

**Bowie State University**  
**Department of History and Government**

History 205:

Introduction to Women's Studies

3 Credits Fall 2020

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Through an interdisciplinary approach, Introduction to Women's Studies explores the ways in which gender, family and children shape the experience of women, and how race, class, ethnicity and kinship are particular to the female experience. Prerequisite: Hist. 114 or Hist. 115

**REQUIRED TEXTS**



Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 3d ed. New York: Routledge, 2008. Additional readings as assigned and provided by the instructor.

**EMERGING ISSUES:** As Bowie State University strives to become a campus sensitive to the issues of preserving the environment, elements of the class will be conducted in accordance to this ideal. Moreover, through the study of history students will be able to determine their place within an ever changing diverse and global society.

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES:**

- I. *Written and Oral Communications:*
  - a. Analyze and discuss critical issues and recurring themes in the discipline;
  - f. Conduct research and evaluate information using the appropriate methods of the discipline;
- II. *Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning:*
  - a. Analyze and understand the physical and biological world as they relate to the historical discipline;
- III. *Critical Analysis and Reasoning:*
  - b. Apply skill in analysis, synthesis, and problem solving;
  - c. Apply logical reasoning in the examination and resolution of tasks.
- IV. *Technological Competency:*
  - a. Create a document using word processing software;
- V. *Information Literacy:*
  - a. Identification of key concepts and terms that describe the information needed;
  - d. Understanding of the ethical, legal and socioeconomic issues surrounding information and information technology.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:** This course is virtual and web enhanced and has components on the University's Blackboard system.

**LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:** Students will be required to utilize the holdings of the University's library as well as other accessible repositories to complete the assigned research project. The project and class assignments will introduce students to primary and secondary sources, reference materials, and tools that the historian uses in her/his craft.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course emphasizes a gender and racial perspective and discourse as it focuses on aspects of the female experience with particular attention paid to the African American gender experience. Intro to Women's Studies covers the experience of women generally, and black women specifically, through a feminist perspective and interdisciplinary analysis. This course is an introduction to the study of gendered thought and action within the historical context of America roughly from the colonial era to the present. The rationale for the course is that it will help students better understand the past and present with regard to how socioeconomic, political, and cultural institutions have impacted the experiences of women. The course also is designed to help students in the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills in studying women studies. To facilitate the development of these skills, students will read required texts, practice listening skills as they take notes on relevant information, prepare for class discussions and presentations, and perform original research.

This course establishes foundations for future study in each student's selected field of study as well as for her/his lifelong learning experiences. For students studying history, women's studies, or social studies, it provides them with a fundamental base of knowledge in women's studies and how to structure and relay this information to a general audience. Specifically, this course is designed to provide history majors and women's studies program participants with an expanded base of knowledge, and social studies teachers with skills and information for their future classroom experience.

### **STUDENT EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

Students will:

1. understand the historian's craft (*Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc, IVa, Va, Vd*);
2. evaluate the various scholarly, academic and popular writings centered on black women's studies (*Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc*);
3. explain the gendered African American historical and sociopolitical experience in order to better understand the present and future directions and conditions of women in general and black women particularly (*Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc*);
4. interpret the past and how socioeconomic, political, and cultural institutions developed over time and place within the African American community from an African American gendered perspective (*Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc*); and
5. analyze the impact of African American women in the development American heritage. This knowledge will then help students to better understand the present and to determine their place within contemporary America from an African American gendered perspective (*Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc*).

### **SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

1. to assist the student's understanding of the methodology and techniques of the historian's craft in addition to providing them with the foundation necessary to utilize modern technologies in women's studies/history/social studies education;
2. to develop the student's research and library skills through the use of scholarly and popular texts and documents, and bibliographic reference tools as they particularly focus on the female's historical experience;

3. to strengthen the student's ability in the areas of critical thinking and abstract reasoning through the examination of historical, sociopolitical, and cultural problems that confront black women; and
4. to aid in the student's understanding of the larger plight of humanity through the uniqueness of the gendered African American historical, sociopolitical, and cultural experience.



**ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES OF COURSE:**

Lecture and discussion of conceptual and factual information from the assigned texts and additional materials such as handouts, articles, and audiovisual material (Ia, IIa, IIIb, IIIc, IVa, Va, Vd):

- to help students' reading and comprehension skills through synthesizing large amounts of information from required reading materials;
- to develop interdisciplinary and historical analysis skills and relate the past to contemporary events;
- to help students develop listening and note taking skills.

Examinations (Ia, IIa, IIb, IIIb, IIIc):

- to test the retention of knowledge applicable to women's studies.

