

## **EDPL 788B**

### **GENDER AND EDUCATION FALL 2004**

Time: Thursday 4:15-6:45pm  
Professor: Jing Lin  
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#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will take a critical approach in analyzing issues and problems concerning gender and education. It will examine:

- Feminist theories on gender inequity; transforming the debate on sexual inequality;
- Women's social status and educational opportunities from a historical and contemporary sociological/philosophical/psychological perspective;
- Gender identity and socialization: Identity development, and theories and practices as taking place in family, school, media and social and political institutions;
- Gender discrimination and biases in curriculum and classroom teaching; challenges facing adolescent girls and boys; ways to enhance girls' learning and reduce gender gaps;
- Women's ways of knowing and moral reasoning; finding women's voices;
- The intersection of gender and race, class, ethnicity and other factors;
- Women and development, ecofeminism, and women in leadership for the future

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course objectives are that students:

1. Learn to examine gender issues critically; develop and heighten awareness about gender discrimination and stereotypes in school and society;
2. Become informed about ways to combat gender discrimination in school and society;
3. Develop complex perspectives on gender issues with relationship to class, race, ethnicity, and other factors.
4. Develop a vision for a gender equal and peaceful, sustainable world.

#### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

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| 1. Abstracts and Participation in discussion: | 20% |
| 2. Personal reflection:                       | 20% |
| 3. Book review and presentation:              | 20% |

4. Research paper:

40%

- 1) **Abstracts and Critiques: 2-4 pages/week.** Students are expected to *write an abstract and reflection paper on at least three readings for each week*. Analyze the ideas in the readings and connect them to your own understanding of relevant issues in gender and education.
- 2) **Personal Reflection: 4 to 5 pages double-spaced.** Reflecting on the literature you have read, using the knowledge you have learned up to mid October, and taking a critical gender perspective, write a personal reflection examining your own education, life experiences and construction of gender identity. Due: **Oct 21** .
- 3) **Book Review: 3-4 pages.** Choose a book that is related to gender issues and education. Summarize the contents of the book and provide a thoughtful critique of the source. Indicate the most interesting and most important ideas in the book. Pinpoint the short comings of the source, if any as well. Students should follow the review pattern used by reputable scholarly journals, giving the full bibliographic details of the authors' name, title and subtitle of the book, place and date of publication, publisher, number of pages. Due: **Nov. 18**.
- 4) **Research Paper: 12-15 pages.** This paper should be on a topic appropriate to the subject matter of the course. You can also choose to use a different format to do the final paper, but you need to discuss with the professor before hand. Double space. Due: Dec. 13.

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Golombok, Susan and Robyn, Fivush. (1994). *Gender Development*. Cambridge University Press.

(2002). *The Jossey -Bass Reader on Gender in Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Belenky, Mary F. et al. (1997). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books.

Bell hooks. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Wilson, Marie C. (2004). *Closing the leadership gap: Why women can and must help run the world*. New York: Viking.

**A course pack will be used for the course. Articles in the course pack are listed in the reading list of each session.**

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

**SEPT. 2      INTRODUCTION**

**SEPT. 9      DEFINITION AND A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY  
OVERVIEW ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS, SOCIAL STATUS AND  
EDUCATION**

Mackie, Marlene. (1991). *Gender Relation in Canada*. Toronton: Butterworth. "Introduction." Pp. 1-21.

Susan Estrich. (2001). *Sex and power*. New York: Riverhead Books. Pp. 1-117.

Lin, Jing. (2003). "Chinese women under economic reform: Gains and Losses." *Harvard Asia Pacific Review*, Vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 88-90.

Population Reference Bureau. (2003). "2002 *Women of Our World*".  
Website: <http://www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org/womenofworld02.pdf>

### ***Questions for Discussion***

1. What were the codes of ethics for women in human history? How do they symbolize patriarchal oppression and gender inequality?
2. Discuss gender inequity in economic, social, political and cultural systems, and reflect on how they historically affected women in terms of their right to political participation (vote), education, employment opportunities, self respect, etc.
3. Where do women stand now? Discuss the fruits and issues of feminist movements and government policies. How effective have they been? What are the challenges? Is there a backlash? Why are women still lacking behind in so many areas?
4. Compare the life of your grandmother, your mother and your self? What are the

differences, and what are the similarities?

