

## **WS 403: Women and Change in Developing Countries**

**Online Summer 2020 (May 11-June 25, 2020)**

**Instructor: Elizabeth Brannon (she/her/hers)**

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**Office: 240 South Kedzie Hall**

**Virtual Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00-2:00 p.m., and by appointment**

### **Course Description**

This course examines the effects of economic, political, and social change on women in developing countries. Throughout the course, students will examine issues of change and development, while considering the interactive influences of gender, class, race, and nationality. The course is intended to teach students about efforts to encourage change in developing countries and to facilitate a critical analysis of such efforts from a post-colonial lens. The class is broken into four modules that focus on (1) key theories and frameworks, (2) economic development, (3) culture and social change, and (4) politics, institutions, and change. Throughout each of these modules, students will be introduced to bottom-up grassroots movements and will contrast these to top-down international organizations and institutions attempting to implement programming in developing countries. The course is intended for advanced students and it is recommended that students are familiar with the discipline of Women's Studies.

### **Course Objectives**

- Apply concepts and theories from Women's Studies to the developing context
- Understand, question, and debate the purpose and role of international development
- Identify the interrelated nature of economic, political, and social change
- Assess the role of women's agency in international development practices
- Build critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills

### **Course Expectations**

***Class Engagement and Preparation:*** Students are expected to do all required reading and assignments. This will be an intensive course, as it will cover a semester's worth of material in a single 7-week summer session. Therefore, students should expect to spend more time weekly for this class than they would during a normal semester. Online courses offer flexibility; however, they also demand time, organization, and diligence. It is the responsibility of students to keep track of all due dates and submit their materials on time. In lieu of a physical classroom, students are expected to engage with the instructor and their classmates through D2L. As such, students should be regularly checking D2L to keep up with the material, but also are expected to be engaged in online discussions on the material. Each module will have approximately two lectures posted onto D2L for students to watch.

This class will be reading heavy. Students are expected to complete all of the assigned readings and they ought to devote time each week to critically reflect on the material covered. It is recommended for students to take detailed notes for every reading, including brainstorming

questions, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, and considering connections to other class material.

**Classroom Philosophy:** Recognizing that a vibrant and transformative intellectual community may be best facilitated among individuals of different experiences and opinions, students are expected to be respectful and open to the perspectives of other students. Students have a right to express their opinions and be heard but are expected to give their peers the same space. The goal of this class is not to reach consensus or to seek absolute answers, but rather to encourage nuanced understanding of complex issues.

### **Required Text**

This class has one required book. It is available online through the MSU Library, so no purchase is required. It is necessary, however, that students are able to access the book online. All other readings will be uploaded by the instructor onto D2L.

Visvanathan, Nalini. 2011. *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books.

### **Course Assignments and Evaluation**

Your grade will be based on the following:

- 1. Discussion Questions & Responses (30%)**
- 2. Reading Responses (25%)**
- 3. Current Event Analysis (15%)**
- 4. Final Project (30%)**

#### **Grading scale, based on the number of points earned:**

4.0 = 93-100%	3.5 = 86-92%	3.0 = 80-85%	2.5 = 75-79%
2.0 = 70-74%	1.5 = 65-69%	1.0 = 60-64%	0.0 <60%

#### **Discussion Questions & Responses (30%)**

As this class has no in-person meeting times, we will instead rely on online discussion threads to facilitate meaningful critical thinking throughout the course. To do so, we will use the discussion boards on D2L. For each module, students are required to post **one** discussion post. This must be posted by the 6<sup>th</sup> day of each module (specific dates will be provided) in order to allow time for other students to consider and respond to said post. Each student is additionally required to respond to **two** other posts. These responding posts must be made by the module's final deadline. The instructor will additionally post discussion points and responses to help facilitate discussion each module. A high-quality discussion post should engage thoughtfully with the reading and lecture material. This could include offering critics, relevant connections to other material, or posing questions inspired throughout the module. Posts should be roughly the length of a long paragraph (6-8 sentences).

