

**Spring 2018**  
**WMST 300:001 / INTS 375:009**  
**Healthy Relationships**  
**Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:30-2:45 PM Room: 124 Planetary Hall**

**WMST 401:002 / INTS 397:002 Experiential Learning Option (1 credit)**

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**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 2-4:00 PM or by appointment  
**Office:** 240K Johnson - Women and Gender Studies Center

**WOMEN AND GENDER STUDIES**  
**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY**

The Women and Gender Studies Program seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across the entire range of human identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and disability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE**

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination, and we are committed to a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202 Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/sexual-harassment-policy/) (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/sexual-harassment-policy/>) speaks to the specifics of our process, our resources, and the options available to you.

**Confidential student resources** are available on campus at the Student Support and Advocacy Center (<http://ssac.gmu.edu/>), Counseling and Psychological Services (<http://caps.gmu.edu/>), and Student Health Services (<http://shs.gmu.edu/>).

All other members of the University community (including faculty, except those noted above) are **not** considered confidential resources and are **required** to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator.

For a full list of resources, support opportunities, and reporting options, contact Dr. Jennifer Hammat, Title IX Coordinator, at <http://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix>, at 703-993-8730, or in the Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics office in the Aquia Building, Suite 373.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Women and Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary academic program that seeks to address the impact of race, gender, sex, class, faith/spirituality affiliations, abilities on society and people around us as well as how these social identities impact us as individuals. This course will explore healthy and unhealthy relationships by learning about intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence (DV), gender based violence (GBV) and sexual assault (SA). The course is designed to be a shared learning community that draws from the lived experiences of students and instructor and engaging with the reading/viewing materials, class activities and discussion.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Define what is a healthy and unhealthy relationship and what contributes to each type of relationships.
- Identify the warning signs of an unhealthy relationship.
- Discuss and explore different types of relationships: relationship with self, family, friends, romantic/intimate relationships (heterosexual, LGBTQ+, polyamory, polygamy, monogamy).
- Learn about the cycle of violence (intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence (DV), gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual assault (SA) and how different systems and institutions enables the cycle.
- Examine how violence impacts different communities (domestic/international) and how different communities (domestic/international) responds to violence.
- Discuss how intimate partner violence, gender-based violence, and sexual assault contributes to mental health-related issues and resources available.
- Learn different and effective ways to communicate and raise awareness of intimate partner violence, domestic violence, gender-based violence, and sexual assault.
- Define and design a self-care/healthy relationship toolkit to continue on living a well-being life.
- Have a greater appreciation for and interest in advocating for self-care and healthier relationships with self and others.
- Apply the course information and skills to real world situations.

## REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE

### Texts

hooks, bell. 2001. *All About Love*.

Lamb, Dominique. 2016. *What Happens in the Home*

\*\*\*Additional readings and viewing materials will be available on BlackBoard.

### Materials

Writing utensils and a journal for in-class writing reflections.

## COURSE POLICIES & INFORMATION

**Shared Learning: our class will be heavily focused on shared learning.**

**What does this all mean?**

**LEARNING\*** • Learning takes place in relationships between people. • Learning is a process involving people. •

Learning takes place in groups or communities that share a common work interest or practice associated with change.

• Learning takes place through ongoing dialogues between people. • Learning needs an open, supportive and trusting environment or context. • Learning happens through the asking of difficult and sometimes uncomfortable questions.

**INFORMATION\*** • Information is a resource for knowledge. • Information is drawn from data and/or facts about a particular subject. • Information is processed data/facts that does carry meaning because it has been formatted, filtered and summarised. • The information we choose influences the decisions or choices we make. • Information is easy to quantify and write down. • Information can be exchanged and compared across different contexts.

**KNOWLEDGE\*** • Knowledge is something we all use, test, question and create. • Knowledge is derived from information but is more than information – it carries our experiences, values, attitudes and beliefs about the world. • Knowledge is never neutral – i.e. all knowledge is tied to existing relations of power. • Knowledge is tied to action – i.e. knowing what we know and what we need to know to work effectively for change in the world. • Knowledge grows into wisdom when it allows us to make sensible decisions and create plans for action. • Action is tied to cycles of critical reflection in which we plan-act-observe-reflect.

\*\*\*Adopted from Shared Learning: A Working Guide made available by ActionAid International

### **Self-Management, Self-Care, Self-Love**

In our class, we will deal with sensitive and sometimes controversial materials, images and ideas. Some of the material may feel 'heavy' or trigger unexpected emotions or physical reactions. Try to be aware of your responses to the material. Do what is most needed for self-management, self-care, self-love. However, understanding the materials and turning in assignments on time is your responsibility.

