Gender and Women Studies 535, Fall 2022

WOMEN’S GLOBAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1333 Sterling Hall Monday 8:00-10:30AM

Araceli Alonso, PhD aalonso@wisc.edu
Office hours: Monday 1:00-3:00PM via zoom: https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/92931970079?pwd=WFpxMmw5NlU1S2JnQWt5QXh4dEN2dz09

CANVAS URL:

COURSE DESCRIPTION: (three credit-course)

The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student learning activity with the courses learning activities (45 hours per credit).

This class meets for two hours and thirty minutes each Monday over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem solving, watching clips, studying, etc.) for about 3 hours out of classroom for every class period. This syllabus includes more information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

GWS535 provides a gender and feminist analysis to understand human rights as we overview health issues within the context of women’s life cycles—childhood, adolescence, reproductive years, and aging. We pay special consideration to the socio-cultural and economic factors that play a role in women’s access to quality basic health care. Particularly important is to understand women's capacities to have good health and manage their lives in the face of societal and cultural pressures and obstacles. We give especial attention to critical issues of women's health such as poverty, unequal access to education, food, health care, and gender-based violence.

An analysis through a feminist lens provides the insight to establish gender equality and gender equity as goals within the world of women’s health and women’s rights. Gender equity in sustainable health and development does not imply an equal distribution of resources; rather, it requires a differential distribution according to the needs of girls and boys, women and men, to achieve the maximum level of health and well-being; physical, psychological, and social.

In class, we often talk about “women” as a general category since this course takes a global approach and that is the way people normally refer to that category of “female identified individuals”. Nowadays, in the
academic world we tend to use terms that refer to “parents” rather than “mothers” “childbearing people” rather than “childbearing women”, and “they” rather than “she”. Although, it is my intention to use language respectfully, I will be referring mostly to women because in my work in global health that is the term I have encountered, and because erasing “women” as a gender category might make women invisible and perpetuate misogyny.

However, within a gender approach, it is important not to essentialize people—that is, not to reduce them to a single essential trait, such as biological categorization as “men” and “women.” This can contribute to perpetuating strict socially and culturally determined roles that limit people from expressing who they are and what they want to be. Among other things, gender roles should be taken as not fixed and naturally given to each biological sex, and thus as something that can be contested and reshaped by people themselves.

In our search for women’s global health, we depart from the understanding that concepts and definitions are often arbitrary and relative to a multitude of circumstances. For that reason, we strive to move away from general arguments and statements like “Women from low/high income countries” or “Women from low/high resource countries;” we rather focus on communities (large or small) than on countries.

Course materials draw from a wide variety of sources, including academic journals and information about women's organizations inside and outside the US. After the second week, each consecutive week will devote time to a particular phase of a life-cycle and/or a health issue related to that phase. At the end of the semester, students will conduct a Special United Nations Women’s Health Summit focused on in-class selected communities and based on women’s health and human rights issues. At the beginning of November, students will meet in small groups to prepare for the Women’s Health Summit.

The topics covered in this course are very sensitive and sometimes difficult to discuss. Lectures, discussions, assignments and all activities in this class have been designed to think critically on gender, health, and human rights in a contemporary global context. In order to achieve that desired level of critical thinking, our class will be based on the principles of shared empowerment, courtesy, generosity, compassion, trust and respect. Ultimately, we will strive to develop a sense of personal and shared responsibility, and a deep connection with women’s health and rights globally.

Course Outcomes:
Students in this course will gain broad exposure to a number of women’s health issues and the interdisciplinary theorizing of feminists, medical social scientists, and public health scholars. Learning outcomes include:

1. Apply ethical frameworks and key Gender and Women’s Studies concepts to Global Health and Human Rights issues. Acknowledge that health is both a physiological and a socio-cultural experience, and recognize ways in which gender and other categories of social inequality influence women’s health around the world.
2. Identify the link between global women’s health issues and local concerns.
3. Develop critical thinking through readings, writing, and oral presentation skills. Express ideas formally and effectively in verbal and written form through research, presentations/discussions and through the UN Women’s Summit assignment.
4. Engage critically with social institutions that influence women’s lives and women’s health around the world—politics, healthcare systems, the economy and education among others.
5. Link theory with practice; recognize and advocate for social change at the local, national and transnational levels.
6. Be able to work collectively towards the common goal of advocating for women’s health and women’s rights globally.
**Required Readings:** Weekly required readings will be available through CANVAS.


