

Year : 2017/18

3353 - Bachelor's degree in Humanities 22335 - Gender Studies

Syllabus Information

Academic Course:	2017/18
Academic Center:	335 - Faculty of Humanities
Study:	3353 - Bachelor's degree in Humanities
Subject:	22335 - Gender Studies
Credits:	5.0
Course:	
Teaching languages:	Theory: Grup 1: English Seminar: Grup 101: Pending Grup 102: Pending
Teachers:	Maria Antonia Oliver Rotger
Teaching Period:	Quarterly

Presentation

This course deals with literature written by women in the English language and with some of the recurrent topics in women's literature that make it possible for us to look at it in the light of the main concerns of gender studies, such as gender identity as a cultural construction, gender relations as relations of power, and gender difference as a means of self-affirmation and transgression. The course will be structured around topics including the difficulty of finding one's own voice as a woman and as a writer in a male literary world, writing about the female body and female desire, maternity, women's experience as cultural and racial others in colonized cultures, and resisting and transforming impulses in women's literature.

Associated skills

1. Developing an understanding of the factors that contribute to the differing images of women in literature and demonstrate this understanding through class discussions and the written discourses required for the course.
2. Obtaining and displaying a knowledge of various literary terms as they relate selected literature by effectively applying such terms in class discussions and in written discourse.
3. Assessing the style, theme, properties, and effectiveness of literary works focusing on women, by participating in group discussions, writing a reading journal, and writing analytical papers on selected works.
4. Contextualizing women's literary works and applying a critical approach to literary pieces in assigned papers.
5. Knowing some of the most significant theories on women's literature to be able to propose sound interpretations of the texts.
6. Developing an aesthetic appreciation for women's literature by means of individual reading, in-class discussion and written analysis.

Learning outcomes

- identify some of the main topics in women's literature in English that concern gender studies
- detect myths and representations of womanhood and women's responses to those myths and representations and to other cultural impulses

- demonstrate a familiarity with some basic concepts of feminist theories
- apply those concepts and others to good analytical argument about a text or texts

Prerequisites

1. It is essential that the students enrolled in the course have a good command of English and have achieved at least level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

2. This is a course that emphasizes students' analytical, critical reading. It is important that they read and prepare all the texts in the course well in advance, given the complexity and length that they may have sometimes. This is an important requirement if you are taking this course since it is a course that places a lot of emphasis on reading thoroughly and analytically.

3. Students are expected to participate actively in discussions and to prepare a brief analysis of a text of their choice. The elements of participation in this course are the usual ones: attendance, reading, staying awake, respect for the class, and participation in discussions. Keep in mind that you want to make your discussion participation productive; talking for the sake of talking is neither necessary nor helpful.

Attendance is necessary to follow the pace of the course and the in-class discussion and analysis of works.

5. If you already know that you will not be able to attend all classes please make an appointment with your instructor during her office hours so she can give you instructions on how to best follow the course.

4. If you miss a class you should keep yourself updated on what has been done in class either by asking your classmates, looking at Aula Global, and, if necessary, making an appointment with your instructor during her office hours.

Contents

UNIT 1. Engendering language, silence and voice

This unit addresses what it means for a woman to find her own voice both as a woman and as a writer. Virginia Woolf's work *A Room of One's Own* will be used to introduce some of the issues later addressed by feminist literary criticism.

UNIT 2. Writing bodies/ Bodies writing

We will read at least one essay on the topic by a feminist theorist and then look at several approaches to the body and desire that women writers have inscribed through the ages: desire unfulfilled, bodies exploited, bodies celebrated, and desire transformed.

UNIT 3. Rethinking the maternal

This unit explores the anger ambivalence, and affirmation with which women have written about motherhood and considers the ways in which works written from a mother's perspective differ from those written from a daughter's. In addition, it discusses essentialist views of mothers, special issues for racial-ethnic mothers, "motherhood as experience and institution," and women's redefinitions of the maternal.

UNIT 4. Concepts and criticism applied to the reading of a novel and its corresponding film version.

UNIT 5. Resistance and transformation

In this unit we will define resistance literature and relate it to ideas and metaphors of transformation, while offering a view of women's literature that challenges patriarchal, racial and class oppression. We will look at the social and political issues that women have incorporated in their works from an approach that brings together race, class, gender and cultural difference.

Teaching Methods

- This course is taught in English and follows a communicative methodology that places emphasis on reading comprehension, listening and writing. Classes are entirely in English. Students are expected to write exams and papers in English.
- The approach to the course, though based mainly on texts, will also consider cinema as a way of narrating or telling a story.
- If you have questions about the course, please ask the instructor in class or during her office hours. She will not clarify class contents and class mechanics through email. Instructors have no obligation to answer students' e-mails about the course.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the course consists in a final exam (50%), a participation mark (10%) and a creative project (40%) that will consist in creatively re-writing and re-interpreting one of the texts read in class.

Please note:

- Students who fail the final exam will have a make-up exam during the following quarter.
- Students who do not submit a paper proposal by the deadline will not be able to submit their project.
- Students who do not submit a paper and proposal by the deadline will not be able to resubmit it or revise it. In their case, their final mark will be based entirely on the result of the final exam, which will count as 100% of their final grade.
- Students who submit their proposal and their project on time and fail it will have the opportunity to revise it and resubmit it during the following quarter by the deadline provided by the instructor. In their case, their mark will be the result of averaging the exam, the in-class participation and the final project marks.

Bibliography and information resources

Some but not all of the readings in the course can be found in:

De Shazer, Mary K. ed. *The Longman Anthology of Women's Literature*. London: Longman, 2000.

Other recommended sources:

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987.

Belsey, Catherine and Moore, Jane, ed. *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*. Basil Blackwell, 1989, New York.

Donovan, Josephine. *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions*. Continuum, 2000, London, New York.

Felski, Rita. *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change*. Harvard University Press, 1989, Cambridge Mass.

Gilbert, Sandra and Gubar, Susan, ed. *Feminist Literary Theory and Criticism A Norton Reader*. Norton, 2007, New York & London

Hooks, Bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*. South End Press, 2000, MA.

Humm, Maggie, ed. *Feminisms, A Reader*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, London.

Jackson, Stevi & Jones, Jackie. *Contemporary Feminist Theories*. Edinburgh University Press, 1998, UK.

Millet, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. University of Illinois Press, 2000, Chicago.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Russo, Ann & Torres, Lourdes eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Indiana University Press, 1991, Bloomington.

Moi, Toril. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. Routledge, 1985, London & New York.

Nicholson, J. Linda ed. *Feminism/ Postmodernism*. Routledge, 1990, NY.

Warhol, Robyn R. & Herndl, Diane Price, ed. *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. Rutgers University Press, 1997, New Brunswick, New Jersey.