

WOMEN'S VOICES THRU TIME

WITH DR. NIKKI LANE



Course Description

From course catalogue: *This course focuses on distinctive contributions of women to Western artistic and intellectual traditions; significant articulations of human experience expressed by women through literature, art, and history; how such traditions became established; and how women, despite obstacles, have produced lasting works of ideas and imagination. Usually offered every spring.*

Course Expectations

Intended Learning Outcomes

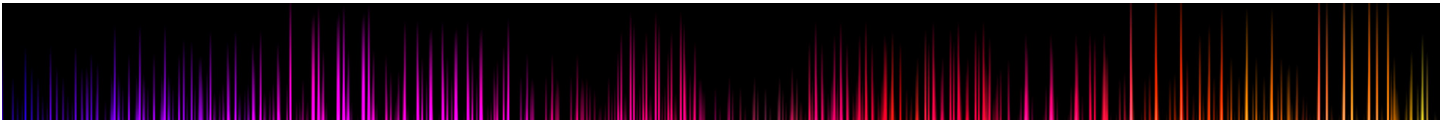
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with scholarly study about women, gender and culture.
- Read primary and secondary sources and explain their significance to relevant historical and contemporary problems.
- Recognize the inclusionary and exclusionary distinctions within women's thought in the West.
- Understand feminist views and theories as points of both intellectual departure and critical inquiry.
- Consider the role of women of color in important artistic and intellectual traditions in the West.

Professional Competencies

Below are professional competencies that you will be able to practice and/or develop in this class:

- Archival research
- Oral and written communication skills
- Advanced problem solving skills
- Teamwork and working collaboratively
- Talking comfortably and competently about complex issues of race, gender, and sexuality, especially those related to women of color in Western civilizations.
- Presentation skills
- Technical skills (presentation software)



Class Rules

1. Come to class. **Attendance is required in this course.**
 - You are allowed two excused absences during the term.
 - In order for the absence to be excused, you must email me prior to missing class and provide proper documentation.
 - Unexcused absences will result in you receiving a zero for Attendance/Participation (1 point reduction in your overall grade).
2. Be on time to class.
 - If you are more than 20 minutes late, it will be counted as an Unexcused absence.
 - Being late twice (under half an hour) during the term, will constitute a full unexcused absence.
3. Come to class thoroughly prepared with notes, questions, and assigned reading materials.
 - To clarify: Bring all assigned reading material to class each class period.
4. Open the bag and pop the can before class starts.
5. Put all electronic devices (phones, tablets, and computers) in silent mode.
6. Do not use electronic devices to "zone out."
 - If the professor notices you "zoning out" which includes buying clothes from your favorite shop on the Internet, chatting, Snapping, Instagramming, live Tweeting, or any other manner of using an e-device while not engaging in course activities, you will be asked to turn off the device and leave it at home for the remainder of the semester. You will receive a zero for Attendance/Participation for that day.
7. Follow class rules regarding discussion (to be determined by the class on the first day)
8. Check Canvas frequently and read/respond to posts/emails from the professor with due diligence.
9. Be courteous to your classmates and to the professor in person and digitally.

Students receive a zero for class Attendance/Participation for the week if they fail to follow the Class Rules outlined above. If an issue/crisis arises or persists that prevents you, or might prevent you, from following any of above rules or course expectations, it is necessary that you communicate this to me via email or in person immediately.

Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the university's Academic Integrity Code. Located on the university's website (<https://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code.cfm>), the code establishes the following commitments:

"By enrolling at American University and then each semester when registering for classes, students acknowledge their commitment to the Code. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and their responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, examinations of whatever kind, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Students are responsible for learning the conventions of documentation and acknowledgment of sources. American University expects students to complete all examinations, tests, papers, creative projects, and assignments of any kind according to the highest ethical standards, as set forth either explicitly or implicitly in this Code or by the direction of instructors."

