“Despite important differences, all the modern feminist meanings of gender have roots in Simone deBeauvoir’s claim that ‘one is not born a woman’... and in post-Second World War social conditions that have enabled construction of women as a collective historical subject-in-process. Gender is a concept developed to contest the naturalization of sexual difference in multiple arenas of struggle. Feminist theory and practice around gender seek to explain and change historical systems of sexual difference whereby ‘men’ and ‘women’ are socially constituted and positioned in relations of hierarchy and antagonism.” – Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women* (Routledge, 1991), p.131

“Political freedom . . . means ‘the right to be a participator in government,’ or it means nothing.” -- Hannah Arendt

“The oppression of women knows no ethnic or racial boundaries, true, but that does not mean it is identical within those boundaries.” – Audre Lorde

**Course Description:** In this course, we will investigate the relations among gender, policy, politics, and society, with a focus on the United States (historically and in the contemporary era), but with an effort to place the US in comparative and global contexts and to gain some familiarity with other countries. We will examine the gendered character of citizenship, political participation and representation, social rights and economic rights. We aim to understand gendered politics and policy from both “top down” and “bottom up” perspectives. What do states do, via institutions of political participation and representation, citizenship rights and policies, to shape gender relations? How do gender relations influence the nature of policy and citizenship? How has feminism emerged as a radical challenge to the androcentrism and restricted character of the democratic public sphere? How have counter-movements developed, and how have gendered divides influences politics of all sorts? We expand on conventional conceptions of political participation and citizenship rights to include the grassroots democratic activism that gave birth to modern women’s movements. We explore how women’s political efforts have given rise to the creation of counter-public spheres and alternative visions of democracy, social provision and economic participation, as well as reshaping formal politics and policies.
The course readings feature different types of materials – original documents, scholarly books and articles, a textbook, policy reports, popular non-fiction work on aspects of gender, policy, politics and society, and normative essays advocating different policy and political approaches to overcoming gender inequalities. These are supplemented by films and online resources.

**Course Organization:** The class is organized as a seminar, although I will occasionally give lectures. Students help to shape the discussion agenda by contributing blog entries and replies on the readings and current events.

**Course Readings:**

We will read two books, and a number of articles or excerpts from books which will be available online on Canvas; these readings are marked on the syllabus with an asterisk.

The following required books will be available for purchase at Norris (or you may order them online), and will also be placed on reserve:


In addition, you will watch several films, available streaming from the library, and listen to some podcasts. (These are noted in the course schedule.)

As a supplemental (not required) text for those who would like some additional background in gender studies, Raewyn Connell’s *Gender in World Perspective* (Polity, 2009 [second edition]) is a good, short introduction (ISBN-13: 9780745645674). A broad overview of feminism as a democratic movement from 1792 to the present can be found in Christine Stansell’s *The feminist promise: 1792 to the present* (Modern Library, 2011).
Course Requirements:

Attendance: The discussions, lectures, readings and student presentations are the heart of the course and are intended to complement one another; they should contribute to the framing of your research paper (see below). Students should be ready to ask and answer questions, ranging from factual questions about the assigned readings to broader and more speculative questions about the themes of the course. You should come to class having read and thought about the assigned readings, and you should feel free to test out ideas and enter into conversations with your fellow students. I will assess your participation based on your thoughtfulness and your engagement with the materials, not whether you agree with me, with other students or with the assigned materials. We will be discussing a number of sensitive topics in this course, about which we are almost sure to have divergent opinions. We’ll be fine as long as we treat one another with respect. (If you are uncomfortable with speaking in class, please come talk to me as soon as possible and we will come up with a solution.) If you need to miss class due to illness or another reason, please email me.

Participation in class discussion forum/blog, and contributing two lead blog entries (with appropriate scholarly citations and references) addressed to the readings (or other media) of the relevant week: The lead blog entries will identify and focus on a theme, topic, or problem in a critical and evaluative (i.e., not solely descriptive) mode, taking a stand and proposing an agenda for discussion. Each week, two or three students will serve as lead bloggers. After meeting with me the week before the readings for which they are responsible, they will write a blog entry for that week’s readings, to be posted by 12 noon on Mondays. All the other students should post replies by 12 midnight Mondays. Everyone should read all posts before class.