Research Project and Written Essays (Ia, If, IIa, IIIb, IIIc, IVa, Va, Vd):

- to assist students in developing a thesis emphasizing critical thought with regard to a problem or question related to women's studies;
- to assist students in the synthesis of gathered detailed or factual information in a comprehensible and structured fashion;
- to assist students in the analysis of a question or problem related women's studies;
- to draw conclusions for the development of individual perspectives and interpretations of problems or questions related to women's studies.

<b>NCATE Competencies</b>	
<b>Curriculum Themes</b>	<b>Corresponding Outcomes or Objectives</b>
✓ Academic Scholar	Outcomes 1, 2, & all objectives
✓ Multicultural and Global Perspectives	Outcomes 3, 4, 5 & all objectives
✓ Personal and Interpersonal Perspectives	Outcomes 3, 4, 5 & all objectives
✓ Technological Applications	Outcomes 1 & 2; Objectives 1 & 2

**TEACHING MODES:**

Introduction to Women's Studies is primarily a discussion course and utilizes instructional lectures, assigned readings, and class discussion. Students will apply these skills to solving problems or answering questions concerning the gendered experience. In the process, students will learn how to relate detailed or factual information within conceptual frameworks. This will be accomplished by asking questions such as how do certain situations affect women in particular? Students will learn how to ask questions about scholarly information and then to begin the process of learning to address these questions. Finally, students will learn how to effectively communicate their conclusions to a general audience through the development of written and oral presentations. The course also emphasizes reading various texts as well as listening to other's ideas—all of which are important in the learning process.

The course information will be conveyed to students through lectures, assigned readings, written assignments, and computer work. Corresponding assignments will develop

critical thinking, communication, and problem solving skills. In addition, students will produce an original research project to improve their communication and problem solving skills. Lectures will assist students in the process of comprehending general concepts and relating details or facts to these through the synthesis of information. Finally, the course will provide students will a foundation for lifelong learning.

To prepare for class, students should refer to the course outline and focus on the weekly topics and assignments. Students should also utilize the Blackboard component to this course to access assignments, notes, and announcements. Students are responsible for completing all assignments and should pay particular attention to the weekly topic of discussion and activity for focused reading and preparation.

### **STUDENT PREPARATION ROLES**

This course emphasizes three competencies that help facilitate the student's role in a global and diverse contemporary American society. Students will receive instruction on identifying problems or questions related to women's studies; understanding broad scholarly concepts, gathering related details or facts, and synthesizing information; and testing their required and retained knowledge. Students are required to do a number of prepared written and oral class presentations. Generally, the student will work on an individual basis to complete the requirements for the course. *In case of inclement weather or the cancellation of class, students should check Blackboard for corresponding assignments.* **Students who have a disability and who would like accommodations should report immediately to Disability Support Services (DSS), located in Room 079 in the Thurgood Marshall Library, or call Dr. Michael S. Hughes, DSS Coordinator at 301-860-4067. Go to the following website for more information: <https://www.bowiestate.edu/academics/support-services/disability-support-services/>**

**Bowie State University shall not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, or veteran status (ADA and Nondiscrimination Policy).**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is required to complete the course successfully. **University rules and regulations state that a student may fail a course if she/he misses a certain number of classes** [six (6) for a course that meets three (3) times a week; four (4) for a class that meets twice a week; and two (2) for a class that meets once a week]. Students are expected to attend (on time) and participate in all scheduled classes and activities. Quizzes and daily class activities are considered class participation and cannot be made up. All students are expected to take examinations and turn in all assignments at the scheduled time. Students who miss assignments because of tardiness will not be able perform make-up work without a valid excuse. Make-up work will be at the discretion of the instructor. For example, if a student misses a quiz, the instructor may require the student to write a paper that is equivalent to that particular activity.

### **STATEMENT OF ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE COURSE**

According to the "Code of Student Conduct," students are to achieve high standards of ethical and professional academic standards. This includes behavior and appearance in the



classroom. For written and non-written scholarship, students are encouraged to be creatively responsible for making a contribution to the body of knowledge. This is accomplished through individual and group effort according to assigned activities. Students who commit acts of plagiarism or copying from other scholarship and/or violating academic standards in the classroom will be penalized according to the “Code of Student Conduct” for students as outlined by Bowie State University. “In cases involving academic dishonesty, a failing grade or a grade of zero (0) for either an assignment and/or course may be administered. Students who are expelled or suspended for academic dishonesty are not admissible to other institutions within the University System of Maryland.” **Students engaging in academic dishonesty will fail this course!**

