

## **Working Women in American Society Summer 2016**

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### **Course Description**

This course will focus on the contemporary experience of working women in American society, including an exploration of current legal strategies and social policies. The course will begin with an examination of the history of working women in the United States, through the current status of working women in today's society. Following this, we will examine current issues and reforms affecting working women including aspects such as wages, sex segregation and tokenism, sexual harassment, gendered roles, race & ethnicity, and collective action. We will explore the role of working women, as portrayed by the media. We will then look ahead to the future of working women in American society.

### **Course Competencies**

This course incorporates the following SAS Core Codes: 21st Century Challenges (21C), Social Analysis (SCL).

### **Course Organization**

This course will be organized into several units: Introduction to working women in America, the history of women's work, the current status of working women, issues and reforms affecting women's work, working women in the media, and the future of working women.

### **Course Requirements**

The course involves the following components:

#### **Reading, Audio/Video Assignments**

Reading – Students will read book chapters, academic journal articles, newspapers articles and other reports. Most required reading is posted in the course shell.

There is one required text for this class: **Ehrenreich, B (2011). *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America*. Picador. ISBN: 9780312626686**

Webliography – This course involves contemporary topics, which are regularly in the news or are discussed on the Internet. Beyond the reading material uploaded into the course to pages associated with each week's topic, I will post interesting

reading, videos and links to websites in the Weblibliography. Anything posted here is not required reading but might be useful to you as you work on your course project or post to the forum. Students are encouraged to share reading, videos and links of interest to the class in the Weblibliography.

Audio/Visual – Student will occasionally be required to watch instructor generated video presentations as well as watch other videos and listen to audio presentations related to Latino workers in the U.S. All video and audio material is provided through links within the course shell.

## Reading Responses

Reading responses are intended to assess students' understanding and application of course material. There are two areas of review within a student's reading response entries: content and mechanics. Each reading response should be an absolute minimum of 500 words.

Content: (80 points)

You must demonstrate to me that you have completed all the assigned reading by identifying the main themes in the reading and how they relate to the week's topic (synthesis), and answer any assigned questions.

Mechanics: (20 points)

Grammar, spelling and sentence structure are important. Students must also be mindful of sentence structure and how ideas are presented. Formatted citations must be included when appropriate.

## Forums

Forums are asynchronous discussions, which student groups use to process and synthesize course content. Leading questions will be posted with each forum. It is expected that you give your initial impressions in your first post and then engage your classmates in subsequent posts.

There are 4 forums assigned in this course. Each forum is 1 week in length. **A MISSED FORUM CANNOT BE MADE UP.**

There are three areas of review within a student's forum comment: content/synthesis, participation and mechanics.

Content/Synthesis: (65 points)

Students are required to engage in an informed academic discussion on selected course topics within each forum. Students are also required to

synthesize the forum discussion with the course reading for the week and/or from prior weeks.

**Participation: (30 points)**

Students are required to cultivate an online learning community that will enable you to understand and synthesize weekly topics. Engaging with and responding to the ideas of other students through this online learning community will give students a broader appreciation of the ideas put forth in the class.

During weeks that forums are open there is an initial post deadline of 11:59 pm on Saturday. Missing the “initial post” deadline will result in an automatic 5-point participation deduction. Making all posts in 1 day at anytime during the forum open period will also result in a 5-point deduction.

**There is a 3-post minimum for each forum. Remember the idea is to engage and respond (react) to the commentary. Making 2 posts results in a 10-point deduction; making only 1 post will result in a 20-point deduction.**

**Mechanics: (5 points)**

Grammar, spelling and sentence structure are important. This is an online forum – but it is an online forum in an upper level college class! Students must also be mindful of sentence structure and how ideas are presented.

## **Course Project: Women and Media- Depiction vs Reality**

This course examines the experiences of Women in the United States’ labor market through a review of current scholarship in this field. In today’s society, the media is often an outlet that people utilize to assist in their understanding of social issues. However, sometimes the depiction of working women from media sources, particularly in film, can be somewhat misconstrued to make a good storyline.

For this course project, students will choose one current or historic movie portraying women in working roles, and examine the reality of those roles in “real” society, preparing a Power Point presentation that summarizes their findings.