Expectations of Academic Integrity apply to all activities in this course, written or otherwise. Violations of the code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violation occurs. Please review the Academic Integrity Code and see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for the course.

Citations

Follow the [Chicago Manual 18th Style Author-Date citation style guide](#).

You must properly cite sources used in all written submissions in this class. If something is

- (1) quoted directly,
- (2) paraphrased (their idea in your own words), or
- (3) consulted regarding dates, "facts," and figures.

Please note: "Reworking" material from another source without doing any intellectual work to contribute your own thoughts, is also plagiarism. Demonstrate your critical thinking and analytic skills by drawing from other people's work to develop your own ideas and to support your own thesis. If you need help determining whether you're doing this properly, please do not hesitate to ask the professor.

(Segments of this section are paraphrased from Dr. William Leap's 2011 Discourse, Text, and Voice Syllabus.)

Please note: I may utilize plagiarism detection software for your written assignments in this class.

Learning Management System: Canvas

Our class will be piloting Canvas this semester. This means we will test the learning management system to see if we like it as an alternative to Blackboard.

To log in, you'll use canvas.american.edu and use your AU credentials to log in.

Throughout the semester, I will provide demonstrations on how to use the system and am happy to answer any questions you might have about navigating it though you'll find quickly that it is exceptionally user-friendly and intuitive.



Academic Support Services

Office Hours and General Support

If you have any questions, trouble with assigned readings, or need help with written assignments, please see me during office hours (Tue/Fri 10:30-12:30pm), or digital office hours (Mon-Fri by appointment) via Skype. I am committed to you being successful in this course, and am committed to helping you be successful throughout your collegiate experience. If you require any help, please think of me as a resource and call on me accordingly.

Access Support and Learning Services

Students who are clients of Academic Support and Access Center (ASAC) have the responsibility of requesting services through ASAC at the beginning of each semester. Once documentation is obtained and shared with me, I am committed to making sure that you have the accommodations you require.

For more information about registering with ASAC:

- Visit <<http://www.american.edu/ocl/asac/index.cfm>>
- Walk-in Mary Graydon Rm 243
- Call 202-885-3360

Time Management

I am committed to helping you become a more productive and stress-less student. Schedule some time to talk with me during office hours about study habits, reading effectiveness, note-taking, and getting the most out of this class and college in general.



Assessment

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Final Point Value
A (4.0)	Greater than 95
A-	90 and less than 95
B+	86 and less than 90
B (3.0)	83 and less than 86
B-	80 and less than 83
C+	76 and less than 80
C (2.0)	73 and less than 76
C-	70 and less than 73
D (1.0)	65 and less than 70
F (0)	Less than 65

Late Work Policy

After checking schedules for travel, work, and other courses, if there are conflicts or potential conflicts, please bring this to the attention of the professor immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made. Extra credit point if you email me within the first week of class to indicate any potential conflicts in your schedule.

If you require more time for any assignment, I am happy to provide you an alternative due date, however, you must make arrangements with me no fewer than 5 days PRIOR to the due date. I reserve the right to be more flexible on this whenever possible.

All late assignments (I give an 11 minute grace period for broken computers and bad internet connections) will incur an automatic 25% reduction in score. If they are more than 72 hours late, then a 50% reduction in score will be assessed.

Grading System: Points vs Percentages

This class uses a "Point System" as opposed to a "Weighted" or "Percentage" system to calculate your final grade. You don't get letter grades or percentages on assignments, you earn points. To simplify things, your grade is based on the number of points you earn out of the 100 points possible points in the class. Extra credit does not effect the points possible. If you complete an extra credit assignment, those points are added to your total points earned. **Please note:** *You can only earn up to 10 points of Extra Credit. Extra Credit is assessed at the end of the term and only in cases where you've completed all assignments in the class.*

To check point progress, add up the number of points you've earned-to-date, then divide by total points possible up to that date. This can give you a *sense* of how you're doing, but it is vital you understand that the number that results from this calculation is not an indication of your final grade, simply the percentage of points you've earned up to that point. The total number of points earned at the end of the term is used to calculate your letter grade. See "Grading Scale."

