WSTU 1000.10 Policy, Gender, and Inequality

Class Meeting & Contact Information
Class meets Mon. & Wed., 12:45-2:00 pm in Monroe B36
Prof. Cynthia Deitch  email: deitch@gwu.edu
Office: 837 22nd St. NW  202-994-7438
Office hours: Mon & Wed. 3:30-5 pm & by arrangement

Course Description
Abortion and same-sex marriage are but two examples of hot-button political issues that bring debates about gender and sexuality into the public policy arena. We will explore differing political and philosophical ideas about equality and the appropriate role of government in reducing inequality. The course examines how policies and policy debates shape, and are shaped by, ideas about gender difference; and how gender intersects with race and class among other inequalities. The focus is primarily on the U.S., but includes some cross-national policy comparisons. This course provides students with an introduction to Women’s Studies and to the study of public policy. It will count for the Women’s Studies major.

Learning Objectives – By the end of the course students should be able to:
• Comprehend competing ideas about equality and the role of government in reducing inequality.
• Understand how public policies both shape and are shaped by ideas about gender and the intersection of gender with race, class and other inequalities.
• Know, list and describe key examples of US Federal legislation and US Supreme Court decisions affecting gender equality.
• Summarize and explain several examples of how US public policy affecting gender has changed over the past 50 years.
• Analyze, compare and contrast two or more approaches to policy on a given topic.
• Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of existing policy on a topic of interest; construct/design a persuasive policy argument on that topic.

Required Books:
• Women’s Rights in the USA: Policy Debates and Gender Roles by Dorothy McBride and Janine Parry (4th edition, 2011)
• Additional required readings on Blackboard and online

Course Requirements and Grading
1. Class Participation -- very important, 15% of course grade.
2. Policy Update -- 15%
   • Requires a 5-6 minute presentation plus a 3 - 4 page paper
   • Each student signs up for a specific topic & due date
   • For more information, see assignment details
3. Interview/oral history assignment -- 15%
   • 5-page paper, due Oct. 29 (see assignment details)
4. In-class exam, Nov. 19 -- 15%
   • Format will include short answer, multiple choice, plus essays
5. **Final paper** -- 35% (5% for class presentation of paper; 5% for 3-page preview posted on Blackboard Nov. 30; and 25% for final written paper)
   - Topic: Policy recommendations for the Obama administration (or other policymaker) on a specific issue that you choose.
   - For more information, see assignment details (and information in class)
   - Each student signs up for a 10-minute presentation of final paper topic to be given in class on Nov. 24, Dec. 1 or Dec. 3.
   - 3 page (900 word) preview of your policy proposal and main arguments due Nov. 30.

### Schedule of Topics and Readings

*The syllabus is subject to minor revision during the semester. The online syllabus on Blackboard will be updated throughout the semester. Changes may be made in some of the assigned readings on Blackboard.*

(Bb) = reading posted on Blackboard under FILES. WR= chapters in *Women’s Rights in the USA* book.

**Aug. 25**

**Introductions**

**Different Ways of Thinking about Equality & Equal Rights**

**Aug. 27**

Deborah Stone, “Equity” (Ch. 2 of *Policy Paradox*) Bb

**Sept. 1**

- Labor Day holiday, no class

**Gender and Education Policy: Title IX debates on athletics, single sex schools, sexual harassment in schools, and sexual assault on campuses**

**Sept. 3**

- WR ch 5

**Sept 8**

Ongoing Debates on Title IX for (a) athletics and (b) single sex schools
Each student will sign up to be part of *one* of these two debates.
(a) Title IX and athletics
   - Jessica Gavora, “Tilting the Playing Field” Bb
(b) Arguments for and against single-sex education under Title IX
   - (against) [http://www.ncwge.org/singlesex.html](http://www.ncwge.org/singlesex.html) (National Coalition for Women & Girls in Education) Read the PDF file report (online)

**Sept. 10**

**Sexual Harassment in Schools and Sexual Assault on College Campuses**

AAUW, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School* by (2011 Report by Catherine Hill and Holly Kearl) Bb