***I strongly encourage you to purchase this book in our local bookstore A Room of One’s Own, 2717 Atwood Ave. Phone: (608) 257-7888***

The book is also available in Amazon.com: [https://www.amazon.com/Health-All-Means-structural-wellbeing/dp/1939755433/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=health+by+all+means%3A+women+turning+structural+violence+into+Peace+and+Wellbeing&qid=1567004355&s=gateway&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Health-All-Means-structural-wellbeing/dp/1939755433/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=health+by+all+means%3A+women+turning+structural+violence+into+Peace+and+Wellbeing&qid=1567004355&s=gateway&sr=8-1)


There is a PDF Format available for $19 through the publisher DEEP Education Press: [https://deepeducationpress.org/e-books.html](https://deepeducationpress.org/e-books.html) Scroll down, under the “Deep Activism Series.”

**Warning:**
This course requires students to keep an open mind. We might be confronting some difficult discussions that deal with gender violence and that may be emotionally triggering. Please talk to Professor Alonso at any point if you need support or if you just need to vent about the issues we are discussing in class. It is important to take care of ourselves and of each other, and we will do that during the course, at any time that is needed, and hopefully before it is needed.

---

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY**

**Attendance and participation:**
Students are expected to attend ALL lectures Mondays 8:00-10:30AM. Attendance will be taken every Monday. If you must be absent from class due to illness, religious observance, or family emergency, please inform me ASAP and obtain notes from a classmate. It is the student’s responsibility to get notes for
any portion of the class that is missed. Considering that this class only meets once a week, more than two absences will adversely affect student’s final grade.

Active Participation Grade Guidelines

A: This student never misses class, always completes assigned readings, and comes to class prepared to think carefully, making connections between readings and across topics. Student is willing to take the lead in discussion periodically, posing interesting questions or taking risks by answering tough questions. Student avoids dominating discussion, instead participating mindfully in discussion with other students, considering their ideas and responding thoughtfully and respectfully. Student helps to create a sense of a shared conversation in the group as a whole. This student shows passion for the work of the class and is committed fully to our work while in the classroom.

AB: This student does most of what an A student does, but may be slightly deficient in one area – for instance, student may be a conscientious reader and thinker who tends not to listen to other students or otherwise dominates conversation instead of engaging in productive deliberation. Or, student may have been late to class a few times, or may have missed several readings.

B: This student participates often, but not consistently. The student attends every class and do all the readings but avoids taking the lead in discussion, instead only responding to questions or adding periodically to others’ ideas. This student may have participated well but may have missed more than two classes.

BC: This student may participate frequently but superficially. At times the student may seem not to have done the readings.

C: This student is intermittently prepared for class (e.g., participates well but has missed two or more classes). Student rarely participates beyond occasional superficial comments.

D: This student very rarely participates, and only in superficial ways. The student may participate when coming to class, but has missed three or more classes.

F: This student has missed three classes or more, and/or attends most classes but never participates.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reaction to Lecture: Take-home Midterm based on all materials studied until that day: lectures, readings, discussions, films, guest lectures, etc. More specific guidelines will be provided.

Health by All Means Assignment: Take-home Midterm based on the book Health by All Means and on class materials covered until that day. More specific guidelines will be provided.

UN Special Women’s Health & Human Rights Summit: “A Healthy Future for Women and Girls”. This is a celebration of all our accomplishments in class; we’ll take everything that we have learned in class and find our inner voice and strength to advocate for women’s health and women’s rights. Detailed instructions will be discussed in lecture and posted in CANVAS.

Final paper: End-of-semester final analysis paper. More specific guidelines will be provided.
Letter Grades will be based on the following scale:
A 93-100  
AB 88-92  
B 83-87  
BC 78-82  
C 70-77  
D 65-69  
F under 65

Late, Missed, or Incomplete Work: Except for reasons beyond your control such as serious illness or emergency, your grade will be reduced each day an assignment remains incomplete or not turned in. After a week, I will not accept late, incomplete, or missed work, and you will receive an "F" for that portion of your grade.

