

## **Assessment plan for Women's Studies 110:**

### **Gender, Sex, and Power**

#### Assessment objectives

Women's Studies 110 fulfills three GEC requirements:

#### **Social Diversity in the United States Social Science, Individuals and Groups Cultures and Ideas**

University-defined learning outcomes, course-specific objectives that address GEC requirements, and course-specific methods of assessment are below

#### GEC Categories

##### **Social Diversity in the United States**

Courses in social diversity enhance students' understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States.

1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

##### **Social Science, Individuals and Groups**

Students learn about the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; of the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and of the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in the contexts of human existence (e.g., psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political), and the processes by which groups, organizations, and societies function.
3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

## **Cultures and Ideas**

Students evaluate significant writing and works of art. Such studies develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

1. Students develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret major forms of human thought and expression.
2. Students develop abilities to understand how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

### Course-specific Objectives that Address GEC Requirements

1. To analyze the structure of gender and the ways in which gender differences, roles, and expectations have influenced the lives of diverse groups of women in a variety of domains of public and private life, in the United States and with regard to the global contexts in which the US is situated.
2. To understand how social science theories and methods are used to examine the historical and current roles of diverse women in social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and institutions in the United States
3. To analyze individual and group behavior in the context of gendered ideologies and institutions
4. To develop critical reading and thinking skills through examining and interpreting women's cultural productions
5. To analyze the ways in which social and cultural norms, ideas, and beliefs about gender and other dimensions of identity affect women's lives and how those understandings help shape students' own attitudes

### Course-Specific Methods of Assessment

Assessment will be carried out using the following methods:

1. Student SEIs
2. Student discursive evaluations
3. Examinations and other graded written work
4. Oversight of Teaching Associates
5. Use of student surveys throughout the quarter
6. Review of Final Exams
7. Retention and review of assessment documents

## Explanation of assessment methods:

1 and 2: Instruction will be evaluated through SEIs and discursive evaluations. The discursive evaluation used by the Department of Women's Studies contains open-ended questions designed to elicit specific information about the extent to which the course meets objectives and student expectations. The course instructor will use these evaluations to reconceptualize and revise elements of the course, including reading assignments, writing assignments, and examination formats and questions.

3: One effective mode of determining whether course objectives are being met is assessment of written work that students are required to do for the course. Students' ability to learn and apply important information, theories and concepts, and to apply critical reading and writing skills will be assessed by examinations and by writing assignments. Examinations in Women's Studies 110 currently test students' ability to demonstrate factual knowledge of key topics in the discipline of Women's Studies (such as cultural representation, cultural diversity, history, and politics) and to comprehend the range of theories and concepts that are foundational to the discipline and to the study of women and gender.

Writing assignments that have been in use in Women's Studies 110 include: The Politics of Difference: Examining Privilege, The Politics of Difference: Heteronormativity, Film Review writing assignment, Gender Roles: Representing Gender, Gender Roles: All in the Family, Title IX: Gender at Play, Women and Violence: Violence by the Numbers, and Gender and Work: Who Does the Work? Besides providing a variety of contexts for developing skills of critical writing and analysis, these exercises deepen students' appreciation for and knowledge of, for example, the impact of human diversity on US society and the position of the US in the world, how policies and institutions function, and how cultural norms influence human behavior. Graded assignments will be the central source of assessment of stylistic and writing skills and mastery of course content as reflected in course objectives and the subject areas represented on the course syllabus.

4: It is a longstanding practice in Women's Studies 110 for the Instructor to engage in oversight of Teaching Associates by attending meetings of recitation sections and providing feedback to TAs regarding their group facilitation skills. Instructors also monitor the extent to which TAs are meeting course objectives and offer feedback to help TAs develop their skills and to ensure that course objectives are being met. This practice of TA oversight will continue, and all relevant documentation with regard to oversight will be retained by the Instructor.

5: It is important to survey students to determine the extent to which the Course Goals are being met. To that end, students will be surveyed at the beginning of the quarter to elicit their learning expectations for the course in the context of course goals that will be made available to them for their use during the survey. Their answers will be collected,

read by the Instructor and Teaching Associates, and then retained. In Week 6, students will be surveyed again so that it is possible to ascertain student perceptions and learning aspirations at a time when a mid-course correction in instruction is possible. In Week 10 students will be surveyed for the third, and final, time to provide feedback to the Instructor regarding how well the course met their expectations, and whether or not they have suggestions for improvement. These surveys will provide helpful data to the course Instructor to be used for designing future versions of the course. All data will be stored so that it can be summarized and used to establish a baseline and continuing representation of the satisfaction of course objectives from quarter to quarter.

6: Before grades are recorded, graded Midterm and Final Examinations will be reviewed by the Instructor and Teaching Associates in order to perform oversight over the consistency of grading across grade categories (A, B, C, etc.). Final exams will be retained for at least one year in order to provide a source of information for Instructors regarding the standards that have been employed for grading in the course and whether the standards have changed over time. The retention of Final Examinations provides a tool for accomplishing consistency of instruction and evaluation in a single course within which the examinations have been generated, but also provides a tool for checking consistency of rigor of instruction and evaluation as the course is taught by different instructors in different quarters.

7: Samples of the information collected from these assessment methods will be retained for 5 years and used to assess the overall effectiveness of the course and to determine ways in which the course might be revised to maximize its effectiveness. Thus, the feedback loop of assessment is closed.

#### Schedule of Exams and Student Assessments:

Week 1	Initial Student Survey
Week 5	Midterm Examination Review of Midterm Examinations
Week 6	Midterm Student Survey
Week 10	Final Student Survey SEI Discursive Evaluation
Week 11	Final examination Review of Final Examinations