WS 482/582
Global Perspectives on Women’s Health
Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program
Oregon State University
4 credits

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Office hours:

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Women’s health issues are examined from a global perspective in the context of a woman’s life and through a feminist political lens. Central to our discussions will be an analysis of the interplay among race, class, and gender in shaping particular health care outcomes. The course stresses the potential for women’s agency and autonomy with respect to improving their health and environments.

HYBRID COURSE

This is a hybrid course, where approximately 50% of the course will take place in a traditional face-to-face classroom for 2 hours per week and 50% will be delivered via Blackboard, your online learning community, where you will interact with your classmates and with the instructor for 2 hours per week of online activity. Within the course Blackboard site you will access the learning materials and syllabus; discuss issues; submit assignments; email other students and the instructor; participate in online activities including small groups; and display your final projects.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of having taken this course, undergraduate/graduate students will be able to:

• demonstrate a clear understanding of the impact gender inequity has on health.
• examine health issues affecting women globally, in terms of their cultural and social contexts, not as a rationale for practices but as a basis for understanding.
• recognize the complexity of local contexts (e.g., villages, towns, districts, cities, provinces, countries) and the difficulty of applying nationally and globally defined interventions and policies.
• discuss the determinants of health and risk factors for conditions of major importance to global health.
• analyze global health disparities through a social justice and human rights lens.
• investigate and report on one major women’s health issue affecting global populations.
• critically read and discuss the popular media as it reports on global health issues.
• understand and analyze the roles and agendas of major players in global health.
• understand the linkages between global and local health issues, problems and solutions.
• work in teams to determine information and modes of action about various global health problems.
• demonstrate and communicate a sense of personal responsibility, empowerment, and connection with women globally.
• design and convey accurate, powerful, moving messages based on your topic in a way that draws public interest

In addition, as a result of having taken this course, graduate students will be able to:

• Characterize and synthesize literature relevant to a specific women’s health issue
• Articulate current health issues for women around the world.
• Appraise and synthesize the complexities inherent in improving women’s health on a global scale.

Required Text Books


Tentative Movies

Pray the Devil Back to Hell
Birth of a Surgeon
View from a Grain of Sand
Yesterday
Sick No Good
Silent Choices
The Vagina Monlogues
## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

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<td><strong>Points Possible</strong></td>
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### 1. Prepared Participation: This is a hybrid course. The in-class component will be conducted as a seminar and is not lecture based. Therefore, in-class time will be used for group projects, discussions, collective knowledge-building exercises, guest speakers, library workshops and classroom simulations. Classroom work will be based on assigned readings, so students who want to do well in this class must read assigned chapters prior to coming to class. Students will be evaluated based on their participation, both in class and in the online forum. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and to actively participate in all class and Blackboard-based discussions. This is an intensive reading and discussion course. All reading assignments are listed next to the day during which they will be discussed. Readings should be read and analyzed by that day. You are expected to come to class and the online forum prepared to discuss all reading assignments, with carefully thought out critical observations, comments, and/or questions about the readings materials. From time to time, you will also be asked to complete additional in-class or online assignments. It is expected that most students will need to miss one or two class times for personal leave during the term; however, if you must miss a class, you are responsible for making sure your work is still turned in on time and for finding out from your classmates what you missed. Please note that work completed during class time cannot be made up. If you know in advance that you will miss a class, please let us know (be sure to copy the email to both the instructor and the teaching assistant). The Women Studies Program has a departmental policy that if you miss more than the equivalent of 2 weeks of classes during a 10 week quarter, a letter grade will be deducted for each additional absence. Use any absences wisely; exceptions will not be made if you have already had 2 weeks of absences and then have an emergency of some kind. Satisfactory participation is expected of all students. Those demonstrating unsatisfactory participation (more than 2 class sessions of personal leave) will lose points associated with their final grade.

### 2. Student-led Discussions (20 points):

Starting from week 3 or 4 each week the class will be led by two or three students. Students will be responsible for conducting class discussion on the scheduled course readings for that week. Presentations will be no more than 30 minutes.

The duties of a discussion facilitating group will involve:

- Providing to the class with an overview of the reading. (5 points)
- Generating questions for discussion on issues related to the reading (2.5 points)
- Presenting at least one relevant article from a peer-reviewed journal to the class concerning the topic of their presentation. They should be prepared to discuss why they choose the article and its importance to the topic of discussion. (2.5 points)
- Writing and turning in an overview (3-4 pages maximum) of the assigned reading. Overviews should raise questions, draw comparisons, and suggest connections,
implications, and/or criticisms of the main ideas in the readings. Overviews should be posted online by 11 pm of the day of your presentation. (10 points)

All written work should be double-spaced, in a 12-point font, with page numbers and appropriate citations for all sources.