35% of your grade

I encourage you to bring your perspectives and your knowledge to wider communities beyond our classroom and Canvas discussion boards. You may want to post comments on relevant blogs, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, or (especially considering the dearth of women editors and authors on Wikipedia)¹ you might want to add new articles to Wikipedia, or to edit or add to existing articles.

Research paper: The central focus of your writing requirements for the course is a comparative research paper, which we will work on step by step through the quarter, starting with defining a topic and research question, developing a bibliography and research strategy, producing a draft and commenting on each other's efforts, and, lastly, writing a final paper. You are free to select the cases and time periods you'd like to compare; for instance, you could compare the different waves of US feminist movements, or different organizations during the same period, or social policies around work or care or reproduction or violence in different countries, or the activities

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Countering_systemic_bias/Gender_gap_task_force/Media_and_research
of NGOs in different countries, regions or time periods. The only requirement is that you use comparative methods; we will discuss a few key readings on comparative methods as well as reading several comparative articles or book chapters.

65% of your grade

Steps for producing the paper:

Office Hour Meetings: Each student is required to meet with me in order to discuss your topic during week 3 (April 16-20). It is important to come to this meeting prepared and to submit to me a paragraph regarding your topic via email the night before the meeting by 6 pm. Please plan to meet with me at least twice more throughout the semester to check in about your progress on the paper.

Memo 1 (topic): due in class Tuesday, April 17. This should be no more than two pages, double-spaced in 12 point standard font. It should identify a general topic of interest and three questions that arise from this topic. Broadly, this memo should address the following question: What is your research topic and why is it of interest?

Memo 2 (question): due in class Tuesday, April 24. This second research memo should be no more than two pages, double-spaced in 12 point standard font. This memo should focus on a single research question in relation to a conceptual puzzle or problem, drawing on course readings and lectures. Broadly, this memo should address the following question: What is your research question and what is the puzzle or problem to which it responds?

5 points for the two memos

We will discuss several readings on comparative methods on April 19 (week 3).

Annotated Bibliography: due in class Thursday, May 3. This bibliography should include at least ten sources (with a maximum of 15), at least five of which are not on the syllabus, that you wish to consult in order to conduct your research.

5 points

Research Paper Proposal: due Monday, May 7 at 6 pm, posted to Canvas. This proposal should be 6 pages double-spaced in 12 point standard font. It should be a narrative presentation that includes an articulation of your research question, the conceptual puzzle or scholarly debate to which it responds, your interpretive approach, your working thesis and an outline of how your paper will unfold. Broadly, this exercise should respond to the following question: What argument do you anticipate making and how do you anticipate making it?

Research Paper Proposal Presentation: On Thursday, May 10, we will break into smaller groups to discuss the proposals, and you should also read the proposals of the students in your group.
ahead of time. This is an opportunity for you to present an outline of the main points of your proposal, to receive feedback from your peers on it, and to answer any questions they might pose in relation to both your pre-circulated proposal and class presentation. I will give you comments on this proposal.

10 points for the proposal and presentation

Final Paper Preliminary Draft and Presentation: To be given in class during week 9 (May 29 and 31); in addition, we will reschedule the June 5 class meeting to sometime during this week, and will use this session for class presentations. This is a presentation of the main findings (or anticipated findings) of your work for this course. It is your opportunity to get peer feedback on the status of your research as you present it. I will give you comments on your draft.

15 points for the draft and presentation

Final Research Paper: The major writing assignment for this course is a 15-25 page research paper, due June 11, 2018.

30 points for the final paper

For your research projects, there are several specialty journals which regularly publish on topics of gender, social policy, social movements and politics (and of course you can also find gender-related research published in the main disciplinary journals).

Critical Social Policy
European Journal of Women’s Studies
Feminist Economics
Feminist Review
Feminist Studies
Feminist Theory
Gender and Development
Gender & Society
International Feminist Journal of Politics
Journal of European Social Policy
Journal of Policy History
NORA: Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research
Politics & Gender
Sexualities
Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society
Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society
Edited handbooks are also useful in supplementing our readings and discussions, and finding annotated bibliographies and overviews pertinent to your research paper; many are published by Oxford University Press and others, on various elements of gender and politics, or social policy, and usually available online through Northwestern library, including (but not limited to):


*Handbook of Gender and Social Policy*, edited by Sheila Shaver (Edward Elgar, forthcoming – chapters available from Professor Orloff)

We may also organize a trip to Northwestern library’s special collections, which houses some papers from second-wave feminist groups, groups active around issues of sexuality and other relevant materials.
CLASS SCHEDULE

