the issues/arguments presented in the papers. Therefore you will be graded on your understanding of the scholarly information, theories and concepts that we have discussed. Simply regurgitating class notes is not a thoughtfully constructed paper.

**Course Schedule: (This is just an overview of readings and forums. More detailed information and instructions are included in the e-course shell.)**

**Week 1: June 2 to June 8: Introduction to Women and Work and Ice Breaker Forum**

Course Information Sheet-- Upload this by Friday June 2 at 11:59 p.m.

Reading:

US Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2011. Spotlight on Women at Work.

Forum:

*Icebreaker:* Your experiences of gender at work

Tell us about a time when your gender had a big impact on your experience at work. Have you ever experienced either discrimination or preferential treatment due to your gender? Has it played a role in whether you’ve gotten or not gotten a job? Did you ever think that expectations of how you would do a job (or how well you would do it) were shaped by gender stereotypes? Has your gender shaped how you have been treated by supervisors, coworkers, clients, or customers? Has it influenced how comfortable you’ve felt in a particular workplace or the degree to which you felt you fit in with co-workers? You can share one specific anecdote, or discuss your general experience at one particular workplace, but stick to one example.

You need to post your “Gender at Work” experience no later than Sunday June 4 at 11:59 pm. Then you need to comment at least one time each on 4 different students’ posts by Thursday June 8 at 11:59 pm.

Since there is little reading assigned this week--to give us a chance to get acclimated to the course site and get to know each other--I recommend that you get started on the reading for Week 2 if you can.

***Part 1: Labor Markets and Gender Inequality***

**Week 2, June 9 to June 15: Occupational Sex Segregation**

Readings:

--Wider Opportunities for Women. 2012. Comparison of Top 53 Occupations Employing Women & Men in 2012

--Heidi Hartmann, “Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation by Sex”

--Christine L. Williams, “The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the Female Professions”

--Claire Cain Miller, “Why Men Don’t Want the Jobs Mostly Done by Women”:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/04/upshot/why-men-dont-want-the-jobs-done-mostly-by-women.html?action=click&contentCollection=The%20Upshot&module=RelatedCoverage&region=EndOfArticle&pgtype=article>

Forum:

*Blog on Gender Segregation and Inequality in the Labor Market.* In this forum each student will write a 300-400 word blog post on sex segregation in the labor market. You should use what you’ve learned from the readings to make one large point about sex segregation in the workforce and then back that point/argument up with evidence. Guidelines on writing the blog are in the forum. You need to post your blog by Monday June 12 at 11:59 pm. Students will then comment at least once on 2 other students’ blogs by Thursday June 15 at 11:59 pm.

**Week 3, June 16 to June 22:** **The Gender Pay Gap**

Readings:

--Paula England, "Why Female-dominated Jobs Systematically Pay Less"

--National Women’s Law Center, May 2017. “Mothers Make Less than Fathers in Every State and at Every Education Level”: <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Motherhood-Wage-Gap.pdf>

--Joanne Lipman, “Let’s Expose the Gender Pay Gap”

--Freakonomics Radio, “The True Story of the Gender Pay Gap” <http://freakonomics.com/podcast/the-true-story-of-the-gender-pay-gap-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/>

Forum:

*Which Explanations Make the Most Sense?* Find a news article in a mainstream paper or magazine (e.g. NY Times, Washington Post, Wall St. Journal, USA Today, Time, Newsweek, etc.) that appeared within the past 12 months and discusses the gender pay gap in a specific profession or industry. Read the article and then write a 300 word “Letter to the Editor” that analyzes how this particular pay disparity is explained in the article and whether, based on the readings/podcast for this week, there are other possible explanations the people interviewed in the article, or the reporter, missed or neglected to mention. You can agree/disagree with the explanation(s) offered in the article, but you must ground your discussion in the evidence provided by this week’s materials. You need to post a link to the article and your response by Sunday June 18 at 11:59 pm, and then comment on at least 2 other students’ posts by Thursday June 22 at 11:59 pm.

