

WST 3015: Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Women's Studies

Writing Requirement 4,000 Words

Fall 2025 Theme: Embodiment, Beauty Cultures, and Belonging



Artwork by April Bey, "Calathea Azul" (2022)

Instructor: Dr. Jillian Hernandez

E-mail: jillianhernandez@ufl.edu

Teaching Assistant: Maria Cordero

E-mail: mariacordero@ufl.edu

Instructor and TA office hours information on Canvas.

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

About the Class

This is an introductory Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies course. Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is an interdisciplinary academic field that examines the role of gender and sexuality in shaping society and culture. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, this course will draw on knowledge produced in a variety of fields, from anthropology to visual arts, history, philosophy, and beyond to understand women's lives. In addition to serving the writing requirement objectives, course content reflects my areas of research expertise. We will explore issues of citizenship, beauty culture, and belonging through a focus on embodiment.

Writing Requirement

This course fulfills the 4,000-word writing requirement. The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures that students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. I will provide feedback on the content of your writing in addition to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C (30 points) or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course that are four essay assignments.

Our course will adhere to the **Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition**. You can access a streamlined style guide in the Writing Resources section of our Canvas site, and the full Chicago Manual of Style is accessible via our course reserves.

This course will have a total of 4 writing assignments that will make up the 4,000-word writing requirement.

If you seek additional assistance on your writing assignments, please access the Writing Studio on campus: <https://writing.ufl.edu>

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

More information about UF's writing requirement can be found [here](#).

Our learning objectives include:

- Understanding how women's lives are shaped by society and culture and how they make contributions to society and culture.
- Learning how social formations of gender, race, class, and sexuality are interconnected.
- Understanding how art, media, and popular cultures are significant areas where social formations of gender, race, and sexuality are contested.
- Learning foundational theories in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.
- Learning how to compare, contrast, and evaluate the claims of thinkers from different periods and social locations.
- Learning how to conduct visual and textual analysis.
- Learning how to clearly articulate ideas in written assignments such as essays and response assignments. Building oral communication skills through collaborative oral presentations based on course materials.

About me, Dr. Hernandez:



My research explores gender and sexuality in Black and Latinx art and popular culture, with a focus on body aesthetics and style. I have a Ph.D. in Women's and Gender Studies from Rutgers University and have a long-standing practice as a curator of contemporary art. My book Aesthetics of Excess: The Art and Politics of Black and Latina Embodiment was published by Duke University Press in 2020.

I believe that visual art, music, film, and popular culture are powerful learning tools, and I use them frequently to enrich our classroom experiences. My classroom is a space for experimentation. It is a site for dialogue, where students are acknowledged as theorists, artists, and producers of knowledge. While aiming to create a safe space for students to forge connections between course material, larger society, and their own lives, I also encourage them to engage with ideas that challenge them, take productive risks, and maintain space for contradiction and flux as they progress in their intellectual development. I treat my students as whole and complex beings and create an environment where we can discuss ideas with a mind toward the social, cultural, and ethical implications of knowledge.

I invite you to be yourself, to recognize that you hold knowledge worth sharing, and to acknowledge your creative potential!

Required Texts and Media

Book: *Bad Fat Black Girl* (2021), by Sesali Bowen, HarperCollins Publishers.

Other required materials will be available as PDFs on Canvas or as web links on the syllabus.

PowerPoints are available under modules on Canvas for most texts. These are an added learning resource but are not intended to replace your own notes. I highly recommend that you take your own detailed lecture notes. Additionally, PowerPoint material does not indicate my personal endorsement of course material (or that of the teaching assistant). The purpose of these slides is for review of course concepts.

Materials and Supplies Fee

None

Grading in this Course

As a teacher, I am interested in students engaging with varied perspectives. Students in my courses are not penalized for not agreeing with a particular argument or perspective we explore. My only expectation is that you demonstrate understanding of the ideas we engage with in class.

I calculate grades 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. I use this scale in determining your final grade.

Letter Grade	Points
A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
S	<59

Information on UF's grading policy can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

You should expect your work to be graded within 7 days of submission. If I anticipate a delay due to unforeseen circumstances, I will inform you.

Procedure for Conflict Resolution

Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact Undergraduate Coordinator Dr. Joanna Neville: jneville@ufl.edu

Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1261)

Course Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on the following: (more details on assignments are provided on Canvas)

Writing Assignment #1: Analysis of Embodiment in Art (1,000 words)

Compose a 1,000-word essay that applies concepts from Module 1 to analysis of a contemporary art work.