### **CLASSROOM DECORUM**

Bowie State University “prohibits disorderly or disruptive conduct on University premises or at University sponsored activities, which interfere with the activities of others, including studying, teaching, research, and administrative operations.” Students must not disrupt class for any reason such as excessive talking or continuously entering/exiting the classroom. Students should be dressed appropriately for an academic setting. Offensive or revealing clothing is not acceptable in a learning environment. Please refrain from the use of cellular phones (talking and text messaging) and other similar electronic devices during class. These devices must be silenced prior to the start of class. Recording devices are not allowed in this class. Students who fail to adhere to these policies will be penalized accordingly.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be evaluated on an essay, research project, final exam and a combined assignment, attendance and participation grade. There will be one take home final examination due during the exam period. Students are required to research and present a research project (specific guidelines to follow) based on an approved topic relevant to women’s studies and complete a critical essay (specific guidelines to follow) of an assigned topic. Students are required to complete and turn in reading summaries each week (specific guidelines to follow). Students will be assigned and should be prepared to thoroughly discuss each reading assignment. Participatory activities also may be assigned. Participation is factored into the overall homework grade. Not completing such activities cannot hurt one’s grade but participating in these activities can improve the assigned grade. Only letter grades recorded in the four grade categories will be utilized in determining grades for the course. Optional extra-credit assignments may be assigned during the semester.

#### **Evaluations**

Critical Essay — 20%  
Research Project — 30%  
Final Examination — 30%  
Assignments, Attendance and Participation —20%

#### **Grading Scale**

90 -100 — A  
80 - 89 — B  
70 - 79 — C  
60 - 69 — D  
59 & under — F

## COURSE OUTLINE

Generally, the assigned readings address the topics of theory, history, politics, family and society, and image.

NOTE: THE SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE GIVEN TIME CONSTRAINTS OR OTHER FACTORS.  
ADDITIONAL READINGS WILL BE ASSIGNED AS NECESSARY.

Date	Assignment	Miscellaneous
<b>Supplemental Readings:</b> Available on Blackboard	Reading Packet “What Is Women’s Studies?” (8-40); Reading Packet on Black Women’s Studies—Darlene Clark Hine, “African American Women and Their Communities in the Twentieth Century” (1-23); and Elizabeth Cole and Nesha Z. Haniff, “Building a Home for Black Women’s Studies” (24-45); Reading Packet on Black Women’s Studies—Grace Chang, “Where’s the Violence? The Promise and Perils of Teaching Women of Color Studies” (46-73).	
<b>September 2</b>	Assignment #1: Collins, <i>Black Feminist Thought</i> : Collins—chapter 1 (3-23); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>September 9</b>	Assignment #2: Collins—chapter 2 (24-48); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>September 16</b>	Assignment #3: Collins—chapter 3 (51-75); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>September 23</b>	Assignment #4: Collins—chapter 4 (76-106); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>September 30</b>	Assignment #5: Collins—chapter 5 (107-132);	
<b>October 7</b>	Assignment #6: Collins—chapter 6 (133-160); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>October 14</b>	Work on your critical essays. Additional readings as assigned.	<b>Research topics are due.</b>
<b>October 21</b>	Assignments #7: Collins—chapter 7 (161-186); Additional readings as assigned.	<b>Critical essays are due.</b>
<b>October 28</b>	Assignment #8: Collins—chapter 8 (187-215); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>November 4</b>	Assignment #9: Collins—chapter 9 (216-242); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>November 11</b>	Work on research papers	
<b>November 15</b>		Last day to drop from a class with a “W” grade: Last day to change from credit to audit.
<b>November 18</b>	Assignment #10: Collins—chapter 10 (245-268); Additional readings as assigned.	<b>Research papers are due.</b>
<b>November 25</b>	Assignment #11: Collins—chapter 11 (269-290); Additional readings as assigned.  <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	<b>No class. University closes @ 5:00 PM</b>
<b>December 2</b>	Assignment #12: Collins—chapter 12 (291-310); Additional readings as assigned.	
<b>December 9</b>	Class Discussion	<b>Last day of class!</b>
<b>December 16</b>	<b>Final exams are due @ 5:00 PM</b>	



**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** FOR A COMPREHENSIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR BLACK FEMINIST STUDIES SEE  
[HTTP://WWW.LIBRARY.UCSB.EDU/SUBJECTS/BLACKFEMINISM/](http://www.library.ucsb.edu/subjects/blackfeminism/)

