PSC 335-04/WGS 450-03: Women in Politics (Spring 2011)
Tuesdays & Thursdays: 12:30 – 1:45
Graham 209

Professor: Carisa R. Showden
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.; Thursdays 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
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Course Overview:
This course examines women’s political socialization, the relationship between daily life and political decision-making, cultural politics and grassroots organizing, and women’s patterns of participation in mainstream electoral politics and representative institutions. The course considers how women resemble and differ from men and from each other as political actors and the reasons for these similarities and differences. While primarily focused on women and politics in the United States, this course will also examine women’s political activity in a comparative perspective in the first three units of the course.

Goals of the Course (Student Learning Objectives):
By the end of the semester, students should be able to
1. Explain how, why, and when “woman” is and is not a politically significant identity;
2. Explain how and why identity politics is different from interest group politics;
3. Explain what “women’s issues” are;
4. Define and distinguish between traditional, grassroots, and cultural politics;
5. Explain when, how, and why women and men govern differently.

Required Texts:


5. E-reserve readings/Blackboard readings. Some required readings are posted on e-reserve or through web links on the course Blackboard site. E-reserve readings are marked “e-reserve” in the schedule of readings and are located under the “e-reserve” button on the course Blackboard page. Linked readings are marked “BB” and are located under the “BB” button on the course Blackboard page. These readings are required.
Schedule of Topics and Readings:

**Unit One: Gender, Culture and Power**

Tues., Jan. 11th:

Course Introduction.

Thurs., Jan 13th:

**The Social Construction of Gender and Power**

**Recommended Reading:**

“The ‘No Problem’ Problem.” (Deborah L. Rhode, 1997)—e-reserve

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Tues., Jan. 18th:

**Identity, Politics, and Culture**
1. “Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women?” (Susan Moller Okin, 1999)—e-reserve
2. “Whose Culture?” (Katha Pollit, 1999)—e-reserve
3. “My Culture Made Me Do It” (Bonnie Honig, 1999)—e-reserve

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Thurs., Jan 20th:

**Identity, Politics, and Social Construction: Intersectionality and “Equality”**
2. “Differences Among Women: Does Group Identification Explain Political Orientation?” (Conway, Steuernagel, and Ahern, 2005)—e-reserve
3. Henderson & Jeydel, chapter 7

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**Unit Two: Women and Public Policy—The Politics of How Women Live**

Tues., Jan 25th:

**The Politics of Education Policy**
1. Conway, chapters 1 and 2
2. Henderson & Jeydel, chapter 10
Thurs., Jan. 27th: The Politics of Employment and Economic Equity Laws
1. Conway, ch. 5
2. Henderson & Jeydel, ch. 4, pp. 103- top of 130 only.
   (be sure to roll over dots to see disparities in individual occupations)

Tues., Feb. 1st: The Politics of Employment and Economic Equity (continued)
1. Conway, ch. 6
2. Conway, ch. 7
3. Henderson, finish ch. 4 (pp. 130-134)
4. Henderson, ch. 8

Thurs., Feb. 3rd: Public Policy and Family Values I: Reconciliation Policy
1. Conway, ch. 8
2. Henderson, ch. 5

Tues., Feb. 8th: Public Policy & Family Values II: Health Care & Reproductive Rights
1. Conway, ch. 3
2. Conway, ch. 4
3. Henderson, ch. 9
4. Recommended Reading:
   1. Henderson, Ch. 6

Thurs., Feb. 10th: Public Policies Regarding Physical Autonomy and Sexual Violence
1. Henderson, ch. 11
2. Henderson, ch. 12
3. Conway, ch. 9, pp. 210-217, only

Tues., Feb. 15th: MIDTERM EXAM

Outside the Electoral Arena: Cultural Politics and Grassroots Organizing

Thurs., Feb. 17th: Consciousness Raising, Cultural Politics, and Collective Action
1. “Rah-Rah-Radical: The Radical Cheerleaders’ Challenge to the Public Sphere.”
   (Margaret E. Farrar and Jamie L. Warner, 2006)—BB
2. “I’m Not a Politics Person’: Teenage Girls, Oppositional Consciousness, and the
   Meaning of Politics.” (Jessica K. Taft, 2006)—BB
   1997)—e-reserve
4. Recommended Reading:
   “No Cultural Icon: Marisela Norte.” (M. Habell-Pallán, 1997)—e-reserve
Tues., Feb. 22nd: Grassroots Organizing and Collective Action
1. Henderson, ch. 2
3. Explore the website for MADRE: http://www.madre.org/ (Pay attention to the areas under the “Meet Madre” section.)
4. Explore at least one of the following websites as well:
   a. CODEPINK at http://www.codepink4peace.org
   b. CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA at http://www.cwfa.org/main.asp
   c. NATIONAL WOMEN’S HEALTH NETWORK: http://nwhn.org

Thurs., Feb. 24th: Grassroots Organizing and Collective Action, continued
Watch in class: Guns and Mothers

Tues., March 1st: Grassroots Organizing: Case Study
1. Jodi Sandfort: “Casa de Esperanza (A)”—BB

Thurs., March 3rd: Conscious-Raising and Cultural Politics, redux
Watch in class: (excerpts from): V-Day: Until the Violence Stops

Tues., March 8th: NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK.
Thurs., March 10th: NO CLASS. SPRING BREAK.