3. Presentation about an International women’s Health Issue (15 points):

This is a presentation that students will give in a small group of approximately 2-3 people on the last day of class (week 10). Its purpose is to give students an opportunity to organize a handout that will allow them to briefly (10-15 minutes) educate others about an issue related to International women’s health. ANY women’s health topic is appropriate. ANY legitimate women’s health topic is also a “global” topic—do not feel confined to a topic that focuses on the Global South only. Topics could cover: women’s heath (e.g., Reproductive rights; sterilization; maternal mortality, politics of breast feeding, breast cancer; HIV/AIDS, Violence against women with a specific focus, Mental health, etc.). Students may describe either; (1) the magnitude of the health condition and its effect on women and their lives; (2) a program or intervention approach, or a health-care access issue related to the health issue (e.g., treatment of HIV-positive mothers in Africa or urban United States; prenatal care in Northern Europe; contraceptive access in Eastern Europe); or (3) a policy or initiative that affects the provision of women’s health services (e.g., major statements from the Beijing or Cairo conferences). If you have any questions about the legitimacy of your topic, talk with me or email me.

4. Handouts (20 points)

This is an online group activity. Students are asked to prepare a handout about the health topic of your presentation and present to the class. Students will bring in copies of their handout and discuss the handout during their presentation. The most successful handout will have a rather limited focus—you only have a couple pages, remember!

The goal of this project is to share evidence-based information. Produce a 1-2 page handout for the class and the course instructor. A good handout would have a small bibliography with relevant articles and websites. These handouts do not have to be fancy (like factsheets). Choose a topic that is of interest to you and give yourself permission to explore something you want to know more about. Think about what you would prepare if you wanted to teach and stimulate conversation about an important health topic. This is a chance for you to investigate a topic of interest more deeply and organize materials in a way that would facilitate educating peers and the community.

Grades will be based on presence to give the presentation, consistent Blackboard updates about the handout, quality of presentation and the quality of the handout in terms of accuracy, references to peer-reviewed literature, comprehensiveness, objectivity, and grammar/spelling.

5. Community Health Art Activism (20 points)

Communicating health messages to a wide variety of audiences can be challenging. Differences among audiences make it necessary to avoid the one-size fits-all mindset when developing effective health communication materials. Culture and literacy skills are two important factors, among others, to consider when designing health communication materials that will capture the intended audience’s attention.
This is a two-part project (10 points each)

I. For this project, you are asked to work collaboratively in wikis in small groups to create a visual image to represent information gathered for handouts (as described in bullet number 5). The point of creating a culturally appropriate visual representation is to convey/conceptualize your educational message in a simplistic manner that can reach a greater spectrum of people. For this purpose, the arts (visual and performing) make strong pedagogical tools that can both convey messages to people of varying educational backgrounds and arouse excitement and community activism. Please note that you are not being graded on artistic skill but on creativity, ability to convey facts in a simplistic manner, ability to follow project guidelines, and general aesthetics. It is important that your final product is put together in such a way that it looks professional and intentional.

The parameters for this project are described below.

A. Create a catchy title for your piece to draw viewers in – make viewers want to “see” and learn more about the message you are conveying. Convey your health information to the audience in a way that is understandable, meaningful, and easy to use.

B. Assume that your audience have an 8th grade (or lower) reading comprehension level. Again, you will want to communicate with as little writing as possible. If you use percentages for example, be sure to include a visual image to convey those percentages.

II. Invite at least 2-3 people from the population that you are advocating for in your project. Share your art project with this group and ask them for specific feedback and suggestions about the quality and message of your project. For example, if you are advocating for African American women’s breast health, invite 2-3 African American women from various age groups to provide you with their feedback on your project. Use viewer feedback to inform a summary (min of 3 pages - maximum 5 pages, 1” margins all-around, 1.5 line spacing, back-to-back printing, 12 pt Times Roman type) of your experience in presenting this information. This summary is submitted through blackboard and due on week 10, by 11pm.

Questions you should respond to in your summary are:
   a. What were the strengths and challenges of this project? (3 points)
   b. How did your audience receive your message? What questions did they ask you? (2 points)
   c. What suggestions did they have? (2 points)
   d. In hindsight, what would you have done differently or the same? (1 points)
   e. What was your experience of employing the arts as a pedagogical tool? (2 points)

For more information please refer to the CDC health literacy document:

6. Media Reports (5 points)
One of the goals of this course is to help you become aware of, and critically analyze, news reports about global women’s medical and health issues in the print and broadcast media. We will do this
on a weekly basis – with 3-4 students reporting per week. To that end, each student must find a news report from newspapers, magazines, television, or radio and analyze it. The media report should address the following in max 2 typed pages (1” margins all-around, 1.5 line spacing, back-to-back printing, 12 pt Times Roman type).

a) A one paragraph synopsis of the report. What information is it giving the reader/audience?
b) Identify the basic concepts necessary to know in order to fully understand the report
c) Is the information accurate and understandable? How do you know? Please critically assess the sources used by those who created this particular media piece.
d) What is the significance of this information to global health?
e) What are the implications for women and global communities?
f) What are other resources an individual could use to learn more about this topic? Please identify a relevant web site about this topic.

