

# WST 3015: Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Women's Studies

General Education Designations: Diversity; Humanities; Social and Behavioral; Writing Requirement

*Spring 2024 Theme: Beauty, Embodiment, and Belonging*



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

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## 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. As a diversity-designated course, we will explore the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing social and cultural differences within the United States and beyond. We will critically analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect people's lives. We will learn humanistic approaches to analyzing gender and cultural representations and build critical thinking skills through written and oral communication. Through engagement with women's studies social science scholarship, we will examine the impact of social institutions, structures, and processes. 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

and contributions to culture and society. In addition to serving the general education objectives, course content reflects my areas of research expertise.

## Trigger Warning/Content Notice

Some of the required materials in this class include explicit depictions and/or descriptions of nudity, sexual acts, and physical violence. Some materials describe or depict experiences of sexual, gender-based, and race-based trauma. I have assigned these works to facilitate learning on women's lives, gender, and sexuality. If you believe engagement with these materials would likely cause you significant discomfort, it may be in your interest to drop the course.

## Our learning objectives include:

### Content:

- Understanding how women's lives are affected by the socio-cultural construction of gender, sexual, and racial categories.
- Learning how women have used scholarship, art, and activism to express their perspectives and address issues of justice in society and culture.
- Learning how 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.

*These content objectives fulfill social/behavioral and diversity designation course outcomes.*

*Assessed by papers, discussion posts, study crew presentations, and structured discussion preparations.*

### Critical thinking:

- Learning key feminist theories.
- Learning how to compare, contrast, and evaluate the claims of feminist thinkers from different periods and social locations.
- Learning how to conduct visual and textual analysis.

*These critical thinking objectives fulfill humanities designation course outcomes.*

*Assessed by papers.*

### Communication:

--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.

*These communication objectives fulfill outcomes in diversity, humanities, and social/behavioral course outcomes.*

*Assessed by papers, study crew presentations, and short discussion posts.*

**You can find UF's General Education Subject Area Objectives Here:**  
<https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-program/subject-area-objectives/>

## Required Texts and Media

Book: *Big 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.

You are also required to watch videos listed on the syllabus for particular class meetings.

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.

## 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.**

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.

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

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

## Grading in this Course

As a teacher, I am interested in students engaging with diverse perspectives. Students in my courses are never penalized for not agreeing with a particular argument or perspective we explore. My only expectation is that you demonstrate understanding of the knowledge 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. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

100-95 points A / 94-90 A- / 89-85 points B+ / 84-80 points B / 79-75 points C+ / 74-70 points C / 69-65 points D+ / 64-60 points D

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 4 days of submission. If I anticipate a delay due to unforeseen circumstances, I will inform you.

## 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 4.040.

## Course Evaluation

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

### **Paper #1: The Body and Power (1,000 words)**

Compare and contrast how the material we read in Module 1 addresses how embodiment shapes how women and girls navigate social and cultural power dynamics. What are key concepts that you take away, and how would you define embodiment?

-- Submit via Assignments on Canvas

-- Value 10 points

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

Analyze a contemporary media representation of gender and citizenship in the United States. You will choose a media representation of a political candidate, or a political candidate's domestic partner.

-- Submit via Assignments on Canvas

-- Value 12 points

### **Paper #3: 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, body positivity, 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

### **Paper #4: Feminist Art Analysis (750 words)**

Conduct internet research on a feminist artist, choose an artwork of theirs that interests you, and write a 750-word analysis of how it explores issues of gender.

-- Submit via Assignments on Canvas

-- Value 8 points

### Short discussion posts, 3 due, each worth 5 points

You will participate in 3 discussion threads. They may include Canvas discussion boards, Persuall, and Flipgrid applications. **To earn points for these assignments you must make a post and respond to a post by one other student.**

- Submit via Assignments on Canvas
- Value 5 points each (15 points total)

### Study Crew Presentation (worth 15 points)

Students will be organized into 10 “study crews” of 4-5 students each. This will be a group with whom you will share notes and engage in discussions and activities with during class time breakouts throughout the semester. 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 15 points

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

Structured notes in outline form on 6 texts of your choice. *Readings marked with an asterisk\* 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 Policies

- **Attendance:**

There will be no attendance taken for this course. Students are expected to participate in all of our scheduled class meetings. If you must miss class please check in with your study crew for lecture notes.

- **Participation and Discussion Guidelines:**

Your participation in this course will require your engagement with the course texts and related material. Please be prepared to engage 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 each other's confidentiality and 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:**

Whether intentional or inadvertent, plagiarism is a serious violation. All work submitted in this course must be your own. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. If you have questions about the proper citation of sources, please ask me. Students who plagiarize, or who cheat on an exam, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

- **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 documentation from a doctor or dean.



## Accessibility

I am committed to making learning in this course accessible to all. Please contact me to discuss any learning needs that you may have. You can also access the resources listed below.

**UF Disability Resource Center** celebrates disability identity as a valued aspect of diversity. We champion a universally accessible community that supports the holistic advancement of individuals with disabilities.

<https://disability.ufl.edu/>

001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). For information, call 352-392-8565 or email [accessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu](mailto:accessUF@ufsa.ufl.edu)

**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/](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/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)

## Consider adding a major in Women’s Studies!

Do you want to learn about issues of diversity, power, equity, and justice and gain the scholarly knowledge and skills to change the world? Adding the Women’s Studies major can deepen your critical thinking, analysis, and skills in intersectional feminist approaches to studying and transforming gender, race, class, sexualities, and other systems of power. The Women’s Studies major shows graduate schools and employers that you bring advanced knowledge and skills about diversity and equity issues. You have the option to designate a general concentration, or concentrations in **theories and politics of sexuality** or **international perspectives on gender**. The Women’s Studies major is simple to combine with another major, and up to 15 credits can double count with another degree (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.