- Submit via Assignments on Canvas
- Value 10 points

Writing Assignment #2: Analysis on Gender, Citizenship, and Media Representation (1,250 words)

Analyze a contemporary media representation of gender and citizenship in the United States using material from module 2. You will choose a media representation of a political figure.

- Submit via Assignments on Canvas
- Value 15 points

Writing Assignment #3: Beauty Culture Analysis (750 words)

Conduct an in-depth analysis of a beauty product advertisement, beauty tutorial, beauty review, or other relevant content by drawing on material from module 3.

- Submit via Assignments on Canvas
- Value 10 points

Writing Assignment #4: Popular Culture or Current Event Analysis (1,000 words)

You will research and analyze a popular culture work or phenomenon or a current event on a topic of your choosing related to gender, work, money or relationships (topic must include gender and one or more of these sub-topics). The paper must be informed by and directly tied into the material in Module 4.

- Submit via Assignments on Canvas
- Value 10 points

Short response post, 2 due, worth 5 points each

You will draft a short response to an assigned podcast and the book *Bad Fat Black Girl*.

-- Submit via Assignments on Canvas

-- Value 5 points each

Study Crew Presentation, worth 12 points

Students will be organized into “study crews”. Each study crew will be assigned a 10-minute collaborative class facilitation to conduct at the commencement of one of our class meetings. These facilitations will introduce keywords, questions, and other prompts/learning resources to jump start our class discussions. More details will be provided on Canvas.

--Group class presentation plus self/group evaluations uploaded to Assignments via Canvas.

--Value 12 points

Essay outline, worth 3 points

You will upload your outline for writing assignment #2 to prepare for your essay and receive advanced feedback on your ideas.

--Submit via Assignments on Canvas

--Value 3 points

Structured Discussion Preparations (SDP), 6 due, each worth 5 points

Structured notes in outline form on 6 texts of your choice. *Readings marked [SDP OK] are eligible for SDP assignments.*

SDP sheets will appear as word documents linked in modules.

-- Submit through the appropriate assignment link on Canvas

-- Value 5 points each (30 points total)

Course Recording Policy and Privacy Statement

Our class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back to and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who unmute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the “chat” feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials are prohibited.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited.

Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4

Course Policies

Attendance policy

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>.

You are expected to attend all class meetings. Doing so will be critical to your success. However, you are not graded for attendance or participation.

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. Create your study crews early so that you have a group that you can share notes and class updates with.

Participation and Discussion Guidelines:

Your participation in this course will require your engagement with the course texts and related material. Please be prepared to participate in discussion by having done the assigned reading and work.

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.

Our teaching assistant is also available to assist you during office hours or via e-mail.

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.bluer.com/ufl/.

Consider Adding Women's Studies Major or Minor

Adding the Women's Studies major or minor can deepen your critical thinking, analysis, and skills in understanding women, gender, race, class, and sexuality in society and culture. The Women's Studies major shows graduate schools and employers that you bring advanced knowledge and skills in these areas. You have the option to designate a **general concentration**, or concentrations in **(a) health, (b) international perspectives, (c) race, (d) sexuality**. The Women's Studies major is simple to combine with another major, and up to 15 credits can double count with another degree (African American Studies, English, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology, in particular, have many courses that can double count). It's also the perfect complement to pre-health studies.

To add a minor in Women's Studies or Theories and Politics of Sexuality, apply online [here](#).

To add Women's Studies as a second major [here](#) (if your first major is a B.A. in CLAS) or [here](#) (if your first major is a B.S. in CLAS or any degree in another college). You may contact Undergraduate Coordinator Dr. Joanna Neville (jneville@ufl.edu) to make an appointment to discuss adding the major or minor.

