

WGS 2062: Women and Activism
Spring 2017
T/TH 12:30-1:50
60 W Charlton 115

Instructor: Nneka Dennie
Email: denniend@uc.edu
Phone: 513-556-4483
Office: 571 Steger Student Life Center
Office Hours: W 11 AM – 12 PM and by appointment

Course Description

This course will provide a historical overview of how women have influenced and engaged in various forms of activism, and will provide students a self-directed experiential learning opportunity. Students will evaluate the factors that have contributed to and impeded social change, and will then apply their knowledge by developing community action projects.

Course Objectives

- Explain how race, class, sexuality, religion, nationality, and other categories of identity have impacted women's activism
- Evaluate women activists' approaches to reproductive justice, the carceral state, politics, and environmental justice
- Identify and articulate the ideologies that have shaped women's activism
- Apply activist strategies by designing and implementing a community action project

Required Texts

Kyle C. Ashlee and Aerial A. Ashlee, *VITAL: A Torch for Your Social Justice Journey* (Cincinnati: Brave Space Publishing, 2015)

All other course texts will be available through Blackboard. To access Blackboard, go to canopy.uc.edu.

Academic Misconduct

Any instances of academic misconduct will be addressed according to university policies. For detailed information about academic dishonesty and its consequences, please see the [Academic Misconduct section of the Student Code of Conduct](#). Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- Aiding and abetting academic misconduct
- Cheating
- Fabrication
- Plagiarism
- Violating Ethical or Professional Standards

Disability Services

If you have a disability (e.g. visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability) that may influence your performance in this course, you may meet with the Disability Services Office (DSO) to arrange for reasonable accommodations to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. Additional information can be found on the [Disability Services website](#). If you require accommodations due to disability, please contact DSO.

Office: 210 University Pavilion

Phone: 513-556-6823

Email: disabisv@ucmail.uc.edu

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 AM – 5 PM

Evaluation of Students

Class Participation (15%)

Two Response Papers (30%)

Project Proposal (5%)

Final Project (30%)

Final Reflection (20%)

Class Participation 15%

Students will receive a participation grade for each class. A rubric is available on the handout titled “Class Participation Guidelines” on Blackboard.

Response Papers 30%

Two response papers of 3-4 pages each will be due during the semester *after* Unit One. You may choose which days to submit a response paper, but they must be submitted during separate weeks. Response papers will be due at the beginning of class. These papers should synthesize the readings for the day that it is due. Identify the authors’ goals, offer analyses of the ideas presented, evaluate the strengths and/or weaknesses of the authors’ arguments, and ask questions about the course texts. These responses should *not* summarize the readings. Avoid speaking from anecdotal evidence and personal experience. Instead, use examples from the text to discuss how the readings impact your understanding of the history of women’s activism. Please consult the “Paper Submission Checklist” handout on Blackboard before submitting your papers.

Project Proposal 5%

A 2-3 page project proposal will be due by **Thursday, February 9**. The proposal should demonstrate that you have a clear direction for your project. Briefly explain your issue, offer a justification for your project, describe your goals and methods, and identify potential obstacles and how you plan to address them. Every member of your group needs to submit their own proposal.

Final Project 30%

Projects will be due on **Tuesday, April 11**. The breakdown of your grade will be as follows:

Project Design and Implementation- 20%

Design a community action project with your group. You have the freedom to choose what form the project will take (i.e. make a documentary, create a magazine, build an awareness campaign, plan an event, design a website, artwork, etc.)

Peer Evaluations- 5%

Teamwork is essential to effective activism. As such, all members of the group will complete peer evaluations about each other's performance and contributions to the final project.

In-Class Presentations- 5%

Final presentations should be 10-15 minutes long. Provide an overview of your project, its goals and methods, and its successes and challenges. The presentation should specifically address how your project relates to women and activism.