You can review the paperwork to add 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. Alyssa Zucker (azucker@ufl.edu) to make an appointment to discuss adding the major.

## *Course Schedule: Subject to Change*

Week 1

### Tuesday January 9<sup>th</sup>

Course Overview

### Thursday January 11<sup>th</sup>

It’s a writing course—let’s talk about writing!

Read: Anne Lamont "[Shitty First Drafts](#)"

## *Module 1: Gender, Power, and the Body*

Week 2

### Tuesday January 16<sup>th</sup>

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

**Thursday January 18<sup>th</sup>**

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 discussion (worth 5 points) due on **Canvas** by 11:59 pm EST on Wednesday January 17th, the night before class.

Week 3

**Tuesday January 23<sup>rd</sup>**

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]

**Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup>**

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]

Study Crew 1 presents

Week 4

**Tuesday January 30<sup>th</sup>**

Module recap and writing workshop space

**Module 2: *Beauty, Embodiment, and Citizenship*****Thursday February 1<sup>st</sup>**

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

**Friday February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Paper #1 due by 11:59 pm EST: 1,000 words (worth 10 points)**

Week 5

**Tuesday February 6<sup>th</sup>**

Complete *Imitation of Life* Screening

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 2 presents

**Thursday February 8<sup>th</sup>**

Read: Keyword: Citizenship by Lauren Berlant

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

Week 6

**Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**

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

Study Crew 3 presents

**Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>**

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

Week 7

**Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>**

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, February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

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

Week 8

**Tuesday February 27<sup>th</sup>**

Module recap and writing space

**Thursday February 29<sup>th</sup>**

No class, work on polishing Paper #3

**Friday March 1<sup>st</sup> : Paper #2 due by 11:59 pm EST: 1,250 words (worth 12 points)**

## Module 3: Relationships, Economies, and Hotgirl Feminisms

Week 9

### **Tuesday March 5<sup>th</sup>**

Read: \*Halliday, Aria S. and Payne, Ashley N. (2020) "Introduction: Savage and Savvy: Mapping Contemporary Hip Hop Feminism," *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Article 3.

Read: Introduction to *Big Fat Black Girl* by Sesali Bowen

[SAVE THE DATE: SESALI BOWEN CAMPUS BOOK TALK ON WEDS. MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>]

### **Thursday March 7<sup>th</sup>**

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

SPRING BREAK WEEK OF MARCH 11

Week 10

### **Tuesday March 19<sup>th</sup>**

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

Study Crew 6 presents

### **Thursday March 21<sup>st</sup>**

Read: Chapter 1 of *Big Fat Black Girl*

In-class screening of Lizzo's "Watch Out for the Big Grrrls" Episode 3

Week 11

### **Tuesday March 26<sup>th</sup>**

Read: Chapter 4 of *Big Fat Black Girl*

Read: \*Khong, Diana (2020) "'Yeah, I'm in My Bag, but I'm in His Too': How Scamming Aesthetics Utilized by Black Women Rappers Undermine Existing Institutions of Gender," *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Article 8. [SDP OK]

Study Crew 7 presents

**Thursday March 28<sup>th</sup>**

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

The Bolivar will be read on **Perusall** for a discussion assignment worth 5 points, due by 11:59 pm on March 27<sup>th</sup>, the night before class.

Listen: Moonbeaming Podcast: “Let’s Talk About Money: Demystifying Your Finances with Paco de Leon”

Study Crew 8 presents

Week 12

**Tuesday April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Read: Chapters 7 and 8 of *Big Fat Black Girl*

**Thursday April 4<sup>th</sup>**

No class, presenting at conference

Week 13

**Tuesday April 9<sup>th</sup>**

Read: Chapters 5 and 9 of *Big Fat Black Girl*

In-class screening of “Caresha Please: Latto & Yung Miami On Women Empowerment, Her Relationship, Changing Her Name & More

**Thursday April 11<sup>th</sup>**

Module recap and writing space

**Friday April 12<sup>th</sup> , paper #3 due (1,000 words) pop culture or current event on gender, body positivity, work, money or relationships**

**Module 3: Analyzing Feminist Art**

Week 14

**Tuesday April 16<sup>th</sup>**

Read: \*Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, [Introduction](#)

\*Luce Irigaray, “Women on the Market”

Research list of artists and share your selected artist on Canvas discussion board, worth 5 points, due by 11:59 pm, on April 15<sup>th</sup>, the night before class.

**Thursday April 18<sup>th</sup>**

In-class film screening and discussion *W.A.R.! Women, Art, Revolution* (2010), directed by Lynn Hershman Leeson

Read: \*Uri McMillan, [“Is This Performance About You? The Art, Activism, and Black Feminist Critique of Howardena Pindell”](#) from *Embodied Avatars: Genealogies of Black Feminist Art and Performance* (2015, New York University Press) [SDP OK]

Study Crew 9 presents

Week 15

**Tuesday April 23<sup>rd</sup> (last day of class)**

Module recap and writing space

**Friday April 26<sup>th</sup>: Paper #4 due by 11:59pm, 750 words (worth 8 points)**