
FEMINISM ACROSS BORDERS: AN INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL FEMINIST MOVEMENTS

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

As a Postcolonial feminist, I have often engaged in discussions about the myriad feminist movements operating across the globe. During these discussions I have noticed that the word "feminism" is often associated with the ideas that were generated in the First-World, and a fair proportion of the global feminist movements are either ignored or disregarded. Also, the word "feminism" is tied to negative attitudes and imagery which makes the conversation about global feminist movements a difficult one. I understood these complications, but I knew that teaching students about feminism practices across the globe would be a worthy undertaking. It is important to discuss the differences between feminism as it is practiced in different nations, and to develop an inclusive global feminist initiative that is empathetic towards the various cultural and religious boundaries in the world. With this in mind, I designed a composition class that would challenge the mainstream views on feminism and provide a more realistic global perspective on the subject. My aim was to train students to critically evaluate views on feminism as it is discussed within the United States and outside its national boundaries.

I taught *Feminism across Borders* in spring 2018 as a special topics course for Composition II. The class was meant for students who had completed the freshman requirement of Composition I. It was a face-face class in which students met with me twice a week. Throughout the course I used feminist theories, examples of feminist movements, and feminist readings to enhance the writing, reading and listening skills necessary for Composition II. Students would interrogate the theories presented in class and engage with the feminist readings assigned for the course. First and foremost, students were introduced to the differences in First-World and Third-World feminism movements, so they could appreciate and value the multicultural perspectives on feminism. The terms First-World and Third-World, although dated, were used as the literature covered in the classroom often referred to the dichotomy between the First-World and Third-World Feminists movements that initially emerged. The contemporary usage is global north and global south feminist movements. However, in an introductory course such as this, it was important to first trace the historical divisions in the feminist movements that then lead the discussion on to the trajectory of contemporary feminist movements. The students used this knowledge to create thoughtful discussions that addressed the issues in the feminist movements.

It was clear from the beginning of the class that students had never learned the distinctions between First-World and Third-World feminism. The classroom space I provided was therefore an enriching experience. They saw it as a safe space in which they could discuss contentions about the feminist movement. They even confessed to not knowing about feminism and told me about their hesitation to identify as a feminist.

By the end of the semester most of the students were proud to call themselves feminists and were willing to speak of the movement outside of class.

For this class we covered a wide number of feminist issues and examined several global feminist movements. This comparative approach allowed first-year students to read and analyze complex theories and understand how women and men express their rights and needs in a male-dominated world. For instance, a much-debated topic is the status of Muslim women, and the wearing of the Hijab considered as a sign of female repression. This course set out to transform certain negative attitudes towards Muslim women, and to foster a conversation that is respectful towards the cultural and religious reasons for wearing the Hijab. Moreover, it discussed controversial movements such as the Men's Rights Movement that caused outrage among feminists. Through videos and writing assignments students also learned that men are a significant part of the movement. *Feminism Across Borders* meant to contradict biased perspectives of non-western women and non-western feminist movements and offered a broader understanding of how women and men fight against oppression from within oppressive systems in the United States and around the World.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives for this course adhere to the general outcomes for Composition II, which is to enhance students' critical thinking, research, writing and rhetorical analysis skills. In Composition I students were introduced to the concepts of researching, drafting, revising, developing ideas, argumentation and clear organization in writing for college courses. They were required to organize and brainstorm before each writing assignment and use the appropriate language in expressing their views. The differences between colloquial language and academic writing was clearly communicated in feedback on written submissions. Plagiarism was a significant topic covered in the Composition I course, and in Composition II students further develop an understanding of how to prevent plagiarism and conceptualize their own views on issues and themes. Composition II further advances researching and writing skills necessary for college education. Additionally, it requires students to analyze rhetorical situations to understand the context, the message, and the intentions. Composition I enables students to identify authoritative sources instead of relying on Wikipedia for information and knowledge. In Composition II, students learn to use the library search tool to find books and peer-reviewed journal articles; in class students use their laptops, tablets and work in groups to find authoritative sources that discuss the topic at hand. Synthesizing a variety of such sources in the development of written assignments is a major skill that students take away from the Composition II classroom.