**Class Discussion:** Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. I expect that you approach our class with seriousness, critical thinking, and respect for your peers, our guests, the material and myself.

### **Attendance: (14 points possible)**

Regular class attendance is crucial for your final grade. Showing up is key to your success in class and in life in general. I take attendance every day. **You will only receive half a point if you are late to class.**

**Unexcused absences** will adversely affect your final grade (an absence is excused when due to serious illness, religious observance, participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, or compelling circumstances beyond your control). To claim an excused absence, you must provide a signed letter by a person in a position to make an authoritative determination as to the validity of the cause of the absence within three calendar days of your return from that absence. **In cases where you know you will be missing class, please let me know as soon as possible through email.** You are responsible for all announcements, assignments, materials and date changes covered or made in class while you are absent.

### **Class Participation (14 points possible)**

Showing up to class is key to your success but it's only half the battle. Active engagement with the course is required. This means keeping up with blog entries, reading, reading to understand and not simply to get through the pages, and putting your best efforts into assignments and class discussions/activities, coming to class regularly and on time, and ask questions and listening attentively to comments made in class.

### **Communication**

Please bring any questions and concerns you may have to me in a timely manner. Do not hesitate to ask for guidance and clarification, whatever the issue is. I will assume that the class is comfortable and satisfactory and the material I present is clear unless I hear from you otherwise.

**Email Policy:** In compliance with a University-wide initiative, our correspondence will be only through GMU assigned email accounts. Please check your email account regularly for updates and important announcements.

### **Electronic Devices**

Before each class, please remember to silence or turn off (not vibrate!) any electronic devices, especially cell phones. No calls and no texting during class! If you must use your cell phone during class time for a personal emergency, please leave the room without disturbing the class.

**You may use your laptops, tablets or phones to take notes and look up information pertinent to our class topics.**

You may **NOT** use this opportunity to complete tasks that are not related to our classroom, write a paper for another class, play games, surf the internet or chat with your friends on social media or elsewhere. In the event that this opportunity is abused, **10 points** will be knocked from your final grade and you will not be eligible for extra credit opportunities. If you have submitted extra credit reflection paper(s) prior, these points will not count towards your final grade.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

**Format for Assignments:** All assignments except for in-class activities must be typed, double spaced using 12 point font along with the required number of words indicated on the assignment guideline documents. Papers must be documented properly according to a citation manual (e.g. The Chicago Manual of Style, APA, MLA). Assignments will be submitted to Blackboard by the due date and time indicated on the assignment guideline documents. ***Unless specifically requested, no assignments will be accepted by email.*** Keep a copy of all assignments. Failure to follow assignment guidelines may result in a grade deduction.

**Academic Honesty & Collaboration:** The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously in this class. George Mason University has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity: 1) all work submitted must be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations (for a full description of George Mason's Honor Code, please see: <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>).

**While collaboration and learning from others, especially established scholars in the field is not only encouraged but required, using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism.** If you quote directly from any text, you **MUST** use the exact words (including punctuation) just as the words, phrases, and sentences appear in the original text. You must also follow proper citation rules to indicate that you are quoting directly from a text. If you paraphrase ideas, that is, convey the author's ideas in your own words, you must still cite the source, using an established citation format. When in doubt about citation rules or assignment guidelines, ask me for clarification. A great online resource for resources on writing and citation is the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

**Late and Missing Assignments:** You are responsible for completing assignments on time. Due dates and times are clearly indicated throughout the assignment guideline document, syllabus and BlackBoard.

**\*\*\*Assignments submitted late will lose 20% for each day they are past due, including Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Assignments may only be made up for full credit if failure to attend class and/or complete required assignments was for an excused absence as outlined in the section on participation and attendance.**

### Grading Scale

This course will be evaluated out of 100 points as shown by the list of assignments and following table:

| Points | Letter Grade |  | Points | Letter Grade |
|--------|--------------|--|--------|--------------|
| 100+   | A+           |  | 77-79  | C+           |
| 94-99  | A            |  | 74-76  | C            |
| 90-93  | A-           |  | 70-73  | C-           |
| 87-89  | B+           |  | 60-69  | D            |
| 84-86  | B            |  | <60    | F            |
| 80-83  | B-           |  |        |              |

