

**WOMS 240-010
WOMEN AND VIOLENCE**

Dr. Marie Laberge

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Course Description:

This course will analyze the gendered nature of violence, and how a wide range of socially institutionalized and individually perpetrated political, social, economic, and physical circumstances impact and shape our experiences. We will use an interdisciplinary approach in order to examine a variety of social and political issues from a feminist perspective. Within the context of violence, we will consider specific conditions of varied social locations such as race, ethnicity, sexual identity and social economic status. Through readings, lectures, films and discussion, we will explore issues of power and the socio-historical circumstances that determine why women's bodies are at risk.

Course Objectives:

To understand how violence against women is accomplished through a broad range of individual acts and practices.

To consider different theoretical positions that help us understand women's lives.

To explore how issues of race, gender, sexuality, class and violence are interconnected.

To understand the role both individuals and institutions play in maintaining and resisting violence in society.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I expect students to come to class prepared to raise questions and participate in discussions. All assigned readings are required. Reading assignments are listed on the syllabus for the current week's classes. Students should have completed the assigned readings **BEFORE EACH CLASS**. You are expected to incorporate material from class meetings, lectures, discussions, videos and readings into all of your class work. Grades will be based on points acquired through three exams, class participation assignments and response papers.

Courtesy is crucial: you are encouraged to disagree with points others make in the course, but need to phrase your objections so as to address the statement, not criticize the person making it. You are expected to be on time for the class and not to leave early without informing the instructor before class of your reason.

IMPORTANT: This class deals with very sensitive and sometimes controversial topics. Any person who decides to stay in this class must agree to exercise the utmost respect and sensitivity to these issues and those persons who have experienced violence in their lives.

Required texts:

Gender Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (1997) Laura O'Toole & Jessica Schiffman, eds. Appears as O'Toole & Schiffman in readings outline.

Black and Blue (1998) Anna Quinlen.

Family Violence: Legal, Medical & Social Perspectives (2005) Harvey Wallace, Appears as Wallace in readings outline.

DUE DATES & POINT COUNTS

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Exam 1 - Mar. 23 | up to 25 pts |
| Final Exam - May 16 | up to 25 pts |
| Response Papers | up to 20 pts |
| Learning Log assgns | up to 20 pts |
| Team teaching | up to 10 pts |
| Total | up to 100 points |

GRADE COMPUTATION:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 94-100 pts = A | 73-76 pts = C |
| 90-93 pts = A- | 70-72 pts = C- |
| 87-89 pts = B+ | 67-69 pts = D+ |
| 83-86 pts = B | 63-66 pts = D |
| 80-82 pts = B- | 60-62 pts = D- |
| 77-79 pts = C+ | |

CLASS PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS (20 points)

As stated above, students are expected to come prepared to discuss readings and other class material. Your class participation grade (20% of the course grade) will be based on the following. Failure to complete these assignments on the dates indicated will result in a zero, unless official medical excuses or pre-arranged excuses are submitted.

1. Class Activities/ Learning Log Assignments: (20 points) The format of this class will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Class attendance is vitally important and you are expected to be an active participant in discussion. In order to participate respectfully, intelligently, and constructively you are expected to have read the assignments by the dates noted on the syllabus.

As we progress through the semester, there will be weekly assignments related to the topic being discussed. Students will be given questions to answer or activities to carry out and are responsible for these assignments. Students will write up short informal responses or analysis of activities. Failure to turn in an assignment on time will result in a zero for that assignment. The short assignments function to promote attendance, preparedness and good class discussion. These assignments will be collected Fridays after discussion, and checked off. When returned they will become part of your learning log which should contain 10 assignments by the end of the semester. Each assignment will be worth 2 points for a total of 20 points. In addition to the regular assignment of the week - you may also include any questions or comments that you may have which will let me know what issues or concerns you might have about the readings etc.

These assignments will be discussed in your groups and collectively. Group activities and discussions are meant to be interactive, therefore, missed groups cannot be made-up. Thus, if you foresee missing many classes, I strongly suggest that you take another course.

2. Team Presentation: (10 pts) Students will also be responsible for team teaching. You will be assigned to groups which you will work with through out the semester. Each group will sign up in advance for a particular week's discussion and will work with others toward a collaborative effort. The goal of each group is to present material on the current community responses to different issues we have covered. Each team will research the topic they are discussing and provide the class with information about how individuals, communities or the government have responded to the problem. You will have about twenty minutes. Each group receives one grade. Each member of the group will write a short paper in part summarizing your group effort, but also analyzing your topic. This is to be treated as a short paper and will count as one of your response papers. This effort will count as 10 pts of participation grade. These papers are due on the day you make your presentation.