**SEPT. 16 FEMINIST THEORIES ON GENDER INEQUITY & WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM**

Tong, Rosemarie P. (1998) (2nd ed). *Feminist Thought*. Westview Press. "Liberal Feminist," "Radical Feminism," and "Marxist and Socialist Feminism."

*Questions for Discussion:*

1. What are the aspirations of liberal, socialist/Marxist and radical feminists? Where do they agree and where do they diverge?
2. Why gender inequity persists? Use a feminist perspective to analyze women's position today.

**SEPT. 23 GENDER DIFFERENCES AND SEXUAL INEQUALITY: TRANSFORMING THE DEBATE THROUGH CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Bem, Sandra L. (1993). *The Lenses of Gender*. Yale University Press. "Biological Essentialism," "Androcentrism."

Mackie, Marlene. (1991). *Gender Relations in Canada*. Toronto: Butterworths. Chapter 2, "Female/Male Similarities and Differences." Chapter 3, "Biological Explanation of Female-Male Differences."

Golombok, Susan and Robyn, Fivush. (1994). *Gender Development*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4 "Psychoanalytic approaches and moral development" pp. 55-74;

Martin, Emily. "The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles." *Signs* 16:3 (1991): 495-51.

*Questions for Discussion:*

1. Critique theories of "biological essentialism" and "androcentrism" and discuss: What problems have been created by the dichotomization of femininity and masculinity? How has gender inequity been legitimized?
2. To what extent is Freud's notion that "anatomy is destiny" true or false? What is the major problem with this notion?

**SEPT 30 GENDER SOCIALIZATION AND IDENTITY CONTRUCTION**

Richardson, Laurel et al. (2001). *Feminist Frontiers 5*. Boston, McGraw Hill. Chapter 12: "Gender stereotyping in the English Language." Chapter 13: "Women and the knife."

Golombok, Susan and Robyn, Fivush. (1994). *Gender Development*. Cambridge University Press. *The whole book except Chapter 4.*

***Questions for Discussion:***

1. In what ways can cognitive and social learning theory inform us about gender identity formation and the transmission of gender biases and stereotypes?
1. How does family environment (toys, dress, language, play and so on) affect children's gender perceptions? In what ways schools are organized to reinforce gender stereotypes (sports, etc)?
2. What examples did you observe, see, and read about in the media that convey gender-stereotyped messages? In other words, how are male and female portrayed in children's movies, books, magazines, TV programs and advertisement, and local post signs? What impacts do these materials/programs/signs have on children (e.g., the cult of thinness)?
3. What kind of pressures do young people face in terms of gender role expectations (e.g. body, beauty)? How are they different for boys and girls? How do children react to the pressures?
4. In what ways can gender bias in language affect our self perception?

**OCT 7            EDUCATION FOR GIRLS: LEARNING IN SCHOOL, CHALLENGES AND ALTERNATIVES**

*The Jossey -Bass Reader on Gender in Education, Chapters 1-2, 9-12, 16-18, 20, 27-31.*

***Questions for Discussion:***

1. What are the challenges and difficulties for girls in learning math and science?
2. How are women portrayed in textbooks? What are their roles, occupation and visibility in textbooks? What have been done and what remain to be the problems for presentation of women in textbooks?
3. How do teachers interact with students? What are their expectations for boys and girls? How is teaching organized in the classroom?
4. How is knowledge constructed? Whom do they serve? Whose knowledge? In what way is women's experience, knowledge and scholarship devalued or excluded?
5. Is there a fear of success experienced by girls?

**OCT 14. LEARNING IN SCHOOL AND CHALLENGES FOR BOYS**

*The Jossey -Bass Reader on Gender in Education, Chapters 4-8, 13, 19- 21,*

1. What are the critical questions that face boys today? How is our education failing boys? What are the possible solutions to boys' problems?
2. What critical challenges are facing adolescent boys, especially minority boys? What social changes must be introduced?

