

# English 2160-D540

## Introduction to Women's Studies (Fall 2016)

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Tuesdays/Thursdays 4:00-5:15 p.m., Namm 1002

Professor Laura Westengard

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:00 p.m., and by appointment

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### Course Description

This course focuses on literature, scholarly writing, and films that examine specifically the role(s) of girls and women, both nationally and internationally, and determines whether women themselves or others (external forces, individuals, or social systems) construct definitions of womanhood. The course utilizes texts, by both men and women, and addresses such themes as womanism, stereotypes, feminism, violence, politics, intimate/familial relationships, sex, sexuality, sexual orientation, and prescribed and evolving gender roles as they relate to girls and women.

3 credits, 3 hours

Prerequisite: ENG 1101

Pathways: World Cultures and Global Issues

Writing Intensive

### Assignments and Grading

- Essay 1 (10%)
- Essay 2 (10%)
- Global Feminisms Research Project and Presentation (20%)
- Midterm Exam (10%)
- Final Exam (10%)
- Weekly Critical Response Blogs (30%)
- Active Participation/In-Class Writing/Quizzes (10%)

### Required Texts

- Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*
- Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

In addition to the novels above, you will be assigned short essays to read each week. These will be posted on the course OpenLab site.

Note: You may use any edition of these texts, including e-reader and pdf versions. However, if you choose to use electronic versions, you must be sure to have access to the texts during class. Additionally, you will *not* be allowed to use electronic materials during open book exams.

## OpenLab

This course will use OpenLab. You will be asked to post assignments and contribute to other course related activities on the English 2160 OpenLab site. You must sign up for an OpenLab account, participate in activities, and check the site daily because important instructions for completing assignments, as well as class announcements, will appear there.

In order to set up your OpenLab account, you must activate your City Tech email. I will only send or reply to email from your City Tech email address, so make sure you set it up early and check it regularly.

## Assignments and Essays

- All essay assignments should follow MLA format. This means that all rough and final drafts must be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins all around, in 12 point Times New Roman font. The first page must display student's name, your teacher's name (Professor Laura Westengard), the class you are in, and the date the paper is due. Every paper should have an original title. I recommend that you obtain a writing handbook for the purposes of formatting and editing your work. You may have one from an earlier writing course, or you can use the Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>.
- Each week I will post a Critical Response Blog prompt, and you will complete a blog post that responds to this prompt. This should be an opportunity for you to reflect on the themes and concepts that you found interesting and/or challenging in the week's reading and to discuss those thoughts with your classmates. Each post must be 250 words, minimum, and it should fully and thoughtfully respond to the prompt. Each week, you also must respectfully and thoughtfully respond to **at least two** other blog posts. Initial posts must be completed by Thursday's class each week. Response posts must be completed each week by Friday at 11:59 pm. Do not wait until the last minute to post!
- I DO NOT accept late papers. All essays must be submitted by the deadline or you will get no credit for them. Because life can be unpredictable, each student will be allowed ONE "oops" paper during the semester. Your "oops" paper can be submitted up to 24 hours late with no penalty, but use this opportunity carefully because once you have used your "oops" paper all other essays must be submitted on time in order to receive credit.
- All homework assignments are due by the start of class, and there will be no make-ups on quizzes or in-class work. If you have a personal emergency or other circumstances that prohibit you from finishing your assignment on time or turning in an essay as scheduled, email or see me as soon as possible so we can discuss your situation.
- Since writing is a process, you will draft, workshop, and revise each of your essays before submitting the final draft. While I will not review an entire essay via email, I'm happy to conference with you about your essay drafts and ideas during my office hours. I am also happy to respond to specific questions via email. Feel free to consult with me at any stage in your writing process. In addition to this, you may choose to perform a revision of ONE essay for a new grade. In order to do this, you must discuss your revision plan with me during my office hours and submit your revision at the beginning of class on Thursday, December 15th.

- Your writing should be grammatically correct and free of spelling errors, and it should demonstrate increasingly complex critical thinking and analysis as the semester progresses. If this is a challenge for you, I encourage you to visit my office hours and the Learning Center for help throughout the semester.

### Participation

Since we will be covering topics such as race, gender, class, and sexuality in this class, it is imperative that our classroom is a safe space for respectful and engaged discussion. Please come to class with an open mind and a desire to learn about identities, cultures, times, and places that are unfamiliar to you. Also, please know that many of the topics we will read about and discuss include perspectives on violence, sexuality, and other topics that may be uncomfortable for some class members.

