

Feminist Philosophy

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Sample Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the development of Western feminist philosophical thought from late 18th Century feminist philosophers to contemporary feminist philosophers. Some of the areas that we will focus on include: feminist epistemology (especially challenges to the traditional notion of objectivity), feminist theories on oppression and domination, feminist conceptions of the self (especially relational autonomy and intersectional identity), Feminist theories of race and responses to racist oppression, feminist theories on gender and responses to sexism, and transnational feminism. Overall, we will explore how feminists have challenged traditional knowledge paradigms and conceptions of the self, and examine feminist theories about oppression, race, gender, multiculturalism, and the liberation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The goals of this course are to provide students with a wide-ranging (though certainly not exhaustive) understanding of Western feminist thought and, by doing so, engage more deeply with broader philosophical debates.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Recognize, explain, and reflect upon the major philosophical arguments covered in this class, and critically compare them.
2. Understand the major goals of western feminism philosophy.
3. Hone critical thinking skills by analyzing philosophical arguments.
4. Refine writing skills through course papers and exams.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 >> *What is Feminism? History and Feminist Thought*

Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, Book V

Mary Wollstonecraft, *"Of the Pernicious Effects which Arise from the Unnatural Distinctions Established in Society"*

Week 2 >> *What is Feminism? History and Feminist Thought*

John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (selections)

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (selection)

- Week 3 >> *What is Feminism? History and Feminist Thought*
bell hooks, "*Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory*"
- Week 4 >> *What is Gender?*
Sally Haslanger, "*Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do we Want Them to be?*"
Judith Butler, "*Performative Acts and Gender Constitution*"
- Week 5 >> *Is Knowledge Gendered?*
Lorraine Code, "*Taking Subjectivity into Account*"
Elizabeth Anderson, "*Feminist Epistemology: An Interpretation and a Defense*"
- Week 6 >> *Is Knowledge Gendered?*
Jane Roland Martin, *Reclaiming a Conversation: The Ideal of the Educated Woman* (selection)
- Week 7 >> *What is Sexism? What is Oppression?*
Ann Cudd and Leslie Jones, "*Sexism*"
Iris Marion Young, "*Five Faces of Oppression*"
- Week 8 >> *What is Sexism? What is Oppression?*
Kate Manne, "*Threatening Women*"
Kate Manne, "*Ameliorating Misogyny*"
- Week 9 >> *What Is A Self?*
Marilyn Friedman, "*Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women*"
Anita Allen, "*Forgetting Yourself*"
- Week 10 >> *Feminism, Culture, and Identity*
Jennifer C. Nash, "*Re-thinking Intersectionality*"
Watch In Class: Kimberlé Crenshaw: The Urgency of Intersectionality
- Week 11 >> *Feminism, Culture, and Identity*
Susan Moller Okin, "*Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*"
Serene Khader, "*Toward A Decolonial Feminist Universalism*"

- Week 12 >> Feminism, Culture, and Identity
Serene Khader, *"Toward A Decolonial Feminist Universalism"*
Serene Khader, *"Autonomy and the Secular: Do Muslim Women Need Freedom?"*
- Week 13 >> Transnationalism and Care
Serene Khader, *"Autonomy and the Secular: Do Muslim Women Need Freedom?"*
Virginia Held, *"The Ethics of Care and Civil Society"* and *"The Caring Society"*
- Week 14 >> Transnationalism and Care
Fiona Robinson, *"Care Ethics and the Transnationalization of Care: Reflections on Autonomy, Hegemonic Masculinities, and Globalization"*