The Special Topics Composition II: *Feminism across Borders* course is designed to introduce college freshmen to different theoretical lenses and teachings in Feminism as it is practiced across the globe. Some of the questions addressed in the class are: how do women resist patriarchal oppression in countries outside the United States? What are the major differences between First-World feminism and Third-World feminism? Why is it that we need to establish a more comparative approach to Feminism that distances itself from evaluative terms such as "First-World" and "Third-World"? And how do social and cultural differences affect the practices of feminism? Through this course students are exposed to multiple perspectives on feminism and their usefulness for examining the current social and political status of women in the United States and the world. The objective is to debunk some of the myths of feminism such as "feminism is a dirty word", "women of color are passive" and "women of color are repressed and don't practice feminism".

Throughout this course students will learn and develop skills that are vital for their academic careers. They analyze and apply theory, contest theoretical perspectives and develop their own views and ideas.

The major areas that are covered throughout this course are:

1. Popular ideas of feminism both academic and literal
2. The spread and growth of feminism across the globe
3. The contentions between "First-World" and "Third-World" feminisms and looking towards a more comparative approach in understanding the feminism movements in the globe
4. Notable figures in the feminist movements

SYLLABUS: FEMENISM ACROSS BORDERS

PURPOSE:

To continue to teach students the research, the writing strategies and processes emphasized in Composition I but doing so through the analysis of feminist writings and feminist speakers from across the globe. Students will reflect on feminist writing and feminist rhetoric as a communicative practice and will write critical essays that demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, effective analysis, awareness of writing conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms. Rhetorical analysis is particularly effective in the American classroom as this gives the opportunity for students to listen to and observe feminist figures. Rhetorical analysis appeals to students rather than the pedagogy of feminism on its own because students are made aware of feminist figures that attempt to establish equal rights and fight for feminist issues on the global platform. Moreover, in countries outside of the western world the fight for feminism is largely based on social movements that are not fully grasped in western scholarship. In this class, students will be exposed to certain scholarship that covers both the western and non-western views on Feminism and also gain access to digital resources that investigate the feminist movements in certain countries.

SPECIFIC GOALS:

In accordance with the stated purpose of the course, students will learn, among other things, how to

- analyze rhetorical situations;
- identify authoritative sources in their discipline;
- identify persuasive appeals in written and visual texts;
- evaluate and experiment with a variety of rhetorical strategies and genres;
- recognize the demands that particular audiences place on written communication;

- use electronic resources to support library research;
- synthesize a variety of sources in the development of critical essays;
- generate a set of principles that will guide their sense of effective writing practices; and
- practice academic integrity and ethical communicative aims.

PROCEDURE:

Discussions; workshops; lectures; formal and informal analytical writing; exercises and activities that promote metadiscursive awareness. The quality of writing will largely determine the final grade.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Adichie, Chimamanda N. *We should all be Feminists*. 1977. Anchor Books, 2015.
- Freedman, Estelle B. *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women*. Ballantine Books, 2003.
- Jayawardena, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*. 1986. Verso, 2016.
- Kral, Karla K., Sara G. Martínez Covarrubias, and Sara Iturribarría Lourdes Cruz. "Feminism, Gender, and Education in the Mexican Context." *Resources for Feminist Research* 34.1 (2012): 9-23. ProQuest.
- Pettman, Jan. *Living in the Margins: Racism, Sexism, and Feminism in Australia*. Allen & Unwin, 1992.
- Shakir, Evelyn. *Bint Arab: Arab and Arab American Women in the United States*. Praeger, Westport, 1997.
- Lundsford, Andrea., *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 7th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.

ASSIGNMENT GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Major Writing Assignments		Other Assignments	
Feminist Critique	15 points	Research Proposals	10 points
Study on Feminism	20 points	Reading Logs	20 points
Feminist Rhetorical Analysis	15 points	TOTAL	100 points

Feminism Research	20 points	
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Course Grade Scale: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 0-59

ATTENDANCE:

Since the classroom is the place where students and instructors meet to engage in learning, attendance is required. I will take roll at the beginning of each class. 4 unexcused absences can be tolerated (In the case of absences, late assignments must be turned in within two days of the absence). If students miss more than 4 classes, each unexcused absence will result in the loss of 2 points from the total points. For example, if a student misses 6 classes s/he will lose 4 points from the total mark.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION:

You will submit 4 major assignments throughout the semester, each one designed to assess your argumentative skills, development of ideas, clear organization, effective analysis, awareness of writing conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms. These essays will be graded on effectiveness of argument, organization, grammar, and style. For more detailed descriptions, see the assignment sheets on Blackboard.