- Abel, Elizabeth, Barbara Christian, and Helene Moglen. eds. *Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalysis, Feminism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Aikau, Holulani K., Karla A. Erickson, Jennifer L. Pierce, eds. *Feminist Waves, Feminist Generations: Life Stories from the Academy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
- Andolsen, Barbara Hilkert. *Daughters of Jefferson, Daughters of Bootblacks: Racism and American Feminism*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986.
- Apthekar, Bettina. "Directions for Scholarship." In *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, eds. Ann D. Gordon and Bettye Collier-Thomas, et al. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Race and Class: Patriarchal Politics and Women's Experience." *Women's Studies International Quarterly* nos. 9-10 (1982): 10-15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Strong is What We Make Each Other: Unlearning Racism Within Women's Studies." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (1981).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Women's Legacy: Essays on Race, Sex and Class in American History*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982.
- Athey, Stephanie. "Eugenic Feminisms in Late Nineteenth-Century America: Reading Race in Victoria Woodhull, Frances Willard, Anna Julia Cooper, and Ida B. Wells." *Genders* 31 (Spring 2000).
- Baker, Houston A. *Workings of the Spirit: The Poetics of Afro-American Women's Writing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Baxandall, Rosalyn. "Re-Visioning the Women's Liberation Movement's Narrative: Early Second Wave African American Feminists." *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 225-245.
- Behera, Navnita Chadha, ed. *Gender, Conflict and Migration*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2006.
- Bennett, Vivienne, Sonia D. Avila-Poblete and Mar laNieves Rico, eds. *Opposing Currents: The Politics of Water and Gender in Latin America*. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.
- Bhavnani, Kum-Kum, John Foran and Priya A. Kurian, eds. *Feminist Futures: Re-Imagining Women, Culture and Development*. New York: Palgrave, 2003.
- Blair, Karen J. *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980.
- Breines, Winifred. "Alone Black Socialist Feminism: and the Combahee River Collective." In *The Trouble Between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Brown, Elsa Barkley. "To Catch the Vision of Freedom: Reconstructing Southern Black Women's Political History, 1865-1880." In *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965*, eds. Ann D. Gordon and Bettye Collier-Thomas, et al. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'What Has Happened Here': The Politics of Difference in Women's History and Feminist Politics." *Feminist Studies* 18, no. 2 (1992): 295-312.
- Caraway, Nancie. *Segregated Sisterhood: Racism and the Politics of American Feminism*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991.
- Cash, Floris Loretta Barnett. *African American Women and Social Action: The Clubwomen and Volunteerism from Jim Crow to the New Deal, 1896-1936*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001.
- Cooney, Robert. *Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Women Suffrage Movement*. Santa Cruz, California: American Graphic Press, 2005.
- Cornwall, Andrea, Elizabeth Harrison and Ann Whitehead, eds. *Feminisms in Development:*

- Contradictions, Contestations and Challenges*. New York: Zed Books, 2007.
- Davis, Elizabeth Lindsay. *Lifting as They Climb*. New York: G.K. Hall, 1996.
- Dickerson, James. *Go, Girl, Go!: The Women's Revolution in Music*. New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2005.
- Evans, Stephanie Y. *Black Women in the Ivory Tower, 1850-1954: An Intellectual History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007.
- Fernández-Kelly, María Patricia. *For We Are Sold, I and My People: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983.
- Gates, Henry Louis, Jr., ed. *Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology*. New York: Meridian Books, 1990.
- Giddings, Paula. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. Rev. ed. New York: Morrow, 1996.
- Guy-Sheftall, Beverly. "African American Women: The Legacy of Black Feminism." In *Sisterhood is Forever: The Women's Anthology for a New Millennium*, New York: Washington Square Press, 2003.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. "Evolution of Feminist Consciousness Among African American Women." In *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African American Feminist Thought*, ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: New Press, 1995.
- Harley, Sharon, and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, eds. *The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images*. Rev. ed. Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1997.
- Hawkesworth, Mary E. *Globalization and Feminist Activism*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.
- Hayes, Eileen M. and Linda F. Williams, eds. *Black Women and Music: More Than the Blues*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007.
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- Hudson-Weems, Clenora. *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*. Troy, Michigan: Bedford Publishers, 1994.
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#### **JOURNALS & PERIODICALS**

- *American Historical Review* [American Historical Association]
- *Black (Negro) History Bulletin* [Association of the Study of African American Life and History]
- *Black Women, Gender & Families* [University of Illinois Press]
- *Feminist Studies* [Feminist Studies, Inc.]
- *Gender and History* [Wiley-Blackwell]
- *International Journal of Africana Studies* [National Council of Black Studies]
- *Journal of African American (Negro) History* [Association of the Study of African American Life and History]
- *Journal of African American Studies* [Transaction Publishers]
- *Journal of American History* [Organization of American Historians]
- *Journal of Black Studies* [Sage Publications]
- *Journal of Southern History* [Southern Historical Association]
- *Journal of Women's History* [The Johns Hopkins University]
- *OAH Magazine of History* [Organization of American Historians]
- *Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women (1986-1995)* [The Sage Women's Education Press]
- *The Black Scholar* [Black World Foundation]
- *The Truth* [Association of Black Women Historians]
- *Western Journal of Black Studies* [Washington State University]