

PS 231Q3: Sex, Power, and Public Policy
Spring 2024
Quest 3

“I ask no favor for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks and permit us to stand upright.” - *Sarah Moore Grimke*

About your professor

Dr. Amber Lusvardi
She/her/hers
Department of Political Science
Student hours: MW 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Fox,
Thursday 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Oshkosh
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920-832-2856

Course details

Sex, Power, and Public Policy
Course meeting times:
3 credits
Explore category: Society

Course Description from Catalog

Examination of controversial issues of gender that affect equality and power. Includes women's movement and the search for equality, justice, and freedom. Examines political and judicial policies that exemplify success and failure.

Signature Question

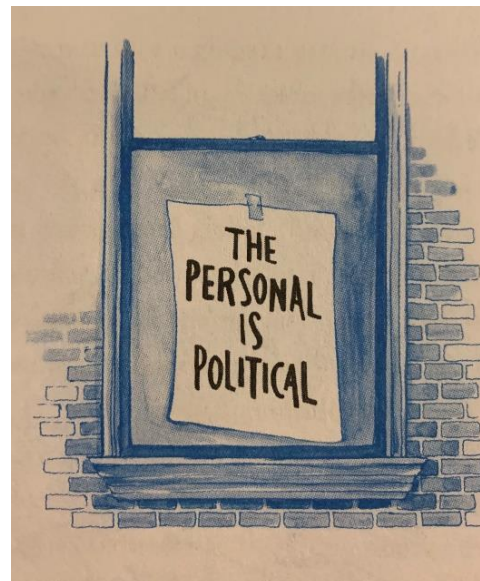
How do people understand and engage in community life?

Additional course information

Students will be expected to learn about and engage with the concept of gender as an analytical tool to view the political world. This will be achieved through both theory and practice. As is expected for a Quest III Course, students will be engaged in activity outside of the traditional classroom. They will use their knowledge of gender as a key concept in which to engage the social world to facilitate and participate in gender and sexuality-themed institutions and events at UWO and the greater community.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Connect knowledge to civic engagement and participation in civic life
- Identify and evaluate theories and assumptions relating to civic engagement and activism
- Learn how to effectively communicate issues at the intersection of gender justice and politics
- Develop and improve written and oral communication skills
- Develop ethical reasoning arguments
- Conduct critical and creative thinking
- Participate in community life through co-curricular activities with a community partner



Important Information

 **UW
Oshkosh**

Dr. Amber Lusvardi

Class help: See me!

Find me at Fox: M1502

Find me at Oshkosh: Sage 4619

I can be reached via e-mail or Canvas.



Let's talk about mental health



Mental health and personal safety resources

1. **UW Oshkosh Counseling Center:** uwosh.edu/counseling or call/text: 888- 531-2142
2. **Reach Counseling** (sexual violence) 24-hour helpline: 920-722-8150
3. **Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services** 24-hour helpline: 800-261-5998
4. **Mental Health Crisis Helpline:** Call or text 24-hours: 988



Best tips for success

Outside of class	Inside of class
Check Canvas Regularly	Be present
Come to student hours	The best predictor of student success is class attendance

University Studies Program

The University Studies Program (USP) is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. This Quest III course is the last in a series of courses you will take to introduce you to the campus and all it has to offer, the vibrant Oshkosh community, and the challenges and opportunities of academic life as you pursue a liberal education.

Signature question

The University Studies Program (USP) is your gateway to a 21st century college education at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. In these courses, you'll be exposed to three "Signature Questions" that are central to a UW Oshkosh education:

- How do people understand and engage in community life?
- How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?
- How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?

The Quest classes are designed to provide a solid foundation for the rest of your education here, no matter which major you choose. Your USP courses will also provide the opportunity for you to Explore and Connect as you begin your college education. For further information about the unique general education program at UW Oshkosh, visit the University Studies Program website at uwosh.edu/usp. In this course, we will specifically focus on the question: *How do people understand and engage in community life?*

Explore Courses and a Liberal Arts Education

Explore

This course is an Explore course for the University Studies Program. The Explore classes are designed to provide a solid foundation for the rest of your education here, no matter which major you choose. For further information about the unique general education at UW Oshkosh and other USP courses that are available, visit

the University Studies Program website at uwosh.edu/usp.

