

Phil 2141 Analytic Feminism

Spring 2014

MW 3:30-5:10 pm IH 112, Small Groups: IH 101, 202

Instructor: [Pieranna Garavaso](#), Office: Humanities 104a

Office Hours: Tu 4-5, W 11-12, and Fridays pm by appointment

e-mail: garavapf@morris.umn.edu

Course Description

This is an introductory course which applies the tools and methods of analytic philosophy to the discussion of various forms of social discrimination, such as sexism, classism, and racism, which are widely discussed in feminist writings. In order to discuss "analytically" these issues, we will learn to define clearly our concepts and to support our claims with well-developed reasons. To understand what I mean by "an analytic approach to feminist issues" you may find it useful to read Ann E. Cudd's [Analytic Feminism: A Brief Introduction](#).

Course Objectives

My main goals are: (i) to help the students develop and refine their reasoning skills, especially when applied to controversial and often hotly debated issues; (ii) to show how a philosophical approach provides valuable tools to address difficult issues in contemporary society; (iii) to encourage the students' empathy, deeper understanding, and appreciation of many socially significant differences between people; and (iv) to favor the development of argumentation and communication skills in the students. No previous experience in philosophy is necessary. During the first two weeks of the course, we will devote some time to learn the basic skills of analysis and evaluation of arguments.

Class Format

The class will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. During the first 45 minutes of class on most Wednesdays, we will divide into three smaller groups in order to facilitate discussion of the course material; the small groups will meet in different classrooms and students will facilitate the small group discussions. In order to co-lead a session, these students will prepare a handout based on the assigned readings.

Readings

Jennifer Saul, *Feminism. Issues and Arguments*, Oxford University Press 2003; articles on e-reserve at the library, articles on the course Moodle web page. The password for accessing e-reserve articles is "garavaso2141". I will show in class how to access your course Moodle 2.4 site. You should regularly check whether there are any announcements on the Moodle web page and the class Calendar as I may change the assignments and/or include additional readings. You need to bring to class the readings we will be discussing. Coming to class without the relevant reading assignments makes it impossible to do the careful work of textual analysis and discussion which is required in philosophy and **means failing to satisfy the attendance requirement**. You may use laptops and tablets in lieu of paper articles, but please do not email or shop in class. It is distracting, disruptive and rude. I prefer not to embarrass students but I will not hesitate to do so, if I see you are not using these devices properly.

Requirements

Midterm and final essay exams; one logic quiz; one short paper; final draft of term paper; co-facilitation of two small group discussions with relevant handouts; weekly posting of questions and comments on the Moodle Discussion Board; attendance and participation in the class discussions. I weigh these requirements as follows:

Midterm, Final Exam, and Term Paper (8-10 pp) (20% each)	60%
Co-facilitation of two small group discussions and relevant handouts	10%
Logic quiz (5%) and short paper (3 pages)(10%)	15%
Attendance and participation in class discussions; weekly posts on Moodle	15%

Essay exams: Each exam will test your understanding of the readings assigned and the material covered in class. I will provide study questions for the exams one week in advance.

Short paper and term paper: In the short paper as well as in your term paper, I expect to see that you have learned to state, explain, and evaluate an argument and/or to argue for or against a thesis of your choice. It is important that you state and justify your reasons for the claims you make. My evaluation of your term paper is principally focused on how extensively and persuasively you support your claims.

Co-facilitation of the small group discussion: On most Wednesdays, we will meet for the first 45 minutes of class, in three small groups and discuss the assigned readings, the lectures, the paper topics, etc. These meetings are intended to favor the students' active participation and discussion. To this effect, we will prepare a schedule of co-facilitation duties: each week either one student or a pair of students will be responsible for preparing a handout and keeping the discussion going and on track. Co-facilitating discussion is an exciting way for students to learn how to take leadership roles in a group setting. The handouts should contain arguments extracted from the readings, questions, or comments on the assigned material. Be creative! I will need a copy of the handout for your grade. If you email me the handout by 2 pm on the day you are supposed to lead the discussion, I will make copies and bring them to class for you.

To minimize your anxiety, here are some strategies for facilitating class discussion: (1) read the material more closely than you usually do, (2) write what you take to be the main points developed in the readings, e.g. an argument or a thesis which is stated in the text, and some questions to guide your discussion of the assigned reading; always give the reference pages for the argument, theses, and quotes; (3) in framing your discussion questions, keep in mind three possible levels of understanding of the text: literal (what claims or arguments did the author actually state concerning such and such topic?), interpretive (what is the meaning, the importance of such and such a claim or argument?), applied (how do these claims or arguments relate to other topics, to your interests, ideas, etc.?). Use **arguments, arguments, arguments** any time you can: they spark a lot of discussion!

The grade for two sessions of co-leading counts for 10% of your overall grade: I will assign 50% of the grade simply for doing the job, and 50% on the basis of how accurate, complete, interesting are the written handouts provided to the small group. Handouts that contain well stated arguments and stimulating questions are much preferable to detailed but non-insightful summaries. You can access the schedule of our small discussion groups on the Moodle web site.

