

# **FEMINIST PEDAGOGIES**

## **GWSS 5103**

Fall 2009

Wednesdays 4:40-6:50

Blog Address: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/puot0002/5103>

Instructor: Dr. Sara L. Puotinen

Office Hours: THURS 12-2 or by appointment

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

What is feminist pedagogy? How do we practice it? What class exercises or assignments help to promote critical consciousness about social injustice in its many forms? Should the feminist classroom be a safe space or a space of discomfort? Can it be both? How do we connect theory with practice (both inside and outside of the classroom)? Should we (teachers) be troublemakers or caregivers? And what should we encourage our students to be?

These are only some of the questions that we will critically explore in this seminar on feminist pedagogies. Approaching these (and other) questions theoretically and practically, we will study feminist, multicultural and radical theories of education and develop practical strategies for empowering students and teachers (and students-as-teachers and teachers-as-students) to be critical, transgressive and transformative thinkers.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To critically analyze the theories and practices of feminist, multicultural and radical pedagogies.
- To design a course and syllabus.
- To experiment with the blog as a tool for feminist pedagogy
- To cultivate a community of learners, both inside the classroom and on the blog
- To engage in cooperative learning through peer evaluations of teaching exercises and syllabi

### **COURSE FORMAT**

This course is a graduate seminar. While I will occasionally give lectures, the focus of our seminar will be on discussion and cooperative learning.

Here is the format for most sessions:

- First, we will begin the class with a brief discussion of a pedagogical question\*.
- Second, we will discuss the readings and the theoretical topic of the day.
- Third, we will focus on practical strategies for teaching. On some days this third section will include a student presentation (and implementation) of a learning activity/practical exercise\*\*.

\*Each session will begin with a wrap-up discussion of pedagogical questions that are first raised by several students on our course blog. The questions can be theoretical and/or practical in nature (e.g.: How do you deal with students who don't "get it"? How do we create community in big classes? What characteristics should a feminist classroom have?). It could also stem from your own experiences as a teacher or student. We will spend approximately 10-15 minutes on the discussion as we brainstorm responses. Each week, several students will be responsible for posting their questions on our course blog. The questions should be posted by Monday evening.

\*\*As part of your teaching strategies grade, you will develop (with at least one other person) a learning activity or practical exercise that utilizes feminist pedagogical theories/strategies/techniques. A more detailed handout and sign-up sheet will be distributed in the next couple of weeks.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**1000 points**

#### **1. Critical Essays (2@100 points)**

**200 points**

You are required to write 2 5-page essays in which you critically engage with the theories we are discussing and the texts we are reading. The topics and due dates for these essays are as follows:

- What is feminist pedagogy?
- How do/should we practice it?

**DUE: OCTOBER 21**

**DUE: DECEMBER 9**

\*You are encouraged (but not required) to post your critical essays on our blog instead of submitting them in hard copy to me.

#### **2. Course Design and Syllabus**

**200 points**

You are required to design a syllabus for a possible course. This syllabus will include a 1-2 page informal reflection on the process of constructing the syllabus and a tentative bibliography of assigned readings. You will submit a draft of your syllabus along with your informal reflection statement and bibliography on **November 18th** for peer review and a final version (with a revised informal reflection statement and bibliography) on **December 16th**.

#### **3. Teaching Strategies/Lessons Assignments**

**200 points**

You are required to develop and implement a brief learning activity or practical exercise. A handout on this assignment will be distributed in the second week of class.

#### **4. Blog Participation**

**200 points**

You are required to actively participate on our course blog. In addition to posting your pedagogical question on our blog (worth 50 points), you are required to post 10 responses (either as new entries or comments on other class members' entries) over the course of the semester (worth 15 points each).

#### **5. Class Participation (20%)**

**200 points**

You are required to attend class regularly and contribute to class discussions. More than one unexcused absence will lower your class participation grade. For each class, you must come prepared, having read and taken notes on the assigned materials.

## **UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICY**

- A achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B achievement significantly above that level necessary to meet course requirements
- C achievement meeting the basic course requirements in every respect
- D achievement worthy of credit even though it does not meet the basic requirements
- F performance failing to meet the basic course requirements
- S equivalent to a grade of C or better

## **OTHER ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

### **Academic Dishonesty**

This includes cheating on assignments, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as your own work any work that has been written by another author), and submitting the same paper or substantially similar paper to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval of all the instructors concerned. I will report such dishonesty. It is grounds for failure in the course.

### **Disability Services**

Students with disabilities who require accommodations in meeting course requirements should meet with me as early as possible in the term. Class materials, including this syllabus, can be made available in alternative formats upon request.

### **Non-native English Speakers and Writers**

If you need some extra assistance with the reading and writing assignments, please contact me early in the term.

### **U of M Harassment Policy**

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

## **COURSE TEXTS**

### **Books** (available at the U of M bookstore)

Fisher, Berenice Malka. No Angel in the Classroom (NA)  
hooks, bell. Teaching to Transgress. (TT)  
hooks, bell. Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope (TC)  
Crabtree/Sapp/Licon, eds. Feminist Pedagogy (FP)  
Adams. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice (**OPTIONAL**)

### **Readings** (available on WebCT\* or our blog\*\*)

\*Access WebCT through MyU. Click on MyCourses and then GWSS 5103. Log in and then click on our class again. The readings will be organized under the week will be reading them and should show up on the front page of our course site.

\*\*Readings posted on our blog will appear in the link section under "readings." The link section is located near the end of the far right column

### **Additional Readings?**

If there is a reading that you would like to include, please let me know.