Incomplete grades will not be given EXCEPT in situations of serious illness or family emergency, which must be documented.

General Course Grading and Important Dates:
- Reaction to Lecture, Midterm One: 20%  
  Friday 10/21 by 11:59PM in CANVAS
- HbAM Assignment, Midterm Two: 20%  
  Friday 11/18 by 11:59PM in CANVAS
- Attendance, Discussion and Participation: 20%  
  On-going, every Monday
- UN Women’s Health Summit: 20%  
  Final Presentation Monday 12/12 in class
- Final Research Paper: 20%  
  Sunday 12/18 by 11:59PM in CANVAS

HATE / BIAS REPORTING PORTAL

As [Chapter 17 of the UW System code](#) states, the university can accomplish its educational mission only if living and learning environments are safe and free from violence, harassment and intimidation.

Incidents of bias or hate affecting a person or group negatively impact the quality of the Wisconsin Experience for community members. UW-Madison takes such incidents seriously and will respond appropriately to reported or observed incidents of bias or hate.

If you witness or experience any racist behaviors, we strongly encourage you to report it:
- [UW–Madison hate/bias reporting portal](#)

WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

If you are struggling to process your emotions, experiencing anxiety, or feel the need to talk to someone, please consider using these resources:
- [SilverCloud](#) — mental health services for UW students, faculty, and staff
- [UHS Mental Health Crisis Line](#) for UW–Madison students

Additional campus resources are available from the [Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement](#).
SEXUAL HARASSMENT & OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

As an instructor, I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation. UW–Madison offers a variety of resources for students impacted by sexual misconduct.

If you wish to seek out free, confidential support, there are a number of services available on campus and in the community.

If you would like to report sexual misconduct to the campus, a number of reporting options are available. In addition, each department has staff members, known as Responsible Employees, who can assist you. If you are an undergraduate student, most of the academic and career advisors you work with are designated Responsible Employees. Please note that Responsible Employees are required to report specific disclosures that you share about sexual misconduct to UW-Madison’s Title IX Office.

Please, contact the Department Chair Dr. Judy Houck (jahouck@wisc.edu) as the Responsible Employee to report sexual misconduct in our department.

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS & THE USE OF AUDIO RECORDED LECTURERS STATEMENT

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor’s express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university’s policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool called AEFIS. For this course, you will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID. Evaluations are anonymous. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

Course Accessibility: “No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely by the reason of disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). The University of Wisconsin-Madison complies with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination law and supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Please let me know if you require any alternative accommodations or if you have any accessibility concerns that may affect your performance in this
**course.** Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

The McBurney Resource Center ([www.mcburney.wisc.edu](http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu)), located at 702 West Johnson Street, provides useful assistance and documentation for a range of needs and concerns, 608-263-2741 (phone), 608-225-7956 (text), or email mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu.

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:** Plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of others without giving them credit. It is your responsibility to learn what constitutes plagiarism and the correct rules for citing sources. In general, if your paper implies that you are the author, the ideas and words must be your own. If you use someone else’s exact words, they should be enclosed in quotation marks with the exact source listed. Please, refer to the Dean of Students’ web page for further information: [www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm](http://www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm)

Examples of **Academic Misconduct** include but are not limited to: cutting and pasting portions of a text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation; paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source; using another person’s ideas, words, or research and presenting it as your own by not properly crediting the originator; signing another person’s name to an attendance sheet. For more details refer again to the Dean of Students’ web page: [www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm](http://www.wisc.edu/students/amsum.htm) This Website also has useful information on what do to if you are charged with academic misconduct.

**Statement on diversity:** “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.”

---

**TOPICS & READINGS**

**Week 1 Monday 9/12**

**Getting Started**
- Course format and class dynamics
- Syllabus
- What can you expect from this class?
- What are my expectations as your instructor?

**Introduction and overview of the course**
Why Gender and Health? Women’s Health and Human Rights. Women’s Rights are Human Rights. Mainstreaming Gender into the Women’s Health and Rights Agenda.