Your essay must be typed, double spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins. Include your name, my name, the title of the course, and the date in the upper-left corner of the first page of each essay. I do not want paper copies of your assignment. You will be required to submit digital copies of the sources you use in your research paper. Assignments must be uploaded via SafeAssign on Blackboard by 12 midnight on the respective due dates. Late submissions will suffer a letter grade reduction for each day they are late, beginning at 12.01 am.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

READING LOGS (20 POINTS)

At the end of each week it is mandatory for students to submit a reading log which is a brief reflection assignment (100 words) on the reading assigned for the week. The student has the freedom to write either an opinion piece agreeing or disagreeing with the views of the author discussed for the week, or application of feminism theories to a topical issue.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (10 POINTS)

For the 4th assignment, students will have to formulate a draft research proposal along with an annotated bibliography. The word count for the research proposals should be 250-300 words. The proposal should include an annotated bibliography with a 50-100-word count for each bibliographic entry. These should

be posted on the content folder on Blackboard. The proposal should be posted by 12 midnight on the due date via Safe Assign link on Blackboard.

MAJOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1 – FEMINIST CRITIQUE (15 POINTS)

In this assignment students will be asked to examine certain terms in the Feminist movement and their common misconceptions (i.e. Feminism, Feminist, Feminist Movement, Third-World Feminism and First-World Feminism). The purpose of the assignment is to familiarize students with the different terms in the Feminist movement, and the focus is on how they can use their comprehensive skills to articulate and communicate the different opinions persons have on Feminism. In Composition II, Assignment I—Feminist Critique, will allow students to hone their research skills. For instance, for this assignment students need to conduct basic research and gather data. They can choose to interview people face-to-face or via an online survey, and they need to organize this data and present their findings by referring to the rhetorical strategies covered in class. They must choose an audience, genre, and adopt an appropriate writing style. Even though the assignment examines common misconceptions of the Feminist movement, the main objective is the evaluation of a student's ability to analyze their findings using rhetorical elements such as writer/speaker, audience, tone, and the message. Overall, this assignment helps students comprehend how the meaning/definition of certain terms in the English language evolve, and how exposure to literacy, and literacy practices (including reading, writing, and speaking) shapes a person's understanding of a given term.

ASSIGNMENT 2 – STUDY ON FEMINISM (20 POINTS)

This group assignment involves two or more class members collaborating on a study of Feminism. The groups will examine global feminism trends such as "Hip-Hop Hijab" and the main objectives and meanings of the movements or trends. Exploration of emergent themes in the Feminist movement encourages students to use library resources, read the history of the movement, and look up background information about the emergent theme. Some of the questions they can address are: What are the origins of the trend? How is information about the trend/theme circulated? What are the issues that are addressed?

Students can choose to interview their classmates or a Registered Student Organization to obtain data on their chosen theme. Through this assignment students will develop Composition II skills such as writing, research and argumentation.

In Spring 2018 the group assignments covered the following topics: #metoo movement in America, Pro-choice versus Pro-life controversy and the opinions among select sororities' members at the University of Arkansas, the gender wage gap in the United States, gender disparities in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs at the University of Arkansas, The 2018 "TIME'S UP" movement and Pay equity and gender discrimination in US corporations.

ASSIGNMENT 3 – FEMINIST RHETORICAL ANALYSIS (15 POINTS)

For this assignment students will be required to select an instructor-approved, popular-featured feminist speech. The students will first trace what information is used in the speech, and second, examine the overt references made in the speech. Students will be required to watch and listen to the speech—if any digital copies are available—and then use rhetorical analysis when writing about the speech. They must

answer questions relating to the rhetorical situation, including who was part of the audience? What persuasive appeals are used by the rhetorician in convincing his/her audience? What are the claims made in the speech? Is the information accurate? How does the rhetor explain certain feminist ideas to the public? What analogies and examples are drawn? How does tone and diction enhance or reduce the overall impact of the speech? Finally, students will use a simple web making site such as *wix.com* and include the gathered information into their own personally developed site.

The main objective of this assignment is to make students realize that rhetorical analysis offers a broader perspective than what is just circulated in popular media. As both Comp II students and undergraduates, it is important to analyze information that is generated in the mass media, and to detect the accuracies and inaccuracies presented. Assignment 3 is a good tool for evaluating these skills. This technique, although daunting at first, teaches students to utilize feminist rhetorical analysis and in the meantime develop their own understanding of how to best use simple digital technologies that are freely available to them.

