

## **Gender, Politics and Policies in the US and across the World**

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**Office hours: Please email me to request a zoom appointment.**

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**Tas will hold office hours via zoom by appointments.**

### **1.-Course Description and Course Objectives**

**This course will address three main themes:**

**1.-Women political participation in the U.S. and in selected countries across the world** including the expansion of political and voting rights, the role of women as political leaders and the overall participation of women in the political and policymaking process.

**Within the U.S., we will pay attention to the situation of racial and sexual minorities** including African-American, and Latina women, as well as issues affecting Lesbian and Transgender Women.

**2.-The evolution of women's economic rights** in the U.S. and selected countries.

Central issues here are the wage gap, the glass ceiling, and the overall female participation in the private sector.

**3.-Women in other countries and women in conflict:** Lastly, the course will examine the role of women in conflict as both participants and victims.

**Goals of this course:** The readings and class discussions are going to focus not only what has happened, but also on the policies that are been implemented and should be implemented to reduce the negative effect of past actions. The course should be of interest to everyone, regardless of gender, because we are all part of the same society.

### **2.-Skills: The course emphasizes the development of analytical skills.**

Students will develop these analytical skills in different forms:

- a) **Class discussions** which will allow the students to develop the ability to analyze, discuss, and defend different policy positions in an academic environment.
- b) **Writing a policy memo:** It is critical for all of us to be able to summarize a problem, present possible solutions, and recommend policies/solutions to others. The policy memos allow the students to develop these very important skills. Typically, students are expected to assume the role of a policy maker and provide specific policies to an important policy maker. The policy memos emphasize the use of relevant data, the analysis of the problem, and the policy design.

- c) **Group presentation:** Group presentations are geared to allow the student to develop the ability to work in a project with other students, learn about a specific topic in depth, and prepare a class presentation using either power point or class handouts. To ensure the effectiveness of the presentation the instructor meets with the student about a week before the presentation to set the specific topics and parameters of the presentation. The handout or slides need to be submitted to the instructor at least 24hours before the presentation. The instructor will review the slides or handouts to verify the effectiveness of the presentation.
- d) **Analytical essays:** The final exam consists of two analytical essays and/ or policy memos.

**Readings:**

**You'll find the articles on Canvas and on the links below.**

**Please do the readings before class**

**Requirements**

Students are required to attend class, to have read the assigned material, to participate in the class discussions, and to fulfill all the class requirements in a timely manner.

The requirements include writing a short policy paper, writing the take home exam, and doing a class presentation.

Assignments should be completed on the due date. Extensions will be granted only for medical reasons or other critical circumstances. The student is expected to document the reason for the extension.

**Grading:**

Policy/Research memo: 25%

Group Presentation: 25%

Final take home essays: 50%

**Policy research memo:** Topic and guidelines will be distributed on Feb 15.

**The memo will be due on February 25, before 10:00 PM. Please submit via Canvas**

**Please email to [sb6n@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:sb6n@andrew.cmu.edu)**

**Take Home Exam**

Students will have to write a take home exam. The exam will consist of two essays or memos of about 3-4 pp. each.

**The essay topics will be distributed on March 4. The papers will be due on March 14 before 10:00 PM. Please submit via Canvas**

**Presentation Guidelines: Please read these guidelines carefully.**

Students will be asked to select topics for class presentation/debate during the second week of classes. The instructor will form groups of 4-5 students based on the students' preferences.

- a. **Structure:** The presentation can be structured either a debate, or a presentation depending on the nature of the topic. Students will be encouraged to debate the issues and present opposing viewpoints on the issues.
- b. **Content:** Presentations should have an agenda, thesis, a brief historical background, policy/issue analysis, data to support the analysis, and conclusions. Please include a couple of policy recommendations at the end. The material needs to be cited.
- c. **Topics:** Students will select three presentation topics during the first week of classes.
- d. **The instructor will form the presentation groups.** Information regarding groups, topics and dates will be sent at the end of the first week of classes.
- e. The debaters/presenters will meet with the instructor about two weeks before the presentation to determine the format and approach to the issue or policy.
- f. The debate/presentation should last about 20-25 minutes (about 5-6 minutes per presenter)
- g. The debaters/presenters must prepare a power point presentation.
- h. The presenters/debaters must email the instructor a draft of the presentation no later than 48 hours before the presentation. The final copy should be emailed to the instructor and the TA no later than 24 hours before the presentation.

**Presentations Grading Rubric**

The presentation will be graded according to the following guidelines:

**Content:** Are the critical issues been addressed? Have the presenters complied with the format described in the guidelines? Is the material cited correctly?

**Presentation Style:** Are the presenters addressing the audience in a clear, professional, and convincing manner?

**Quality of the slides:** Includes citing the material and making sure the slides look professional.

Each of these factors will account for 1/3 of the grade.