If you find any of the class material to be excessively uncomfortable, be sure to speak with me about your feelings and reactions. I also encourage you to take advantage of City Tech's support resources by visiting the Counseling Services Center (<http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/students/counseling/services.shtml>). They can help you process difficult course materials, address personal topics, and offer support for college-related stress. Location: Namm 108 Phone: 718-260-5030

I expect you to exhibit maturity in class, to arrive prepared (which means you have read the assigned reading and completed any homework/blog assignments), to ask and answer questions, and to participate in a positive classroom environment (including turning all electronic devices to silent and treating your fellow students and myself with a positive and respectful attitude). When you miss class it is your responsibility to keep up with the reading/homework. You should email me as soon as possible to let me know if you are going to miss a class and to find out what you will miss.

### Attendance and Lateness

A student may be absent without penalty for 10% of the number of scheduled class meetings during the semester. Because this class meets 2 times a week, you may miss 3 classes without penalty. 2 late arrivals = 1 absence. Any arrival later than 20 minutes past the scheduled start time = 1 absence. This attendance policy is intended to cover sickness, work and family commitments, and transportation delays. In other words, there are no "excused" absences. **If you have more than 3 absences, your grade will be significantly lowered. After you have missed 3 classes, each absence will lower your final grade by one step and may, ultimately, result in a "WU" grade.**

### New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

# Course Schedule (subject to revision, as needed)

## Week 1: Who are We? What is Feminism?

Thursday, 8/25: Introduction/Syllabus Review

## Week 2: What are the Three Waves of U.S. Feminism?

Tuesday, 8/30: **Read:** Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (excerpt)  
Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" by Sojourner Truth  
**Due:** Create an OpenLab account, find and join our site

Thursday, 9/1: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 1-3  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 1 (introductions)

## Week 3: What Makes a Woman? What Makes a Man?

*Global Feminisms: China*

Tuesday, 9/6: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 4-6

Thursday, 9/8: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 7-9  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 2

## Week 4: Intersectionality

*Global Feminisms: China*

Tuesday, 9/13: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 10-12

Thursday, 9/15: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 13-15  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 3

## Week 5: Mental and Reproductive Health

*Global Feminisms: Poland*

Tuesday, 9/20: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, chapters 16-18

Thursday, 9/22: **Read:** *The Bell Jar*, 19-20  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 4

## Week 6: Womanism and U.S. Third-World Feminisms

*Global Feminisms: Poland*

Tuesday, 9/27: Peer Review Workshop  
**Due:** Essay 1 Draft

Thursday, 9/29: **Read:** *The Color Purple*, pages 1-74  
**Due:** Essay 1

## Week 7:

Tuesday, 10/4: **No Class**

Thursday, 10/6: **No Class**  
(Monday Schedule)

## Week 8: Legacies of Slavery

*Global Feminisms: Nicaragua*

Tuesday, 10/11: **No Class**

Thursday, 10/13: **Read:** *The Color Purple*, pages 74-221  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 5

Friday, 10/14: **Read:** *The Color Purple*, pages 221-295  
(Tuesday Schedule)

## Week 9: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave, 4<sup>th</sup> Wave, Post-Feminist? Where are we now?

*Global Feminisms: Nicaragua*

Tuesday, 10/18: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 1-3

Thursday, 10/20: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 4-7  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 6

## Week 10: Midterm Week

Tuesday, 10/25: Midterm Review

Thursday, 10/27: **Midterm Exam**

## Week 12: Postcolonial Feminisms

*Global Feminisms: India*

Tuesday, 11/1: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 8-12

Thursday, 11/3: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 13-16  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 7

## Week 13: Globalization and the Prison Industrial Complex

*Global Feminisms: India*

Tuesday, 11/8: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 17-20

Thursday, 11/10: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 21-27  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 8

## Week 14: Migration and Borders

*Global Feminisms: Cross-Site*

Tuesday, 11/15: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 28-32

Thursday, 11/17: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 33-38  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 9

## Week 15: Gender and Sexuality Today

*Global Feminisms: Cross-Site*

Tuesday, 11/22: **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 39-45

Thursday, 11/24: **No Class**

### Week 16: Can Women “Have It All?” What Is “It” Anyway?

Tuesday, 11/29:       **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 46-51

Thursday, 12/1:       **Read:** *Americanah*, chapters 52-55  
**Due:** Critical Response Blog 10

### Week 17: Review/Wrap-up

Tuesday, 12/6:       **Due:** Essay 2 Draft

Thursday, 12/8: Final Exam Review  
**Due:** Essay 2

### Finals:

Tuesday, 12/13:       Reading Day, No Class

Thursday, 12/15:       **Final Exam**  
**Due:** Revision

Tuesday, 12/20:       Conclusions