Attendance and participation in the class discussion: My expectation is that you will attend each class unless ill or dealing with serious personal emergencies. I will excuse any absence for which you can provide a health service excuse, a Chancellor's excuse, or other official excuse. I encourage you to come and talk with me if you would like me to excuse any other absence for serious personal emergencies.

For every reading assignment, I ask that each student post on Moodle at least one question or comment to help generate class discussion. You will need to post **your comments and/or questions on Moodle by noon on Mondays and Wednesdays.**

Classroom Climate: In a course like this, it is very important that we feel comfortable together and that we all contribute to the best of our capacities to the learning process of the group. So, attendance and participation are of the utmost importance. It is the responsibility of all members of the class to keep up with the assigned readings. The failure to do so as evidenced by poor discussion contribution will negatively affect your grade. Furthermore, since true discussion involves personal exposure and taking risks, it is crucial as well that there be a climate of respect, patience and tolerance for others' points of view. I will encourage open discussion and allow questioning and dialogue between students, but intimidating, disrespectful or disruptive behavior is grounds for dismissal.

For information about make up tests, grades distribution, workload expectation, disability accommodations, and other university policies, please see the following link: **Statement of Policies for Syllabus.**

Office Hours

Tuesdays 4-5 p.m., Wednesdays 11-12 a.m., and by appointment on Friday p.m. unless otherwise announced in class. If you need to see me at a different time, please contact me after class or by phone and we will make an appointment at a more convenient time.

Phil 2141 Analytic Feminism Calendar

Spring 2014: MW 3:30-5:10 p.m.

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Instructor: Pieranna Garavaso, Humanities 104a

The following is our **tentative schedule**. Please, realize that I alter this schedule to accommodate the needs of the class, i.e., to adjust our work to the timing of your best learning. I post this calendar on the web to ensure you are informed of indispensable changes in a timely fashion. Hence, I expect you to keep up with our schedule. I can provide paper copies of this table to those who cannot easily print it.

Wk	Date	Topics	Assignments
1	M 1/13	Syllabus, Introductions, Definitions of Feminism, Analytic Feminism, Logic	Saul, 1-4; handouts and web sites
	W 1/15	Arguments, most common fallacies, validity and soundness	Handouts
2	M 1/20	MLK Day	
	W 1/22	Argument practice The Politics of Work and Family	Saul, 5-22
3	M 1/27	The Politics of Work and Family	Saul, 22-43
	W 1/29	DG: The Politics of Work and Family De Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i>	E-reserve: De Beauvoir, Introduction, 639-673
4	M 2/3	De Beauvoir: The Independent Woman (Conclusion); Introduction to Plato	E-reserve: De Beauvoir, 674-689
	W 2/5	DG: Human Nature and Women's Nature	Moodle: Plato, 140-157
5	M 2/10	Plato and the Biological Argument Review for Logic Quiz	Moodle: Plato, 157-173
	W 2/12	Logic Quiz Plato and Feminism	Moodle: Annas, Farrell-Smith
6	M 2/17	Mill, Against the Subjection of Women	Paper Topics E:reserve: Mill (Part 1, read all pp. 125-156; Part II, read 216-222; skip 223-top 231; read 231-242)
	W 2/19	DG: Are Plato and Mill Feminists? Criticisms of Mill	Moodle: Stove, Brecher

7	M 2/24	Sexual Harassment	Saul, 45-72 Short Papers Due
	W 2/26	DG: The definition of Sexual Harassment The Argument against SH	E-reserve: Crosthwaite & Priest, Hajdin Study Questions
8	M 3/3	Review Sexism and Racism: Some Conceptual Differences	Moodle: Thomas, Postow
	W 3/5	Midterm exam	
9	M 3/17	Pornography	Saul, 74-106
	W 3/19	DG: Pornography Pornography, Violence, and Free Speech	Moodle: Segal
10	M 3/24	Abortion	Saul, 110-138
	W 3/26	DG: Abortion Abortion and an Argument by Analogy	Moodle: Thomson
11	M 3/31	Feminism and Language	Haslanger, Saul (articles); Hornsby
	W 4/2	DG: Feminism and Language	Saul, 171-196
12	M 4/7	Women's Different Voice	Saul, 199-229
	W 4/9	DG: Morality and Gender Moral Thinking in Men and Women	Rachels
13	M 4/14	Feminist Science Studies, guest speaker: Molly Paxton	Kourany 49-77
	W 4/16	DG: Feminism and scientific bias Women and Reason	Saul, 232-258
14	M 4/21	Women and Nature	Warren, Dixon
	W 4/23	DG: Feminism and Vegetarianism Must Feminists Be Vegetarians?	George, Lucas
15	M 4/28	Feminism and Multiculturalism	Saul, 261-291
	W 4/30	DG: Feminism, Human Rights and Cultural Difference	Moodle: Okin Study Questions

Final: Monday May 5: 4-6 pm

Term papers due; see relative instructions on the Moodle Web Site: Instructions for Writing Assignments.