Course Description
This course will focus on the multiple and sometimes conflicting ways feminist theory produced scholarship since 1980 which sought to deploy the concept of difference in order to release some political potential in undermining a homogenous, universal(izing) concept of womanhood. The curriculum features a selection of texts representing key arguments in order to trace this development of difference in feminist scholarship: we will focus on Foucault's impact on feminism, psychoanalytic thought's relationship with feminism, French Feminism, and the readings will introduce ways in which sexuality, embodiment, and oppression have been thought and contextualized. The course is designed to provide an opportunity to read and discuss in detail these texts and the turns they inaugurated or represent.

Learning Outcomes
- Students will improve their competence in key poststructuralist theoretical interventions informing feminist theory;
- Students will be able to discuss the impact on and implications of these theories for gender studies in particular and critical theories in general;
- Students will improve their analytical skills during reading, writing reaction papers, and group discussions;
- Students will develop their writing and presentation skills.

Requirements
- Attendance and class participation
  You are required to attend classes consistently: missing a class without some official documentation of a medical problem or other cases of vis maior may affect your grade. You are expected to take an active, constructive part in group discussions (focusing on the text at hand and the questions it raises, and fostering productive discussion), and constructive questions and contributions are in general welcome. This component will yield 20% of your grade.

- Group Presentation
  You will be asked to form 6 teams of 2 or 3 people. Each team will give a presentation on a given author at the beginning of the class when we are discussing that author’s text. The presentation has to focus on the author in order to contextualize the text we have read for class that day. The presentation should give an introduction about the author (who is he/she, where is she teaching in what department. In addition, the presentation should give a brief introduction to their research focus in general, relying on book reviews of the author’s key works. The presentation should take 10 minutes, and all team members should participate in it. Please email me a brief plan for the presentation (up to one page) by the day before the presentation. This component will yield 20% of your grade.
• 3 analytic response papers
You will have to write 3 reaction papers spread out during the semester. Reaction papers are due at the beginning of the class when we discuss the text (please submit a hard copy). See the guidelines on how to write a reaction paper for this class below. It is very important that you submit these papers before class. If you can’t attend class, make sure you submit your paper beforehand. This component will yield 60% of your grade.

• Preparing 3 questions for Week 12 (see schedule).

Guidelines for Analytic Response Papers

An AR paper is around **800-1000 words** long and should be either brought to class in a hard copy or posted on the course e-learning site before the start of the relevant class. Papers should be posted in student folder for the corresponding week of discussing the text. The paper must include page numbers, a title, the name of the student, the name of the course, and the date of submission.

The purpose of the assignment is to create a space for you to think about the texts, and to articulate your questions, interpretations, and critiques. These papers will also help you to prepare for class discussion, and may be shared with the class.

There are several ways you can engage with this assignment. However, a strong analytic response often

(1), offers a close reading of a sentence, a phrase, or even a concept that intrigues you the most, and discuss how and why it intrigues you: how do you interpret the chosen part – what are the argument, the contingency, and the tension in this part, and how does this part relate to the main argument of the author, and what are its theoretical and political implications;

(2) begins with what is most confusing or difficult to grasp in the materials. Try to develop it into a discussion question; we might actually discuss it in class. Can you find any clue in the text? What would be your hypothetical response to your own question, based on that textual clue?;

(3) develops a point based on analyses interrogating the implicit argument, the contingency, the tension, and the potential of the identified element(s) in the text, discussing their theoretical and political implications.

In this light, I’d like to push you to dwell upon the given materials for close and attentive engagement.

While an analytic response paper is less formal than a typical research paper, it should nonetheless be taken more seriously than a usual reaction paper.
1. What is a analytic response paper?
Analytic response papers are more than summaries of the texts. They focus on one problem or question that you identify in relation to and/or within the text.

The analytic response paper focuses on one text but is otherwise an open exercise. For ideas how you should construct a reaction paper, see the next section.