Students studied the following feminist rhetorical speeches for this assignment in Spring 2018: "This is What a Feminist Looks Like" Barack Obama, 2016, "RE: Feminism (A Request)" Joseph-Gordon Levitt, 2014, Malala Yousafzai's 16th Birthday Speech at the United Nations 2013, "A Story Like Mine" Halsey's Women's March, NYC 2018 and "A Woman's Mark" Viola Davis Women's March LA 2018, to name a few.

ASSIGNMENT 4 – FEMINISM RESEARCH (20 POINTS)

The final assignment requires that students choose a community dedicated to accomplishing goals of the feminist movement. They can choose an organization that they are familiar with and have access to within the university or outside of it. Students will be required to seek instructor approval before commencing work on the project. The community that the student chooses could be, a religious group or a social group etc. This assignment is comparable to the disciplinary analysis done in a regular Composition II class.

Students will use John Swales' six Discourse community characteristics when observing and analyzing their chosen community. In his "The Concept of Discourse Community," Swales outlines six characteristics of a discourse community. They are: "1. A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals. 2. A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members. 3. A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback. 4. A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims. 5. In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis. 6. A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursual expertise." (Swales, 1990).

Students will formulate a research question; thereafter, students will observe their chosen community, specifically observe the role of men and women in that community and how they interact. Some questions to think about are: 1. What specialized language do they use? 2. Do they use code-words to maintain the intimacy/privacy within their community?

Furthermore, students will interview community members and ask their opinion on certain Feminist ideas covered in class. One purpose of this assignment is to expose students to the specifics of an official interview process and data gathering. As a Composition II assignment, this evaluation will help students discover the differences in language, communication practices - visual, auditory, and written - and the application of information gathered in constructing an academic paper.

Spring 2018 students conducted research with the following discourse communities: Girl Attorney LLC in Oklahoma, Arkansas Press Women, Northwest Arkansas Professional Women's Book Club, Women's Foundation Arkansas, Delta Delta Delta and Alpha Chi Omega Greek Life at the University of Arkansas, American Association of University Women—Arkansas Branch, Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), Rape Education Services by Peers Encouraging Conscious Thought (RESPECT), Planned Parenthood—Fayetteville, Arkansas Branch, and Arkansas Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

UNIT ONE: THE SCOPE OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

WEEK 1

- **Tue-** Welcome and introductions. Explanation of Course Policy and Syllabus. 30-minute in-class written reflection on student perspectives on feminism, the feminist movement, views on Third-World and First-World feminism and their expectations for this course (not graded).

Homework: Read chapter 2, pp. 23-43, in the *St. Martin's Handbook*.

- **Thurs-** Define and discuss key terms: "rhetor," "rhetoric," "rhetorical situation / stance," "exigence," "discourse," "discourse community," "literacy," "research." Discuss ideas and history of feminism, feminist stereotypes, and women's experiences. Introduce and lecture on the idea of Feminist rhetorical analysis in relation to Emma Watson's He for She UN Campaign 2014 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkjW9PZBRfk>

Homework: Adichie *We Should All Be Feminists* pp 1-30.

WEEK 2

- **Tue-** Welcome and introductions. Explanation of Course Policy and Syllabus. 30-minute in-class written reflection on student perspectives on feminism, the feminist movement, views on Third-World and First-World feminism and their expectations for this course (not graded).

Homework: Read chapter 2, pp. 23-43, in the *St. Martin's Handbook*.

- **Thurs-** Define and discuss key terms: "rhetor," "rhetoric," "rhetorical situation / stance," "exigence," "discourse," "discourse community," "literacy," "research." Discuss ideas and history of feminism, feminist stereotypes, and women's experiences. Introduce and lecture on the idea of Feminist rhetorical analysis in relation to Emma Watson's He for She UN Campaign 2014 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkjW9PZBRfk>

Homework: Adichie *We Should All Be Feminists* pp 1-30.

WEEK 3

- **Tue-** Discuss Freedman and the emergence of the feminist movements. Watch "If I have a daughter" Ted Talk by Sarah Kay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0snNB1yS3IE>. Students will watch Kay's video, and in their groups work on a 5-10-minute presentation on similar feminist issues and everyday female experiences and encounters. Work on draft of Assignment 1 in class.

