

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

WGSS 10

Fall 2025 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/17/2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Angela Castillo

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Office: DMH 238A & Zoom

- **Office Hours:** Monday & Wednesday from 2 - 3pm, and by appointment
- **Class Days/Time:** Monday & Wednesday, 3 - 4:15pm
- **Classroom:** Sweeney Hall 313
- **GE/SJSU Studies Category:** D1

Course Description and Requisites

Interdisciplinary introduction to core concepts and analytical tools addressing the diversity of human experience cross cut by gender, sexuality, embodiment, and class location. Students will become familiar with key contemporary and historical debates in both global and local contexts.

GE Area: D (formerly GE Area D1)

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

1. You are expected to do all of the assigned readings for the week before class meets on Monday. You are expected to bring that day's reading to class, arrive on time, and participate in class activities by asking and answering questions. Anticipate a reading load of about 50-100 pages per class. Success in this course is based on the expectation that you will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course-related activities.
2. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class time.
3. You are expected to attend all class meetings and you are responsible for all assignments and announcements presented in class. If you are late or absent, it is your responsibility to contact another

student. I'm unable to respond to emails asking what you missed. Please come see me in my office hours if you have further questions after contacting another student.

4. If you are facing personal difficulties that may affect your ability to come to class and/or complete assignments, it is important to inform me as soon as possible. Reach out to me via email or come by my office hours. Maintaining timely communication is key to success in this course.

Late Policy

On-time submission is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to submit all assignments by the designated due date. Late work will be accepted up to two weeks after the original due date. However, a penalty of 50% of the total points will be applied to any late assignment. Please note that this policy is in place to encourage timely completion of assignments and to ensure fairness to all students.

AI Generative Tools Policy

Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL·E) can be useful for brainstorming, organizing ideas, checking grammar, or clarifying difficult concepts. You may use AI for these purposes in this class.

You may **NOT** use AI to generate entire assignments, such as writing responses or reflections, essays, discussions, quizzes, or any graded work to submit as your own. Doing so is considered plagiarism and violates SJSU's academic integrity policy.

Our class values critical thinking, creativity, and learning. Overreliance on AI can flatten your voice and stifle the analysis that is central to WGSS. AI may give you a shortcut but it cannot replace the process of wrestling with ideas, connecting readings, and developing your own perspective.

Because AI is changing rapidly, we will have ongoing conversations throughout the semester about its use in academic work, its limits, and its implications for equity and knowledge production.

If you use AI at any point in your process, you must be transparent. At the end of your assignment, add a brief note explaining:

- What tool you used
- What prompt(s) you gave it
- How you used or revised the output in your own work

For example:

"I used ChatGPT to help brainstorm possible research questions. I selected one idea from its list and rewrote it to better align with our course materials."

If you directly quote or adapt text from AI, cite it in APA format (see: [How to cite ChatGPT](https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt) (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>) in APA). Screenshots or records of your AI use are also encouraged in case questions arise.

Remember: AI can be inaccurate, biased, or incomplete. You are always responsible for the quality, accuracy, and originality of the work you turn in.

If you're ever unsure whether a use of AI is acceptable, please ask me and we will figure it out together.

A Climate of Mutual Respect

A climate of mutual respect requires free expression, critical investigation, and open discussion of ideas. All of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. This means opening ourselves to the lived experiences of others, which may not be our own, and treating those experiences as valid. No one is entitled to harass, discriminate, or belittle another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. On the other hand, we cannot permit ourselves to be silenced because we feel awkward discussing politically sensitive issues.

Participating as a good listener while your peers are speaking is also critical. This is your role as a member of the audience. Good listening requires effort and energy; "audience member" is not a passive role. Good listening entails offering attentive, supportive nonverbal feedback, and asking questions or offering comments.

When you are involved in a class discussion reflect on the following: Do you lead? Do you follow? Do you dominate the conversation? Are you hesitant to speak up? Are you aware of other people's desire to join in the conversation? Do you make sure everyone has a chance to contribute? When you have an emotional reaction to something someone says, how do you handle it?

A Note about Women's Studies Classes

This class will be a challenge because:

The Workload- Officially, a three-unit course entails six hours of work outside the classroom. Each week you will be expected to read between 30-60 pages and class assignments will require a substantial amount of work outside of class.

Topic Matter- There will be frequent instances throughout the semester in which sensitive and difficult issues will be discussed. Many of these issues will require an open mind. Feminist readings of topics may go against moral or religious teachings with which you have grown up. Frequently, students in this course find that they begin to see almost everything in a new light. This experience can be both exciting and disturbing.

R-rating- As you will come to find, we may be using several texts that involve "profane" language. Some of the films that we will use in class also contain nudity and/or violence. Please be forewarned.

Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website \(https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php\)](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area D: Social Sciences

Area D courses increase students' understanding of human behavior and social interaction in the context of value systems, economic structures, political institutions, social groups, and natural environments. Students develop an understanding of problems and issues from different disciplinary perspectives and examine issues in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.

The CSU requires students to complete General Education courses in the Social Sciences in at least two different disciplines. Students may meet this requirement by either 1) taking two lower-division Area D courses in different disciplines, or 2) taking two lower-division Area D courses in the same discipline and an Area S upper-division GE course in a different discipline.

GE Area D Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area D course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which social institutions, culture, and environment shape and are shaped by the behavior of individuals, both past and present;
2. Compare and contrast the dynamics of two or more social groups or social systems in a variety of historical and/or cultural contexts;
3. Place contemporary social developments in cultural, environmental, geographical, and/or historical contexts;
4. Draw on social/behavioral science information from various perspectives to formulate applications appropriate to historical and/or contemporary social issues.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

Gendered Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings

Author: Shaw, Susan M., and Janet Lee

Publisher: Oxford

Edition: 8th

ISBN: 9780197622622

There is also an eTextbook available via Vital Source. Here is the link:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/products/gendered-voices-feminist-visions-susan-m-shaw-janet-lee-v9780197622629>

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. **In-Class Responses (10x10pts each = 100 points):** Ten times throughout the course you will be required to do an in-class writing response or group activity based on either the readings for that week, a film shown in class, a class "field trip" or guest speaker. These responses are my way of assessing that you are completing the readings as well as coming to class. They cannot be made up. You must be in class to get credit.
2. **Class Facilitation (200 points):** All students will be responsible for leading at least one class session with several of your classmates. This will require you to: synthesize the readings, present the material for the week, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the readings, and lead a discussion. More details on class presentations will follow.
3. **Online Quizzes (13x30pts each = 390 points):** At the end of each week/module, you will complete a quiz on Canvas based on what you have learned that week from the assigned readings, lecture, or other module materials. Quiz formats will vary and contain multiple choice, true/false, and/or short answer questions. Quizzes can be completed any time prior to the quiz due date, but you will only have one attempt at each quiz so you will need to complete the quiz in one sitting.
4. **Final Creative Project (310 points):** Your final for the course will be a creative project that explores one of the central themes we've studied. You will also share your project with the class during a presentation in the final weeks of the semester. Full details and guidelines will be provided later in the semester.

Grading Information

I grade using a point system. Your final grade is an accumulation of points you have earned throughout the semester. The grading scale is as follows:

A+ = 970-1000 A = 940-969 A- = 900-939

B+ = 870-899 B = 840-869 B- = 800-839

C+ = 770-799

C = 740-769

C- = 700-739

D+ = 660-669

D = 630-659

D- = 600-629

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

WGSS 10: Introduction to Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice.

When	Topic	Notes
Introduction Module Week 1/ Aug 20th	Things You Need to Know about the Course	
Module 1 Week 2 & 3/Aug 25 & Sept 1	Women's and Gender Studies: Perspectives and Practices	No Class on Monday, Sept 1st (Labor Day) Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 23-51 <i>Submit: Quiz #1 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 2 Week 4/Sept 8	Systems of Privilege and Inequality	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 75-99 <i>Submit: Quiz #2 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 3 Week 5/Sept 15	Learning Gender	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 120-155 <i>Submit: Quiz #3 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 4 Week 6/Sept 22	Inscribing Gender on the Body	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 176-216 <i>Submit: Quiz #4 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>

When	Topic	Notes
Module 5 Week 7/Sept 29	Sex, Power, and Intimacy	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 238-262 <i>Submit: Quiz #5 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 6 Week 8/Oct 9	Media and Culture	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 298-318 <i>Submit: Quiz #6 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 7 Week 9/Oct 13	Health and Reproductive Justice	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 349-373 <i>Submit: Quiz #7 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 8 Week 10/Oct 20	Family Systems, Family Lives	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 400-420 <i>Submit: Quiz #8 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 9 Week 11/Oct 27	Paid Employment	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 445-478 <i>Submit: Quiz #9 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 10 Week 12/Nov 3	Resisting Gender Violence	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 510-537 <i>Submit: Quiz #10 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 11 Week 13/Nov 10	State, Law, and Social Policy	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 568-581 <i>Submit: Quiz #11 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 12 Week 14/Nov 17	Religion and Spirituality	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 602-637 <i>Submit: Quiz #12 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 13 Week 15/Nov 24	Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures	Read: Shaw and Lee: Pgs. 661-690 <i>Submit: Quiz #13 by Friday at 11:59pm</i>
Module 14 Weeks 16-17/Dec 1 & 8		Final Creative Project Showcase