(April 5, 2018)

Week 1:  Introduction: Gender as Political and Social Difference,
          Gender as Unequal Power

Michelle Budig, “The Fatherhood Bonus and the Motherhood Penalty: Parenthood and the
http://www.thirdway.org/report/the-fatherhood-bonus-and-the-motherhood-penalty-
parenthood-and-the-gender-gap-in-pay

David Cotter, Joan Hermsen, and Reeve Vanneman. 2014. “Brief: Back on Track? The Stall and
Rebound in Support for Women’s New Roles in Work and Politics, 1977-2010,” and Sharon
Sassler, “Is the Glass Half-Empty or Three-Quarters Full?”
Both are available at Council for Contemporary Families, “After Puzzling Pause, Gender
Revolution Continues.”

Informal assignment: Visit a couple of the following websites, and print out a page you find
particularly interesting and annotate it (this should be handed in Thursday, or next week in
class, and the link posted on the Canvas discussion board):

Center for Women and Politics, Rutgers University:
www.cawp.rutgers.edu

Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Washington, DC:
http://www.iwpr.org

Center for Women’s Global Leadership, Rutgers University
http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA),
Stockholm, Sweden
http://www.idea.int/gender/

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
http://www.oecd.org/gender/

United Nations Women (UNWomen)
http://www.unwomen.org/
(April 10 and 12, 2018)

Week 2: Theories of Gender and Politics, the Social Organization of Gender

Podcast: Hidden Brain, “The Double Bind for Women in Leadership”
https://www.npr.org/2018/03/05/590881966/-­‐shes-shrill-but-hes-­just-­being-­a­-­boss-­the­-­double­-­bind­-­for­-­women­-­in­-­leadership

Film: “Miss Representation”


Recommended Reading:


Week 3: The Gendering of Modern Citizenship: First-Wave Feminism, Women’s Suffrage and the Maternalist Origins of Welfare States

Films: “Iron Jawed Angels” and “Suffragette”

Required Reading:


Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon and Astrid Henry, Feminism Unfinished, chapter 1.


OR

*Isabel Castillo, “Cleavages, Motivation Alignment, and Female Suffrage in Latin America,” unpublished dissertation chapter, Northwestern University Department of Political Science.


Recommended Reading:


History of Woman Suffrage in the United States
http://dpsinfo.com/women/history/timeline.html

Timeline of women’s suffrage worldwide

“The Declaration of Independence”
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html

“The Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848”
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp

Sojourner Truth’s Speech to the Akron Convention, 1851
http://sojournertruthmemorial.org/sojourner-truth/her-words/
(April 19, 2018)
Week 3: Comparative Methods


Recommended readings:


Week 4: The Second-Wave Feminist Movement

Informal assignment: Visit this website, which has some of the classic "manifestos" from the second wave; print and annotate one (to be handed in on Tuesday in class, with the link posted ahead of time on Canvas):
http://www.cwluherstory.org/Classic-Feminist-Writings/

Films: “Makers: Women Who Make America, parts 1 & 2” (season 1);
“Mississippi: Is this America?” (episode of “Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years”)

Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon and Astrid Henry, Feminism Unfinished, chapter 2.


Recommended Reading:


Week 5: Gender, Social Policy, Law

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Carol Smart, *Feminism and the Power of Law* (Routledge, 2002).


(May 8 and 10, 2018)

Week 6: Backlash, the “Right Turn” and gender in conservative movements

May 10: In-class discussion of research paper proposals

Films: “Makers: Women Who Make America” (season 1, part 3)

Required Reading:


OR


Recommended Reading:


Week 7: Gender, Employment, Family, Care

Film: “Chain of Love”

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


(May 22 and 24, 2018)
Week 8: Contemporary Feminism, Gender and Politics

Films: Watch one or two episodes (your choice of episode) of season two of the PBS documentary “Makers: Women Who Make America,” available streaming from the library

Required Reading:

Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon and Astrid Henry, Feminism Unfinished, chapter 3 and Afterword.


Recommended Reading:


Nancy Fraser, *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis* (Brooklyn: Verso, 2013).

**Symposium on “choice feminism” in Perspectives on Politics (March 2010):**


(May 29 and 31 + one additional 75-minute session, rescheduled from June 5)

**Week 9: Student Presentations**

**PAPER DUE ON CANVAS, JUNE 11, 2018**