### **READING SCHEDULE: (subject to change)**

#### **September**

##### **9 Introductions**

##### **16 Some thoughts on teaching with technology: BLOGS**

Scholar and Feminist Online. Blogging Feminism: (Web) Sites of Resistance

<http://www.barnard.edu/sfonline/blogs/index.htm>

Tobias, Vicki. "Blog This! An Introduction to Blogs, Blogging, and the Feminist Blogosphere"

<http://womenst.library.wisc.edu/fc/fcblogs1.htm>

Feminist Collections. "Round-Up: Blogging Women's Studies"

<http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/fc/BlogRoundup.pdf>

Puotinen, Sara. "Feminist Pedagogy and Blogging, parts 1-3"

\*on our course blog

<b>DISCUSS AND SIGN UP FOR TEACHING EXERCISE</b>
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#### **DEFINITIONS**

##### **23 What is Feminist Pedagogy?**

Fisher, Berenice Malka. "Introduction" and "What is Feminist Pedagogy?" (NA, 1-53)

Crabtree/Sapp/Licona. "Introduction." (FP)

Shrewsbury, Carol M. "What is Feminist Pedagogy?" (WebCT)

Elenes, C. Alejandra. "Transformando Fronteras. Chicana Feminist Transformative Pedagogies" (WebCT)

##### **30 Critical Pedagogy: The Legacy of Paulo Freire**

Freire, Paulo. Excerpt from Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

hooks, bell. "Paulo Freire" in Teaching to Transgress (TT)

Weiler, Kathleen. "Introduction" and "Rereading Paulo Frere" in Feminist Engagements (WebCT)

#### **October**

##### **7 Feminist Pedagogy and Critical Pedagogy**

Ellsworth, Elizabeth. "Why Doesn't this Feel Empowering?" in Feminisms

and Critical Pedagogy (WebCT)  
Valle, Maria Eva. "Antiracist Pedagogy and Concientización: A Latina Professor's Struggle" in Twenty-First Century Feminist Classrooms (WebCT)  
Anderson, Robert C. "Teaching (with) Disability: Pedagogies of Lived Experience" (WebCT)

**14 Feminist Pedagogy as Critical Pedagogy: bell hooks**

hooks, bell. Teaching to Transgress (TT)  
Davidson, Guadalupe and George Yancy. "Critical Pedagogy and Praxis" in Critical Perspectives on bell hooks (WebCT)

**21 WORKSHOP: Developing a syllabus**

**YOUR CRITICAL ESSAY ON "WHAT IS FEMINIST PEDAGOGY?" IS DUE TODAY.**

**VIRTUES AND/OR VICES FOR FEMINIST TEACHERS AND STUDENTS**

**28 Truth-telling: "Authentic" Voice, Experience and Empowerment**

Fisher, Berenice Malka. "Is Women's Experience the Best Teacher? Different Ways of Knowing" (NA, 55-80)  
Orner, Mimi. "Interrupting the Calls for Student Voice in 'Liberatory' Education: A Feminist Poststructuralist Perspective" in Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy (WebCT)  
Boler, Megan. "Feminist Politics of Emotion" in Feeling Power: Emotions and Education (WebCT)

**November**

**4 Troublemaking**

Boler, Megan. "A Pedagogy of Discomfort" in Feeling Power (CP)  
Berlak, Ann C. "Confrontation and Pedagogy: Cultural Secrets, Trauma and Emotion in Antioppressive Pedagogies" (WebCT)  
Erickson, Ingrid M. "Fighting Fire with Fire: Jane Elliott's Antiracist Pedagogy" (WebCT)  
Rose, Suzanna. "The Protest as a Teaching Technique for Promoting Feminist Activism," (FA, 171-175)  
Rinehart, Jane A. "Collaborative Learning, Subversive Teaching and Activism" in Teaching Feminist Activism (WebCT)

**11 Vulnerability**

Bauer, Dale M. "Authority" (FA, 23-26)  
Gaughie/Pearce. "Resisting 'the Dominance of the Professor': Gendered Teaching Gendered Subjects" in (FA, 27-39)  
Fisher, Berenice Malka. "The Rocky Road to Feminist Empowerment:

Questioning Authority" (NA, 81-110; 137-162)  
Ming-yeh Lee, Juanita Johnson-Bailey. "Challenges to the Classroom Authority  
of Women of Color" in New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education  
(WebCT)

**18 Care and Being Careful**

Fisher, Berenice. "No Angel in the Classroom: Exploring the Ethic of Care"  
(NA, 111-136).  
Fisher, Berenice. "Dangerous Curves Safety and Self-Disclosure" (NA, 137-162)  
Kishimoto/Mwangi. "Critiquing the Rhetoric of 'Safety' in Feminist Pedagogy:  
Women of Color Offering an Account of Ourselves" (WebCT)

**DRAFTS OF YOUR SYLLABUS AND INFORMAL STATEMENT ARE DUE TODAY.  
PLEASE SUBMIT ENOUGH COPIES FOR THE ENTIRE CLASS.**

**25 No class: Thanksgiving**

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

**December**

**2 Peer Review of Syllabi**

**9 Peer Review of Syllabi**

**YOUR CRITICAL ESSAY ON "HOW DO/SHOULD WE PRACTICE IT?" IS DUE  
TODAY.**

**16 Hope**

hooks, bell. Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope (TC)

**FINAL COPIES OF YOUR SYLLABUS AND INFORMAL STATEMENT ARE DUE  
TODAY.**