

**PHIL 1107: Philosophy and Gender  
Spring 2017**

*Time and Place:* MWF 1:25-2:15, BRON 124  
*Instructor:* Alycia LaGuardia-LoBianco, M.A.  
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*Office hours:* Monday 11am-1pm, Manchester 132

Course Overview

This course will provide an introduction to philosophical questions surrounding gender and its intersection with other social identities like race and sexual orientation. Topics include the impact of oppression on individual freedom and responsibility and applied topics like hook-up culture. By engaging with readings via philosophical tools and in-class discussions, you will be able to evaluate philosophical concepts, arguments, and objections.

Class Requirements

20%: Midterm exam  
20%: Final exam (non-cumulative)  
20%: Participation (includes in-class work)  
20%: Weekly-ish Quizzes  
20% Weekly-ish Writing

*There will be NO extra credit opportunities for the class.*

Exams: The exams are meant to test your understanding of the concepts and arguments in the readings and discussion. Both the midterm and the final will be formatted as a combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer/fill-in-the-blank questions, and one essay. You will receive a list of potential essay prompts about one week before each exam, one of which will appear on the exam.

Participation and Conduct: Active participation in class is key to learning philosophy. Former students have told me that discussions help clarify difficult or obscure readings, so it is to your benefit to attend and make an effort to join the conversation. Participation can be difficult, especially if this is your first philosophy class. You aren't expected to have all the answers figured out or to provide a brilliant theory or devastating objection whenever you raise your hand, but instead to show that you are engaging with the readings critically and carefully. Here are some examples: Point out a connection or a contrast between two readings; clarify a position in new terms ("So is this author saying...?"); work out a 'hunch' ("This argument seems unsound, but I can't quite put my finger on why..."); notice an implication of an argument or concept ("If this is right, doesn't that mean that...?"); bring up a problem in an argument ("Is this claim consistent with what she writes on page...?").

The participation component is meant to benefit both students that begin the semester quietly and take time to improve in this area and those who are comfortable participating from the first day on. There are multiple ways to satisfy the participation

requirement, either by contributing to discussion in class, coming to talk with me during my office hours, or participating on the HuskyCT discussion board (I will post questions every week). **Additionally, your participation grade will include in-class work, which may include group work and short writing assignments.**

In addition to active participation, I expect everyone to conduct themselves appropriately for a college class, treating others with respect and creating a positive class environment. Disruptive, rude behavior that interferes with the class environment will not be tolerated and, if persistent, will hurt your grade. Many philosophical topics are controversial, and it is expected that there will be disagreement. You are encouraged to challenge claims and present objections. However, it is important to separate the *claim* a person makes from the *person* making the claim. Attacking a philosophical position does not mean attacking the person who holds that position, whether this is an author or a fellow classmate.

Weekly-ish Quizzes: Quizzes are intended as both study material and practice for the exams, so will roughly the same format: a few multiple choice questions and one short answer questions. Each quiz will generally cover the readings discussed that week. These are **in-class quizzes only**; if you are not in class on the day of quiz (see schedule), you will receive a zero. **All quizzes will be on Fridays. I will drop your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester.**

Weekly Writing: Once a week, you will be expected to write about one paragraph on that week's reading(s). These must be submitted before 12pm on Monday via HuskyCT. The goal of these assignments is to practice engaging with the texts and come prepared to discuss them in class. You may pose a question or objection to an argument in the text, write about something that confused you, make connections with other texts or any other ideas you've encountered, explain why you disagree with the author—anything that shows you were thinking critically about the text.

#### Electronics and Classroom policy

You are permitted to bring your laptops or other devices to class so long as you use them to take notes or refer to the texts; use them otherwise at the peril of your participation grade. In general, I expect you to be attentive and non-disruptive during class time. Even if this class was far from your preferred choice, it behooves you to try to get something out of it.

#### Grade Breakdown

100-94: A

93-90: A-

89-87: B+

86-83: B

82-80: B-

79-77: C+

76-73: C

72-70: C-

69-67: D+  
 66-63: D  
 62-60: D-  
 59-0: F

### Required Readings

There is no textbook required for this class. All readings are available on HuskyCT. Please bring readings with you to class as we will reference them during discussions (you are not required to print anything out; laptops and tablets are fine if you prefer). You are expected to come to class having done the assigned reading for the week. Any changes will be announced through HuskyCT, so please make sure to check the site regularly.

Philosophy texts can be very difficult to read and understand, especially at the first pass. In some of the texts we will be reading, there is no definitive interpretation or single ‘answer’ that unlocks the meaning of the work. Rather, you’ll have to work with the text, relying on textual evidence and arguments for your interpretation of the meaning. This means that the readings can be dense, obscure, mysterious, and at times, unpleasant to read. It will require work and multiple readings to something out of the text. Try to become comfortable with this intellectual discomfort. If you don’t understand something, note your confusion, move on, and come back to it later. If you are still unsure what the text is saying, this can be a great question to bring up in class—chances are good that you are not the only one who is confused!

### Late Policy

In-class work and weekly quizzes cannot be made up; you must complete them in class to receive credit. **No exceptions.**

For every day a weekly writing assignment is late, I will deduct 1 (one) point from that assignment. Check the schedule for due dates and plan accordingly.