Further, this calculation is not always the best indicator of what you're learning in the class. Questions to consider: Are you turning in assignments on time? Are you present in class and participating? Are you adding value to your in-class discussion groups? Are you making connections beyond the course material? Are you able to make connections within the material? Are you noticing larger patterns?

I strongly encourage you to visit me during office hours to discuss your progress throughout the semester, not just at the end. I also encourage you to [read this essay on why obsessing over A's does you little good in the long run](#). In fact, I'll give you 2 points of extra credit if you write a short one page reflection on how the essay makes you think further about your pursuit of knowledge (as opposed to grades) in college.

You will receive grades back on major assignments within 14 days, unless otherwise noted.

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Attendance/Participation	15 pts	Assessed weekly
Homework	5 pts	As assigned
(In-Class) Reading Group	20 pts	
Response sheets (5)	5 pts	Weekly, Wks 4-8
Response Sheet Portfolio	10 pts	Mar 5, 10pm
Self & Peer Evaluation	5 pts	Mar 5, 10pm
Mid-Term Exam (Open Notes)	15 pts	Mar 8, during class
Women's Voices Book Club	15 pts	
Discussion Board Reflections (3)	5 pts	Wk 5, Wk 7, Wk 10
Critical Reflection (Art display/Audiovisual presentation/Essay)	10 pts	Mar 29, 10pm
Women's Voices in the Archives Presentation (In Pairs)	30 pts	
First Draft	5 pts	Apr 12
Final Draft - Self-Running Presentation	15 pts	Final Exam Period
Self and Peer Evaluation	5 pts	Final Exam Period
Commentary on colleagues work	5 pts	Final Exam Period
Extra Credit (assessed only if all assignments are turned in)	Up to 10 pts	As assigned
Total	100 pts	

Attendance/Participation (15 pts)

Attendance: You are required to attend all scheduled meetings of this class during the term. Two excused absences are permitted. In order for the absence to be excused, you must email me prior to missing the class about your absence. Unexcused absences will result in you receiving a zero for Attendance/Participation (0.5 point reduction in your overall total points earned).

Class Participation: Students are required to participate in lively, critical discussion of course materials in-class either during class or on the course online discussion board.

Homework (5 pts)

Occasionally, I will ask you to complete a homework assignment in this class. It will never be arduous and will rarely take more than half an hour to complete. It may, for example, ask you to write a short paragraph, or a reflection on media you review for class.

Short Descriptions of Major Assignments

You will receive detailed instructions for all assignments in this class that will include rubrics so that you understand the expectations and assessment for assignments. Included here are point values and short descriptions which DO NOT replace what is written in the instructions for the assignments. You must closely read the instructions provided on Canvas for all assignments in this class.



(In-Class) Reading Group (20 pts)

Beginning in Week 4 and ending before Spring Break, you will meet during class for 30-45 minutes with an assigned Reading Group to discuss the reading material for that Week. Each member of the group will have a unique role and be responsible for a prep sheet to be turned in before class and used during your Reading Group Meeting. Roles will rotate such that every member will have a chance to be in each role. See Canvas for more details on the roles:

- Discussion Leader
- Passage Master
- Creative Connector
- Devil's Advocate
- Reporter

Everyone in the group receives an individual grade. You will earn 1 point for completion and turning the prep sheet in on time. You will turn in a portfolio worth 10 points during Week 8 with all 5 prep sheets you've completed. The **first meeting will be on Feb 1** where you will meet with your assigned Reading Group and you will sign up for roles for the remaining weeks. You will not be required to meet outside of class time, but are encouraged to remain in communication with one another. *You are strongly encouraged to meet with me to talk about expectations for the prep sheets before you turn in the portfolio to ensure that they meet expectations.* Extra credit point if you come and visit me to talk specifics before the first prep sheet is due.

