

**\*SYLLABUS** (after first class meeting, this syllabus will be completed and revised to reflect students' academic needs and interests; a Readers' Packet will be posted on September 9, 2016 on Sakai after the first class meeting and will be subject to change-- if necessary and warranted-- during the course of the semester regarding readings, not requirements)

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
LABOR EDUCATION CENTER**

**Instructor:** Francine Moccio

**50 Labor Education Way**

**New Brunswick**

**Fall 2016, Fridays, September 9 – Friday, December 14, 2016**

**Time: 10:55 a.m. – 1:55 p.m.**

**Room: LEC 130/31**

**\*SYLLABUS: Working Women in American Society**

**Course Description**

This is an undergraduate course in the experience and history of workingwomen in America. In accordance with the set goals and objectives of the course listing, much of the course will look at women and waged work. Nonetheless, the course is broader in its approach than just presenting a chronology of the experiences of "working women" in the US work force. For example, America's working women rests on the evolution of women's work in western culture, but can be seen more clearly as compared with nonwestern and developing countries. For example, In Ancient Greece, the "city" was synonymous with "politics." As a result, Aristophanes, an Ancient Greek philosopher noted: "When women enter the city, they change it forever." This course will present how and why working women from pre-and post WWII America to the present day transform gender and societal relations.

Ideas of scholars, experts and authors will be read and discussed about America's working women and men and why their changing gender relations matter in shaping contemporary events and future opportunities. Readings will be interdisciplinary literature, books and articles. This simply means that in addition to the **three paperback books** (very modestly priced) you need to purchase; I will provide a **Readers' Packet** on Sakai for the rest of your required readings for your convenience. This Packet will list course dates the specific readings/assignments that are due on that date.

Required Readings are drawn from what students are accustomed to encountering in specialized departments like the humanities and social sciences: history, psychology, anthropology, sociology, human resources, labor studies, political economy, economics, history, philosophy, urban studies, and literature. The instructor of this course aims—with this approach--to introduce students to social forces behind contemporary events and "to see ourselves" as actors and interpreters. Thinking invariably leads to action, other innovative ideas, and/or an alternate state of mind. It can initiate changes where none exist, change the course of history, or simply help an individual enjoy life to a greater extent. This course is relevant for increasing good judgment, overcoming fears, understanding what is happening and/or applying new ideas to solve old still-unresolved social problems. Please note interdisciplinary social science can lead down a path of a more holistic understanding of ways in which social change and life are organized --over time, demographics, economies, political environments, ecologies, and human cultures.

America's workplace conditions are influenced by women's intersection with their environments, working men, political worlds, families and/or households. As a result, at the end of this course students are expected to hone their critical analysis and academic skills related to interpreting the world and changing it for positive social change.

### **Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

#### **(1) Class Attendance/ Participation (20%)**

Since all course assignments will draw heavily from lectures and class discussions, on-time and regular attendances, and thorough study of assigned readings, are expected and necessary for a passing grade. Classes will typically include a period of both lecture and discussion. The lecture component of the course is intended to provide further historical context or an explanation of topics stemming from the readings. Mostly, however, our class meetings will be discussion-centered---meaning all students are expected to come to class prepared to participate and articulate their perspectives on the readings and topics being considered. Participation will be evaluated on the quality of students' contributions to class discussions. In general, students who pose thoughtful questions and comments for consideration, or who listen actively and follow-up on others' remarks, will do well in this regard. In-class discussion will be worth half of your class participation grade.

**(2) Three Quizzes** (60% of Grade in Total; Worth 20% each) (take home, open book, due in Sakai Dropbox on date specified by instructor, hard copies are also required and brought to class meetings)

**(3) Leading the Seminar** (20% of Grade in Total) (Two students per team): Students will be scheduled at the September 15 class meeting for this assignment)

### **Learning Objectives:**

Working Women in American Society is a core social science area course. Its goals are for a student to:

- . Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- . Apply concepts of human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.
- . Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.

It is also a core 21st Century Challenge course. Its goals are for a student to:

- . Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences and perspectives on the world.

