

POLS 3010/WGST 3050: Women and Politics

Fall 2019
T/Th 1:00–2:15
Fretwell 120

Instructor: Dr. Mel Atkinson
Office: Fretwell 435E
Email: MAtkinson@uncc.edu
Office Hours: T/Th 2:15-3:15 & by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the subfield of women and politics within the context of American politics. It assumes completion of an entry-level course in American government. The topics covered during the semester will include: 1) The history of the women's movement in the U.S. and its relationship with other rights movements. 2) The roles of sex, gender, and sexism in electoral politics. 4) Are women as lawmakers different? 5) and Public policy related to sex and gender. We will read a combination of chapters from textbooks, academic articles, and popular non-fiction to explore these topics. We'll also watch a few videos, listen to a few podcasts, and keep our eye on the national political news.

Class meetings will primarily be spent discussing the assigned readings for the day as a group and working on in-class assignments. There will be very little lecture and a heavy emphasis on student participation. One of the main tasks for this course is simply to keep up with the reading so that you will be prepared to participate. To help motivate you, I will regularly give short reading quizzes.

This course also places a heavy emphasis on the development of skills that will be useful in your senior seminar and in jobs that you might apply for with a social science degree. This includes the ability to: read and digest academic writing, use data to support an argument, connect academic concepts with real world events, write in a clear and concise manner, and deliver a clear and engaging presentation. These skills will be developed over the course of the semester using a range of assignments.

At the end of the semester you should have a firm understanding of the history of women's rights in the U.S., the state of gender equality in the U.S. today, the gender stereotypes faced by political candidates and officeholders, the importance of descriptive and substantive representation, how intersectionality shapes women's experiences, and the things you can do to help advance equality for women and men.

Course Reading

Hooks, Bell. 2014. Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics. 2nd Edition.

Available as a free ebook from Atkins library.

Additional readings as assigned (posted on Canvas).

Expectations And Procedures

This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for Women and Politics. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Unless you are prepared to abide by these policies and expectations, you risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or by written or email notice or by changes to this syllabus posted on Moodle.

If I am late in arriving to class, you must wait a full 15 minutes after the start of class before you may leave without being counted absent, or you must follow any written instructions I may give you about my anticipated tardiness.

If you notice an error or problem with the syllabus it is your responsibility to bring it to my attention prior to the due date in question. Otherwise, I will expect you to meet all deadlines listed on the syllabus.

Phones, Laptops, Recording Devices etc.

The use of phones, tablets and computers can be very disruptive for those around you. I will ask students to silence their phones at the start of each class and expect everyone to honor this request. Laptops will sometimes be permitted for specific activities, but during class discussions, I ask that students put their computers away and take notes by hand. I find this keeps everyone more engaged. You might want to print out your notes or copies of the assigned reading to reference during class. Chronic violators of the phone and laptop policy may be asked to leave the class for causing a disruption. Recording devices are not permitted unless the student has a documented disability and requires this accommodation.

Disabilities

I am happy to make accommodations for students with disabilities who require them. Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should, 1) contact the UNCC Office of Disability Services and 2) follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations. This should be done during the first week of school. Even if you aren't sure whether you will require any accommodation, contact the department of disability services and talk with me about your disability at the start of the semester. If the need for accommodation arises and your disability has not been documented, I might not be able help due to university policies regarding the exam schedule, etc.

Academic Honesty

All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office and [online](#).

You may not give or receive any assistance while taking examinations or quizzes. Students should not work together on assignments unless group work is expressly permitted by the instructor. *All work handed in is expected to be your own.* Ideas and statements from reference materials (including, but not limited to books, articles, and web content) may not be included in student assignments unless they are properly cited. Violations of this policy will be taken very seriously and may result in the student receiving an “F” on the assignment, an “F” in the course, and/or the submission of a report to the Academic Integrity Board.

You can find a short, helpful tutorial on citations, plagiarism, and related topics [here](#). Please make use of these resources and if you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, ask me BEFORE handing in the assignment. Information included by students in written course work that is based on a source such as a web site, news article, textbook, or any other material must be clearly and completely attributed to the original author. This applies whether or not the student quotes from the source material directly. Failure to do so is a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity.

