

INCLUSIVE FEMINISMS— SENIOR SEMINAR

Course description: In this course, we will examine key questions in feminist philosophy. The class begins with a brief section on the history of feminism in the U.S. and examines the question: what is feminism? Students then explore three areas of philosophical investigation important to feminist theory: (1) the metaphysics of sex and gender, (2) social epistemology, (3) the ethics of sexuality, desire, and relationships. Each segment begins with historical case studies, which illustrate conflicts related to inclusion within the feminist community. We explore how feminists and their allies have attempted to forge more inclusive communities, relationships, and theories, as well as critical responses to these attempts.

PART 1—What is feminism?

Readings: bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*, Excerpts

PART 2—Feminist metaphysics

Readings: Susanne Sreedhar & Michael Hand, “The Ethics of Exclusion: Gender and Politics at the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival.”
Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?”
Katharine Jenkins, “Amelioration and Inclusion: Gender Identity and the Concept of Woman”
Ásta (Sveinsdóttir), *The Categories We Live By*, Excerpts
Alok Vaid-Menon, *Beyond the Gender Binary*, Excerpts
Robin Dembroff, “Why Be Non-Binary?”

PART 3—Social epistemology & feminism

Readings: bell hooks, *ain’t i a woman?* Excerpt
Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race & Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, & Antiracist Politics”
Tommy Curry, *The Man Not*, Excerpts
Naomi Zack, *Inclusive Feminism: A Third Wave Theory of Women’s Commonality*
Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, Excerpt
Kristie Dotson, “Conceptualizing Epistemic Oppression”

PART 4—Sex, relationships, and feminist ethics

Readings: Andrea Dworkin, *Intercourse*, Excerpts
Talia Mae Bettcher, “Getting “Naked” in the Colonial/Modern Gender System”
A.W. Eaton, “Feminist Pornography”
Alison Love, “Queer Critique, Queer Refusal”

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Theoretical goals

Students will gain knowledge of...

- The history of feminism in the U.S. as well as conflicts among feminists
- Philosophical analyses of gender and sex
- Philosophical analyses of how social positioning and embodiment affects the ways in which we know about and understand the world
- Philosophical analyses of epistemic discrimination & oppression
- Philosophical analyses of sexual orientation/sexuality
- Philosophical analyses of pornography
- The ways in which inclusivity matters, philosophically & politically.

Practical goals

Students will improve their ability...

- to read and interpret philosophical texts.
- to recognize and evaluate arguments
- to develop and use intersectional frameworks for problem solving and analysis
- to communicate ideas clearly in speech and writing
- to engage respectfully with conflicting points of view

GRADES

Evaluation in this course is based on:

- weekly online assignments
- participation and attendance
- 2 class presentations: one on a historical topic, one on a philosophical topic
- two writing assignments (5 -7 pages): one assigned to everyone, one of your choice.

NOTE ON WHAT TO EXPECT

We'll be watching TV shows, reading philosophy and theory, and looking at case law (among other things). Know that there will likely be some profanity and that we will be discussing sensitive topics including sexual violence, queer and genderqueer experience, racism and sexism, and consensual sex. The design of this course pairs philosophical work with historical investigations of the feminist movement in the United States, so you'll end up with both historical and philosophical knowledge at the end of the seminar.