Students will learn about the outcomes workingwomen have achieved in American society regarding workplace equality and how these outcomes and experiences may or may not apply to women in a global context.

### **Required Books** (to purchase online, or in paperback):

*Nickel and Dimed, On (Not) Getting By in America*, by Barbara Ehrenreich, August 2011

(Available online and/or in paperback)

*Women, Race, and Class* by Angela Y. Davis, February 1983

(Available on online and/or in paperback)

*Revolutionary Road* by Richard Yates, April 2000

(Available online and/or in paperback)

**Required Reading Articles** (including chapter selections from books) will be available on Sakai for students' use.

**Readers' Packet** - POSTED BY INSTRUCTOR ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2016 - AFTER THE FIRST CLASS MEETING

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1:**

**Sept 9: Welcome, Introductions, Review of course syllabus and requirements, and short video**

Readings: TBA

(Tuesday, September 13, 2016 LAST DAY TO ADD OR DROP)

**Week 2:**

**Sept 16: "The Problem with No Name" or "Why Should I Care?"**

Readings: TBA

**Week 3:**

**Sept. 23: Why do women make less pay as compared to men? And does it matter?**

Readings: *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich, August 2000 and

Institute for Women's Policy Research 2016 Gender Wage Gap Report, Washington, DC (posted on Sakai)

**Week 4:**

**Sept 30: So what is it? Sex, Gender, or simply Men and Women, and what's the big deal?**

Readings: *Gendering Labor History* (chapter selection on Sakai) by Alice Kessler-Harris, 2007

(Reminder: Monday, October 3, 2016, Registration Begins for Winter Session)

**Week 5:**

**Oct 7: Can't We All Just Get Along?**

Readings: *Women, Race, and Class* by Angela Y. Davis, 1983

(Reminder: Monday, October 10, 2016- Friday, October 21, 2016: Academic Warning Grades Due)

**Week 6:**

**Oct. 14: "The Trouble with Father"**

Readings: *The Hearts of Men* by Barbara Ehrenreich (selected chapter on Sakai)

*The Fall of the House of Labor* by David Montgomery (chapter on the formation of the living wage concept in US craft unions posted on Sakai)

**Week 7:**

**Oct. 21: Whose 'father knows best?'**

Readings: "Masculinity and Citizenship" in *Towards Gender Equity* by Alice Kessler-Harris (selected chapter posted on Sakai)

"The Child is Father to the Man" by William Wordsworth (posted on Sakai)

**Week 8:**

**Oct. 28: Moving on up?**

Readings: *The Unfinished Journey: Post World War II America* by William H. Chafe, the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2013 (selected chapters posted on Sakai)

**Week 9:**

**Nov.4: Feminists, Carnivores, Vegans, Hipsters, Baby Boomers, Queers, Millennial and “All That Jazz”**

Readings: *The Second Sex* by Simone DE Beauvoir, the *Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan, *When and Where I Enter* by Paula Giddings (selected chapters posted on Sakai)

**Week 10:**

**Nov. 11: What’s Love Got to Do With It?**

Readings: Revolutionary *Road* by Richard Y. Yates, April 2000

**Week 11:**

**Nov. 18: O Lord won’t you buy me a Mercedes Benz?**

Readings: William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey* (chapter selections will be posted on Sakai)

(Reminder: October 31, 2016, Last Day to Withdraw from Classes with a “W” Grade)

**Week 12:**

**Dec. 2: Hey Mister, can you spare me a dime?**

Readings: Nickel and Dime, by Barbara Ehrenreich, August 2000

(Reminder: Thanksgiving Break, Thursday, November 24, 25 – Sunday, November 27, 2016)

**Week 13:**

**Dec. 9: Working women and the American family? Does it exist the archetype of a haven in a heartless world?**

Readings: The Haven in a Heartless World, by Christopher Lasch (selected chapters will be posted on Sakai)  
LAST class meeting.

**Reading Day: Friday, December 15, 2016**

**Final Exam Period: Dec. 16-Friday, December 23, 2016**

**Winter Recess: Saturday, December 24 – Monday, January 2, 2017**