Late Work

You will lose one letter grade for each day you are late handing in an assignment. This starts as soon as you miss the deadline, so make sure you hand things in on time. If you are struggling with an assignment or have a personal issue that will prevent you from meeting a deadline, please come and talk to me BEFORE the assignment due date so that I can assess whether an extension is warranted.

Written Assignments

All written assignments—including homework—should be typed. I do NOT accept hand-written assignments. It is the responsibility of each student to make sure they meet this requirement. If a printed document is required, the student must come to class with the document in-hand, or the assignment will be counted late. Do NOT wait until the last minute to print. If an assignment is to be submitted electronically, it must be submitted as either a word doc or a PDF file. If the document is submitted in another file format and the instructor is unable to open the document, the submission will be counted as late.

Course Requirements

Attendance: 5%

Quizzes: 10%

Activities: 10%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Class Campaign Project: 35% (Data collection: 5%, Data coding: 15%, Memo and presentation: 15%)

Reading Quizzes

You will get the most out of our class discussions by completing the assigned reading ahead of time. Additionally, reading before class gives you the opportunity to ask questions about any concepts you find difficult, and prepares you to work on in-class assignments. For these reasons, you will complete reading quizzes most weeks before class to help you keep up with the reading. These quizzes are posted on Canvas and should be **completed by 1:00 pm before each class period.**

Activities

Over the course of the semester, you will complete a number of assignments in-class (some of which will require a bit of leg work outside of class as well). These include simulations, debates, thought experiments, exam reviews, etc.

Each of these activities will be graded based on:

- Strength of connection to assigned reading.
- Completion.
- Contribution to group activities (when group projects are assigned).

The grading scale for the these assignments:

- Check Plus = Exceptional...A
- Check = Average...B
- Check Minus = Below Average...C
- Unacceptable = D
- Students who do not hand in an assignment will receive a zero.

Exams

Students will complete two exams over the course of the semester. Both are worth 20% of the final course grade.

Class Project

This semester we will follow news coverage of the candidates running for the Democratic presidential nomination. Currently, there are 24 candidates running. Six of those candidates are women, six of them are people of color. Of the six women, and Pete Buttigieg (mayor of South Bend) is the first openly gay man to seek the party's presidential nomination. The diversity of the candidates makes the primary race particularly interesting for our class to follow. Over the course the semester, we will keep an eye on the news coverage of the campaigns. We will look in particular to see whether the candidates talk about issues related to sex, gender, sexuality, and race. And we will monitor the type of media coverage each candidate receives—i.e. positive, negative, substantive, horserace, etc.

In addition to these general discussions, each student will be assigned two candidates to follow in-depth. Students will collect a comprehensive dataset of all USA Today news articles printed during the summer and fall of 2019 that mention the candidates they are assigned. Then, they will analyze the content of those articles, following the coding scheme outlined in Kahn 1996 (*The Political Consequences of Being a Woman*). Finally, students will write a memo summarizing their findings and will report them to the class with an oral presentation.

This project is worth 35% of your grade in the course and has three separate components: 1) Data collection and memo, 2) Data coding and memo, 3) Final memo and presentation. I will provide you with detailed, written instructions for each of the project components.

Tentative Course Timeline

All readings and assignments are due the day they are listed.

Aug 20:

Welcome

Aug 22:

Introduction: Ford, Chapter 1

Hooks, Bell. 2014. *Feminism Is for Everybody*. Ch 1–Feminist Politics: Where We Stand.

A Very Brief History of Women's Rights in the U.S.

Aug 27:

Ford, Chapter 2 (Suffrage and the ERA)

Aug 29:

Makers Season 1: Part 1 (Video)

Part 1: <https://www.makers.com/playlists/59f26000afb6c70001c5cec2/55479e14e4b08df3b6e96408>
Before Stonewall (Throughline Podcast)

<https://www.npr.org/2019/06/26/736268853/before-stonewall>

Recommended:

Hooks, Bell. 2014. *Feminism is For Everybody*. Ch 2: Consciousness Raising.

Women, Gender, and the Electorate

Sept 3:

Kauffman and Petrocik. 1999. "The Changing Politics of American Men: Understanding the Sources of the Gender Gap" *AJPS*.

