George Mason University Course Approval Form
Office of the Registrar
New__X_____ Modify_______ Delete_______

Department: Public and International Affairs  Course Abbrev/Number__GOVT 820

Prepared by: Julianne Mahler, Dept. Public & International Affairs  Ext: 3-1414

Full Course Title: Advanced Topics in Political Thought
(Topic varies. This example: Feminist Theory and Political Science)

Abbreviated Course Title (*Inventory will only accommodate 24 characters*):
Adv Sem Pol Thought

Term First (new courses): F 2006  Course Level: GA
UL=Undergrad lower
UU=Undergrad upper
GF=Grad lower (500-600)
GA= Grad upper (700 + )

Credit Hours: (Fixed)__3__ (Var.)______  Catalog Format : (3:3:0)

Previous Course ID :_________________ Last Term Course will be Offered:______________

Repeatable for Credit: T, 9  D=Yes, but not within same term (indicate max hrs) Up to:
T=Yes, within same term (indicate max hrs) (Maximum hours)
N=Cannot be repeated for credit

Activity Code 1: Sem
Activity Code 2:
LEC=Lecture  RCT=Recitation  SEM=Seminar
LAB=Lab Maximum Enrollment:
STU=Studio  INT=Internship
IND=Independent Study

Prereq: GOVT 520

Approval:
Department or Program:______________________________  Date:_______________
(Signature)

College Council:____________________________________  Date:_______________
(Signature- if applicable)

Graduate Council:*_____________________________________  Date:_______________
(Signature - Provost or Graduate Council Representative)

*All courses numbered 500 or above must be forwarded to Graduate Council once approved at the departmental or college level. OtR 11/99
GOVT 820
Advanced Topics in Political Thought: Feminist Theory and Political Science
Department of Public & International Affairs
George Mason University

Course Description:

This semester GOVT 820 examines a variety of issues and debates within the field of feminist theory that are important to the study of Political Science. Drawing on materials written by scholars from several disciplines, the course provides an introduction to feminist theory, explores the nature of feminist inquiry both in interdisciplinary perspective and within the discipline of political science, examines several of the major areas of feminist scholarship that have relevance for political scientists, and considers the potential for feminist scholarship to transform the discipline of political science.

Course Requirements

Written requirements for the course include two short (6-8 page) papers and a take-home final exam. Class participation is an essential component of this course; all seminar participants are expected to read required readings prior to class and to come to class prepared to discuss them. Each of the two short papers, the take-home final, and class participation will all be weighed about equally in determining final grades.

Required Readings

There are two required books for the course:


All other readings are available for purchase at the copy center; some may be accessed via electronic reserve.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Week 1: Introductory Session

THE NATURE OF FEMINIST INQUIRY

Week 2: An Overview of Feminist Theory

Judith Grant, *Fundamental Feminism*.

Week 3: The Need for Feminist Research: Feminist Critiques of the Traditional Literature in Political Science


Week 4: Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part I


Maria Mies, “Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research,” in Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein (eds.), *Theories of Women's Studies*, pp. 117-139.

**Week 5: Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part II**


**RELEVANT ISSUES AND DEBATES IN FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP**

**Week 6: Alternative Conceptions of Sex and Gender**


Week 7: Gender Difference Theories


Week 8: The Category “Woman” and Dealing with Difference: Postmodern Perspectives


Week 9:
The Category “Woman” and Dealing with Difference: Perspectives of U.S. Women of Color


Week 10: The Category “Woman” and Dealing with Difference: International Perspectives


Week 11: Identity Politics in a Postmodern Context

Shane Phelan, *Getting Specific*.

Week 12: Gender and the Welfare State


FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Week 13: The Relationship Between Theory and Practice in Second and Third Waves


Week 14: Equality, Difference, and Women's Bodies in Public Policy and the Law


Martha Minow, “Adjudicating Differences: Conflicts Among Feminist Lawyers,” in Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller (eds.), *Conflicts in Feminism*, pp. 149-163.


