PROSEMINAR: WOMEN AND POLITICS

Course Description

This seminar examines a variety of issues and debates within the field of Women's and Gender Studies that are important to the study of Women and Politics. 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 be weighed about equally in determining final grades.

Required Readings

There is one required book for the course:

Judith Grant, Fundamental Feminism: Contesting the Core Concepts of Feminist Theory (Routledge, 1993)

This book can be purchased at the Rutgers University Bookstore. Copies of all other readings are available as “resources” through the Sakai site (https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal) for this course.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Jan. 25  Introductory Session

THE NATURE OF FEMINIST INQUIRY

Feb. 1  An Overview of Feminist Theory

Judith Grant, *Fundamental Feminism*.

Feb. 8  The Need for Feminist Research in Political Science: Feminist Critiques of Political Science and the Traditional Literature


Feb. 15  Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part I


Feb. 22 Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part II


RELEVANT ISSUES AND DEBATES IN FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Feb. 29 Alternative Conceptions of Sex and Gender


March 7  Gender Difference Theories


March 14  SPRING BREAK

March 21  The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: Postmodern Perspectives


Kevin Duong, “What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about Intersectionality?” Politics & Gender, 8(September 2012), pp. 370-386.

March 28

The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: U.S. Women of Color


April 4

The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: International Perspectives/ Theorizing Intersectionality


April 11  Gender and the State


April 18  Gender and the Welfare State


FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

April 25  The Relationship Between Theory and Practice in Second and Third Waves


May 2  Equality and Difference in Public Policy and the Law; Women and Politics at RU