Homework: Finish drafting Assignment 1. Bring Laptops or any other type of electronic device to next class. Read: "Women's Rights, Women's Work, and Women's Sphere" *No Turning Back* by Estelle B Freedman pp 45-55.

- **Thurs-** Lecture on editing, thesis statement, argument coherence, conclusion, and MLA citation. Discuss Freedman.

Homework: "Women's Rights, Women's Work and Women's Sphere" *No Turning Back* by Estelle B Freedman pp 56-72. Bring a copy of assignment draft for peer review. Read chapters 13 & 14 in the *St. Martin's Handbook*, pp. 276-294. Submit Reading Log.

WEEK 4

- **Tue-** Discuss Freedman and First-World Feminist ideologies. Peer-review workshop for draft of Assignment 1. Discussion of chapters 13 and 14 of *St. Martins Handbook* in class.

Homework: Revise draft based on the feedback received in class.

- **Thurs-** Assignment 1 due. Present and explain prompt for Assignment 2—Study on Feminism. Give student 5-10 minutes to decide on which class member they wish to collaborate with. Discuss the development of Assignment 2 by focusing on emergent themes in the global feminism movements.

Homework: Read "The Global Stage and the Politics of Location" *No Turning Back* by Estelle B Freedman pp 95-122. Submit reading log.

UNIT TWO: FEMINISM IN PRACTICE**WEEK 5**

- **Tue-** Discuss Freedman and global feminist politics. Watch "Confessions of a Bad Feminist" by Roxanne Gay https://www.ted.com/talks/roxanne_gay_confessions_of_a_bad_feminist Student group work—ask students to discuss ways in which they may have been "bad" feminists.

Homework: Read "Sexualities, Identities and Self Determination" *No Turning Back* by Estelle B Freedman pp 253-256, draft a basic outline/ To-Do list with group member for Assignment 2.

- **Thurs-** Discuss Freedman's chapter on Sexualities and Identities. Watch Diane J Savino's "The case for same sex marriage." https://www.ted.com/talks/diane_j_savino_the_case_for_same_sex_marriage

Homework- Read Chapter 4 "Women's Struggles and Emancipation in Iran"—*Feminism and Nationalism in the Third-World* by Kumari Jayawardena. Submit reading log.

WEEK 6

- **Tue-** Discuss Chapter 4 in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third-World* and the feminist movement in Iran. Have students collaborate in the development of Assignment 2.

Homework: Read "Emancipation and Subordination of Women in Sri Lanka" Chapter 7-- *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third-World*. Bring Laptops to next class for the workshop.

- **Thurs-** Discuss the role of women in Sri Lanka and developments in the feminist movement in India and Sri Lanka. Assignment 2 Workshop. First 15 minutes individual speed writing—the task for each student is to write as many words as they can within the time frame for their assignment. Student writing will be reviewed by other class members.

Homework: Read chapter 43, "Memorable Prose," pp. 700-706 in the *Handbook*; revise Assignment 2 using revision checklist. Submit Reading Log on *Ladies First* documentary. *Ladies First* documentary is on Deepika Kumari an Indian woman athlete who rises to become the best female archer in the world at the age of 18.

WEEK 7

- **Instructor-Student, face-to-face conferences** (each session is approximately ten minutes, students bring a printed copy of their revised draft and the instructor offers feedback on the work the student has produced for Assignment 2).

WEEK 8

- **Tue-** Assignment 2 due. Review key concepts rhetorical stance, rhetorical situation, discourse community, genre. Present and explain prompt for Assignment 3—Feminist Rhetorical Analysis. Have students begin discussing their ideas for Assignment 3 on which feminist speech they would prefer to work on. Have students work in groups and search for popular feminist speeches online. For Assignment 3 students should examine feminist speeches that are not covered in the syllabus.

Homework: Read Chapter 9 "Women's Struggles in the Philippines" in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third-World*.

- **Thurs-** Discussion on the feminist movement in the Philippines and Jayawardena's Chapter 9. Review the idea of rhetorical strategies and how these influence meaning and perceptions of authority. Continue brainstorming for Assignment 3.

Homework: Read Chapter 10 "Feminism and Revolutionary Struggles in China" in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third-World*. Submit Reading Log. Bring Laptops or any other type of electronic device to next class.