Course Schedule

Module 1: *Theories of the Body*

Week 1

Thursday August 21st

Introduction to class

Week 2

Tuesday August 26th

Writing discussion and study crew meet-ups

Thursday August 28th

Read: Cesare Lombroso [“Criminal Woman, the Prostitute, and the Normal Woman”](#)

Week 3

Tuesday September 2nd

Read: Sander L. Gilman. [“Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature.”](#) [SDP OK]

Listen to [Anything for Selena podcast](#) Episode 4: Big Butt Politics and discuss on Canvas

Graded response (worth 5 points) due on **Canvas** by 11:59 pm EST Monday September 1st

Thursday September 4th

Read: Anne Meis Knupfer. 2001. [“To Become Good, Self-Supporting Women”: The State Industrial School for Delinquent Girls at Geneva, Illinois, 1900-1935”](#) *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9 (4): 420-446. [SDP OK]

Week 4

Tuesday September 9th

Read: Stephanie M.H. Camp, “The Intoxication of Pleasurable Amusement: Secret Parties and the Politics of the Body” from *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (2004, The University of North Carolina Press) [SDP OK]

Thursday September 11th

Module recap and writing workshop

Writing assignment #1 due Saturday September 13th

Module 2: *Embodiment, Style, and Citizenship*

Week 5

Tuesday September 16th

In class screening: *Imitation of Life* (1934) directed by John M. Stahl

Thursday September 18th

Complete *Imitation of Life* Screening

Week 6

Tuesday September 23rd

Read: Lauren Berlant, “National Brands, National Body: *Imitation of Life*” from *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (2008, Duke University Press) [SDP OK]

Study Crew 1 presents

Thursday September 25th

Read: Keyword: Citizenship by Lauren Berlant

Read: Renato Rosaldo, “Cultural Citizenship” <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/enc09-academic-texts/item/681-cultural-citizenship.html>

Week 7

Tuesday September 30th

Read: Anne Anlin Cheng, “Borders and Embroidery” from *Ornamentalism* (2018, Oxford University Press) [SDP OK]

Study Crew 2 presents

Thursday October 2nd

Read: Sylvia Chan Malik, “Chadors, Feminists, Terror: Constructing a U.S. American Discourse of the Veil” [SDP OK]

Study Crew 3 presents

Week 8

Tuesday October 7th

Read: Catherine S. Ramirez, “Black Skirts, Dark Slacks, and Brown Knees: Pachuca Style and Spectacle during World War II” from *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (2008, Duke University Press) [SDP OK]

Study crew 4 presents

Thursday October 9th

Read: *Ralina L. Joseph, [“‘Of Course I’m Proud of My Country!’: Michelle Obama’s Postracial Wink” from *Postracial Resistance: Black Women, Media, and the Uses of Strategic Ambiguity*](#) (2018, New York University Press) [SDP OK]

Study Crew 5 presents

Outline for paper #2 due by Friday October 10th

Week 9

Tuesday October 14th

Key concepts review and writing workshop

Thursday October 16th

No lecture, work on paper #2 due October 18th

Week 10

Module 3: *Beauty Politics & Social Media Visibility*

Tuesday October 21st

Read: *Kathy Piess, "Women Who Painted", from *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (1998, University of Pennsylvania Press) [SDP OK]

In-class screening and discussion “Self-Made” Episode 1, Netflix series

Study crew 6 presents

Thursday October 23rd

Read: Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu, “White Like Koreans: The Skin of the New Vietnam” from *Fashion and Beauty in the Time of Asia* (NYU Press, 2019) [SDP OK]

Study Crew 7 presents

Week 11

Tuesday October 28th

Read: *Sarah Banet-Weiser, "Shame: Love Yourself and Be Humiliated" from *Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny* (2018, Duke University Press) [SDP OK]

Read: Sesali Bowen, *Bad Fat Black Girl*, Chapter 1

Study Crew 8 presents

Thursday October 30th

Key concepts review and writing workshop

Paper #3 due November 1st

Module 4: Sexuality and Gendered Labor

Week 12

Tuesday November 4th

*Juana María Rodríguez, Introduction, *Put a Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Sex* [SDP OK]

Thursday November 6th

*Bolívar, A. (2021), “Nothing Feels Better than Getting Paid”: Sex Working Trans Latinas’ Meanings and Uses of Money. *Feminist Anthropology*, 2: 298-311. [SDP OK]

Read *Bad Fat Black Girl* Chapter 4

Study Crew 9 presents

Week 13

Tuesday November 11th

No class, holiday

Thursday November 13th

Read: Sylvia Federici “Wages for Housework”

Read: *Bad Fat Black Girl* Chapter 6

Week 14

Tuesday November 18th

Key concepts review and writing workshop.

Thursday November 20th

No class, I am attending a conference. Work on paper #4.

Paper #4 due November 22nd.

Week 15

No class this week for holiday.

Week 16

Tuesday December 3rd

Bad Fat Black Girl chapters 5 and 8

Reflection paper on *Bad Fat Black girl* due December 6th