Upon completing this project, students will:

- Provide an analysis of the reality of working women in the US, as compared to the film depiction of their choice.
- Develop supporting evidence including factual knowledge, statistical evidence, authoritative testimony

### **STEP 1: Choose Your Movie/TV Series**

Select a movie or TV series depicting a working woman in the US (in a lead role). Some suggestions are as follows:

- **Maid in Manhattan [2002]**
- **The Help [2011]**
- **Erin Brockovich [2002]**
- **Nine to Five [1980]**
- **Working Girl [1988]**
- **The Fosters [2013-present]**
- **Switched at Birth [2011-present]**
- **Grey's Anatomy [2005-present]**
- **Roseanne [1988-1997]**

**These are just some suggestions to get you thinking. You certainly can choose your own movie or TV series. If you have any questions about your choice, feel free to email me anytime.**

Once your movie/TV series is selected, you should do some research on the subject matter. For example, if your movie was set in the 1980's, what were some major issues working women were facing during this period? Was there any big legislation during this period? What roles do race/ethnicity/social class play? What are some statistics of women in similar "real life" roles during this time period? Is how they are depicted in the film representative of women during this time period?

Before you begin your project, familiarize yourself with the expectations of this assignment. Be sure to include at least 6 references, there are many sources on-line that can be found through a simple Google search. You must cite all your sources. Your sources (minimum of 6) should come from academic, popular (reputable) and on-line research.

### **STEP 2: Communicate Your Choice**

You must communicate your selection choice to me via the course dropbox by the due date specified in the course calendar.

### **STEP 3: Complete the Project**

#### **Project Requirements**

#### **-Slides and Notes Page Requirements**

The minimum number of content Power Point slides is 16. Let's try to keep the maximum number at around 30.

This maximum number does not include the title page, content divider slides or the bibliography.

Your Power Point Project should be written in a confident and explanatory tone (you must always back up your points with research and facts, statistics, charts, graphics, etc.).

#### **-Template**

The following is a template for arranging your Power Point Project. If you arrange your project as closely as possible to this template, you will ensure that you have included all the necessary elements of your project.

- 1) Introduction/Background
  - a. Introduce the topic and time period

- b. Brief summary of the film/TV series
  - 2) Major themes depicted in the video as they relate to working women in the US\*
  - 3) How those themes compare to the reality of working women in that time period (be sure to include statistics, and other factual information, cited correctly)\*
  - 4) Summary and Conclusion
  - 5) Works cited
- \*#2 and #3 should make up the bulk of your presentation

**Other Requirements**

- **You must include notes pages with your Power Point Presentation.** Your notes pages tell me what you cannot in your slides. If this were a face-to-face class, you would present your power point with some details and discussion not presented on the slides. Your notes pages will take the place of these details and discussion.
- **Students must properly cite all sources.** Students can receive free assistance at the Rutgers Learning Centers (LRC's). To learn more about the LRC's visit: <http://lrc.rutgers.edu> All Power Point Projects must include a "Works Cited" page within the Power Point Presentation (final slide).
- **Your work must be your own!!** Plagiarism: All students should know and abide by academic ethics. "Plagiarism is the representation of words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise" (Policy on Academic Integrity, Rutgers, New Brunswick). Information is available on the following web site: <http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/student.html>.

**Grading**

The development and submission of this course project represents 25% (250 points) of your final grade. It will be assessed on 3 dimensions:

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Content</b><br/>         Student thoroughly discusses how the media portrayal relates to the reality of working women in the US, including at major themes as they relate to issues such as social class, race, ethnicity, education, etc. Student uses a minimum of 6 sources which include academic articles.</p> | <p><b>(150 points)</b></p> |
| <p><b>Grammar, Format, etc.</b><br/>         Student demonstrates proper grammar usage and correct spelling throughout the Power Point presentation. Project is formatted using proper citations, etc.</p>  | <p><b>(60 points)</b></p>  |

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Originality</b><br>Originality & Style<br>Student has original ideas and innovatively uses facts from their research to support their project. (15 pts.)<br>Student uses graphics and figures to support their work. (10 pts.)<br>Student uses appropriate themes and colors. (5 pts.) | <b>(40 points)</b>       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100% (250 points)</b> |

**COURSE PROJECT IS DUE VIA DROPBOX ON DATE LISTED IN THE COURSE CALENDAR**

### Online Exams

You will have a Final Exam for this course worth 200 points. This exam will be based on all material covered in this course and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Students are encouraged to prepare notes throughout the course (based on the assigned readings, etc.) that can assist them on the final exam.