**Sept. 15**

**Sex Education**
- Chapters from Doan & Williams, *The Politics of Virginity*, Bb

**Sept. 17**

**Reproductive Rights and Related Policies**
- WR ch 4

**Sept. 22**

**Abortion – ongoing debates**
- Carol Sanger, “Regulating Teenage Abortion in the United States: Politics and Policy” Bb

**Sept. 24**

**Contraception – recent issues**

**Gender and Family Law: Marriage and Divorce**

**Traditional Marriage & Divorce Policies in the U.S.**
- WR ch 6

**Oct. 1**

“*The Loving Story*” documentary video on *Loving v Virginia* shown in class

**Politics of Same Sex Marriage Policies**
- Readings on Blackboard to be added on recent developments

**Oct. 6**

**International perspectives on same sex unions in other countries**
- Additional reading to be added (Bb)

**Oct. 8**

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Public Policy** (issues other than marriage)
- (tentative) Film: *After Stonewall* to be shown in class
- WR 270-275

**Oct. 13**

**Gender, Equal Employment Policies, and the Economy**
- WR, ch 7
Oct. 22  **Title VII Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**  
- WR pp 290-29 of ch. 5 (section on Sexual Harassment)  
- Frank Dobbin, “Sexual Harassment as Employment Discrimination” (ch. 8 of *Inventing Equal Opportunity*) (Bb)

Oct. 27  **Policies for Working Parents: Parental leave and child care**  
*U.S Policies*  
- WR, ch. 8  
- Possible additional reading TBA

Oct. 29  **Interview paper due** – discussion of papers in class

Nov. 3  **Child Care and Parental Leave Policies in Other Countries**  
- Kimberly Morgan, “The ‘Production’ of Child Care: How Labor Markets Shape Social Policy and Vice Versa” (comparison of France, Sweden, and US) Bb  
- Linda Haas & Philip Hwang, “Fatherhood and Social Policy in Scandinavia” Bb

Nov. 5 & maybe Nov. 10  **Women, Welfare, and Poverty**  
- WR ch 11  
- Chapter from *Flat Broke with Children* by Sharon Hays (Oxford University Press, 2004) Bb  
- Chapter from *When Welfare Disappears* by Kenneth Neubeck (Routledge, 2006) Bb  
- Randy Albelda, “Different anti-Poverty Programs, Same Single-Mother Poverty, Fifteen Years of Welfare Reform” (Bb)

Nov. 10– Nov. 12  **Violence Against Women and Related Topics**  
- WR ch 10  
- Possible additional reading and/or guest speaker

Nov. 17  Review for exam, guidance for final papers

Nov. 19  **In-class Exam**

Nov. 24  Student Presentations of Final Paper in-progress

Nov. 26  No class meeting, Thanksgiving holiday

Dec. 1  Student Presentations of Final Paper in-progress

Dec. 3  Student Presentations of Final Paper in-progress

**Examples of good sources for the policy update and the final paper include:**  
- thomas.loc.gov for US Federal legislation  
- www.house.gov for the US House of Representatives  
- www.findlaw.com and www.law.cornell.edu for court decisions and legal information  
- www.usscplus.com for Supreme Court Decisions  
- US Federal Government departments and agencies such as the Dept. of Education, Dep. of Justice, Dept. of Health and Human Services, etc.  
- www.iwpr.org Institute for Women’s Policy Research
• Websites of respected advocacy groups that track and analyze policies on your topic such as National Women’s Law Center [www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org) among others.
• For more conservative perspectives see Independent Women’s Forum [www.iwf.org](http://www.iwf.org), American Enterprise Institute, Heritage Foundation, among others.