**Week 4, June 23 to June 29:** **The Role of Government Policy and Legislation**

Reading

--Caroline Frederickson, Under the Bus (entire book)

Forum:

*Which Government Reform Would Help Women Workers the Most?* Frederickson describes how the law denies many working women basic benefits and protections. After reading the book, write an op-ed (opinion/editorial) piece of about 300 words arguing for ONE legal change that you think would have a significant positive impact on women workers in the U.S. You can discuss overturning or revising an existing law or propose a new piece of legislation. Using information and examples from Frederickson’s book, explain who would benefit most from your proposed reform and how/why their lives would improve. You should take into consideration how your proposal would affect workplaces/employers, families, and the larger society. The purpose is to convince as many people as possible that the reform you propose is feasible and will improve the lives of working women, their families, and communities.

***Part 2: Women’s Experiences in Occupations***

**Week 5, June 30 to July 6:** **Women in the Professions**

Videos

--Sheryl Sandberg, Ted Talk: “Why We Have So Few Women Leaders”

--Anne-Marie Slaughter, Ted Talk: “Can We All ‘Have It All’?”

Reading

--Jodi Kantor, “Gender Equity and Harvard Business School”

--Claire Cain Miller, “How to Close a Gender Gap: Let Employees Control Their Schedules”: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/07/upshot/how-to-close-a-gender-gap-let-employees-control-their-schedules.html?em_pos=medium&emc=edit_ml_20170209&nl=well-family&nl_art=2&nlid=40763418&ref=headline&te=1&_r=0>

--Nancy Fraser, “A Feminism Where Leaning in Means Leaning on Others” <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/10/15/a-feminism-where-leaning-in-means-leaning-on-others/?_r=0>

Forum:

*Leaning In, Leaning On, Opting Out.* Pick One of the following topics: **1)** Becoming a Leader in Your Field or Organization **or 2)** Achieving Work-Family Balance. Then, write a dialogue between two of the following figures you encountered in the readings/videos this week—Sandberg, Slaughter, Fraser, a female student or recent graduate of Harvard Business School, or a woman who works from home/telecommutes (the last two don’t have to be real people quoted in the articles, they can be composite figures you make up based on what you learn from the Kantor article or Miller article). What points would the figures you’ve chosen want to make? What would they agree or disagree about? What questions would they have for each other?

In recognition of the July 4 holiday, you can have until 11:59 pm July 6 to post your assignment and you don’t have to post responses to other students’ dialogues.

**Week 6, July 7 to July 13: Women and Service Sector Work**

Readings:

--Evelyn Nakano Glenn, “From Servitude to Service Work”

--Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*, chapter 3 (2001)

--Jodi Kantor, “Working Anything from 9 to 5”: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/us/starbucks-workers-scheduling-hours.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fjodi-kantor&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=26&pgtype=collection>

--Interview with Ai-Jen Poo, Domestic Worker Advocate.

Forum:

*Your Experiences with Service Work*—either as a worker or customer. For this forum you’re being asked to think about work you have performed (or currently perform) in the service sector. Ideally, you should focus on work in retail, restaurant/hospitality (including fast food, Starbuck’s, etc.,) or housekeeping/cleaning. If you have never done this kind of work as a paid job, choose one of these employment sectors and discuss your experiences as a customer/client. For the first post, you should reflect on your own experiences and write a 500-word response based on how they are similar to or different from those described by Ehrenreich, Kantor, and Poo, as well as any new insights into your own experiences that you developed by engaging with the course materials. This first post is due by Monday July 10 at 11:59 pm. I then want you to comment on at least 2 other students’ posts by Thursday July 13 at 11:59 pm.

**Week 7, July 14 to July 20:** **Women in Nontraditional Occupations**

Readings:

--Paula England 2010. “The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled”

--Barbara Bergmann.2011. “Sex Segregation in the Blue Collar Occupations: Women’s Choices or Unremedied Discrimination?”

--A. C. Saguy, “Gendered Homophobia and the Contradictions of Workplace Discrimination for Women in the Building Trades.”

