

Syllabus of PHIL 4060 Philosophy of Feminism II

Transnational Feminist Politics

Instructor: Marie-Pier Lemay

1. Course Details

1.1. Calendar Description

This course is an advanced study of problems in feminist philosophy. The course may cover specific topics or the work of one or more feminist philosophers. Topics may be drawn from feminist ethics, epistemology, and/or postmodernism. Texts and topics will vary with the instructor; students are advised to consult the Philosophy department's website.

Pre-Requisites: 1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000 level or PHIL*2060

1.2. Course Description

Transnational Feminist Politics

The starting point of this advanced course in feminist philosophy is the contentious landscape of transnational feminist activism and theory. While feminism is considered to have been international since at least the 19th century, only in the past three decades has transnational feminist ethics emerged as a distinctive and transdisciplinary field of study.

We will examine current debates about the potentials and pitfalls of global feminist responsibility and solidarity. Through an engagement with recent key texts in this scholarship, we will explore the manners in which global systems of power and oppression are interrelated (gender, sexuality, race, class, ethnicity, colonialism, and imperialism), as well as the prospects of what transnational feminism can be or do.

In the first half of the semester, we will specifically frame and situate global responsibility within the global philosophical political landscape. We will accomplish this by reading the work of two prominent contemporary feminist political theorists of structural injustices and political responsibility: Iris Marion Young and Brooke Ackerly. We will reflect on whether our everyday concepts of injustices are sufficiently complicated to capture their complexities.

In the second half of the semester, we will investigate what may hinder or challenge such global political responsibility and solidarity from a feminist perspective. We will thus critically reflect on how 'saving narratives' are used in Western activist or political discourses about non-Western women. To do so, we will engage with key concepts of transnational feminist political theorizing, such as intersectionality, imperialism, paternalism, settler colonialism, culture, and postcolonialism. Towards the end of the course, we will think about the border between feminist theory and praxis through the emergence of online feminist activism, using the #MeToo campaign as an example.

1.3. Timetable

Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:20, Graham Hall 2302

1.4. Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course.

2. Instructional Support

2.1. Instructional Support Team

Instructor: Email: Office: Office Hours:

Marie-Pier Lemay

mlemay01@uoguelph.ca

MACK 362

Office Hours: Thursday, 12:00 to 1:00, MCKN 362 (or by appointment)

3. Learning Resources

3.1. Required Resources

There is no textbook for this course. (Textbook)

All required course readings are available online on the Ares Course Reserves system or at the library. (Readings)

4. Learning Outcomes

4.1. Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Orally Articulate and Defend a position on a philosophical topic, either in class discussion or in a formal presentation, that is clear, accurate and well-reasoned.
2. Develop research methods for gathering a wide range of primary and secondary source materials, and synthesize these materials and evaluate their credibility.
3. Demonstrate Independence in articulating an original approach to a significant philosophical topic.
4. Write clearly and cogently on complex problems in philosophy.
5. Read extensively and systematically in a specialized area of philosophical research.
6. Understand the challenges of developing a nuanced piece of writing in feminist philosophy in cross-cultural and cross-border contexts. Respectfully discuss and assess views that are not your own in the classroom and in your writing assignments.
7. Use the category of gender as a critical lens, by taking into account its interrelatedness with other systems of power. You should strive to use this lens to critically reflect as well on your own position in the dynamics of global responsibility and solidarity.

5. Class schedule

	Week	Readings	Assignment
Tue., Jan. 7	Week 1: Introduction to the course	Khader, 2019, “Why Poor Women are Poor?”, <i>New York Times</i> : https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/11/opinion/why-are-poor-women-poor.html **We will read this text together in class. There is no need to read it and/or to print it before the class.	
Thu., Jan. 9		Ackerly, 2018. <i>Just Responsibility: A Human Rights Theory of Global Justice</i> . New York: Oxford University Press, “Prologue” pp. IX-XIII and “Introduction”, pp. 1-26.	

Tue., Jan. 14	Week 2: Analyzing injustices	Ackerly, Chapter 1: “Where a theory of justice begins” pp. 27-68	
Thu., Jan. 16		Ackerly, Chapter 2: “Injustice Itself” pp. 71-103 Optional reading (not required): Ackerly, Chapter 3: “The Theoretical (Ir)relevance of the unknowns of injustice itself”, pp. 104-127	
Tue., Jan. 21	Week 3: The politics of responsibility	Ackerly, Chapter 6: “The Human rights approach to political responsibility”, pp. 189-217 Optional reading (not required): Ackerly, Chapters 4 and 5.	
Thu., Jan. 23		Ackerly, Chapter 7: “The right kinds of politics”, pp. 218-245 Ackerly, Conclusion, pp. 246-250 Friday Jan. 24: Optional talk by Prof. Brooke Ackerly (University of Vanderbilt) and Q&A about her book <i>Just Responsibility</i>.	
Tue., Jan. 28	Week 4: Global responsibility	Jaggar, 2005, “Global Responsibility and Western Feminism” in <i>Feminist Interventions in Ethics and Politics: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory</i> , pp. 185–200.	
Thu., Jan. 30		Parekh, 2017, “Feminism, structural injustice, and responsibility” in <i>The Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy</i> , pp. 620-630. Young, Iris Marion, 2003. “From Guilt to Solidarity”, <i>Dissent</i> , pp. 39-44. Meeting with Prof. Karen Houle (University of Guelph) about her art project in relation to sweatshops.	
Tue., Feb. 4	Week 5: Social- connection model of responsibility	Young, 2011, <i>Responsibility for justice</i> , pp. 43-64.	
Thu., Feb. 6		Young, <i>Responsibility for justice</i> , pp. 95-113.	
Tue., Feb. 11	Week 6: Politics of knowledge production	Alcoff, 1991, “The Problem of Speaking for Others”, <i>Cultural Critique</i> , pp. 5-32.	
Thu., Feb. 13		Nnaemeka, 2003, “Nego-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa’s Way”, <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> , pp. 357-385.	

Tue., Feb. 18		No class	
Thu., Feb. 20		No Class	
Tue., Feb. 25	Week 7: Cross-cultural saving narratives	Khader, 2013, "Identifying Adaptive Preferences in Practice: Lessons from Postcolonial Feminisms", <i>Journal of Global Ethics</i> , pp. 311–327.	First essay due
Thu., Feb. 27		Narayan, 1998, "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism", <i>Hypatia</i> , pp. 86-106	
Tue., Mar. 3	Week 8: Transnational feminisms	Abu-Lughod, 2002. "Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others", <i>American Anthropologist</i> , pp. 783-790. Khader, 2018, "Introduction" in <i>Decolonizing Universalism: Toward a Transnational Feminist Ethic</i> , pp. 1-20 (you can skim pages 7 to 10). Optional (not required): Khader, 2018, "Can a goat change a woman's life?", talk at the Australian public radio: https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/can-a-goat-change-a-womans-life/10030646	
Thu., Mar. 5		Khader, 2018, "Toward a Decolonial Feminist universalism" in <i>Decolonizing Universalism: Toward a Transnational Feminist Ethic</i> , pp. 21-49. Skype with Prof. Serene Khader (Brooklyn College & CUNY Graduate Center).	
Tue., Mar. 10	Week 9: Transnational feminist activism and research	Gallegos, 2017, "Building Transnational Feminist Solidarity Networks" in <i>Decolonizing Feminism Transnational Feminism and Globalization</i> , pp. 231-256.	
Thu., Mar. 12		Rajan, 2018, "The Ethics of Transnational Feminist Research and Activism: An Argument for a More Comprehensive View", <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> , pp. 269-300.	
Tue., Mar. 17	Week 10: Settler colonialism and resistance	Arvin, Tuck, and Morill, 2013, "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy", <i>Feminist Formations</i> , pp. 8-34.	
Thu., Mar. 19		Simpson, 2017, "Constellations of Coresistance" in <i>As We Have Always Done</i> , pp. 211-232.	

Tue., Mar. 24	Week 11: Online feminist activism and #MeToo	Manne, 2017, "Ameliorating Misogyny" in <i>Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny</i> , pp. 55-77. Optional (not required): Amnesty International, 2018, "Toxic Twitter: A Toxic Place for Women", <i>International report on online violence against women</i> : https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-1/	Final paper outline and bibliography
Thu., Mar. 26		Pilipchuk, 2019, "Good Survivor, Bad Survivor: #MeToo and the Moralization of Survivorship", <i>APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy</i> , pp. 5-12. Zheng, 2019, "Women, Work, and Power: Envisaging the Radical Potential of #MeToo", <i>APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy</i> , pp. 29-35. **For this week, we will also read two pieces of global news related to the #MeToo movement. These will be announced a week before this class.	
Tue., Mar. 31	Week 12: Conclusion the class	Narayan, 2019, "Sisterhood and "Doing Good": Asymmetries of Western Feminist Location, Access and Orbits of Concern", <i>Feminist Philosophy Quarterly</i> , pp. 1-26.	
Thu., Apr. 2		Class discussion about your final essay. This is an opportunity to get feedback on your research and writing. I encourage you to informally present your final paper outline or to talk about your current dilemmas regarding this paper to the rest of the class.	
TBA		Due date of the final essay	Final essay

6. Assessments : Marking Schemes & Distributions

Assignment	Details	Due date	% of the final grade
Class participation and attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Come to class prepared, having read the texts that will be discussed. Be attentive to what your classmates are saying and try to advance the discussions accordingly. - If you are not comfortable with public speaking, please reach out to me at the beginning of the semester and we will work out alternate arrangements for this grade. Please note that these arrangements must be worked out ahead of time. - Please avoid using your phone during class unless it enhances your learning. 	X	10%

8 critical summaries	150 to 250 words critical summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not spend more than half of the reflection piece summarizing the reading. - Critical does not always have to mean 'negative': tell me something that surprises you, that you disagree with, that confuses you, that makes you think about some global news you have read this week, or that enters into conflict with another reading of the class. - You should write at least one question that we will be able to use as a starting point for a discussion. - You cannot submit two critical summaries for the same week. - These will only be graded if class was attended, you should give me a hard copy of it at the end of the class. 	X	20%
Class presentation (10-15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical discussion of a reading for that day. - You must circulate 3 to 5 discussion questions to the class by emailing these questions to me by 6p.m. at the latest the day before your presentation. 	X	10%
Midterm paper	1250-1750 words. You are free to choose the topic you want, but you should discuss your paper with me at least a week before the due date.	Tue., Feb. 25.	15%
Final paper outline and bibliography	You are free to choose the topic you want, but you should discuss your paper with me at least a week before the due date. I will email you written feedback on it for April 2 nd at the latest.	Tue., Mar. 24	5%
Final paper	3000-3500 words.	Date TBA.	40%
Total			100%

** Word count excludes footnotes and bibliography.

7. Course Statements

7.1. Late Policy

Unless other arrangements are made, in writing, with the course instructor, late assignments will be penalized by 5% for the first day they are late and then 2% for every subsequent day, except in cases of documented family emergency or illness.

All assignments should be submitted to me through the Courselink dropbox. Please submit a file in Word or Rich Text Format (no .pdf files please).

Grading rubric for the midterm essay

Student name:

Components	Comments
Clear introduction containing a thesis statement and outlining your argument (ex. I will argue that...). Presence of a conclusion (or conclusive sentence).	
Comprehensive and consistent.	
Precise and concise	
Excellent understanding of the material	
Strong critical analysis	
Objections/tensions/questions well-considered	
Organization and logical progression of ideas at the paragraph and whole-paper levels.	
Style/language: precision of statements and cohesion between sentences and paragraphs. Careful editing.	
All necessary citations present.	
Ideas of how to pursue your reflections in the final paper, if you wish.	

Your grade (XY% of final course grade):