Midterm Exam (15 pts)

The Midterm for this course will be submitted online and will be an open-notes, timed exam containing between 3-5 long answer questions. The exam will be based on concepts, readings, and thinkers we engaged through Week 8 and must be completed during class time on Friday, March 8th.

Women's Voices Book Club (15 pts)

You will choose one of the following memoirs to read independently over the semester.

Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982)
 Patricia J. Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (1991)
 Esmeralda Santiago, *When I Was Puerto Rican* (1993)
 Lindy West, *Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman* (2016)
 Nicole Chung, *All You Can Ever Know: A Memoir* (2018)

During Weeks 5, 7 and 10, I will pose a "Reflection Prompt" on the class discussion board for your assigned book. You will be required to write a short reflection in response that demonstrates your engagement with the book you're reading. On Mar 22, (the week after Spring Break) you will meet in-person during class with people who have chosen to read the same memoir to discuss the book. You're encouraged to bring *snacks*, and to prepare at least two discussion questions that you'd like to talk about with the group.

Finally, you will turn in a Critical Reflection on the memoir that may take the form of an art project, short film, audiovisual presentation (self-running), or a short essay (3-5 pgs). Due no later than Mar 29th, 10pm, but you are encouraged to turn it in before.



Women's Voices in the Archives Presentation (30 pts)

In lieu of a Final Exam, you will conduct archival research, analyze the resulting primary sources according to conceptual frame you've gathered in this class, and present the results. The Final Project requires the following:

- (1) a clear research question;
- (2) 3-4 primary sources (documents, photos, art, film reel, live recordings) from the 20th century produced by women, or which strongly center women's voices;
- (3) an in-depth analysis of sources you locate that utilizes and expands upon course themes and concepts;
- (4) a presentation of your analysis in the form of a 5-7 minute self-running media rich PowerPoint (that includes audio and narrating text).

You will work in pairs. You must indicate to me by February 8th who you will be working with the research question you intend to ask. You will turn in a draft version of your presentation on Apr 19th. You will post the final presentation to the course discussion board to share with colleagues. You will also complete a Self and Peer Evaluation that will factor into your final grade for this assignment.

Required Texts and Media

- ☐ *Eclipsed* by Danai Gurira or *Familiar* by Danai Gurira
- ☐ *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, 4th edition edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (BCMB in course schedule)
- ☐ *Redefining Realness* by Janet Mock
- ☐ Episode 1, *Pose* (2018) FX Original series
- ☐ *Bessie* (2015) directed by Dee Rees
- ☐ *The Joy Luck Club* (1993) directed by Wayne Wang
- ☐ *Frida* (2002) directed by Julie Taymor

Tentative Course Schedule

Below is a list of material to be prepared BEFORE class. Subject to change. Check Canvas regularly for the most up-to-date list of required and recommended material you're to prepare before class.

Unit 1: How to Listen to Women's Voices

Week 01 | Women's Obstacles

Jan 15 - Introduction

- Syllabus
- Selections: "Feminism is for Everybody" (2000) by bell hooks

Jan 18 - The Plight of (All) Women

- "Introduction" to *The Second Sex* (1949) by Simone de Beauvoir
- "The Dialectic of Sex" (1970) by Shulamith Firestone

Week 02 | Causing Trouble

Jan 22 - Cult of True (White) Womanhood

- "The Cult of True Womanhood" by Barbara Welter
- "The Legacy of Slavery: Standards for a New Womanhood" (1981) by Angela Davis

Jan 25 - Indigenous Knowledge and Witch-Hunts

- "Witches, Charlatans, and Old Wives" (2018) by Oksana Yakushko

Week 03 | Differences Among Women

Jan 29 - Silent No More

- "The Masters Tools Will Never Dismantel the Master's House" (1984) by Audre Lorde (BCMB)
- "Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" (1984) by Audre Lorde
- "Theory as Liberatory Practice" by bell hooks