**\*\*\* As the instructor, I have the right to make any changes to assignments at any time of the semester.**

**Notifications will be sent out in a timely manner. Please check this syllabus, your email, and Blackboard (BB) announcement page on a regular basis for updates.**

| List of Assignments   | Due Dates   | Possible Points   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Attendance</b>   | Each class period   | 14  |
| <b>Participation (In-class activities and discussion)</b>   | Each class period   | 14  |
| <b>Weekly Blogs (500 words max)</b>   | Weekly Submission on BB<br>Due Monday prior to class,<br>11:59PM  | 15  |
| <b>Paj Ntaub (Pa Dao) - Story Cloth (Creative Piece)</b><br>Guidelines will be provided in BlackBoard.  | Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018<br>Due at beginning of class.<br>Instructor will collect and return<br>at the end of semester.   | 2   |
| <b>Paj Ntaub (Pa Dao) - Story Cloth Reflection Paper</b><br>Guidelines will be provided in BlackBoard.  | Submit paper on BB by<br>Thursday, February 8, 2018<br>1:30PM.  | 2   |
| <b>Peer Journal Writing</b><br>Guidelines will be provided in BlackBoard.   | Journal Submissions<br>#1: Due: Feb. 6 / 1:30 PM<br>#2: Due: Feb. 20 / 1:30 PM<br>#3: Due: Mar. 6 / 1:30 PM<br>Mid-term<br>#4: Due: Mar. 27 / 1:30 PM<br>#5: Due: Apr. 10 / 1:30 PM<br>#6: Due: Apr. 24 / 1:30 PM | 24<br><br>(Six journal<br>submissions at 4<br>points each.) |
| <b>Self-Care/Healthy Relationships Toolkit (In-class sharing)</b><br>Guidelines will be provided in BlackBoard.<br><a href="#">Sign up here.</a>  | Day of Sharing  | 5   |
| <b>Final Project Proposal</b><br>Guidelines will be provided.<br>Options:<br>a) Interview an activist or community organizer who works in the field.<br>b) Creative Art Piece - sculpture, acrylic painting, live performance, spoken word.<br>c) Public Service Announcement video to raise awareness of a issue discussed in class (2 minutes max for video). | March 1, 2018<br>1:30PM<br><br>Submit on BlackBoard and<br>bring 2 hard copies with you to<br>class for peer review.  | 2   |
| <b>Final Project Presentation</b><br>Attendance is crucial for these two days. If you show up both days to present and participate in class, you will get your full points.   | Last two days of class.<br>May 1 & 3, 2018  | 10  |
| Final Self-Reflection Paper<br>Guidelines will be provided in BlackBoard.   | Thursday, May 10, 2018<br>5:00PM  | 12  |
| Extra credit opportunities will be announced throughout the semester.<br>A student can earn up to 10 points of extra credit. Two extra credits per event with reflection paper. Guidelines will be provided on BlackBoard.  | Grand Total   | 100   |

## WEEKLY THEMES (Reading Assignments are on BlackBoard)

**\*\*\* As the instructor, I have the right to make any changes to reading assignments at any time of the semester. Notifications will be sent out in a timely manner. Please check this syllabus, your email, and Blackboard (BB) announcement page on a regular basis for updates.**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Week 1 (January 23 & 25, 2018)         | Introduction & Why Study Healthy Relationships?                     |
| Week 2 (January 30 & February 1, 2018) | Systems, Institutions & Their Impact On Relationships               |
| Week 3 (February 6 & 8, 2018)          | Intersectionality, Identities, & Owning Your Stories                |
| Week 4 (February 13 & 15, 2018)        | Movements & Policies  |
| Week 5 (February 20 & 22, 2018)        | Family Violence, Relationships & Culture Part I                     |
| Week 6 (February 27 & March 1, 2018)   | Family Violence, Relationships & Culture Part II                    |
| Week 7 (March 6 & 8, 2018)             | Romantic Relationships: Power & Control                             |
| <i>March 12-16, 2018</i>               | <i>Spring Break</i>   |
| Week 8 (March 20 & 22, 2018)           | Romantic Relationships: Hook Up Culture & Dating In The Digital Age |
| Week 9 (March 27 & 29, 2018)           | Romantic Relationships: Beyond Monogamy                             |
| Week 10 (April 3 & 5, 2018)            | Navigating Healthy Relationships                                    |
| Week 11 (April 10 and 12, 2018)        | Trauma Healing & Mental Health                                      |
| Week 12 (April 17 & 19, 2018)          | April 17th: Self-care & Reflection                                  |
|  | April 19th: Bystander Training                                      |
| Week 13 (April 24 & 26, 2018)          | What Is Healthy Relationship & What's Next?                         |
| Week 14 (May 1 & 3)                    | Class Presentations   |
| Week 15 (May 15 at 1:30PM-4:30PM)      | Final Exam (TBD)  |