Presentations will start in mid-February

**Class attendance is required.**

**Students who do not attend class will have their grade substantially reduced.**

**Attending class requires to have the zoom video on.**

**Grade reduction will proceed as follows:**

2 unexcused absences= One-point reduction i.e., from A to B

Between 3-4 unexcused absences=two points reduction i.e., from A to C

Over 4 unexcused absences= students will fail the class

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** In cases of cheating or plagiarism, the instructor will make full use of the College's and the University's procedures and regulations. **Students who plagiarize, will fail the paper and the course.** There will be no exemptions to this rule.

**Recording of Lectures** University policies establish that "no student may record or tape any classroom activity without the express written consent of the instructor".

**Use of Internet Sources:** Please use reliable sources. **Wikipedia is not a reliable source.**

**Suggestion:** Do not use Wikipedia unless you want to fail your exam or paper.

***Take care of yourself.***

*Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.*

*All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.*

*If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings such as anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.*

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, I encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, I encourage you to contact them at [access@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:access@andrew.cmu.edu).

**Writing Support:** Feel free to get in touch with the Global Communication Center (GCC), if you need writing support. You can schedule appointments by emailing the [gcc-cmu@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:gcc-cmu@andrew.cmu.edu)

## **Syllabus**

### **Feb 1st: The Struggle for Political Rights: A Never-Ending Battle: Political Leadership, Gendered Institutions, Exclusion, and Inclusion**

#### **Read:**

Kelly Dittmar, et. al. “Representation Matters: Women in the U.S. Congress” Center for American Women and Politics, 2017

<https://cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/representationmatters.pdf>

U.S. House of Representatives, “Chisholm, Shirley Anita”,

[https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/C/CHISHOLM,-Shirley-Anita-\(C000371\)/](https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/C/CHISHOLM,-Shirley-Anita-(C000371)/)

Robin Bleiweis and Shilpa Phadke, “The State of Women’s Leadership and how to continue changing the face of U.S. Politics” Center for American Progress, 2021

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/news/2021/01/15/494672/state-womens-leadership-continue-changing-face-u-s-politics/>

Carrie Elizabeth Blazina and Drew DeSilver, “A record number of women are serving in the 117th Congress”, Pew Research Center, Jan 15, 2021,

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/15/a-record-number-of-women-are-serving-in-the-117th-congress/>

Caroline Fraser, “The Representative: My Journey from Refugee to Congresswoman by Ilhan Omar”, The NY Review of Books, November 2020,

<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2020/11/19/ilhan-omar-representative/>

**Feb 8: Gender representation, Political Participation and Political Candidates, the Limits of Representation, Women as Legislators, Presidents and Women in the Judiciary, Women in Universities, the Arts, and other Fields, Pay Equity**  
**Read**

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, “Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, and the Limits of Representation” The New Yorker, August 24, 2020,  
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/joe-biden-kamala-harris-and-the-limits-of-representation>

Amy Atchison and Ian Down, “Women Cabinet Ministers and Female-Friendly Social Policy” Poverty and Public Policy, Vol. 1, Issue 2, 2009 (on Canvas)

Jill Lepore, “Ruth Bader Ginsburg Unlikely path to the Supreme Court” The New Yorker, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/08/ruth-bader-ginsburgs-unlikely-path-to-the-supreme-court>

Julia Jacobs, “Female Artists Made Little Progress in Museums since 2008, Survey Finds”, The NY Times, Sept 2019  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/19/arts/design/female-art-agency-partners-sothebys-artists-auction.html>

Susan Bartel, “Leadership Barriers for Women in Higher Education”, BizEd, 2018  
<https://bized.aacsb.edu/articles/2018/12/leadership-barriers-for-women-in-higher-education>

Center for Women in Politics, “By The Numbers: Black Women in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress”, 2021  
[https://cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/higher\\_heights\\_black\\_women\\_in\\_congress\\_fact\\_sheet\\_12.30.pdf](https://cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/higher_heights_black_women_in_congress_fact_sheet_12.30.pdf)

Alissa Davis and Elisse Gould, “Closing the Pay Gap and Beyond: A Comprehensive Strategy for Improving Economic Security for Women and Families”, Economic Policy Institute (EPI) Briefing Paper, 2015  
<http://www.epi.org/publication/closing-the-pay-gap-and-beyond/>

Meika Berlan and Morgan Harwood, NATIONAL SNAPSHOT: POVERTY AMONG WOMEN & FAMILIES, 2018, National Women Law Center  
[National-Snapshot.pdf \(nwlc.org\)](http://www.nwlc.org/National-Snapshot.pdf)

“How Salesforce Closed the Pay Gap between Men and Women” Wired  
<https://www.wired.com/story/how-salesforce-closed-pay-gap-between-men-women/>

## **Feb 15 African American and Latino Women and access to social policies**

### **Read:**

Center for American Progress, “Fact Sheet: The State of African American Women in the United States”, By Maria Guerra Posted on November 7, 2013,

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2013/11/07/79165/fact-sheet-the-state-of-african-american-women-in-the-united-states/>