Feb 01 - The Importance of Difference

- "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" (1984) by Audre Lorde
- "What Happened Here" (1991) by Elsa Barkley Brown

Unit 2: Listening to Women's Voices

Week 04 | The Poem

Feb 05 - Emily Dickinson and 19th Century Poetry - RG #1

- Select poems by Emily Dickinson
- "The Negro never knew" (2002) by Paula Bernat Bennett
- "Poetry is Not a Luxury" (1984) by Audre Lorde

Feb 08 - The Archive

- Special Guest: Leslie Nellis (Archivist) from American University Library

Week 05 | The Vote

Feb 12 - The Suffragettes - RG #2

- "Kitchen not the Ballot Box" George G. Vest
- "'The Solitude of Self" Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- "Durability of White Supremacy" Belle Kearney
- "Class Versus Gender" Carrie Chapman Catt

Feb 15 - Southern Horrors

- Selections: "Southern Horrors: Lynching in all its Phases" Ida B. Wells-Barnett
- "A Heritage of Scorn" Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

Week 06 | Naming the Self

Feb 19 - Questioning Heterosexuality RG #3

- "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (1980) by Adrienne C. Rich
- "Lesbianism: An Act of Resistance" by Cheryl Clark (BCMB)

Feb 22 - Self-Portrait

- Review selected works by Frida Kahlo
- Screen: Frida (2002) film
- "I Am What I Am" by Rosario Morales (BCMB)

Week 07 | Collaboration

Feb 26 - Labor Activism - RG #4

- Screen: Dolores (2012) documentary
- "Spaces of Labor Activism..." (2005) by Wendy Jepson

Mar 1 - Third Wave Feminism

- "The Bridge Poem" Kate Rushin (BCMB)
- "The Welder" by Cherrie Moraga (BCMB)
- "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex" (1989) by Kimberlé Crenshaw

Week 08 | Cultural Theory

Mar 5 - Critiquing Colonialism - RG #5 & Reading Group Portfolio Due by 10pm

- "Under Western Eyes" (1988) by Chandra Mohanty
- "Constructing the Other" (2007) by Jing Yin
- Screen: The Joy Luck Club (1993) film based on the novel by Amy Tan

Mar 8 - Midterm Exam

- No in-class meeting, however, your Midterm Exam is to be completed during this time.

Week 09 | Spring Break

- I encourage you to finish reading your chosen memoir during your break and work on the critical reflection.

Week 10 | Film Cont.

Mar 19 - Bessie Smith and Blues Women

- Screen: Bessie (2015) by Dee Rees
- "I Used to Be Your Sweet Mama" (1999) by Angela Davis.

Mar 22 - Book Club Meeting

Week 11 | Re-Writing Colonial Tales

Mar 26

- *Eclipsed* (first half)

Mar 29 - Memoir Critical Reflection Due

- *Eclipsed* (second half)

Week 12 | *Becoming* a Woman

Apr 2

- Redefining Realness, Pt. 1

Apr 5

- Redefining Realness, Pt. 2 & Pt. 3

Unit 3: Thinking with Women's Voices

Week 13 | Redefining "Women"

Apr 9

- Episode 1, FX Original series *Pose* (2018)
- "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens" by Cathy Cohen

Apr 12 - Scheduled Work Day

- Draft Pres. Due

Week 14 | Conclusions

Apr 16 - TBD

- Reading selections based on student feedback

Apr 19 - TBD

- Reading selections based on student feedback

Week 15 | Course Review

Apr 23 - The Future & The Roots of Contemporary Feminism

- "A Black Feminist Statement" (1977) by the Combahee River Collective (BCMB)
- "The Masters Tools Will Never Dismantel the Master's House" (1984) by Audre Lorde (BCMB)
- "In Search of our Mother's Gardens" by Alice Walker

Apr 26 - Review Day

- No reading assigned.

Final Exam Period | Final Presentation Due via Class Discussion Board



Course and syllabus designed by
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