#### **Reading Responses (25%)**

Students are required to submit reading responses for **each** module. Reading responses should be 2-3 pages (double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1in margins). Reading responses should engage with **at least one** of the readings assigned in the module. Papers should synthesize the reading(s) and provide

critical commentary on the content. Such commentary should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the material, as well as consider broader questions and connections that can be made from the readings. Reading response papers are **due midnight** on the last day of the module. Specific dates are provided for each module. The lowest grade of the four response papers will be dropped.

### **Current Events Analyses (15%)**

Throughout the class, students are to submit one current events analysis. Students are to select a current (within the last six months) news story on women and change in the developing world that relates to a given module. Students are to submit a 3-page (double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1in margin) analysis that critically evaluates the events. As there are only one of these analyses due, students have the ability to pick the module they want to relate the current event to. Analyses are due by midnight on the last day of respective module. A detailed rubric is available on D2L.

### **Final Project (30%)**

Students will have two options for the final project. Final projects are **due June 25<sup>th</sup>** at midnight. **Option #1** is a traditional research paper. The paper should be approximately 6-7 pages (double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1in margin). Students may choose their own projects but are required to submit a paper proposal to the instructor by June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Paper proposals should include the thesis and a brief outline of the paper. Topics may relate to anything that falls under the class purview. A detailed rubric for the research paper is available on D2L.

**Option #2** is a group project. Groups may include 2-4 people. Each group will be required to create a “wiki” page for a topic related to the class. The wiki page topic should be relatively specific in order to allow students to provide an overview and analysis of the topic in depth. A thorough wiki page would be approximately 5 pages (single spaced, 12 pt. font, 1in margin). Students may choose their own projects but are required to submit a paper proposal to the instructor by June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Proposals should include the topic of the page and an outline of what sections will be included. A detailed rubric for the wiki project is available on D2L

Students are required to include a works cited list for both Option #1 and Option #2. A successful final project is one that is well researched and includes between 15 and 20 references cited. References should include peer-reviewed academic material. References should be cited in Chicago format.

### **Class Policies**

**Email/D2L:** The instructor will check all emails Monday-Friday during normal business hours (9am-5pm) and will respond to all emails within a 24-hour window. Students must have access to D2L for this course. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they have access and to check D2L regularly. For issues with D2L, students should contact the help desk online or by phone at (517) 432-6200 or toll free: (844) 678-6200.

**Deadlines and Make-up Policy:** All assignments are due by **Midnight Eastern Time (EST)** on the date listed on the syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to take this into account if they are in a different time zone. **No late work will be accepted**, except in documented cases of what the

university defines as “extraordinary circumstances” (including university-approved athletic competition, extreme illness resulting in a hospital stay, or death of a family member).

**Office Hours:** Office hours will be held on zoom on **Wednesdays from 1:00-2:00 p.m.** and by appointment.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:** Article 2.3.B of the Student Rights and Responsibilities states: “The student shared with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, this course adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, *Protection of Scholarship and Grades*; the all-University Policy on *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades*; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations.

Students who are found to have committed academic dishonesty or plagiarism will receive one of the following penalties: no credit on the respective assignment, a failing grade for the class, and/or report to the university. Students **must** complete and turn in only original work. Where appropriate, students must properly cite relevant material. For more information on MSU’s policies on academic honesty, see <https://ombud.msu.edu/academic-integrity/plagiarism-policy.html>.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). If you have been issued a VISA form by RCPD, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the course.

**Sensitive Material:** The topics covered within this class contain sensitive material. Sensitivity to such material will be considered and respected. However, students should be aware that such material is a necessary part to the course content. When possible, the instructor will include relevant warnings for readings, film, and lectures.