**General guidelines and grading considerations for all written assignments:**

• All papers must be typed and double spaced.
• No emailed or faxed papers will be accepted at all for any assignment.
• Hard copy is expected for all written work unless you receive permission for Blackboard-only. However, you are strongly encouraged to submit a back-up copy of your papers on Blackboard (under PROJECTS) It is ok to post your paper on Blackboard on the due date to make the deadline and then submit a hard copy the following day.
• Be sure to number pages in case they get separated.
• Careful writing, proofreading, spell checking, etc. is required. Poor writing or poor organization will lead to a poor grade. Avoid unsupported generalizations as well as trite or superficial comments.
• Full citation of all sources is required, including course readings for this course and internet sources. Include parenthetical citations, footnotes, or endnotes in the text plus an alphabetical list of works cited at the end in appropriate bibliographic format.
• Use of inappropriate, unreliable sources is likely to result in a low grade. If you do not know how to find reliable sources, consult with the instructor or a librarian. Note: WIKIPEDIA is not an acceptable source for any assignments in this course.
• If you do not follow instructions and your paper does not fit the specific requirements of the assignment, you risk a low or failing grade. Get permission if you want to do something different from what is in the instructions.
• If you do not understand the assignment or are having difficulty with it, be sure to consult with me before the assignment is due.
• For the final paper, especially, I will look for original, critical thinking, in depth analysis, demonstration of good grasp of the policies and background information discussed in the paper.
• You may not submit a paper you have written for another course, or a paper anyone else has written. All writing should be in your own words, except where you (sparingly) use and cite direct quotes.
• **Warning, academic integrity means, among other things, that if the paper is not written in your own words you could be charged with plagiarism and receive an F.**
• **Late penalties:** 1-3 calendar days late, an A becomes an A- (B+ become a B), etc.. For papers received 4-8 calendar days late, an A becomes a B (B+ becomes C+), etc. 9-12 calendar days late, an A becomes a C (B becomes a D), etc. More than 12 days late, the paper is not accepted at all. No-penalty extensions are given only for extenuating circumstances such as a health problem or other emergency with written documentation.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Students are expected to adhere to the University Academic Integrity Code. Be careful to fully cite all sources. Ask for help and/or consult a style manual if you are not sure how, when, or whether to include a citation. All papers must be written in your own words. Papers that fail to address the specific topics and questions assigned for this class risk an F.
Grading Scale: A=95, A- = 91.5, B+=88.5, B=85, B- =81.5, C+=78.5, C=75, C- =71.5, D+=68.5, D=65, D- = 61.5, F=55 or lower (Note: This is the same scale Blackboard uses when it automatically assigns scores to letter grades).

Additional Instructions for the Written Assignments

Policy Update (15 %) Due same date as your presentation listed on the sign-up sheet.

5 minute presentation plus 3-4 page paper due the same date. Sign up for a topic and presentation date. The assignment is to give a policy update on recent (since 2009) developments in your topic area that are not covered in the assigned readings. Find 1-3 significant laws or policies proposed or enacted, or major court decisions. One important example is best, but 2 or 3 related items are also ok. Explain what each is about, where things stand to date, why it is important, who is on what side and, very important, what are the arguments on each side. Be sure to include primary sources such as actual Supreme Court decisions and actual text of bills and laws among your sources for each item. If two students have the same topic, make sure your presentations cover different items. For the presentation, powerpoint or a handout is encouraged but not required. Try to raise a question for discussion related to your topic. It is also good to relate your paper and/or presentation to the reading assignment where appropriate.

What counts as a significant item for the update? Criteria might include: evidence that it has had an impact, substantial media attention, ongoing debate, a major change from previous law or policy, something in one state that other states are moving to follow. For bills introduced but not passed, it should be something you can show has a reasonable chance of moving forward to a vote.

Interview/Oral History Assignment (15%)
Due: Oct. 29 Suggested length: 5 double-spaced pages

The purpose of the paper is to use the personal experience of people you may know to learn more about how historically significant policy changes actually affected people’s lives. The focus of the interview is on personal experience and the lives of friends and family. It is ok if the person you interview does not know much about the specific law or policy – it is your job to add the policy information into the paper. Your paper should NOT be a simple transcript of the interview. Rather, incorporate information, themes, stories, and quotes from the interview to reflect of what you learned from the interview and how it relates to the policy history covered in class and in reading assignments. Explicitly discussing how the interview relates to material assigned and/or covered in class is a key component of this assignment.