RESPONSE PAPERS ASSIGNMENT (20 points):

Response Papers: Five response papers are due during the semester. The purpose of these papers is to assist you in focusing on the material in the readings and help you synthesize the material. Each student can select the particular week's readings they wish to respond to but they are due in class on the day we discuss the material reviewed and will not be accepted late. These papers should be informal and about 2 pages in length. These papers must briefly do three things:

- synthesize key point(s) of the article(s) arguments(s)
- respond to that/those points
- make connections to other readings or to preceding readings and discussion

Two papers are due by the Friday before Spring Break, March 23rd and the other three are due after Spring Break by the end of the semester. Papers will be graded as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 5 papers, 4 or more with a "+" | = A or 20 pts |
| 5 acceptable papers | = B or 17 pts |
| 4 acceptable papers | = C or 15 pts |
| 3 acceptable papers | = D or 13 pts |
| 2 acceptable papers or fewer | = F or 0 pts |

An acceptable paper is one that shows a serious attempt to grapple with the ideas in the reading and which does all three things listed above. A "+" paper does at least two of the above things excellently in a brief space. You must complete FIVE papers to get the full 20 points.

EXAMINATIONS: (25 points each) There will be TWO exams each worth 25% of your final grade. Both exams will be given in class. These exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice, short answers and short essay questions and will draw on material from texts, films, lectures, and discussions. The dates of the exams are listed above.

EXTRA CREDIT: There are several possible options you have for earning extra credit. 5 possible points may be added to your final grade. Extra credit requires application of theories and concepts covered in the course (with proper citations). Must be passed in by Dec. 2nd to be accepted. They may also be passed in earlier.

1. Write a short paper analyzing something found in the popular media using material from class.
2. Attend Women's Studies brown bag discussion and events and write up report with analysis.
3. Volunteer at shelter or with activist group working on these issues and write up short summary of experience.
4. Options may arise during the semester, I will make announcements in class (ie attend lectures.)

Helpful Hints: 1) When in doubt, ask questions. If you don't understand something, ask for clarification. 2) Come to class prepared; jot down questions to be asked in class. Try to keep up with the reading. You will find your learning experience will be enhanced if you read the material before class. Class lectures will not necessarily repeat information given in the textbook. 3) The key to passing the course and getting a decent grade is to READ the assignments. 4) If I talk too fast, ask me to slow down.

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS: Please note that the dates are flexible - and there is some leeway built into the schedule. If we need more time on particular topic - we will take it.

WEEK 1 - 2/7, 2/9

Introduction to Course; Definition and Prevalence of Violence .

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, pg 3-9, ch 6

Wallace, pg 1-27, Ch 1

WEEK 2 - 2/12, 2/14, 2/16

Biological/ Psychological Perspectives on Violence .

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 2, 7, 30 and poem "Philadelphia story" p 373

WEEK 3 - 2/19, 2/21, 2/23

Socialization and Cultural Perspectives.

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 3, 4, and 34.

WEEK 4 - 2/26, 2/28, 3/2

Structural Perspectives.

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 1, 5, 14 and Poem "Need"

WEEK 5 - 3/5, 3/7, 3/9

Sexy Violence and Violent Sex: Rape and Sexual Assault

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 11, 12, 13, 15 & poem "The Rape", p 182

Wallace, Ch 13, p 317-340

WEEK 6 - 3/12, 3/14, 3/16

Sexual Violence: Incest and Child Sexual Assault -

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 22 & 23

Wallace, Ch 3, p 69-88

WEEK 7 - 3/19, 3/21, 3/23

Video, Summary, Review ; **Midterm Exam Friday March 23rd**

WEEK 8 - SPRING BREAK

WEEKS 9 and 10 - 4/2, 4/4, 4/6, 4/9, 4/11

Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 16, 17, & 21

Wallace, Ch 8, p 179-214, Ch 9, p 219-244

Read Black and Blue for discussion this week

O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 18, & 19

Wallace, Ch 11, 271-282

WEEK 11 - 4/16, 4/18, 4/20

Child Abuse and Neglect; Elder Abuse

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, Review chs 16, 17, Read 20, 24 & 32

Wallace, Ch 2, p 31-44 only, Ch 4, p 91-107, Ch 10, p 249-268

Optional, Ch 7, p 143-176

WEEK 12 - 4/23, 4/25, 4/27

Sexual Harassment/Stalking

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 8, 9, 10

Wallace, Ch 13, p 340-345, Ch 14, p 351-365

WEEK 13 - 4/30, 5/2, 5/4

Choice, Liberation or Oppression? Debates over Pornography and Prostitution

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, chs 26, 27, 28 & 29

WEEK 14 - 5/7, 5/9, 5/11

Creating a Safe Society

Readings: O'Toole & Schiffman, ch 31 & 35, Review 32

Wallace, Ch 16, 389-412

WEEK 15 - Exam Review, 5/ 14, 5/16

FINAL EXAM DURING CLASS May 16th - WILL COVER MATERIAL ON Family Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Child Abuse and Neglect, Elder Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Stalking, Pornography & Prostitution and Creating a Safe Society