Each of you will be given a day to share and discuss your report with the class on the Discussion board. Media reports should be posted on Blackboard on the day you are assigned to share your report.

7. Final Essay Exam - Undergraduates (25 points)

For this course, undergraduate students are expected to complete a final essay exam. The exam will be posted on Blackboard and consist of short essays about the readings and topics discussed in class. More details will be provided in class. All final exams will be due Monday, 11pm of finals week, submitted through Blackboard. No late final exams will be accepted.

8. Final Research Paper – Graduate Students (25 points)

Graduate Students are expected to write a minimum 8-10 page (typed, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman) paper in which a particular health issue for women in a specific country/culture is addressed. You will be expected to research this topic over the course of the term. Papers are to include a full bibliography of works consulted and works cited. The paper should demonstrate that the student is capable of analyzing a selected narrow area related to the selected topic and produce a manuscript suitable for publication in a professional journal relevant to the focus of the student's paper. A sample published paper that could be used as a model will be discussed in class. Students will be asked to identify an appropriate journal for possible publications of the paper. The paper should be written in accordance with the authorship guidelines for that journal. APA format should be used. Research papers are due Monday of finals week, by 11pm. Late papers will not be accepted.

Research paper Guidelines:

a. Rationale (5 points)
   • Students will be required to submit a 2 page hard copy (double spaced 12 pt. Times New Roman,) rationale for their choice of country and health topic by week 7 in class.
   • The rationale should include: title of your topic, a clear statement of the research objective, a brief description of the prevalence of the particular health condition in your country of choice, the local and global health importance of the disease, why that health condition should be a priority for resource allocation.
   • Name and website address of the appropriate journal of your choice for possible publication.
b. Final Paper (20 point)

- Paper should be a min of 8-10 page (typed, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman).
- References or tables are not included in page count.
- In-text citations and a list of all references at the end of your paper must be included and formatted according to APA style guidelines. Information APA style can be found at: http://www.apastyle.org/
- All references must be scholarly publications or online references (journals, periodicals, newspapers, books); Wikipedia references or similar online sources are not acceptable.
- You can use tables, charts, diagrams, etc., but they should not be more than ¼ of the paper

The paper will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Focus**: Is the issue chosen focused enough to be covered adequately within the space of the paper?
- **Organization**: Does the paper’s structure conform to the guidelines of the journal of choice? Is the paper’s structure apparent and easy to follow? [Suggestions: use subheadings to facilitate the organization of the paper]
- **Development**: Does the paper adequately include a (an): abstract that provides a clear overview of the paper, introduction of the topic, synthesis of the literature that presents a convincing argument in support of the writer’s position, summary of findings and reasonable conclusions, and recommendations for research and future practice?
- **Sentence structure**: Are sentences well formed and appropriately varied in length and style?
- **Mechanics**: Is the paper generally free of spelling, typographical, and grammatical errors? Are statements appropriately cited and referenced?
What is the handout?

*The purpose of your handout should be to educate other students and the community by providing a basic, comprehensive outline of your topic.*

It should be like a factsheet—i.e., an “at-a-glance” tool. Factsheets are used to convey health information to the public or to providers; they are also used to educate key stakeholders and legislators about policy or program needs.

The best handout summarizes a topic using evidence-based resources (e.g., peer-reviewed journals, government reports) and gives the reader an idea of where to look for further information.

What are the elements of your handout?

It should be about two pages long. Components include the following:

- Your names and month/year of development on the top line
- The title of the handout (I suggest in larger font than the rest of the text, in boldface and centered)
- The text of the handout should be single-spaced. If you can include one or two graphics, include some white space, or even put some text in a box, you will have a more visually engaging handout.
- Use 12-point font (10-point is the smallest): you want it to be readable. I don’t care what kind of font you use.
- The handout must be self-contained; do not refer to previous documents and assume that the reader has read them.
- Use bullet points, instead of many sentences in paragraph form, when you can.
- Subheads should be in bold face and they should be descriptive, allowing the reader to get a good sense of the outline for the handout.
- You might want to start with a 25-50 word summary paragraph, which should contain the main points of the handout. The summary should be 3-4 sentences that include:
  ✓ Short and simple definition of the topic (e.g., endometriosis is a condition that effects women…….)
  ✓ One or two clarifying sentences (e.g., an outline of symptoms, who is affected, health effects)
  ✓ A concluding statement that will encourage the reader to read the handout.