Final Reflection 20%

A 4-5 page reflection will be due on **Thursday, April 27**. The reflection should discuss how you applied concepts from this course in your community action project. Explain the methods you used and whether and how you accomplished the goals that you identified in your project proposal. If you did not accomplish your original goals, or if your goals and methods changed, discuss why. Describe the project's successes and any challenges that you encountered. Finally, discuss how this project has impacted your understanding of women's activism. Every member of your group needs to submit their own reflection.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	0-59

Late Policy and Extensions

Late Submissions will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade per day (i.e. A- becomes B+ after one day; A- becomes B after two days). Extensions will be available for the project proposal, final reflection, and final project under extenuating circumstances only. If requesting an extension, please do so at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline. I reserve the right to edit this syllabus. In the event of any changes, I will notify you in a timely manner.

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

Week 1: Activism, Identity, and Uncomfortable Learning

January 12

- Kyle C. Ashlee and Aerial A. Ashlee, *VITAL: A Torch for Your Social Justice Journey*, "Identity," pg. 62-72, 76-86, 95-96

Week 2: Crafting Your Message

January 17

- Maisha Z. Johnson, "[6 Signs Your Call-Out Isn't Actually About Accountability](#)"
- Sian Ferguson, "[Calling In: A Quick Guide on When and How](#)"
- Jason Del Gandio, *Rhetoric for Radicals: A Handbook for 21st Century Activists*, "Labors of the Multitude," pg. 57-81

January 19

- *Rhetoric for Radicals*, "Labors of the Multitude," pg. 81-98
- Linda Alcoff, "The Problem of Speaking for Others"

Week 3: Building Activist Communities

January 24

- *VITAL*, "Vulnerability," pg. 18-35, 60-61
- *VITAL*, "Trust," pg. 97-121

January 26

- Alicia Garza, "[A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement](#)"
- Patricia Hill Collins, "Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection"

UNIT TWO: THE BODY AND SEXUALITY

Week 4: Policing Sex and Gender

January 31

- Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith, *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, "Identities Under Siege: Violence against Transpersons of Color" pg. 160-177

- *Captive Genders*, “Making It Happen, Mama: A Conversation with Miss Major,” pg. 301-314

February 2

- Mary E. Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920*, “‘White Slaves’ and ‘Vicious Men’: The Age-of-Consent Campaign,” pg. 8-37
- Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America*, “Voluntary Motherhood,” pg. 55-71

Week 5: Reproductive Justice

February 7

- Leslie Reagan, *When Abortion Was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973*, “Introduction,” pg. 8-18
- *When Abortion Was a Crime*, “Radicalization of Reform,” pg. 216-246

FEBRUARY 9: PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE

February 9

- Jael Silliman, Marlene Gerber Fried, Loretta Ross, and Elena R. Gutiérrez, *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice*, “Women of Color and their Struggle for Reproductive Justice,” pg. 11-25
- *Undivided Rights*, “The Political Context for Women of Color Organizing,” pg. 31-50
- *Undivided Rights*, “Native American Women Resist Genocide and Organize for Reproductive Rights,” pg. 111-124

UNIT THREE: ELECTORAL POLITICS

Week 6: Voting Rights

February 14

- Faye E. Dudden, *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America*, “The Age Is Ripe for the Woman Question,” pg. 13-38
- *Votes for Women*, “Voices of Suffrage: Sojourner Truth, Frances Watkins Harper, and the Struggle for Woman Suffrage,” pg. 42-55

February 16

- Jean H. Baker, *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*, “Female Opposition: The Anti-Suffrage Campaign,” pg. 118-129

- Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, "Local Need and Electoral Politics," pg. 61-84

Week 7: Women in Politics

February 21

- Doualy Xaykaothao, "[Somali Refugee Makes History in U.S. Election](#)"
- Nidhi Prakash, "[Meet Ilhan Omar, the first Somali-American Muslim Woman Elected to Public Office](#)"
- Shirley Chisolm, *Unbought and Unbossed*, pg. 19-20, 40-81

February 23

- *Unbought and Unbossed*, pg. 82-106, 129-137, 175-181
- Roxane Gay, *Bad Feminist*, "When Twitter Does What Journalism Cannot," pg. 260-266
- *Bad Feminist*, "The Alienable Rights of Women," pg. 267-279

UNIT FOUR: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

Week 8: Ecofeminism

February 28

- Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, "Ecofeminism," pg. 255-273
- Lisa Kemmerer, *Sister Species: Women, Animals, and Social Justice*, "Fighting Cocks: Ecofeminism Versus Sexualized Violence," pg. 45-56