UNIT THREE: RECOGNIZING FEMALE ADVOCACY

WEEK 9

- **Tue** - Class discussion and lecture on Feminism in China and Women's struggles in China in relation to Chapter 10 by Jayawardena. Evaluations of the reading logs completed by students thus far. Group work: Use of electronic devices to search for a Chinese feminist online and presentation of a brief bio, including works and the significance of the chosen female figure.

Homework- Read Kral, Karla K., Sara G. Martínez Covarrubias, and Sara Iturribarría Lourdes Cruz. "Feminism, Gender, and Education in the Mexican Context." *Resources for Feminist Research* 34.1 (2012): 9-23. *ProQuest*.

- **Thurs**- Brief lecture on South American Feminism and its developments. Watch South American Feminist and rap artist Ana Tijoux's music video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoKoj8bFg2E>. Ask students to find the English translation for the lyrics of the song. Then students will break into their groups and discuss the lyrics in relation to the class lecture and homework reading "Feminism, Gender, and Education in the Mexican Context," and in relation to rhetorical strategies that have been discussed in class.

Homework- Read "Racism and Sexism"—*Living in the Margins* by Jan Pettman pp 54-77. Submit Reading Log.

WEEK 10

- **Tue**- Engage in class discussion of feminism in Australia and New Zealand and their perspectives on the differences between First-World Feminism as it is practiced in America and in Australia. Emphasize and clarify expectations for Assignment 3. Have students collaborate in the development of Assignment 3.

Homework: Generate a draft of Assignment 3 and bring a copy [or copies] for peer review. Bring laptop to class next day.

- **Thurs** - Workshop draft of Assignment 3 using a revision worksheet. Use chapter 12, pp 251-275 in the *Handbook*, to introduce/review the concept of an annotated bibliography.

Homework: Further revision of Assignment 3 based on in-class feedback.

WEEK 11

- **Instructor-Student, face-to-face conferences** (each session is approximately ten minutes, students bring a printed copy of their revised draft and the instructor offers feedback on the work the student has produced for Assignment 3).

UNIT FOUR: FEMINISM AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

WEEK 12

- **Tues-** Assignment 3 due. Review key concepts and goals of the course (e.g., discourse communities, rhetor, rhetorical situation, rhetorical reading, metadiscourse, literacy as social practice, writing with authority, expressive choices).

Homework- Read "Introduction" pp 1-13 and "Syrian Emigration" pp 20-27—*Bint Arab* Evelyn Shakir.

- **Thurs-** Lecture on Feminism in the Middle East and its developments. Discussion on Shakir's introduction and the status of women in Syria. Present and explain prompt for Assignment 4—Feminism Research.

Homework- Think about ideas for research paper and read "Fighting Political Racism" pp 79-94—*Bint Arab* Evelyn Shakir. Submit Reading Log.

WEEK 13

- **Tues-** Discuss the question of the Hijab in relation to Shakir's *Bint Arab*. Have students discuss their research activity for Assignment 4. Homework: Collect data and/or continue research activity for Assignment 4.

Homework- Read "Women for Women"—*Bint Arab* pp 104-111
Bring laptop to class next day.

- **Thurs-** Research proposal due. Discuss *Bint Arab*. Ask students to work in their groups and search for material on the library website and the internet on Islamic feminism and the wearing of the hijab. Group presentations (5-10 minutes) should focus on the major concepts in Islamic feminism, the developments and a short video from YouTube that highlights the group's views. Class discussion on Assignment 4 and the issues encountered by students when conducting research. A brief lecture on credible sources and using the UARK library system.

Homework: Edit Research proposal based on instructor's feedback. Submit final Reading Log on Netflix documentary *Seeing Allred*. *Seeing Allred* offers a glimpse into the life of acclaimed women's rights attorney Gloria Allred. The documentary also extensively covers the Bill Cosby case, the #metoo movement, and gives a voice to victims of sexual abuse and assault in America. Bring laptop to next class.

WEEK 14

- **Tues -** Writing Workshop for Assignment 4, initial drafting in class based on the research proposal.

Homework: Continue drafting Assignment 4 and bring a copy [or copies] of draft for peer review.

- **Thurs-** Overview of course material. Discussion on the writings covered in class, the major differences between First-world and Third-World Feminism, Feminist figures, and further developments in the movement. Peer Review Workshop of Assignment 4.

Homework: Further revision of Assignment 4 based on in-class feedback.

