

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
ENGL 244R: Introduction to Women and Gender Studies
Fall 2022-23**

‘Everybody was asking, "What is it to be a man? What is it to be a woman?" It's a hard question, so in *The Left Hand of Darkness* I eliminated gender to find out what would be left. Science fiction is a wonderful opportunity to play this kind of game.’ Ursula K. Le Guin

Professor: Dr Kathryn Maude
Office: Fisk Hall 329
Office Phone: AUB extension 4105
E-mail: km55@aub.edu.lb [I will reply to emails within 2 working days]

Course Description:

What is gender? How does gender affect us in our lives? How does gender intersect with attributes such as race, sexuality, dis/ability and class? In this course we will read gender and feminist theory alongside science fiction novels in order to ask how we can imagine gender and gendered roles differently. Science fiction writers imagine a future that is not the same as our present – whether for better or worse – and this moment of transformative imagination allows us to reassess contemporary concerns. As well as writing academic essays that will use science fiction and theoretical work to think through issues of gender, assessment for this course is designed to encourage students to reflect on the applicability of theoretical work on feminism and gender to themselves and their environment.

Catalogue Course Description:

ENGL 244 Special Topics in Literature 3.0; 3 cr. A course that varies in content and focuses on a topic not currently covered in the curriculum. *Occasionally.*

Required Texts:

All theoretical texts for this course are electronic. Links to theoretical readings will be posted on Moodle.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand key theoretical traditions in feminist and gender theory
- Apply these theoretical arguments to the analysis of their lives and values, as well as to science fiction texts
- Analyze primary works of science fiction literature using gender and feminist theories
- Write clearly in a variety of styles

Course Expectations

- Every week there will be roughly **2 hours** of reading/watching/listening for you to complete before each class
- You will be expected to complete your annotations weekly before class (see below)
- You will also be expected to attend a virtual office hour twice during the semester
- I will have assignment due dates to help you plan your time; however, these are guidelines and I will be flexible with deadlines (except the pass/fail annotations, which must be completed before class time)

Class Policies

We are all teaching and learning in unprecedented times. Studying together in a community still in mourning after a disaster, in the middle of a pandemic and an economic crisis, is not going to be easy and it may not feel like a priority. Please remember I am interested in you as a person first, and as a student second. If you need anything, please reach out for help and I will do what I can. An ethics of care puts wellbeing before productivity. Please look after yourselves.

[If you are feeling overwhelmed, I recommend this lovely Tumblr piece: Sinope, 'Everything is Awful and I'm Not OK: Questions to Ask Before Giving Up'](#). I am not suggesting that caring for ourselves and others can fix structural and systemic problems, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to care anyway.

My class is primarily discussion-based. I will show up to our synchronous discussion prepared, having read the text, and ready to hear your ideas. I expect you to do the same. Class discussion sometimes gets heated but I expect respect and courtesy towards me and towards your fellow students.

The official university anti-discrimination and accessibility policies are below, but I want to reiterate – please get in touch with me if you are having any difficulties in my class, whether you need me to teach something in a different way, whether you need different types of assessment due to a disability, or if you are finding the class material difficult for any reason. I do not expect there to be any discrimination in my classroom, and I will do everything I can to avoid it, but if there is something that I or a fellow student has said that has made you uncomfortable please also let me know.

Assessment

Participation: **10%**; Annotations: **20%**; Reading reflection: **20%**; Reflective piece applying theory: **20%**; Final Assignment: **30%**

Grading Policy:

The assessments will be criterion-based. A marksheet for each section of the assessment explaining the criteria I am using will be circulated.

Participation: 10%

To get full participation marks for the semester, you should: 1) send me an email introducing yourself, following the template that I will send you; 2) attend a virtual office hour once in the first four weeks of the semester and attend a virtual office hour to plan your final project

Annotations: 20% - weekly

Each week, there will be one theoretical article that I expect you to annotate. You need to add **three comments or questions** on the document. The instructions on how to use Hypothes.is can be [found here](#), and the links to each week's document are available through the Moodle site. To gain full marks for this assignment, you must:

- Respond directly and specifically to the article you are annotating
- Complete your annotations before class time
- Annotate throughout the document (not all in the first paragraph of the article...)
- Write at least three comments or questions in the document

Reading response: 20% - due October 1

The response paper should be 3-5 double-spaced pages, and you should submit it to me on Moodle.

Reflective piece applying theory: 20% - due November 5

This paper is a short piece applying theory to your personal experience. It should be 3-4 pages, double-spaced. I expect you to analyze one of the theoretical pieces in light of your personal experience. How does the theoretical piece help illuminate your experience? What kinds of insight can we gain from applying theoretical work to our own lives and contexts?

Final Assignment: 30% - due December 10

This is an assignment on a topic of your choice from the course. There will be a choice of formats, which will be decided in discussion with me throughout the semester.

University Policies

Academic Integrity:

Please refer to AUB Student Code of Conduct:

<http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/generaluniversitypolicies/Documents/StudentCodeConduct/StudentCodeConduct.pdf> , in particular section 1.1, which concerns academic misconduct including cheating, plagiarism, in-class disruption, and dishonesty. Please be aware that misconduct is vigorously prosecuted and that AUB has a zero tolerance policy. Course policy is that **credible evidence of cheating will result in course failure.**

Accessibility Statement to Acknowledge the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities:

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform me immediately so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office:

accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

Non-Discrimination

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at www.aub.edu.lb/titleix . To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or titleix@aub.edu.lb . An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at www.aub.ethicspoint.com