Valerie Wilson, et.al., “Black Women have to work 7 months into 2017 to be paid the same as White men in 2016” Economic Policy Center, 2017,

<http://www.epi.org/blog/black-women-have-to-work-7-months-into-2017-to-be-paid-the-same-as-white-men-in-2016/>

Center for American Progress, “Economic Security for Black and Hispanic Families”, By Molly Cain and Sunny Frothingham, 2016,

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2016/06/21/139713/economic-security-for-black-and-hispanic-families/>

Jasmine Tucker, “Women and Social Security: Fact Sheet”, National Women Law Center, 2019, [2018-Women-and-SS.pdf \(nwlc.org\)](https://www.nwlc.org/2018-Women-and-SS.pdf)

Karen Paz and Kelly Massey, “Health Disparity among Latina Women: Comparison with Non-Latina Women”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4955974/>

Leila Schochet, “The Child Care Crisis is Keeping Women out of the Work Force” Center for American Progress, 2019

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2019/03/28/467488/child-care-crisis-keeping-women-workforce/>

Jacob Passy, “How welfare reform made women worse off”. MarketWatch

““<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-welfare-reform-made-women-worse-off-2018-02-26>”

Robin Bleiweis, et. al, “Basic Facts about Women in Poverty”, Center for American progress, 2020

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2020/08/03/488536/basic-facts-women-poverty/>

Jasmine Tucker, “It’s 2020 and Black Women Aren’t Even Close to Equal Pay”, National Women Law Center, 2020

[Black-Womens-Equal-Pay-Day-Factsheet-7.27.20-v3.pdf \(nwlc.org\)](https://www.nwlc.org/black-womens-equal-pay-day-factsheet-7.27.20-v3.pdf)

National Partnership for Women and Families, “Black Women’s Maternal Health: A Multifaceted Approach to Addressing Persistent and Dire Health Disparities” April 2018

<http://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/health/reports/black-womens-maternal-health.html>

## **Feb 22: LGBTQ's Rights and Wrongs**

Shabab Ahmed Mirza, "A closer Look at Bisexual People of Color" Center for American Progress, 2019

Caroline Medina, Et. Al. "Improving the lives of LGBTQ People in America: A Road Map for the Biden Administration", Jan 2021, Center for American Progress

Sharita Grumber, et.al. "The State of the LGBTQ Community in 2020: A National Public Opinion Study" Center for American Progress, 2020

Masha Gessen, "In the Eyes of the Law: Chase Strangio's Victories for Transgender Rights", The New Yorker, October 19, 2020,  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/10/19/chase-strangios-victories-for-transgender-rights>

James Kirchick, "The Struggle for Gay Rights Is Over: For those born into a form of adversity, sometimes the hardest thing to do is admitting that they've won". The Atlantic,  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/06/battle-gay-rights-over/592645/>

Human Rights Watch, "LGBT Rights 50 Years After Stonewall: The Movement's Momentum and Challenges Ahead", <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/26/lgbt-rights-50-years-after-stonewall>

**March 1st: What is going on in other Countries? Just a Snapshot.....**  
**Students will be asked which other countries we can include either in the class discussion or via presentations.**

**Central America:** Read: Ogodnik, Corinne and Borzutzky, Silvia, "Women under Attack: Violence and Poverty in Guatemala" Journal of International Women's Studies, Vol. 12, No1, Jan. 2011 (on Canvas)  
<http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=jiws>

### **Argentina: Saving your Children from Dictatorship**

Read: Women Voices for Change "Mothers as Agents of Political Change: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo" (on Canvas)  
<https://womensvoicesforchange.org/mothers-as-agents-of-political-change-the-mothers-of-the-plaza-de-mayo.htm>



### **Argentina: Abortion rights**

The Guardian, “Argentina legalises abortion in landmark moment for women's rights”  
[Argentina legalises abortion in landmark moment for women's rights | World news | The Guardian](#)

### **China: Economic Rights**

Didi Kirsten Tatlow and M. Forsythe, “In China’s Modern Economy, a Retro Push Against Women”, NY Times, Feb 20, 2015  
[https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/21/world/asia/china-women-lag-in-work-force-especially-in-top-jobs.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/21/world/asia/china-women-lag-in-work-force-especially-in-top-jobs.html?_r=0)

### **The Middle East and North Africa**

Congressional Research Service, “Women in the Middles East and North Africa: issues for Congress” November, 2020

### **Germany**

George Packer, “The Quiet German” The New Yorker, 2014,  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/12/01/quiet-german>

### **March 8: The MeToo Movement and Violence against Women**

#### **Other topics decided by the class...**

Catharine A. MacKinnon, “Where #MeToo Came From, and Where It’s Going: The movement is moving the culture beneath the law of sexual abuse”, The Atlantic, March 24, 2019  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/03/catharine-mackinnon-what-metoo-has-changed/585313/>

World Health Organization, “Violence against Women”, 2017  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>