March 2

- *Feminist Thought*, "Ecofeminism," pg. 274-292
- *Sister Species*, "Connections: Speciesism, Racism, and Whiteness as the Norm," pg. 72-77
- *Sister Species*, "Fighting 'Other,'" pg. 79-86

Week 9: Race and Environmental Justice

March 7

- Michael Bennett, *The Nature of Cities: Ecocriticism and Urban Environments*, "An Ecofeminist Perspective on the Urban Environment," pg. 191-212
- Kristen Jordan Shamus, "[How Race, Class Set Stage for Flint Water Crisis](#)"
- Julia Lurie, "[Meet the Mom Who Helped Expose Flint's Toxic Water Nightmare](#)"

- Amy Hay and Lisa Fine, "[Lead Poisoning is Devastating Flint: It's Time to Listen to the Women](#)"
- Jake May, "[Women in Flint Protest Water Crisis with 'Die-In' Outside Treatment Plant](#)"

March 9

- Devon Abott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*, "Feminists, Tribalists, or Activists?" pg. 159-171
- Rebecca Bales, *OAH Magazine of History*, "Native American Women: Living With Landscape," pg. 13-16
- Emily Arasim and Osprey Orielle Lake, "[15 Indigenous Women on the Frontlines of the Dakota Access Pipeline Resistance](#)"
- Melissa Scholke, "[The Dakota Access Pipeline Endangers Women and the Environment](#)"
- Sara Lafleur-Vetter, Romin Johnson, and Jonathan Klett, "[Dakota Access: Women on Frontlines Tell of Violent Arrests and Police Abuse](#)" (Video)

Week 10

SPRING BREAK

UNIT FIVE: RACIAL JUSTICE AND THE CARCERAL STATE

Week 11: Race, Gender, and the Prison Industrial Complex

March 21

- Jael Silliman and Anannya Bhattacharjee, *Policing the National Body: Race, Gender, and Criminalization*, "Private Fists and Public Force: Race, Gender, and Surveillance," pg. 4-22
- val codd, *Off Our Backs*, "Women and the Prison Industrial Complex," pg. 8
- Marilyn Buck, *Feminist Studies*, "Women in Prison and Work," pg. 451-455
- Katie Farro, "[Resistance to the Prison-Industrial Complex Remains a Feminist Issue](#)"
- Carmen Rios, "[Criminal Injustice: 5 Disturbing Facts About Women of Color and the Prison Industrial Complex](#)"

March 23

- *Policing the National Body*, "Speaking Out Against State Violence: Activist HIV-Positive Women Prisoners Redefine Social Justice," pg. 81-102
- Tala Khanmalek, "[Slavery: the Haunting Legacy of Sterilization Abuse in California State Prisons](#)"
- Corey G. Johnson, "[Female Inmates Sterilized in California Prisons without Approval](#)"

Week 12: Prison Activists and Abolitionists

March 28

- *Captive Genders*, “How to Make Prisons Disappear: Queer Immigrants, the Shackles of Love, and the Invisibility of the Prison Industrial Complex,” 123-140
- Esther Yu Hsi Lee, “[How Immigration Detention Centers Retraumatize Women and Children Fleeing from Violence](#)”
- Liz Robbins, “[22 Migrant Women Held in Pennsylvania Start a Hunger Strike to Protest Detention](#)”
- Nigel Duara, “[Hundreds of Women and Children are Released from Texas Immigration Detention Facilities](#)”

March 30

- Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* “How Gender Structures the Prison System,” pg. 60-83
- Jeff Spross, “[Why No One Knows About the Largest Prison Strike in US History](#)”
- Max Blau and Emanuella Grinberg, “[Why US Inmates Launched a Nationwide Strike](#)”

Week 13

April 4

- Ava DuVernay, *13th*, beginning-50:22 (Netflix documentary)

April 6

- Ava DuVernay, *13th*, 50:22-end

UNIT SIX: FINAL PROJECTS

Week 14

APRIL 11: FINAL PROJECTS DUE

April 11

In-Class Presentations

April 13

In-Class Presentations

Week 15

April 18

In-Class Presentations

April 20

In-Class Presentations

APRIL 27: FINAL REFLECTIONS DUE