Liberal arts courses provide students with knowledge of the world in reference to themes such as culture, nature, and society. The explore category for this course is *society*.

Liberal education

Liberal Education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings. ([AAC&U, http://www.aacu.org/leap/what-is-a-liberal-education](http://www.aacu.org/leap/what-is-a-liberal-education))

Early alert

After the third week of classes, you will receive a grade for your overall progress in this course and each of the courses you are taking in your first semester. This process is called "Early Alert." The registrar's office will send you an E-mail during the fifth week of classes reporting on academic performance and attendance for each of your classes.

Early Alert is designed to help you evaluate your study skills and your class attendance so that you know if you are on the right track. If you need to make some changes, there are resources available to support your academic success. These Early Alert grades are not permanent and will not appear on your transcript.

The Community Engagement Project

This course is designed to increase your awareness of gender as a lens through which to view the political world and the greater social world. As such, your community engagement project is designed to partner you will on-campus and off-campus opportunities to reflect

on the theory you have learned in class and apply it in a community-based context. In particular, the community engagement project seeks to offer the opportunity to educate and support others on issues related to gender and sexuality. You will be expected to spend between 14 and 20 hours engaged in this project.

You have two opportunities for engagement. The first opportunity for community engagement will be through Planned Parenthood Advocacy of Wisconsin, which provides information and access for women's health and reproductive justice issues in the Fox Valley.

An additional community engagement option will be available at The Women's Center (717 W. Irving St). This center provides educational opportunities on gender, gender identity, and social issues. These activities will be centered on the UWO campus.

Grades

Your final grade will be based on a first-week writing assignment, all requirements and assignments related to the community engagement project, reading annotations, zine creation, exams, and final self-assessment.

There is a five-day grace period on all assignment submissions. After that, no submissions will be accepted without first meeting with me.

Assignments

First-week writing assignment (20) - I will provide you a prompt on our first day of class to help you reflect on how to best be a successful student during this semester. You have a week to complete your two-page typed response.

Community Engagement Project (200 total points, breakdown below): This is the most substantial portion of your overall grade during the semester. Completion of your community engagement hours is required for success in the course. You will have opportunities to volunteer or participate in

Women's Center events and Planned Parenthood events.

There will be sign-ups via Canvas for different events. You need to fill this out not only so I can help account for your hours but so we spread the work out across various events.

You should plan to:

Attend at least 5 hours of Women's Center events.

Volunteer 4 hours towards our International Women's Day project. The IWD Project will involve a social media takeover of the Women's Center social media page, a group that will plan events/make posters, and a group that will table in Reeve.

Volunteer 4 hours tabling for Planned Parenthood. Your first opportunity will be Feb. 12-14 from 11-1 for the Consent Valentines tabling.

To make up for the expectation of your commitments outside of class, we will have the following no class days: Feb. 22, March 7 (IWD event day), March 21, April 11, April 25, May 2, May 16

Hours completion (100): Minimum of 14 volunteer hours engaged in between the Women's Center and Planned Parenthood completed prior to May 6. You will keep a weekly detailed hours log.

Process letters (3 x 20): A process letter is a form of self-reflection and self-evaluation about the work you are completing on the community engagement project. Through a series of three process letters you will answer the following questions about your work: How is the work/activities I am doing informing how I understand class material? Conversely, how does class material help me understand the work I am doing? What have I found challenging about this work? What could I be doing to improve this

experience? How can I put that idea into action?

e-Portfolio (40): Put together a portfolio that demonstrates your contribution to the community engagement project. It could be items you designed or wrote, reflections on experiences, photos, or other relevant evidence of your work.

Annotation of readings (10 x 10): You have one or two readings assigned each week that will be posted on your Canvas page. Each week, you will write comments and questions on the readings through Canvas annotations. Your annotations are worth 10 points each week.

