

POL S 305/W ST 305
GENDER AND POLITICS: WOMENS EMPOWERMENT, POLICY, AND DEMOCRATIC
DEVELOPMENT IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Spring 2001
MWF: 11:10-12:00
CUE 409

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Office Hours: M/W 12:15-2 pm and
by appointment

DESCRIPTION:

The goal of this course is to introduce *upper division* students to a relatively new area of study in Political Science -- Gender and Politics. It focuses on gender and politics issues in a comparative perspective through systematic study across a wide variety of national settings. While some women's studies courses may be oriented toward discussions of personal politics and life situations, this class seeks to teach about empirical issues in the study of comparative gender and politics. If students are seeking such a purely applied agenda, this course will likely not serve their needs, in of itself.

Given the diversity and expansiveness of comparative research on gender and politics, this class focuses on one concept central to understanding how the state and society interrelate in making and implementing public policy: the triangle of women's empowerment. The way in which *women's movements*, *women's policy agencies/femocrats*, and *women in public office* work together will be examined at the national, international, and transnational levels. The issue of democratization in terms of women's substantive and descriptive representation will be central to our discussions. We will examine if, how, and why the triangle of empowerment contributes to democracy in different countries and how these processes play out within the international arena of the United Nations.

In the first part of the course, students will learn about Gender and Politics as it relates to Women's Studies and Political Science. Students will also be introduced to the basic conceptual and analytical tools used by Comparative Gender and Politics researchers and the analytical framework for the class. In the next section, the class will examine nine national *case studies* of the triangle of women's empowerment in action. Students will apply what they have learned in a simulation of a UN women's policy conference on a policy issue selected by the class in the last two weeks of the semester.

Assignments are designed to teach students how to conduct comparative analysis of gender and politics and to think critically about global gender and politics issues. The short essay provides the opportunity for students to compare gender and politics issues in two different countries. Beginning in February, students will meet in small groups each Friday to discuss pertinent topics from that week and to prepare for the UN women's policy conference.

REQUIRED READINGS:

All readings are available for purchase in the Bookie.

Lycklama à Nijeholt, Virginia Vargas, and Saskia Weringa. ed. (1998). Women's Movements and Public Policy in Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Garland Publishing, Inc.: New York and London.

Nelson, Barbara J. and Najma Chowdhury, eds. 1994. Women and Politics Worldwide. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Stetson, Dorothy McBride and Amy G. Mazur, eds. 1995. Comparative State Feminism. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Specific instructions for class assignments will be distributed in class on Wednesday January 23rd.

Participation	20%
Two Essay Exams	40%
Comparative Essay (one out of two)	20%
UN Women's Policy Conference	20%

COURSE POLICIES:

(Also see attached sheet for general WSU policies that apply to this class).

*It is the responsibility of each student to understand the requirements of each assignment.

*Class handouts will only be brought to class on the day they are distributed. Missed class handouts will be available in a box outside of Dr. Mazur's office.

*Graded assignments will be brought to class once. After this, students may collect their graded assignments in a box outside of Dr. Mazur's office.

*Late assignments will not be accepted in this class. Students will receive a zero if they fail to turn-in assignments on the due date AND in the beginning of class. You will also receive a zero for each missed discussion day. If there are personal issues that prevent you from turning an assignment in on time or attending a discussion day, they must be documented and, if possible, arranged in advance with Dr. Mazur.

*Each week, students should plan to spend at least *five hours* outside of class on readings and class assignments.

SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

** = Assignment deadlines, exam dates, schedule changes.

Readings are referred to by the book editors' names.

We will review regularly the *key concepts* for the class. Students are responsible for grasping their general meaning. Blank spaces are provided in the syllabus for students to record these key concepts.

Part I: Introducing Comparative Gender and Politics

Week 1:

1/16 Introduce Class and Distribute Syllabus

1/18 Situating Comparative Gender and Politics

READINGS: Nelson and Chowdhury, Acknowledgements, Chapters 1 & 2

KEY CONCEPTS:

Week 2:

**** No Class 1/21 Martin Luther King Holiday****

1/23 INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLASS ASSIGNMENTS DISTRIBUTED. ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

**** Class Cancelled on 1/25****

Week 3: 1/28, 1/30, & 2/1 Concepts and Methods in Comparative Gender and Politics

READINGS: Nelson and Chowdhury, Chapters 3 & 4

KEY CONCEPTS:

Week 4: 2/4, 2/6, & 2/8 The Triangle of Empowerment and the Global Institutional Framework

READINGS: Lycklama, Vargas, and Wieringa Forward, Preface, Chapters 1 and 2, Stetson and Mazur Preface and Chapter 1.

KEY CONCEPTS:

Part II. The Triangle of Empowerment in Comparative Perspective

**Regular Friday discussion sessions begin and continue until 4/8.

Post Industrial Democracies (PIDs) I. North America

Week 5: 2/11, 2/13, & 2/15 The USA

READINGS: Chapters on the USA in Nelson and Chowdhury and Stetson and Mazur

Week 6: 2/20 & 2/22: Canada

Monday Feb. 18th No Class, School Holiday.

Readings: Chapters on Canada in Nelson and Chowdhury and Stetson and Mazur

KEY CONCEPTS:

Post Industrial Democracies (PIDs) II. Western Europe

Week 7: 2/25 & 2/27 France

READINGS: Chapters on France in Nelson and Chowdhury and Stetson and Mazur

***Friday 3/1 Exam 1**

Week 8: 3/4, 3/6, & 3/8 The Netherlands

READINGS: Chapters on The Netherlands in Nelson and Chowdhury, Stetson and Mazur, and Lycklama, Vargas and Wieringa

Week 9: 3/11, 3/13, & 3/15 Spain

READINGS: Chapters on Spain in Nelson and Chowdhury and Stetson and Mazur

KEY CONCEPTS:

** Comparative Essay Due in Beginning of Class 3/13**

** Spring Break 3/18-3/22***

Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs): Latin America

Week 10: 3/25, 3/27, & 3/29 Mexico

READINGS: Chapters on Mexico in Nelson and Chowdhury and Lycklama, Vargas, and Wieringa

Week 11: 4/1, 4/3 & 4/5 Brazil

READINGS: Chapters on Brazil in Nelson and Chowdhury and Lycklama, Vargas, and Wieringa

** 4/1 Bibliography for UN Simulation due in beginning of class.**

Week 12: 4/8, 4/10 & 4/12 Peru

READINGS: Chapters on Peru in Nelson and Chowdhury and Lycklama, Vargas, and Wieringa

KEY CONCEPTS:

Post Communist Countries

Week 13: 4/15, 4/17, & 4/19 Poland

READINGS: Chapters on Poland in Nelson and Chowdhury and Stetson and Mazur

KEY CONCEPTS:

** 4/17 Comparative essay due in beginning of class***

III. The Triangle of Empowerment in Action: UN Women's Policy Conference Simulation

Week 14: 4/22, 4/24 & 4/26

Week 15: 4/29, 5/1 & 5/3

** EXAM 2 May 6th 3:10-5:10**