--Danielle Paquette, “America’s Manliest Industries Are all Competing for Women” (2017) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/04/21/americas-manliest-industries-are-all-competing-for-women/?utm_term=.416f649f6e2d&wpisrc=nl_rainbow&wpmm=1>

Video:

--Sisters in the Brotherhood: A Film about Women Carpenters

Forum:

*Interview a woman who works in a nontraditional job!* Your assignment this week is to interview a woman in a nontraditional job. You can use the BLS data from Week 1 or WOW data from Week 2 to determine if a job is nontraditional (25% or less female). Sample interview questions can be found in the forum. Then you should write up a case study, using the experiences of the subject of your interview to reflect upon and respond to the readings for the week. If you cannot identify a woman to interview by Sunday of this week, EMAIL me and I will alter the assignment slightly for you. Your write-up should be about 400 words and is due by Thursday July 20 at 11:59 pm. No forum discussions this week.

**Week 8, July 21 to July 27: Women’s Bodies at Work**

Readings:

Gillian Thomas, *Because of Sex*, chapters 8 and 10

Patti Giuffre and Christine Williams, “Boundary Lines: Labeling Sexual Harassment in Restaurants”

Jane A. Halpert and Julia Hickman Burg, “Mixed Messages: Co-Worker Responses to the Pregnant Employee”

[Judith Galtry](http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/action/doAdvancedSearch?f3=all&ed=&q6=&q5=&q2=&acc=on&q0=pregnancy&c3=AND&wc=on&f5=all&isbn=&f4=all&sd=&f0=all&la=&q3=&q1=workplace&f6=all&group=none&ar=on&f1=all&q4=&f2=all&pt=&c4=AND&c5=AND&c1=AND&c6=AND&c2=AND&Query=au:%22Judith+Galtry%22&si=1), “Extending the ‘Bright Line’: Feminism, Breastfeeding, and the Workplace in the United States”

Forum:

While most Americans would agree that sexual harassment and discrimination against pregnant women and mothers is wrong, many people have trouble separating the personal and the professional and don’t understand why comments, attitudes, and actions they consider harmless can be interpreted as harassing, discriminatory, or offensive by the targets of their attention. Based on this week’s readings, as well as your own experiences and observations, write an open letter of 200-300 words addressed to someone who has interacted with or spoken to a female employee in a way that constitutes sexual harassment, or discrimination against a pregnant or breast-feeding woman. Your piece should explain why the behavior in question was wrong and how it contributes to creating an unequal or hostile workplace for women. (You can use a real example that you’re aware of or make up a hypothetical.) You should write this from the point of view of a co-worker, **not** as an HR professional or someone representing the employer. You should post your letter by 11:59 pm Monday, July 24 and respond to the posts of two other students by 11:59 pm Thursday, July 27.

**Week 9, July 28 to August 3: Work and Family (Paid Family Leave)**

Readings:

--Joan Williams and Heather Boushey, “The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict”

--Karen White, Linda Houser, and Elizabeth Nisbet, “Policy in Action: New Jersey’s Family Leave Insurance Program at Age Three”

--Center for American Progress. “Paid Sick Days and Paid Family and Medical Leave Are Not Job Killers.” (2017)

--Vox. Trump’s Ambitious, Unlikely Paid Family Leave Plan, Explained.”

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/5/23/15665562/trump-paid-family-leave-plan>

--Think Progress. “Trump’s Updated Paid Leave Plan “Falls Short” in Nearly Every Way, Experts Say” <https://thinkprogress.org/trump-paid-family-leave-updated-plan-93ca67a92d82>

Forum:

*Family Leave Policies* As you learned this week, New Jersey is one of a handful of states with Paid Family Leave Insurance. President Trump has proposed a national family leave plan in his budget for next year and the readings from Vox and Think Progress discuss it in detail, pointing out the pros and cons of the proposal. For this week’s forum you should post a letter to your Congressional representative, discussing what you think Congress should do in response to calls for a national paid family leave policy. You should discuss the impact of Family Leave Insurance in NJ, how it compares to the Trump proposal, and how you would like your representative to respond to the Trump plan—would you like Congress to approve, reject, or amend the proposal? (If you’d like the plan to be revised, explain how). Be specific and post your letter by Monday, July 31 at 11:59 pm. You should comment on the letters of two other students by Thursday August 3 at 11:59 pm.

**Weeks 10 and 11, August 4 to Aug 16**

Final Exam—The exam questions and instructions will be available in the course shell after 6 pm on August 4. This is an open book exam. The completed exam is due by 11:59 pm August 16.