Zine creation (100): You will create a fully designed, informative 'zine on either a topic related to gender policy or an activist previously or currently engaged in a struggle for equal rights. The audience for the zine is University of Wisconsin Oshkosh students. The completed zines will be made available at the UWO Women's Center.

Zine check in #1 (10 points): Submit your proposal for what your zine will be about and what methods you will use to collect your information (Interviews? First-person narrative? Ethnography?)

Zine check in #2 (10 points): Submit some examples of material that will be used in your zine and describe all materials that will go into its completion.

Exams (2 x 40): You will have two essay-style exams, one at midterm and one at the end of the semester.

Final Self-assessment (50) – This final assignment will ask you to evaluate your own learning over the course of the semester. To consider: What are the most important concepts you learned this semester? How do they help you understand the social world? What is something you did that you are proud of?

If substantive changes are made in course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available.

Grading Scale

Your final grades are calculated by points earned/total points.

100-97 - A+
97-94 - A
93-90 - A-
89-87 - B+
84-86 - B
80-83 - B-
79-77 - C+
76-74 - C
73-70 - C-
69-67 - D+
66-64 - D
63-60 - D-
59 and below – failing

Course schedule

All readings will be posted on Canvas.

Feb. 6, 8:

Feb. 6 – Syllabus introduction and scheduling

Feb. 8 – Meet in Reeve 220, women's center introduction and project

Feb. 13, 15: What is feminism? What is gender?

Feb. 13: Intro to gender and policy and class visit from Marianne Radley Wellhouse, Planned Parenthood

Feb. 15: Intro to gender and policy and IWD prep

Readings:

hooks, bell. (2000). *Feminism is for Everybody*. Chapters 1-3.

Hawkesworth, Mary. (2013). "Sex, Gender, and Sexuality: From Naturalized Presumption to Analytical Categories." *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*.

Valentine's Consent Tabling – Reeve Feb. 12-14

Feb. 20, 22: Intersectional feminism

Readings:

Combahee River Collective. (1977). The Combahee River Collective Statement.

Collins, Patricia Hill, and Valerie Chepp. (2013). "Intersectionality." *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*.

Feb. 22 – No Class

Feb. 27, 29: Representation in Politics

Readings:

Pitkin, Hannah. (1967). *The Concept of Representation*. University of California Press. Ch. 1 Introduction (pp. 1-13).

Dovi, Susanne. (2002). "Preferable Descriptive Representation: Will Just Any Woman, Black, or Latino do?" *American Political Science Review*, 96(4), pp. 729-743.

March 5, 7: Gendered Representation

Reading:

Swers, Michelle. (2002). *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress*. University of Chicago Press. Ch. 1 (pp. 1-19)

March 7: International Women's Day event in Reeve (a day early)

March 12, 14: Women's Political Ambition

Fox, R. L., & Lawless, J. L. (2004). Entering the arena? Gender and the decision to run for office. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48(2), 264-280.

Holman et al. (2021). Girls learn early that they don't have much of a place in politics. *The Conversation* Oct. 25.

March 19: Midterm exam

March 21 – No class

April 2, 4: Gender and Policy – Intimate Partner Violence/Violence Against Women

Readings:

Bedera, Nicole. (2024). "'I Can Protect His Future, but She Can't be Helped': Himpathy and Hysteria in Administrator Rationalizations of Institutional Betrayal." *The Journal of Higher Education*.

Slakoff, Danielle C. (2023). "'She Did See Warning Signs but Chose to Ignore Them': Perpetrator Justification and Victim-Blaming Narratives in True Crime Podcasts about Intimate Partner Violence." *Feminist Media Studies* 23(8): 4347-4363

April 9, 11: Gender and Policy – Reproductive Justice

GEPI. (2022). State of Reproductive Health in the United States Report.

Price, Kimala. (2022). "Women of Color Want Reproductive Justice – Not Just Abortion Rights." *Washington Post Monkey Cage*.