Option A. Interview someone old enough to have clear memories of what it was like before one of the following: legal abortion, Title IX, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, no fault divorce, the repeal of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell in the U.S. military.

Option B. Interview someone who has been directly involved in making, changing, or trying to change policy on one of the topics on the syllabus for this class.

Option C. Interview someone who has had personal experience challenging discrimination based on one of the laws or policies covered in this class. It could be gender, race, ethnic, religious, or sexual orientation discrimination. Find out about the person’s experience with discrimination, what they did to challenge it, and what was the outcome. In your paper, reflect upon how existing law and policy did or
did not help in the situation described. To fit, the person would have done something to challenge discrimination, not just experienced it.

Final Paper:  
Policy recommendations for the Obama administration (or other policymaker or government agency)

Choose a topic or issue that is relevant and related to gender policy. Write as if you are a policy expert, clearly identifying yourself (your imaginary self) as, for example, a staff member of a Congressperson, government agency, think tank, advocacy organization, etc. Unless you are writing as a very well-known individual, the first person is not appropriate for this paper. The paper should cover the following 5 parts:

1. Provide an overview of existing policy on this topic.
2. Make a convincing argument to explain why you believe new or additional policy, or policy change, is needed. Provide relevant facts, figures, and examples to substantiate your argument that a problem exists.
3. Review what new policies, legislation, or other government action has been or is being proposed by people or groups other than you. Identify key individuals and organizations involved in the policy debate and briefly describe their positions. Briefly explain what proposals have been introduced or debated and by whom. Then, give your analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of these proposals. If there are opposing sides of a debate, be sure to cover all sides. If the issue is intertwined with other political conflicts, explain.
4. Present your specific recommendations for what the President or other policymaker(s) should do on this issue. Be clear to whom your recommendations are addressed. Your recommendations and analysis should include some type of gender focus.
5. Provide an argument to the President and/or Congressional leaders or other policymakers as to why your recommendations are politically and financially feasible and viable. In most cases, this would include an assessment of likely bi-partisan support, popular support, estimated cost, and how it might be funded.

More on the Final Paper
- Final Paper Due: Dec. 12 (6:00 hard copy or midnight on Blackboard)
- Length: 13-15 typed, double-spaced pages. The final paper is 25% of the semester grade, with an additional 5% for the panel presentation (see below) and another 5% for the written preview (see below)
- Panel Presentation: Each student will present a 10-minute version of the final paper, including the policy recommendations, in class on Nov. 24, Dec. 1, or Dec 3 as part of a panel. The presentations will be coordinated as part of a group/panel session. The panel presentation counts for 5% of your semester grade.
- Written Preview: Post on Blackboard a 3 pages (approximately 900 word) preview of your paper, summarizing of the most important background information, arguments, and points by 9 pm Sunday Nov. 30. The preview is worth 5% of the semester grade.
ADDITIONAL CLASS & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Attendance policy: Given that this is a seminar, baring unforeseen circumstances such as illness, students are expected to come to class each session prepared to participate in a discussion of the assigned material.

Late work: The grade penalty for late written work for the policy update and interview papers is: 1-4 calendar days late, an A becomes an A- (B+ become a B), etc.; 5-9 calendar days late, an A becomes a B (B+ becomes C+), etc.; 10-12 calendar days late, an A becomes a C (B becomes a D), etc.; more than 12 days late, the paper is not accepted at all. No-penalty extensions are given only for extenuating circumstances such as a medical or other emergency with written documentation. Incomplete grades for the semester are only given by special permission for extenuating circumstances and require a written contract.

Make-up exams: Approved on a case by case basis, only for significant reasons, must be arranged in advanced except in case of medical emergency, medical excuses must be documented. Leaving town a week early for Thanksgiving is NOT a legitimate excuse for not taking the 11/19 exam in class.

University Policy on Religious Holidays: Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. There will be no penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations or other work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
The GW Code of Academic Integrity applies to all work in this class. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC)  202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

SECURITY
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.