### Makeup Policy for Exams

If you have a legitimate scheduling conflict (i.e. documented and university-approved), you must contact me **at least two weeks** before the date of the exam to schedule a makeup, which you must take within a few days of the original exam. Failure to do this (i.e. emailing me on the day of the exam asking to be excused) or absences on the day of the exam will result in a zero for the exam. Exceptions may be made in the event of a documented medical emergency or family crisis (e.g. a doctor’s note explaining that you had a medical emergency—no details are necessary). I will determine the threshold of legitimate conflicts and emergencies on a case-by-case basis.

### Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this class—even if they are done unintentionally. If you are unclear on what counts as academic misconduct, ask me. Any instance of academic misconduct will be handled according to the standards of the university. You are responsible with familiarizing yourself with UConn’s position on academic misconduct, which can be found here: <http://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/>.

Disabilities

If you are a student with documented special needs, please let me know so that we can make arrangements to best accommodate you. If you think you may benefit from these services and have not yet done so, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities. Information can be found here: <http://www.csd.uconn.edu>.

Important Numbers

Counseling and Mental Health Services: 486-4705 or [www.cmhs.uconn.edu](http://www.cmhs.uconn.edu)  
 Alcohol or Other Drug Services: 486-9432 or [www.aod.uconn.edu](http://www.aod.uconn.edu)  
 Office of Student Services and Advocacy: 486-3426 or [www.dos.uconn.edu](http://www.dos.uconn.edu)

Disclaimer

I reserve the right to reasonably alter the syllabus if needed, and will announce any changes in class and via HuskyCT.

ScheduleWeek 1: 1/17-1/20: Introduction, Sex & Gender

- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry, 'Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender,' Sections 1.1 & 1.2
- <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/>

Week 2: 1/23-1/27

- **Weekly Writing on Wollstonecraft Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, selection
- Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Introduction
- **Friday: Quiz 1**

Week 3: 1/30-2/3

- **Weekly Writing on Bauer Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Beauvoir, continued
- Nancy Bauer, "Beauvoir on the Allure of Self-Objectification"
- **Friday: Quiz 2**

Week 4: 2/6-2/10: Trans Identities

- **Weekly Writing on Fausto-Sterling OR SEP entry Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Anne Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes"
- SEP entry, 'Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues,' Sections 1 & 2  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-trans/>
- Talia Mae Bettcher, "Evil Deceivers and Make-Believers: On Transphobic Violence and the Politics of Illusion"
- **Friday: Quiz 3**

Week 5: 2/13-2/17: Intersectionality

- **Weekly Writing on Crenshaw Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Kimberlé Crenshaw's "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," selections
- **Friday: Quiz 4**

Week 6: 2/20-2/24

- **Weekly Writing on hooks Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- bell hooks' "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory"
- Cheshire Calhoun's "Separating Lesbian Theory from Feminist Theory"
- **Friday: Quiz 5**

Week 7: 2/27-3/3 MIDTERM

- Monday 2/27: Catch up/Review for midterm
- **Wednesday 3/1: MIDTERM PART 1**
- **Friday 3/3: MIDTERM PART 2**

Week 8: 3/6-3/10: Masculinity

- **Weekly Writing on Coston and Kimmel Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Bethany Coston and Michael Kimmel, "Seeing Privilege Where It Isn't: Marginalized Masculinities and the Intersectionality of Privilege"
- C.J. Pascoe, "Dude You're A Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse"
- **Friday: Quiz 6**

Week 9: 3/13-3/16

- *Spring Break!*

Week 10: 3/20-3/24: Oppression

- **Weekly Writing on Frye Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Marilyn Frye, "Oppression"
- Kenneth Clatterbaugh, "Are Men Oppressed?"
- **Friday: Quiz 7**

Week 11: 3/27-3/31

- **Weekly Writing on Bartky Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Sandra Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression"
- Martha C. Nussbaum, "Adaptive Preferences and Women's Options," selection
- Start Uma Narayan, "Minds of Their Own"
- **Friday: Quiz 8**

Week 12: 4/3-4/7: Responsibility Under Oppression

- **Weekly Writing on Superson Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Continue Narayan

- Anita M. Superson, “Right-Wing Women: Causes, Choices, and Blaming the Victim”
- **Friday: Quiz 9**

Week 13: 4/10-4/14

- **Weekly Writing on Wendell Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Continue Superson
- Susan Wendell, “Oppression and Victimization; Choice and Responsibility”
- **Friday: Quiz 10**

Week 14: 4/17-4/21: Sex, Consent, and Deception

- **Weekly Writing on Conly Due By Monday at noon on HuskyCT**
- Sarah Conly, “Seduction, Rape, Coercion.”
- Tom Dougherty, “Sex Lies and Consent”
- **Friday: Quiz 11**

Week 15: 4/24-4/28 IN CLASS FINAL

- Monday 4/24: Catch up/review for final
- **Wednesday 4/26: FINAL PART 1**
- **Friday 4/28: FINAL PART 2**

Week 16: 5/1-5/5 Finals Week

*No final during finals week*