Sept 5:

Thomson-DeVeau, Amelia. 2019. "Americans Say they Would Vote for a Woman, But" Five Thirty Eight.

https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americans-say-they-would-vote-for-a-woman-but/?ex_cid=story-twitter

Sept 10

Schaffner, MacWilliams, Meta. 2018. Understanding White Polarization in the 2016 Vote for President: The Sobering Role of Racism and Sexism. PSQ

Sept 12

Schaffner, Brian. 2018. Republican Candidates are Being Punished for Trump's Sexism.

<https://wthh.dataforprogress.org/blog/2018/11/8/republican-candidates-are-being-punished-for-t>

A.P. "Trump blasts 4 congresswomen; crowd roars 'send her back' "

<https://www.apnews.com/eb7f2bf6a7bd41e282a95dcf3904a877>

Sept 17

Data Collection Due to Partners

Stereotypes in the Media and Political Ads

Sept 19:

Carlin and Winfrey. 2009. "Have You Come a Long Way, Baby?" *Communication Studies Journal*.

Anderson, Karrin. 2017. "Every woman is the wrong woman: the female presidentiality paradox." *Women's Studies in Communication*.

Sept 24:

Cassese, Erin and Mirya R. Holman. "Party and Gender Stereotypes in Campaign Attacks." *Political Behavior OnlineFirst*.

Data Collection and Memo Due

Sept 26

Kahn. 1996. *The Political Consequences of Being a Woman*. Chpts. 4-5.

Oct 1:

Coding Work Day

Oct 3:

Makers: Women in Politics (in-class video)

Midterm Exam Due by 5 pm

Oct 8:

Fall Break: No Class

Candidates and Strategies

Oct 10:

Thompson, Danielle. 2015. "Why so Few (Republican) Women? Explaining the Partisan Imbalance of Women in the U.S. Congress" *LSQ*.

Oct 15:

Herrnson and Stokes. 2003. "Women Running 'as Women': Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter Targeting Strategies." *JOP*. 65(1): 244-255.

Sullivan, Kevin. 2019. "I am who I am: Kamala Harris, daughter of Indian and Jamaican Immigrants, defines herself simply as 'American.'" *The Washington Post*.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/i-am-who-i-am-kamala-harris-daughter-of-indian-and-jamaican-immigrants-defines-herself-simply-as-american/2019/02/02/0b278536-24b7-11e9-ad53-824486280311_story.html

Oct 17:

Schaffner, Brian. 2005. "Priming Gender." *AJPS*.

Oct 22

Windett. 2014. "Gender Campaign Strategies in U.S. Elections." *American Politics Research*.

Women as Lawmakers

Oct 24:

Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women?" *JOP*. Carol Moseley Braun on the Senate floor (short video clip). Start at 5:51:17.
<http://www.c-span.org/video/?46035-1/senate-session>

Oct 29

Dittmar, Kelly, Kira Sanbonmatsu, Susan Carroll, Debbie Walsh and Catherine Wineinger. 2017. "Representation Matters: Women in the US Congress." Eagleton Institute for Politics. Pgs 1-25.

Oct 31

Bratton, Haynie and Reingold. 2006. "Agenda Setting and African American Women in State Legislatures," *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*. 28(3-4): 71-96.

Nov 5

Atkinson and Windett. 2018. "Gender Stereotypes and the Policy Priorities of Women in Congress." *Political Behavior*.

Nov 7

Coded Datasets Due to Partners

Women and Public Policy

Nov 12:

Hooks, Ch 5: Our Bodies, Ourselves: Reproductive Rights.

Campisi, Seipel, Cohn, and Hellman. 2019. "All the states taking up new abortion laws in 2019." The Hill.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/445460-states-passing-and-considering-new-abortion-laws->

Nov 14:

Waldman, Annie. "How Hospitals Are Failing Black Mothers." ProPublica. December 27, 2017.

Coded Datasets and Memo Due

Nov 19:

Ford, Ch8. The Politics of Family and Fertility. Pgs 341-357. (Starting at "Supporting Families with Working Parents.")

Nov 21:

Ford, Ch 7: Women and Work. Pgs 294-321.

Nov 26:

Final Presentations

Nov 28:

Happy Thanksgiving!

Dec 3:

Exam Review

Final Exam: Dec 12 at 11 am