Readings:


- Cook, Rebecca J. “Gender, Health and Human Rights” The President and Fellows of Harvard College, Harvard School of Public Health/Francois-Xavier Bagnound Center for Health and Human Rights JSTORE Vol. 1 No. 4


---

Week 2 Monday 9/19

Why do we study “women's health”? Definitions and beyond. Relativism, Universalism, Critical Pragmatism; the Capabilities Approach.


Readings:


Extra readings (not required, for consultation):


- Nupur Ray. Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach: A Glance through Indian Philosophical Tradition. Centre for Political studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

---

Week 3 Monday 9/26

UNICEF. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: WASH for Women
http://www.unicef.org/wash/index_womenandgirls.html

Readings:

-Mahon, Therese and Maria Fernandes. Menstrual hygiene in South Asia: a neglected issue for WASH programmes. Journal Gender and Development: Water, Page 99-113 | Published online: 25 Feb 2010

-O’Reilly, Kathleen. Combining sanitation and women's participation in water supply: an example from Rajasthan, Journal Development in Practice Volume 20, 2010 - Issue 1 Page 45-56 | Published online: 11 Jan 2010

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3328991/


LGBTIQ+ Health in a global context; criminalization as acute barrier to realizing the right to health.

Guest Lecture: Abbey Baus, Assistant Professor Chamberlain University, Chicago.

Readings:
-Human Rights Watch, "If We Don't Get Services, We Will Die". Tanzania's Anti LGBT Crackdown and the Right to Health. Pages; 30-53


Week 5 Monday 10/10


Readings:

-Sharma, Manisha. Killing the little girls of the world – the lingering problem of female infanticide. Teaching Sociology, June 24 2013


Extra readings (not required, for consultation):
- The Adolescent Girl Vulnerability Index (the case of Uganda); only review some illustrations

Week 6 Monday 10/17


Readings:


Extra reading (not required, for consultation):


Week 7 Monday 10/24

Reproductive Health; Maternal Health
Readings:


Week 8 Monday 10/31

Reproductive Health (cont.) Access to Abortion and Family Planning

Readings:


- Paul et al. “Unsafe Abortion in Sierra Leone: An Examination of Costs and Burden of Treatment on Healthcare Resources.” Journal of Women's Health Care, 2015, 4:2


Extra resources (not required, for consultation):

Abortion laws worldwide, with maps

https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-worldwide
Induced Abortion Worldwide, Guttmacher Institute

Week 9 Monday 11/7

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Global Context: An Obstacle for Global Health and Development.

Readings:
Pre-Preparation for Women’s Health and Well-Being Summit

Week 10 Monday 11/14

Women in War and Refugee Situations. Women’s health and special needs in times of war and/or conflict.

Readings:
- Amnesty International. “Female refugees face physical assault, exploitation and sexual harassment on their journey through Europe.” January 18, 2-16


Pre-Preparation for Women’s Health and Well-Being Summit

Week 11 Monday 11/21

Health by All Means in Action!!

Pre-Preparation for Women’s Health and Well-Being Summit

Week 12 Monday 11/28
What does it take to change women’s health and women’s rights? Innovation in gender equity education; innovation in human rights awareness.

The story of Ram Devineni and his commitment to educate the younger generations in India and around the world. https://nabshow.com/2020/thought-gallery/ram-devineni/

From victims to survivors to activists through comic books and beyond https://www.priyashakti.com/survivors

Priya Shakti: https://www.priyashakti.com/priyas-shakti (Links to an external site.) (you can download the comic for free)

Priya's Mirror: https://www.priyashakti.com/priyas-mirror (Links to an external site.) (you can download the comic for free)

Week 13 Monday 12/5


Readings:

- Zimmerman, Cathy. The health risks and consequences of trafficking in women and adolescents, findings from a European study, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. 2003

- Fernandez Rodriguez de Lievana, Gema and Keina Yoshida. Human Trafficking as a Gendered Phenomenon: CEDAW in perspective, 1-Immigration Asylum 32_1 text.indd 28, 04/01,2018

Pre-Preparation for Women’s Health and Well-Being Summit

Week 14 Monday 12/12

United Nations Women’s Health and Well-Being Summit
“A Healthy Future for Women and Girls Globally”
Drawing by undergrad students Cassie Barwick, Justine Hill, and Hannah Redpath for course Circle of Care and Communication for Women’s Health and Human Rights, summer 2020