April 11 – No class

April 16, 18: Gender and Policy – Welfare

Hancock, AM. "Contemporary Welfare Reform and the Public Identity of the

‘Welfare Queen.’” *Race, Gender & Class*, 10(1), 31–59.

Tharenou, P. (2013). “The work of feminists is not yet done: The gender pay gap—a stubborn anachronism.” *Sex roles*, 68(3), 198–206.

April 23, 25: Gender and Policy – Prostitution and Pornography

Readings: Cawston, A. (2019). “The feminist case against pornography: A review and re-evaluation.” *Inquiry*, 62(6), 624–658.

Sanchez, Sophie. “The World’s Oldest Profession Gets a Makeover: Sex Work, OnlyFans, and Celebrity Participation.” *Women Leading Change*

No Class April 25

April 30: Zine construction party day

No Class May 2

May 7, 9:

Cohen, Nancy L. (2020). “Toward a Feminist future: A Political strategy for fighting backlash and advancing gender equity.” *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture and Society* 45(2)

Wrap up

May 14: Final Exam

May 16: Final self-assessments due

Extra credit reading:

Rich, Adrienne. (1999). “Compulsory heterosexuality.” *Culture, Society, and Sexuality*, Chapter 11.

Note: If substantive changes are made in course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided

in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available

All About YOU

The author bell hooks writes in *Teaching to Transgress*, “The professor must genuinely value everyone’s presence. There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources” (8). In this spirit, I affirm that without exception every person is a valued member of this class. Your experience and contribution as a member of this class is important to me. If you are experiencing barriers that are preventing you from being a fully present member of this group, please come speak to me.

All About Others

I’m going to paraphrase the scholar Brené Brown to say that we cannot understand other people’s point of view by pretending to walk in their shoes. This is insufficient because we are only imagining what they have experienced. It is better to actually listen to other people. Listen to them and believe them about their experiences. This is where understanding begins.

On Language

Each person in this course is a valued member of the group and you should feel free to share your experiences as they are relevant to this class. No student in this class is ever expected or believed to speak for all members of a group. Do be thoughtful and inclusive in your language when adding to class discussion.

What About My Technology?

You will never be required to bring a laptop or tablet to class. I discourage students from the use of laptops or tablets in my courses due to the extensive research that shows it to be a hindrance to learning and a distraction to classmates (*see* Dontre 2020). It is your choice

whether to use your laptop/tablet while we are taking notes, but it should be stowed away at other times. As engagement and discussion are important, please refrain from wearing headphones during class.

In other words: *Hi! Don't be the problem.*

Note to Poli Sci Majors

Political Science majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year. Political Science 245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently. If you are currently a political science major or if you think you will be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. If you have questions, please see me or any faculty member after class.

Student Right to Know

Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990:

<https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/> Academic Honesty

A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, the writing must be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team.

Disability Statement:

This course is for all UWO students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that could negatively impact one's equal access to education. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the space or content of this course, please contact me by email, phone, or during office hours to discuss your specific needs. I am happy to discuss how to best accommodate you. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessibility Center in Dempsey Hall 215 or at accessibilitycenter@uwosh.edu for further assistance.

Caregiver statement:

I recognize that some of you may be caregivers to others (siblings, children, partners, parents, etc.) and that places an added consideration to your availability. If you are a caregiver, please reach out to me if there are additional ways that I can support you.

Grievance Statement:

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. Tracy Slagter. She can be reached at slagtert@uwosh.edu. Should she be unable to resolve your concerns, she will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

Academic Honesty

A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all

graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team.

Artificial Intelligence statement:

Increasingly the use of AI programs such as ChatGPT are used to assist in generating ideas and responding to writing and editing prompts. However, the goal of our course is to be intellectually curious and grow our writing and critical thinking skills. As such, I expect anything written for class to be generated by you from the idea stage to the writing stage.

Course Prerequisites:

None – this course is open to students at any level and in all majors and is the first in a series of introductory courses in Political Science.