Handout Evaluation Criteria

You will receive 0-15 points for the quality of your handouts. Your peers will use the following evaluation criteria and will assign between points for each of the following four items:

- Organization and accessibility: does the information flow well? Does it flow in a logical manner? (5 points)
- Comprehensiveness: does the handout appear to contain relevant information about the topic? Are there important gaps in information? (5 points)
- Writing: is the handout well written (e.g., free of errors in grammar or spelling)? (2.5 points)
- Accuracy and relevance: does the information appear to be accurate and current? Are the data sources appropriate? Are there in-text citations of statements of fact? (2.5 points)

Examples

While this assignment is asking you to produce a handout, factsheets provide the best examples of what is being asked for. Factsheets, however, often involve fancy graphics and formatting; I do not want you to struggle with that. What is relevant about factsheets is how they cover topics and
provide information. You will thus want to present factsheet-like text. You may certainly have graphs (tables and figures reproduced from other sources) and, in fact, such things will likely improve your handout. However, you do not have to fuss with photos and fancy styling, as one sees with professionally produced factsheets. I think you have all seen factsheets that you thought were useful; think about why you like certain factsheets and consider including those elements in your handout. I have listed many sources for you to check out if you want some ideas about good factsheets (my single frustration is that some “good” sheets that have nice construction and great information don’t always include references.)


2. The Guttmacher Institute has some great factsheets. For some examples, look at:


3. Child Trends has some great factsheets, www.childtrends.org/, but they don’t consistently include references. Look at a recent factsheet on forced sexual intercourse for an example of a nicely constructed sheet (but no references!), www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2008_09_10_FS_ForcedSex.pdf and contraceptive use (based on a single article, which was not well referenced!), www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends2008_02_20_FS_ContraceptiveUse.pdf.


5. The U.S. site for women’s health has some good factsheets, www.4woman.gov/pub/.


7. The Population Council has nice factsheets, (www.popcouncil.org/publications/factsheets.html). They are a bit longer than you should construct, but their construction is nice. For example, look at: Child marriage in Ethiopia, www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/briefingsheets/ETHIOPIA_2005.pdf

8. WHO has many factsheets: www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/en/. I like the construction of many of them, EXCEPT for the absence of references on some of them. For content and construction, look at female genital mutilation, abortion and breast cancer, condoms (effectiveness of latex condoms), contraception (emergency contraception), and the environmental health of children and mothers.
**Grade Calculation**

A  Excellent work. An example for all to follow. Exhibits openness and unusually sharp insight into many sides of an issue. Shows considerable critical thought. Written work is virtually flawless in terms of grammar, spelling, cogency, and content. Performs far above minimum requirements. Exceptionally articulate.

B  Above average. Speaks and writes well. Performs above the minimum requirements. Demonstrates very good understanding of ideas.

C  Speaks and writes in an acceptable manner. Work is satisfactory, average. Meets minimum requirements.

D  Below average work. Minimally acceptable, but unacceptable if this course is required.

F  Unacceptable work. Does not meet minimum requirements.

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<td>90-94.99</td>
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**Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

**Statement on Diversity**

The Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program strives to create an affirming climate for all students, including underrepresented and marginalized individuals and groups. Diversity encompasses differences in gender, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, citizenship, religion, socioeconomic background, physical or mental ability, veteran status, and sexual identity and/or orientation.

**Statement on Religious Holidays**

Oregon State University strives to respect all religious practices. If you have religious holidays that are in conflict with any of the requirements of this class, please see me immediately so that we can make alternative arrangements.
**Statement on Academic Dishonesty**

Many students do not understand what academic dishonesty is. It is important to become familiar with its different forms and the University's definitions. At Oregon State University, academic dishonesty is defined by the Oregon Administrative Rules 576-015-0020.1.a-c as: *An act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work.* Academic dishonesty includes:

- **CHEATING** - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids or an act of deceit by which a student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment or using prohibited materials and texts.

- **FABRICATION** - falsification or invention of any information (including falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data and listing incorrect or fictitious references.

- **ASSISTING** - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, or taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else (or allowing someone to do these things for you). It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an education assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

- **TAMPERING** - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents.

- **PLAGIARISM** - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

Academic dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units (collection of evidence and documentation of incident, meeting with student regarding the situation, determination of responsibility and academic penalty) but will also be referred to the Student Conduct Coordinator for action under the rules. For more information on expectations for student conduct, see [http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses](http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses).