

Professor Leslie Petty  
Office Hours: Office Hours: Tuesday, 11:15-12:15; W 10-12; Thursday 2-3  
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### **WSS 200: Introduction to Women's Studies**

Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary field that draws on ideas from the humanities, social and natural sciences in order to analyze how humans construct notions about women, gender and sex and how these notions in turn affect the lived experiences of both men and women. In this introduction to the field, we will focus on understanding the concept of gender as a social construct and also examine how this concept is inextricably linked to and complicated by other factors such as ethnicity, sexuality, class and age (among other things).

The first half of the course will be devoted to key concepts in the study of gender and sexuality and to "classic" texts of Western feminism. We will proceed roughly chronologically, but we also focus in turn on how the study of gender intersects with that of racial/ethnic diversity, sexuality and class. We will also investigate the link between gender and popular culture in order to interrogate the "common sense" notions about sexuality that it both promotes and undermines. In the final weeks of the semester, we will shift gears, considering "Gender and Sexuality Studies" as a mode of intellectual inquiry that has transformed almost all academic disciplines. During this segment, several GSS faculty members will teach class sessions in order to model for you how gender study informs their research and pedagogy.

#### **Required Texts**

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*.  
Course Packet  
Various essays / book chapters that can be found in my public folder

#### **Assignments**

Midterm	25%
Essay (4-6 pgs.)	20%
Final Project (includes 4 response papers and a summary essay)	30%
Article review / presentation	15%
Participation	5%

We will discuss these assignments more fully during the course of the semester. Please note: You cannot receive a passing grade for this course unless you complete all major assignments. Any of the following will result in an "F" for the course: failure to take an exam, present your article review to the class, or turn in an essay or the final project.

### **Attendance Policy**

You are expected to be in class every day. Being “present” means not just physically in the room; you are to be alert and prepared. Anyone not alert (i.e. sleeping, reading the paper, working a crossword) will be counted absent, as well anyone clearly not prepared to participate. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and what, if anything, you need to make-up. **If you have more than 3 absences (for any reason other than a school sanctioned event) your final grade will be penalized 1/3 of a letter for each additional absence.** Excessive absences (i.e. more than 6) could result in an “F” for the course.

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

Essays and other assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise specified. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per day. Except in the case of documented illness or family emergency, papers more than a week late will receive a failing grade. If you believe you have a legitimate reason for missing a deadline, talk to me beforehand to make alternate arrangements. Also, please note that essays and response papers must be typed, double-spaced with an inch-margin, stapled, and adhere to MLA standards in both layout and documentation. See me if you have questions about MLA or need further information.