**Mandatory Reporting:** It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure that a safe learning environment is created. As such, all materials submitted to the instructor will be kept private, as will any personal information revealed through one-on-one meetings. However, as an employee of the university, the instructor is a mandatory reporter. If the instructor is made aware of any form of sexual misconduct, the endangerment of a child, or harm to oneself or others, either on or off campus, while enrolled at MSU, irrespective of who was involved in the incident(s), the instructor is required to inform the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) as well as the MSU Police Department. If this happens, the student will then be contacted by a campus official, though the student has the option to decline speaking with that individual. If students wish to disclose or discuss such events, they are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center (517-355-2870) or the MSU Sexual Assault Program (517-355-3551), call the 24-hour crisis line (517-372-6666), and contact MSU Safe Place (517-355-1100). for support services/shelter for relationship violence and stalking. More information can be found at <http://endrape.msu.edu/> and <http://safeplace.msu.edu/>.

**Name and Pronoun Policy:** Students have a right to be called by preferred names and pronouns. Students may indicate their preferred names and pronouns throughout the semester. The instructor and all students in this class will respect such preferences.

**Schedule of Modules**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topics</b>
Key Theories & Frameworks	May 11-20	A Crash Course in Feminism  Post-Colonial Thought & Women in Developing Countries  Introduction to Gender & Development
Economic Development	May 21-June 2	Women, Labor, & Poverty  Women, Globalization, & Aid
Culture & Social Change	June 3-June 12	Issues of “Culture” and Re-Visiting Post-Colonialism  Social Change & Women’s Movements
Politics, Institutions & Change	June 13-23	Women’s Domestic Political Influence & Engagement  The Transnational Women’s Movement & International Gender Mainstreaming

**Module 1: Key Theories and Frameworks**

**May 11-20, 2020**

*A Crash Course in Women’s & Gender Studies and Feminism*

*Read:*

“Introduction” (Ch. 1) in Launius, Christie and Holly Hassel. 2018. *Threshold Concepts in Women’s and Gender Studies: Ways of Seeing, Thinking, and Knowing*. Routledge. (p. 4-17)

“Sex or Gender? Bodies in World Politics and Why Gender Matters” in Shepherd, Laura J. 2010. *Gender Matters in Global Politics: A Feminist Introduction to International Relations*. Routledge. (p. 3-14)

*Watch:*

“We Should All Be Feminists” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_we\\_should\\_all\\_be\\_feminists?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists?language=en)

### ***Post-Colonial Thought & Women in Developing Countries***

*Read:*

“Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” by Chandra Talpade Mohanty in Visvanathan, Nalini (ed). 2011. *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 83-88)

Lugones, Maria C. and Elizabeth V. Spelman. 1983. “Have We Got a Theory for You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism, and the Demand for ‘the Woman’s Voice’”. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 6 (6): 573-581.

Narayana, Uma. 2000. “Undoing the “Package Picture” of Cultures.” *Signs* 25 (4): 1083-1086.

“How to Write about Africa” by Binyayanga Wainaina <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

*Watch:*

“The Danger of a Single Story” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

### ***Introduction to Gender & Development***

*Read:*

“Feminism and Development in a Global World” (Ch. 1) in Everett, Jana, and Sue Ellen M. Charlton. 2014. *Women Navigating Globalization: Feminist Approaches to Development*. Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield. (p. 1-22)

“The History of International Development: Concepts and Contexts” by Shiran M. Rai in Visvanathan, Nalini (ed). 2011. *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 14-21)

“Gender and Development: Theoretical Perspectives” by Shirin M. Rai in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 28-37)

*Watch:*

Girl Rising by Richard E. Robbins

[https://tubitv.com/movies/363092/girl\\_rising](https://tubitv.com/movies/363092/girl_rising)

## **Module 2: Economic Development**

**May 21-June 2, 2020**

### ***Women, Labor, & Poverty***

*Read:*

“Debates and Dilemmas: Work” (Ch. 6) in Everett, Jana, and Sue Ellen M. Charlton. 2014. *Women Navigating Globalization: Feminist Approaches to Development*. Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield. (p. 117-143)

Benería, Lourdes. 1992. “Accounting for Women’s Work: The Progress of Two Decades.” *In The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 14-21)

Kabeer, Naila. 2015. “Gender, poverty and inequality: a brief history of feminist contributions in the field of international development.” *Gender & Development* 23(2): 189-205.

