

WST4930/WST 6935: Professional Pathways in Women's Studies

Spring 2026 Semester

Class meeting times on One UF and Canvas

Instructor: Professor Jillian Hernandez, jillianhernandez@ufl.edu

Office hours and location available on Canvas

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This course empowers GSWs students to connect their scholarly training with professional pathways to start building successful, thriving, and abundant post-graduate lives. Students will articulate their unique professional strengths, values, and goals while learning about GSWs career paths. Students will identify key professional pathways, develop professional skills, and create a portfolio (e.g., LinkedIn profile, cover letter, résumé, and elevator pitch). Students will also engage with literature and scholarship that explores the world of work and imagines what a resourced life can look like under contemporary socio-economic conditions.

- Articulate the values and skills of GSWs and how to translate them
- Apply transferable skills and experience to multiple professional pathways
- Deliver a clear and effective “elevator pitch”
- Identify key elements of career development and adulting in GSWs
- Construct effective professional materials to launch a professional life
- Confidently explore and pursue professional opportunities

COURSE MATERIALS

- Required book

Parable of the Sower, by Octavia Butler, (1993, Grand Central Publishing)

- All other assigned material available through Canvas
- Materials and Supplies Fees: None

ASSESSMENT AND GRADES

Graded Course Activities (Instructions available through Canvas)

Grades are calculated in this course using a point system. Assignments have corresponding point values that add up to a maximum of 100. Point values for assignments are listed below.

- Elevator pitch (2 rounds) - 10 points (5 points each)
- Skills map and position posting/grad school analysis - 10 points
- LinkedIn - 10 points
- Resume - 15 points
- Job cover letter or graduate school statement of purpose - 10 points
- Developmental plan - 15 points
- Attendance and participation - 10 points
- Responses papers (4 x 5 points each)-20 points

Grading Scale and Policies

The grading scale is below and is consistent with UF grading policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/Links to an external site.>

Grading Scale:

A	100-94 points
A-	93-90 points
B+	89-87 points
B	86-84 points
B-	83-80 points
C+	79-77 points
C	76-74 points
C-	73-70 points
D+	69-67 points
D	66-64 points
D-	63-60 points
E	59—0 points

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).

Course Schedule

Jan. 12: Introduction to course and each other

Jan. 19: No class, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday

Module 1: Mapping Current Socio-Economic Conditions and their Histories

Jan. 26: Keyword: Labor from *Keywords in American Cultural Studies*; selection from Silvia Federici's *Caliban and the Witch; Wages Against Housework* by Silvia Federici

Feb. 2: "Freedom, Domination, and the Gig Economy" by James Hickson, "The Job Search Has Become a Humiliation Ritual" *The Cut*, "'Nothing Feels Better than Getting Paid': Sex Working Trans Latinas' Meanings and Uses of Money" by Andrea Bolivar, "Run Me My Money" by Sesali Bowen

Module 2: Dreaming Our Present and Futures: Skills of GSWS and How to Translate Them

Feb. 9: "Liberating Indolence" by Marcos Gonsalez, "In Pursuit of Softness" by ebonyjanice, "Ca\$happ Connectivities: High Maintenance Feminism and Payment as Praxis" by Jillian Hernandez

Feb. 16: Introspection and Career Values Exercises (Canvas), "How You Can Talk about Women's and Gender Studies Anytime, Anywhere, and to Anyone" Michelle Tracey Berger and Cheryl. L. Radeloff

Feb. 23: Elevator pitch practice and assignment; Chapters 1-5 *Parable of the Sower*

March 2: Networking and Branding Canvas Assignments and Discussion; Chapters 5-10 *Parable of the Sower*

March 9: Guest speaker (alum/financial planning/career connections/employer)

March 16: No class, spring break

Module 3: Launching a Professional Life

March 23: Grad School 101, Chapters 11-16, *Parable of the Sower*

March 30: Resumes and Cover Letters Assignment on Canvas, Chapters 17-21 *Parable of the Sower*

April 6: Communication and interview strategies, complete *Parable of the Sower*

April 13: Guest speaker (alum/financial planning/career connections/employer)

April 20: Revised elevator pitches, selected texts on Non-Profit Industrial Complex and *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne marie brown, final reflections and developmental plans

Attendance policy

You have two free absences. Each additional absence thereafter will result in -5 points of your participation grade unless your absence is excused under the UF policy and documentation is provided if relevant.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

This is an in-person class, meetings are not delivered via zoom or zoom recorded.

Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to engage in class include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Other reasons (e.g., a job interview or club activity) may be deemed acceptable if approved by the instructor.

Please contact me if you anticipate an absence or soon after your absence to discuss your situation.

Participation and Discussion Guidelines:

This course explores topics that affect people's lives in significant ways. Course topics also relate to contemporary social and cultural issues and as such may result in the sharing of personal perspectives and experiences. We will respect differences of perspective and each other's confidentiality. We will engage one another with consideration. Abusive and harsh language, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Correspondence:

I can answer questions during office hours or via e-mail. Please be aware that I receive a high volume of e-mails, if your query is time sensitive, please indicate that in the subject line.

Questions that require substantive engagement, such as commentary on an assignment, would be best addressed during office hours. I will expect for you to check your UF e-mail once a day in the event that there is a schedule change or if I need to send you important information. Class alerts will be sent via the Canvas system.

Academic Integrity:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states 'We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.' On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.' The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class

Late Submission of Assignments:

Assignments turned in late will lose 1 point per calendar day. If you foresee an issue in completing your assignment on time, please contact me as soon as possible. Assignments over three days late will not be accepted without medical or other relevant documentation.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Accessibility

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. See "Get Started With the DRC" Disability Resource Center webpage (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible.

UF Counseling and Wellness Center offers individual counseling, wellness counseling, couples counseling, problem solving help, CERC crisis services, and other assistance:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/>

3190 Radio Road; (352) 392-1575 (8 am-5 pm, Monday through Friday)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is unacceptable anywhere on UF's campus. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/

Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click [here](#) for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email that they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/.