

GENDER AND POLITICS Fall 2021-22 (Term I)

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Lectures: Available on Avenue to Learn

Office: KTH-528

Office Hours: On Zoom, Fridays 9:30-11:30 am, or by appointment

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Online course format

This course will be delivered asynchronously via McMaster’s online teaching and learning platform, Avenue to Learn (A2L). There are 12 course modules, each of which will be available to students on the Wednesday of a given week. There is a short quiz after 11 of these modules, which must be completed by 11:59 pm the following Tuesday. Most of the modules also have an associated 2-page assignment, which are also due one week after the module opens. You are to complete any three of these. In addition, there is a longer 4-5 page essay assignment, and a take-home final exam. The key to doing well in this course is keeping up with the assigned work – including the weekly lectures and quizzes. You should count on spending about 6-8 hours per week on this course.

I will hold synchronous “drop-in” office hours on Fridays from 9:30-11:30 and am otherwise available by appointment.

Course Description

This course examines gender and the roles that gender plays in relation to politics, the state, government, law and public policy. To organize our examination of these issues, the course is divided into three parts. The first addresses theory. We unpack what is meant by

a “feminist approach” to political science and examine why liberal ideas are both the generative force of feminism and a problematic constraint to the full political expression of gender equality. The second part examines gender in the sphere of electoral and legislative politics. The third part takes a more global view: we look at gender and the state, social movements and transnational feminist organizing, and feminist approaches in international development. Across these themes, we will draw on scholarly research, selected films, recent news and public commentary to gain deeper insights.

Course Objectives

What will students get out of this course? It is designed to help you:

- Understand the major theories and research findings on the role of gender in politics, including its relationship to the state, political attitudes and behavior, electoral systems and outcomes, political leadership, public policy and law, and issues of foreign policy and international development.
- Develop your ability to think analytically about complex issues regarding gender, sexuality and politics, drawing on findings of high quality research and reputable web-based resources;
- Enhance your reading and written communication skills;
- Practice good time management and self-organization skills, including the ability to balance and complete multiple tasks, as is expected in professional careers.

Required Materials and Texts

Jacquetta Newman, Linda A. White and Tammy Findlay. 2020. *Women, Politics & Public Policy: The Political Struggles of Canadian Women*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. You are advised to rent as an e-book [here](#), or you may purchase as a [hard copy](#) via online distributors.

All other required readings will be made available on A2L.

Also: **READ THE SYLLABUS** in its entirety, which is available on the A2L course page for those registered for the course.

Course Evaluation – Overview & Policies

10 Module quizzes (each worth 2 points): 20%

Three 2-page module assignments (each worth 10 points): 30%

Female leader paper: 25%

Final exam: 25%

All writing assignments are to be submitted via the “Assessments/Assignments” submission folder in A2L, by the deadline, in Word (.doc, .docx) or .pdf format. Please use 12-point font, single-spaced, and include your word count.

Papers that are submitted late will not be graded. Due dates are indicated within each module in A2L, and on the syllabus.

For further details on assignment format expectations and grading rubric, **see the Appendix** to the complete syllabus.

Course Evaluation – Assignment Details

1. Module quizzes, 20%

This course has 12 modules. For 11 of these, you will find a short multiple choice/fill-in-the-blank quiz. Each quiz is worth 2%, however only your top 10 quiz scores will be calculated in your final grade. Once you have opened it, your quiz will have a 30-minute time limit. A quiz will only become available after you have watched the relevant class videos in the module, and must be completed no later than one week (7 days) after the scheduled module date (by 11:59 pm). For example, Module 1 has a scheduled opening date of September 8. Therefore, the Module 1 quiz must be completed in a 30 minute interval at any time between Sept. 8 and Sept. 14 at 11:59 pm.

2. Module writing assignments (three “2-pagers” each worth 10%), 30%

Most of the modules have an associated 2-page writing assignment. Each assignment raises a provocative issue and provides a few additional materials (e.g., online news articles, short videos, etc.) for you to draw on in addition to the core assigned readings. You are expected to explore and make a specific argument in answer to the question/issue presented, using theories, concepts, evidence and ideas from across the module materials, as well as original ideas (“Aha!” moments) that you infer and synthesize from those materials. In most cases, no research is required beyond the materials provided within the module. There are 9 module assignments to choose from, and you are to complete any three. Each should be approximately 2-pages single-spaced (about 1,000 – 1,250 words max.). The last date to submit a module assignment is one week (7 days) after the scheduled module date (by 11:59pm). So if you plan to complete a module assignment, it is a good idea to do the readings and review the lectures earlier in that week rather than later. If you wish to complete an additional (fourth) module assignment, you may. At the end of the term, the lowest grade will be dropped and the highest grades counted.

3. Female leader paper, 25%

For this assignment, you will choose a significant and relatively contemporary political leader who is a woman or LGBTQ person, and who has been elected to a top political office somewhere in the world (think President or Prime Minister, Chancellor, Governor, Premier, Mayor, etc.). You are to write an analytical essay applying a gendered lens to assess their path to power and impact. Your analysis must bring to bear the relevant concepts and theories covered in the course (particularly Part 2), complemented by additional research on this person and the political, electoral, cultural, economic (etc.) context in which they arose to and exercised their power and leadership. Your paper

should be about 4-5 single-spaced pages (2,000-2,500 words) excluding references. There is structured time during Module 8-9 to work on this, and you must submit a brief proposal on your selected leader at the end of that module (worth 5 points of the total 25%). The final paper is due Tuesday, December 7 at 11:59 pm.

3. Final exam, 25%

There will be a final exam for this course, worth 25% of your grade. The exam will include short-answer questions and one essay question. It will be posted/distributed on Friday December 10 at 12 noon, and completed exams are due on Friday December 17 by 12 noon (submitted to A2L). The exam will draw on all course materials (lectures, videos, readings), and you may consult these materials when writing your answers.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

PART 1: Feminist political science: Theoretical underpinnings

Module/Week 1: Introduction and course overview

Module/Week 2: Gender, Power and Politics

Module/Week 3: Debates in feminist theory I: Liberal feminism

Module/Week 4: Debates in feminist theory II: Feminism, racism & intersectionality

PART 2: Gender in Elections, Legislative Politics and Public Policy

Module/Week 5: Gender and electoral politics

Module/Week 6: Intersectionality in electoral politics and legislative representation

Module/Week 7: Gender quotas and other electoral reforms

Module/Week 8-9: Gendering the reins of power: Women in the executive suite

PART 3: Gender and Women's Issues in Global Politics

Module/Week 10: Gender, nationalism and the state

Module/Week 11: Gender and development

Module/Week 12: Women's movements and feminist organizing

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

This course uses ATL for submission and return of all assignments. Please do not e-mail your assignments to me.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments, Missed Work, Illness

As an asynchronous course, you have flexibility on how you choose to organize your work over each weekly module, however the key to success is to keep up with the weekly readings, lectures and quizzes. The expectation for this course is that all components will be completed on time. Requests for extensions should be submitted through the [MSAF process](#). In the event of an approved extension for the Female Leader Essay, that assignment will be due one week from the original due date. Module quizzes and 2-pagers will not be accepted/graded if they are submitted after the due date, as you have the option to instead submit the assignment for an alternate module.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard

copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services

can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.