**OCT 21 SHARING OF PERSONAL REFLECTION PAPER**

*Use the knowledge you have learned so far and reflect on your own education, life experiences and construction of gender identity. Paper due*

**OCT. 28 NO CLASS, PROFESSOR IN CONFERENCE**

**NOV 4 WOMEN'S WAYS OF KNOWING: DEVELOPING VOICE OF HER OWN**

*The Jossey -Bass Reader on Gender in Education, Chapters 3.*

Belenky, Mary F. et al. (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books.

Hays, Elizabeth. (2000). "Voice." In E. Hays et al, *Women as learners: The significance of gender in adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

***Questions for Discussion:***

1. How do women learn? How teaching should be reformed so that women's voices are heard?
2. How can we connect transformative teaching with construction of a new identity?

**NOV. 11 TRANSCENDING CLASS, RACE AND GENDER**

*The Jossey -Bass Reader on Gender in Education, Chapters 22-26.*

Bell hooks. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Bell hooks. (2000). "Black women shaping feminist theory." From *Feminist theory: from margin to center*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

***Questions for Discussion:***

1. Why are race and social class key issues in feminist discourse? Why must we take multiple perspectives in understanding gender issues and education?
2. Discuss power and privilege in relation to race, ethnicity, social class, and other factors.

**NOV. 18      PRESENTATION OF BOOK OR ARTICLE REVIEWS**

***(Review article due on Nov. 18)***

**NOV 25      WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Parpart, Jane L. (1995). Deconstructing the Development "Expert." In M. Marchand and J. Parpart (eds). *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 242.

Lin Jiling. (2000). Evolution of the Confucian concept of women's value in recent times. *Chinese Education and Society*, vol. 33, no. 6, pp. 15-23.

Yang Xing. (2000). Mental impediments in education for women in China and countermeasures. *Chinese Education and Society*, vol. 33, no. 6, pp. 64-79.

Fujimura-Fanselow, Kumiko and Anne E. Imamura. (1991). The Education of Women in Japan. In *Windows on Japanese Education*, Beauchamp, Edward (ed.). NY: Greenwood, pp. 229-258.

Fox, Christine. (1999). "Girls and Women in Education and Training in Papua New Guinea" In *Gender, Education & Development Beyond Access to Empowerment*, Christine Heward and Sheila Bunwaree (eds). London: Zed Book Ltd, pp. 35-48

Jayaweera, Swarna. (1999). "Gender, Education, Development: Sri Lanka" In *Gender, Education & Development Beyond Access to Empowerment*, Christine Heward and Sheila Bunwaree (eds). London: Zed Book Ltd, pp. 174-188

***Questions for Discussion:***

1. What is the relationship between gender, development and empowerment?

2. In what ways are women and girls still suffering from horrible inequity internationally? What are the critical factors hampering girls' education?
3. What creative ways have been adopted to involve women in development and education?

## **DEC. 2        ECOFEMINISM AND WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE**

Wilson, Marie C. (2004). *Closing the leadership gap: Why women can and must help run the world*. New York: Viking.

Davion, Victoria. (1994). Is ecofeminism feminist? In Karen J. Warren (ed), *Ecological feminism*. London: Routledge, pp. 8-28.

Diamond, Irene. (1994). Chapter 6: Our bodies, our Earth: The politics of renewal, restructuring, and re-evolution. In *Fertile Ground: Women, Earth, and the limits of control*. Boston: Beacon Press, pp. 135-150.

Warren, Karen J. (2000). Chapter Nine: Surviving patriarchy: Ecofeminist philosophy and spirituality. In *Ecofeminist philosophy: A Western perspective on what it is and why it matters*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

### ***Questions for Discussion:***

- What problems have been created by a mechanistic, disconnected worldview and a greed-driven economy? What environmental crises are we facing now? What are the main goals of ecofeminism? What can eco-feminism offer in terms of our environmental survival and sustainability?
- How should education respond to the challenge of building international peace and the protection of our Earth Mother? What does it take to enhance women's leadership roles in all major policy areas in international and domestic affairs?