

WMST/GSS 302. FEMINIST RESEARCH METHODS

UNLV
FALL 2016

Meeting Time:

Classroom:

Office Hours:

Email:

Office:

About the Course

What makes feminist research feminist? How do researchers conduct good research? This course is designed to provide an interdisciplinary, intersectionalist introduction to the process of conducting feminist research. We will explore feminist epistemologies and research methods. You will learn about different techniques for gathering information (methods) and how the research process may be guided by feminist theory and analysis (methodology). We will discuss a number of different research methods, literary/humanist, qualitative and quantitative including but not limited to: literary analysis, media analysis, interview and oral history methods, ethnographic fieldwork, as well as archival research. We will pay close attention to questions of research ethics, and the relationship between power and knowledge, as well as how these entities shape the research questions we ask, types of materials we use, and even our position as researchers. We will discuss how and by whom knowledge is produced, the variety of ways in which researchers have 'produced' and 'distributed' knowledge, what is the relationship of the researcher to the researched, and the ways in which research can relate to efforts for social change.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to:

1. Engage in constructive discussion and demonstrate knowledge of gender and sexuality's relationship to social justice and diversity issues.
2. Apply broad knowledge of the intersectionality of social categories/lived experiences, including but not limited to gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, and nationality.
3. Identify the relationship between privilege and oppression on both individual and systemic levels.
4. Analyze women, gender, and sexuality from a cultural and institutional perspective.
5. Develop knowledge about feminist perspectives, including the following:
 - a. Identify feminist theories
 - b. Apply feminist research methods and ethics
 - c. Interpret evidence from a feminist perspective
6. Produce feminist research that integrates the praxis of local and global activism for the purpose of social change.

Student Outcomes

By the end of the semester students will be able to”

- Differentiate between traditional and feminist epistemologies and methodologies
- Analyze the advantages and limitations of feminist, and interdisciplinary methodologies
- Explain how different knowledges and research methods we use influence the phenomena we study
- Describe how our subjective life experiences influence the research process
- Design and develop a research proposal, bearing in mind the audience they want to reach and the effectiveness of their genre/approach.*

Assignments

Attendance/Participation (10%)
Class (group) presentation (10%)
Mini "In-Practice" Assignments (20%)
Preliminary Research Proposal (15%)
Critical Annotated Bibliography (20%)
Project Plan and Methods Rationale (25%)

Textbooks & Course Readings

Feminist Methodologies
Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Light in the Dark*
Readings posted on webcampus

Reference librarian:

Kate Wintrol – kate.wintrol@unlv.edu

Safe Space/Zone Policy

Students are encouraged to contribute to course discussion and engage with the diversity of perspectives that come both from the reading and from peers’ contributions. Each student arrives in class with diverse personal experiences, individual aspects of self-expression and beliefs. This classroom seeks to be an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students and perspectives. Students are encouraged to share their preferred name and form of reference (e.g. name, gender pronoun) to the instructor. Students are also encouraged to inform the instructor of their intellectual and emotional needs regarding their difference. As a collective learning unit, be mindful that one’s transition is his/her/hir/their form of self-actualization and agency and should be treated with respect and integrity.

A safe zone is a space where a person, regardless of self-expression and self-representation, is respected and safe to engage with their environment. As such, coursework and class discussions will make this space and the process of learning a safe haven for critical introspection.

Consequently, **we will work to make this a safe space where each person in this course is respected, not just tolerated.** We will create a space where statements, understandings and perceptions that may be unintentionally offensive will be discussed in order to foster a critically engaging and inclusive learning process for all. Patience with each other and with ourselves will be appreciated as we foster a safe and inclusive learning environment.

In order to familiarize yourself with what constitutes intentional acts of harassment, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with UNLV's Harassment Policy.

<https://www.unlv.edu/hr/policies/harassment>

Food Policy

Working class activists and scholars often had to convene around food given the emotional, political and professional demands in addressing systemic oppression. In the vein of critical nontraditional pedagogy experiences as well as in the real need to nourish our bodies to better put our minds and our hands to work, food is welcome and encouraged in this class. (I will always bring it) The nature by which we bring and/or share food, which we will discuss in the beginning of the course, will be sensitive to the aromatic and health sensitivity of our peers. Eating in front of strangers and colleagues is uncomfortable, given how food stains, smells, and the cultural norms we practice while we eat what we eat. The only caveat - foods should make as minimal noise as possible so we can continue conversation and dialog with each other.