The reader should be left at the end with an understanding of why you have chosen to focus your attention on this one problem or debate in particular: what is the relevance of this problem for you?

You can supplement your analysis, if you wish, with other readings not featured in the course reader, but these cannot replace analysis of the readings from the course reader.

2. Guidelines for preparing your analytic response paper
You don’t have to do all this, but some of this may help.
Read the text and list to yourself what to you seem like the keywords and concepts/problems. Try to summarize its argument with the help of these keywords and concepts. Practice writing a short summary: how much can you omit by still being able to say what the text is about and what it argues.

When you are done, you can return to your list of keywords. Can you find one question or problem that:
- a) relates to these key words and concepts;
- b) produces a reaction in you (negative, positive, ambivalent, familiar, alien, boring, exciting, relevant, irrelevant).

Write an intellectual argument that summarizes the problem or question. In this argument you should:
- cite from the text to support yourself
- explore the nature of your personal response to the problem: asking why it might seem irrelevant to you, boring to you, or the most important thing since the invention of the wheel…

3. Organization
Use your notes to make a rough draft of your reaction paper, which should be organized in the following way:
- An introductory summary of the overall argument of the text (no longer than the 1/3 of the whole paper)
- A body
- A conclusion.

I. Introduction
- include information such as author, title, of the text discussed
- give a brief summary of the argument of the text (a short paragraph) in order to contextualize your focus
- briefly identify your focus in this analytic response paper.
II. Body
  • exposition of your reaction and argument; for an effective academic prose, you can rely on the following academic writing tips:
    • make sure your paragraphs (including citations) provide support for your argument;
    • each paragraph should contain one idea;
    • the first sentence of each paragraph should support the thesis;
    • the final sentence of each paragraph should lead into the next paragraph.

III. Conclusion
  The conclusion can be:
  • a restatement of what you said in your paper,
  • a comment that focuses your overall reaction, or
  • As short as 1-2 sentences

!! Note: your conclusion should include no new information.

Note on plagiarism: It is your responsibility to make sure that your written work does not include any plagiarism (make sure you clearly mark your notes including quotations for yourself in order to avoid accidentally pasting them in your text). Any assignment found containing plagiarism will receive an F with no possibility of rewriting and you’ll receive an email notification of the problem. Any recurrence may result in failing the course.

Electronic policy:
Please don’t use your laptops in class. I ask you to bring your readings in hard copy (tablets are negotiable; phones are fine) and take notes by hand on paper. Here are a few relevant articles:
http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away
https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/students-are-better-off-without-a-laptop-in-the-classroom/
https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/2015/08/laptop-use-effects-learning-attention/
https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/
http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away

Concerns
If you have a concern regarding any part of the above syllabus, including especially the fulfilment of course requirements, please email me for an appointment before the end of the registration period so that we can discuss the possibilities of accommodating these concerns.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1. 
Foucault and Feminism 1

**Week 2.**
**Foucault and Feminism 2**

**Week 3.**
**Posthuman Feminism**

**Week 4.**
**French Feminism**
Presentation—group 1

**Week 5.**
**Gender and Performance**
Presentation—Group 2

**Week 6.**
**Feminism, postcolonial critique and secularism**
Presentation—Group 3

**Week 7.**
Spivak continued

**Week 8.**
Presentation—Group 4

**Week 9.**
**Embodiment/New Materialism**

**Week 10.**
Presentation—Group 5

**Week 11.**


**Week 12.**
No reading—structured discussion

There are no readings scheduled for this class. Please bring to class 3 questions about the course so far. These questions might emerge from the way the different texts interact in you: there might be strange affinities or contradictions between the texts we have read. The aim of this class is to stop for a second to discuss seriously the main questions we have engaged with throughout the course without the burden of having to address a new reading in class. Please be ready to submit 3 questions before the class starts. The questions will not be graded but are part of your required coursework.

This syllabus is subject to change.