Chant, Sylvia. 2008. “The ‘Feminisation of Poverty’ and the ‘Feminisation’ of Anti-Poverty Programmes: Room for Revision?” *Journal of Development Studies* 44 (2): 165-197.

### ***Women, Globalization, & Aid***

*Read:*

Hickel, Jason 2014. “The ‘Girl Effect’: Liberalism, Empowerment and the Contradictions of Development.” *Third World Quarterly* 35 (8): 1355-1373.

Chant, Sylvia and Caroline Sweetman. 2012. “Fixing Women or Fixing the World? ‘Smart Economics,’ Efficiency Approaches, and Gender Equality in Development.” *Gender and Development* 20 (3): 517-529.

Karim, Lamia. 2008. “Demystifying Micro-Credit: The Grameen Bank, NGOs, and Neoliberalism in Bangladesh.” *Cultural Dynamics* 20 (1): p. 5-29.

Sanyal, Paromita. 2009. “From Credit to Collective Action: The Role of Microfinance in Promoting Women’s Social Capital and Normative Influence.” *American Sociological Review*: 74. (p. 529-550)

## **Module 3: Culture & Social Change**

**June 3-June 12, 2020**

### ***Issues of “Tradition” and “Culture” and Revisiting Post-Colonialism***

*Read:*

Narayan, Uma. 1998. “Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism.” *Hypatia* 13 (2). (p. 86-99)

“Subordination and Sexual Control: A Comparative View of the Control of Women” by Gita Sen in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 154-161)

“Is Islam Misogynistic” (Ch. 9 ) in Kristof, Nicholas D. and Sheryl WuDunn. 2009. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. New York: Vintage Books. (p. 149-166)

Sayantani DasGupta’s Critique of *Half the Sky*: “Your Women are Oppressed, but Ours are Awesome: How Nicholas Kristof and Half the Sky Use Women Against Each Other.”

“Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and its Others” by Lila Abu-Lughod in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 89-94)

### ***Social Change & Women’s Movements***

*Read:*

“Women’s Community Organizing in Quito: The Paradoxes of Survival and Struggle” by Amy Lind in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 417-423)

“Feminist Nation-Building: An Examination of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)” by Jennifer L. Fluri in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 425-431)

“Mobilization without Emancipation? Women’s Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua” by Maxine Molyneux in *Women, Gender, and Politics: A Reader* (p. 21-28)

“African Women’s Movements Negotiating Peace” by Aili Tripp, Isabel Casimiro, Joy Kwesiga, and Alice Mungwa in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 349-359)

*Watch:*

*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, Documentary by Gini Reticker and Abigail Disney



<https://www.forkfilms.com/pray-the-devil-back-to-hell/>

**Content Warning:** Wartime violence (including mass murder), sexual violence

## **Module 4: Politics, Institutions & Change**

**June 15-25, 2020**

### ***Women's Domestic Political Influence***

*Read:*

“Latin America and the Caribbean” in Paxton, Pamela and Melanie M. Hughes. 2013. *Women, Politics, and Power: A Global Perspective*. Sage Publishers. (p. 286-304)

Yoon, Mi Yung. 2004. “Explaining Women’s Legislative Representation in Sub-Saharan Africa.” in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 167-174)

“The Problem with Patronage: Constraints on Women’s Political Effectiveness in Uganda” by Anne Marie Goetz in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 107-116)

Wordsworth, Anna. 2007. *A Matter of Interests: Gender and the Politics of Presence in Afghanistan's Wolesi Jirga*. Issues Paper Series, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit. (p/ 7-37)

### ***The Transnational Women's Movement & International Gender Mainstreaming***

“Challenges in Transnational Feminist Mobilization” by Aili Mari Tripp in *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Vol: 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Halifax: Zed Books. (p. 402-407)

“Translating the Global: Effects of Transnational Organizing on Local Feminist Discourses and Practices in Latin America” by Sonia E. Alvarez in *Women, Gender, and Politics: A Reader* (p. 63-70)

Goetz, Anne Marie and Sally Baden. 1997. “Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]? Conflicting Discourses on Gender At Beijing.” *Feminist Review* 56: (p. 3-11).