Attendance/Participation(10%)

Learning is a social endeavor and participation is a key component of learning. This is a required course for your major so attendance is imperative. You must attend class, each absence from class will result in lowering of your grade. Participation is more than showing up for class, you must participate in the discussion. This means that you have read the assigned readings before class, listen actively, and engage your fellow students while maintaining respect for one another. You will not pass this course without completing the readings and coming to class.

Class Presentations (10%)

On days not otherwise designated, student groups will be required to present on class readings. It is important that you touch on the primary arguments of the piece(s); evidence that supports it.

When preparing your presentation, here are questions you should be considering: What does this piece do well? In what ways can this method be useful in your research question? What are the gaps (if any) that the reading leaves? Finally, you will prepare questions for your classmates to consider. If in attempting to address these questions, you find supplementary material—especially if it is pertinent to your research—you are more than welcome to bring it to class.

There is an assignment sheet providing more directions on WebCampus.

Mini "In-Practice" Assignments (20%)

Methods are something we do; so whenever possible we will talk about practice. In order to promote the exploration and development of research technique, students are required to complete

a total of **FIVE** assignments based on doing: 1) data collection, 2) participatory observation/action, 3) oral history and interviews, 4) archival research, and 5) popular culture analysis. Directions for each assignment can be found in "Lectures and Reading Assignments" section of this syllabus the week they are due (further details will be provided in class). Assignments must be submitted in class, and I will devote time to sharing of work and for comments and brief discussion. Due dates are as follows:

Critical Annotated Bibliography (20%)

DUE: Thursday 4/9

Students are required to submit a **3 page** annotated bibliography of 8-10 secondary sources. Whereas a standard bibliography is an organized list of sources consulted in the research process, a critical annotated bibliography includes additional description and evaluation (i.e. annotation) of each listed source. The purpose of the annotation is to help us understand and evaluate whether the work cited is relevant to a specific research topic or line of inquiry. Students can write a brief summary identifying the main points of the original work, a critical comment of those main points, or a combination of both. Most importantly, tell us why each book/article can provide insight to your research topic. Each annotation should be no longer than 4-5 sentences.

Research Plan and Methods Rationale

DUE: (25%)

Based on the research you do for the critical annotated bibliography, you will write a **4-5 page** Research Plan and Methods Rationale in which you are to revise the Preliminary Research Proposal (with my feedback) and identify a focused research topic and set of research questions that will guide your work in IDS 494 and 495. You will also identify the primary methods you might use to address your research questions, explaining in detail why those methods are well suited to your research goals. In addition, you will deliver a brief presentation of your research plan and methodology to the class during finals week. This paper and the presentation serve as your final exam.

Theme	Readings	Project
1. Introduction to the course		
2. What is feminist research?	Anzaldua – Gestures of the body What is Feminist Ethnography?	
3.	Anzaldua – Flights of the imagination Introduction	Preliminary Research Proposal due
4. The ethos behind research	Anzaldua – let us be the healing of the wound	
5. How to read what we see	Scholes – On reading a video text;	Mini Assignment due (guest speaker from McNair)
6. Archive	Anzaldua – Appendix 2-5	
7. Quantitative v. Qualitative Methods	How does one do feminist ethnography?	Quantitative data assignment due
8. Participatory Observation/Action	Montesinos – Ethnography, Commitment, and Critique; Digital Ethnography & Watch/follow the debate	Field notes due (email by Friday)
9. Participatory Action – Oral History	Challenges for feminist ethnographers; Feminist activist ethnography	
10. Oral History	Anzaldua- Editor’s introduction	Oral history due
11. Critical Annotated Bibliography	Anzaldua – References (for both texts)	
12. Research Methods v. Methodology	Anzaldua – now let us shift;	Annotated Bibliography due
13. Research Plan & Rationale	Anzaldua- Lloronas dissertation material; Appendix 6	
14. Presentations		Presentation due
15. Presentations		

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to

always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor **within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses**, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Tutoring and Coaching—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library statement:

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is (https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.