WEEK 15

- Instructor-Student, face-to-face conferences (each session is approximately ten minutes, students bring a printed copy of their revised draft and I offer them feedback on the work they have produced for Assignment 4).
- Have students submit course evaluations.
- Assignment 4 due.

SELECT RESPONSES FROM READING LOGS:

1. "This week we discussed a broad topic about gender and the gender spectrum. Gender is no longer a binary subject. Majoring in biology, with a pre-med concentration, the idea that there is more than just male, and female is a little head-spinning. There is an increasing lack of education behind the difference of sex and gender. Sex being male or female, and gender containing up to, or more than five identities. Gender holds importance in Feminism because understanding gender and its differences allows an individual to better understand Feminism. While disregarding negative stereotypes that often cling to feminism due to ignorance etc."
2. "For me, Feminism wasn't a word that was taught, used, or spoken growing up. But my mom established a sense of feminism in how she raised me. She was and is a single mom, raising a kid on a teacher salary. She would always tell me, 'be independent, and do things on your own. If you find someone you care about, that's great, but guard your heart.' The stigmas and misconceptions placed on women are ingrained into our brain from the moment we're born. We're dressed in pink and told to play with dolls and do other girly things. Of course, there's nothing wrong with that, but I feel it's important for young girls to know that liking blue and cars or trucks is okay too. There shouldn't be a difference between masculine things and feminine things. Boys and girls can like whatever they choose."
3. **On the documentary *Ladies First*:** "I really liked the documentary *Ladies First*. I think, especially in the United States, our society views a stern/third world countries as very primitive. Western media paints those countries to be impoverished and repressed. That narrow world view makes it hard for Westerners to see the progress that does indeed exist in countries outside of our own. This documentary really highlighted the power of determination, especially in young women. Deepika Kumari subverts so many stereotypes that are usually applied to women, and especially Indian women. I'm taking a class on Asian Americans in the Media, and we discuss how various Asian ethnicities are portrayed in American shows and movies. For example, many Asian women are shown to be hypersexualized, quiet, and submissive. Kumari is none of these things. She's determined and unashamed of pursuing her dream. She also demonstrates athleticism in women. Many women, not only Indian women, are thought to be weak and less apt at sports compared to men. This documentary completely negates that."

4. **On Estelle Freedman *No Turning Back*: "Sexualities, Identities, and Self-determination"**: "When I think about ideas of women's sexuality in Japan, women especially, especially those in erotic magazine, adult videos, they are depicted as men's ideal person. When you go to the convenience store in Japan, erotic magazines are located along with windows, and that makes people especially men's attention and buy the magazines. These magazines and videos are widely popular in Japan. Prostitution has occurred throughout Japanese history. Even though prostitution is banned under the law now, legal sex industry exists. This is where women do the physical contact with men for getting money, but phallic penetration is not included. That makes huge difference between the industry and prostitution. This industry is sexual pleasure for men. Throughout the Freedman's book 'Sexualities, Identities, and Self-determination', I realized that the image of women was created by male-gaze in Japan and their sexual identity is restricted by our society because of pornographic and sex industry."
5. **On *Bint Arab* by Evelyn Shakir and the modern-day discrimination towards the Burqa**: "This week's reading really changed how I viewed feminism in Arab culture. I used to think feminism involved wearing what you wanted, but I thought of it in a 'wear less' sense. So, when I heard that a burqa was a part of feminism, I was in denial. I am not sure if it was because of movies, my parents, news, or just me, but I had been judgmental of women who wore burqas in the United States when I was young. I think a major part was that you don't see very many people in head to toe garments, and I was nervous. I also think a major factor of me stereotyping them, was that my parents never really explained to me that it was their choice to dress that way. I think many western feminists' stereotype and are being judgmental without realizing the harm it can cause."

COURSE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS IN SPRING 2018:

- "Thank you so much, Ms. Jayasinghe! I really enjoyed this course, and I was able to get the basic knowledge of feminism. I also got the perspective of how to analyze the issues that happen around the world especially when we dealt with sensitive topics such as the #metoo movement and the Men's Rights Movement. I do love reading and writing because of you. One of the best classes that I have ever taken!!"
- "I have learned so much from this course and have adjusted to view world-wide issues in a different light. This has been an amazing class and I would recommend it to anyone."
- "I enjoyed this class thoroughly! I learned so much about feminism in general and about feminism in different countries. It opened my eyes to new and different perspectives that I probably would not have been introduced to if I was not in this class."