Unit Four: U. S. Electoral Politics

Tues., March 15th: The Gender Gap In Public Opinion and Participation: Is There a Women’s Perspective?
1. Carroll and Fox, ch. 3
2. Carroll and Fox, ch. 4
3. Henderson & Jeydel, ch. 1, pp. 5-12, only
   ➔ Paper One Due by 5:00 p.m. today

Thurs., March 17th: Women and Representation
2. “The Representation of Women” (Anne Phillips)—e-reserve
3. “Electoral Politics: Still a Man’s World?” (Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, 2010)—e-reserve

Tues., March 22nd: Women and Political Participation: Engaging Minority Women
1. Carroll and Fox, Ch. 5
2. Carroll and Fox, Ch. 6
3. View in class: Engage Her: Getting Minority Women to Lead and Vote
Thurs., March 24th:  **Women and Political Participation: Political Ambition**
1. “The Gender Gap in Political Ambition” (Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, 2010)—e reserve
2. “Religion, Race, and Gender Differences in Political Ambition” By R. G. Moore—BB

Tues., March 29th:  **Women as Candidates and Office Holders: The Role of Family & Image**
1. Carroll and Fox, ch. 1
2. Carroll and Fox, ch. 2

Thurs., March 31st:  **Women as Candidates and Office Holders: Money and Party Politics**
1. Carroll and Fox, ch. 7
2. Carroll and Fox, ch. 8
   *Recommended Reading:*
   Carroll and Fox, ch. 10

Tues., April 5th:  **Women as Candidates and Office Holders: The Media and the 2008 Election**
1. Carroll and Fox, ch. 9
2. Traister, chapters 1-4
   *Recommended Reading:*
   Traister, ch. 5

Thurs., April 7th:  **Women and the 2008 Election, continued**
1. Traister, chapters 6 - 11

Tues., April 12th:  **Women as Candidates and Office Holders: A Case Study**
1. “Jane Swift: Motherhood in the Massachusetts Governor’s Office” (Steffany Stern) BB

Thurs., April 14th:  **How Women Govern I: Women and Power**
1. Henderson, Ch. 1, pp. 22-36 only
2. “Women as Officeholders: Linking Descriptive and Substantive Representation” (Beth Reingold, 2008)—e-reserve
3. Watch in class: (excerpts from) 92Y: Nancy Pelosi in Conversation with Dr. Gail Saltz

Tues., April 19th:  **How Women Govern II: Women in Congress**
Watch in class: (excerpts from) *14 Women*
   ➔ **Paper Two Due at the beginning of class**

Thurs., April 21st:  **Course Wrap Up: Women and Politics: Looking Toward the Future**
1. Conway, ch. 10
2. Traister, ch. 12

Saturday, April 30th:  **FINAL EXAM**, NOON – 3:00 P.M.
Evaluation, Grading, and Rules of the Road:

Midterm Exam: 15%
Final Exam: 25%
Paper One: 20%
Paper Two: 15%
3 Policy Briefs: 5% each, 15% total
Participation: 10%

1. Midterm Exam (15%):
The midterm will be held in class on Tuesday, February 15th. It will be short essay format asking you to define and analyze the major themes from Units One and Two. You will need to bring at least one blue book to the exam.

2. Final Exam (25%):
The final exam will be held during our University-scheduled final exam period (Saturday, April 30th, Noon – 3:00 p.m.). The exam will be comprehensive and include both short and longer essay questions that ask you to define, compare, and analyze major themes from the assigned readings and videos this semester. You will need to bring two blue books to the final exam.

3. Paper One—Cultural Politics and Collective Action (20%):
Your first paper will be your longer analytical essay of the semester. I will provide you with a few questions from which you will choose one on which to write a 7-8 page paper. While the focus of the paper will be on cultural and grassroots politics, you will be expected to draw on material from the first two units of the course as well. I will distribute the topics and more detailed instructions by the midterm exam. This paper is due on Tuesday, March 15th.

4. Paper Two—Members of Congress Profiles (10%):
Your second paper will evaluate how different members of the United States Congress present themselves to their constituents. You will select two members of Congress, one woman and one man, and compare their websites in a 4-5 page paper. You must compare members of the same chamber (either two in the House or two in the Senate). This paper will ask you primarily to apply the knowledge you have gained in the final unit of the course. More detailed instructions will be distributed when we return from Spring Break. This paper is due on Tuesday, April 19th.

5. Three Policy Briefs (5% each, 15% total):
During Unit Two, you will select three of the six policy topics to write on. (For the purposes of this assignment, employment policy is one topic and “economic equity”—i.e., retirement, social security, etc.—is a second topic.) Your policy briefs will have three paragraphs. The first will explain the basic parameters of the policy area and how it is a gendered policy issue. The second paragraph will explain some of the significant policies that have been enacted or judicial rulings that have been handed down to try to address the gendered dimensions of the policy problem. The third paragraph will be your assessment of how well these policies have or have not addressed the major gender issues as you understand them and how, if at all, policy in this area could be improved. Policy papers are due in class on the day that we discuss the readings for that issue.
6. Participation (10%):

This class only works if students do the reading in advance and come prepared to discuss it. Regular, active participation helps you get more out of the material, helps your classmates learn from you, and helps me assess how well you are understanding the readings and lectures. Participation includes asking questions about the reading, responding to questions that I and the other students pose, active listening, and connecting ideas that different people have raised or from a variety of materials that we’ve read. Please note: I will pass around a sign-in sheet every day after the first week of class. It is your responsibility to sign-in so that you can be counted as in attendance for that day.

Academic Integrity:

I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university’s academic integrity policy. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted. The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at: http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/

Specifically pertinent to this course are the following infractions:

a. “Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Cheating includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying from the work of another student, using notes or other materials not authorized during an examination…” If caught cheating, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

b. “Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise.” Do NOT engage in plagiarism. If caught, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, please see me immediately.

Grading Scale:

I use a standard “ten-point” grading system. For example:

93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B, etc.