### Grading

A final grade is based on a 1000-point system. Each assignment is worth a specific number of points. Total points accumulated determines final course grade.

|    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| A  | 900-1000 points      |
| B+ | 870-899 points       |
| B  | 800-869 points       |
| C  | 700-799 points       |
| D  | 600-699 points       |
| F  | 599 points and below |

The points are accumulated as follows:

| Item<br>% of Grade                | Assignment and Associated Points  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Writing Assignments</b><br>55% | Forums (350 points) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory Forum<br/>50 points</li> <li>• Unit Content Related Forum<br/>100 points each (3)</li> </ul> Reading Response Entries (200 points)<br>100 points each (2) |
| <b>Course Project</b>             | Media Power Point Project   |

|                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 25%                        | 250 points              |
| <b>Online Exams</b><br>20% | Final Exam – 200 points |

## **Policies and Procedures**

### Class Sessions

The success of this course depends on active engagement and dialogue by members of the class. You must be fully prepared to discuss and debate the issues raised in the assigned reading material. The course week begins on **WEDNESDAY** for all weeks, with the exception of week 1 which begins with the semester on a Tuesday.

A weekly message will be sent to you each Wednesday. In addition, I will upload this message into the course weekly messages file in document sharing and Course Announcements by 12pm (noon) each Wednesday.

Keeping current with the material and assignments is vital to your success in the course. You are expected to participate in the online class each week fully prepared to discuss and debate the issues raised in the assigned reading material. Exam material will draw heavily from material covered in lecture notes and readings, reading response entries and forum discussions. **Everything covered in class is fair game for the exam!**

### Due Dates

**THIS IS NOT A SELF-PACED CLASS!** All assignments must be completed by dates indicated on the course calendar. Deadlines are listed in the syllabus with the course assignments section as well as on the course calendar available in the course shell. Due dates are also listed in each of the weekly units and in the weekly messages I email you. Thus, you have significant notification of deadlines.

**Reading response entries and the Media Power Point Project will be accepted up to 24 hours late for a deduction of 10% of the assignment points. Assignments will not be accepted past this 24-hour late period. No exceptions to this policy will be made.**

Forums lock after 11:59pm on the Tuesday following the week in which it was assigned. No comments or responses can be posted after this time. **MISSED FORUMS CANNOT BE MADE UP, NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### Communication

You should inform the professor of any personal emergencies that may arise which will prevent you from getting online. I am available via email at any time and I generally try to answer emails on the same day they are received. You may also reach me on my cell phone at 334-663-4880 (you may also text me – but please be sure to identify yourself by name). **Please reserve this form of contact (phone calls) for only pressing issues.** I prefer not to be called before 9am or after 8pm. **COMMUNICATION IS CRUCIAL** to success, so please let me know if you run into an issue or problem throughout the course.

### Accommodation Requests

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

*\*The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus, assignments, course content, etc. in any way to enhance the learning experience of this course*

## **Course Topics and Assignments**

### Unit 1: Introduction to Working Women in America

Week 1: May 31<sup>st</sup> – June 7<sup>th</sup> **Intro Forum**

### Unit 2: The History of Women's Work

Week 2: June 8<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

Week 3: June 15<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup> **Forum 2**

Week 4: June 22<sup>nd</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> **Reading Response A**

### Unit 3: Current Status of Working Women

Week 5: June 29<sup>th</sup> -July 5<sup>th</sup> **Forum 3**

### Unit 4: Issues and Reforms Affecting Women's Work

Week 6: July 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> **Reading Response B**

Week 7: July 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> **Optional Assignment**

### Unit 5: Working Women in the Media

Week 8: July 20<sup>th</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> **Course Project**

### Unit 6: The Future of Working Women

Week 9: July 27<sup>th</sup> – Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> **Forum 4**

### Unit 7: Wrap Up and Final Exam

Week 10: Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>

Week 11: August 10<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> **Final Exam (opens August 11<sup>th</sup> and closes August 14<sup>th</sup>)**