

English 410/510
Feminist Jurisprudence: Women in Law and Literature
TTh 4:00-5:20pm
191 Anstett

Instructor: Dr. Faith Barter (she her hers)
Office: PLC 320
Office Hours: Thursday, 10:00am-1:00pm; by appointment
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Course Description:

This course provides an analysis and critique of women's position in patriarchal society and examines the nature and extent of women's subordination. Together, we will explore the role of law in maintaining and perpetuating patriarchy, and we will trace literary works by and about women that register and/or resist white supremacist patriarchy. In our work, we will focus on ways that women have been excluded from full participation in the social, political, and economic life of the societies in which they lived, and on their efforts to achieve autonomy. We will practice intersectionality in this course, meaning that we will be particularly attentive to intersections of gender with race, class, and other status/identity categories in order to understand how systemic oppression works in complex, varied ways on different populations.

A Note on Content:

This course will examine texts that document, describe, and grapple with issues of racial and sexual violence. The material may be graphic, and class discussions will frequently take up issues that many people consider controversial. Please consider whether this content will be disturbing or triggering to a degree that will interfere with your learning in the course.

Learning Outcomes:

Through reading, written assignments, and in-class discussion, this course will help you:

- Arrive at a deeper historical, legal, cultural, and literary understanding of the relationship between literature and law, and the ways that each mode of discourse has both oppressive and liberatory potential;
- Generate a deeper knowledge of feminist traditions in literature and law, with particular attention to feminisms that address race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and (dis)ability;
- Refine, through written expression, close reading skills, critical thinking, and critical argumentation skills;
- Identify other places in which to use these skills—other coursework, daily life, personal reading, etc.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

I do not allow laptops or e-readers in class, so you must have hard copies of all course materials. These editions have been ordered through The Duckstore; if you buy them elsewhere, please make sure that you purchase the editions listed below.

- Simone Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (ISBN 9780822359388)
- Maryse Conde, *I, Tituba: The Black Witch of Salem* (9780813927671)
- Suzan-Lori Parks, *Venus* (ISBN 9780822215677)
- Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, *The Yellow Wall-Paper* (ISBN 9781558611580)

- M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!* (ISBN 9780819571694)
- You will need to watch the mini-series *Alias Grace*, which is available on Netflix
- You will also be required to print the following course texts and bring the hard copies to class with you. PDFs or links will be provided to you:
 - Excerpts from *Alchemy of Race and Rights*
 - Excerpts from the Code Noir
 - Excerpts from the Salem trial transcripts
 - Audre Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”
 - Combahee River Collective Statement
 - *Buck v. Bell*
 - *Loving v. Virginia*

GRADING DISTRIBUTION:

For students enrolled in ENG 410:

Canvas Posts (10 total)	15%
Paper 1 (2-3 pages)	15%
Supreme Court Opinion Analysis (4-5 pages)	20%
Proposal/outline for final project/paper	10%
Final paper/project (6-8 pages or equivalent)	25%
In-class participation	15%

For students enrolled in ENG 510:

Response Papers (10 total; 1-2 pages each)	20%
Paper 1 (3-4 pages)	15%
Final project proposal	10%
Final paper/project	25%
In-class presentation	15%
In-class participation	15%

COURSE POLICIES:

Class participation: Active classroom participation is an integral part of your success in this course. On a practical level, I expect you to come to class having read and thought about the assigned readings, and therefore having prepared to discuss them. You are unable to participate effectively if you have not brought the text(s) we are discussing that day. Since I do not allow laptop use in class you may need to print out and bring hard copies of readings with you.

Your classroom participation grade will be based on: any pop quizzes, my assessment of your regular contributions to class discussion, and a self-evaluation of your in-class performance that you will complete at the end of the term.

Attendance: You are allowed two absences during the term. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences except for religious observances. Missing a required conference (without notice) counts as a class absence. Each absence over two will result in 1/3 of a letter grade penalty off your final grade in the course. **Attendance is taken each day, but only tallied at the end of the term. It is your responsibility to keep track of your attendance and to be aware of how many absences remain available to you without a penalty on your final grade.** If you miss any class, it is also your responsibility to get notes and information from a classmate. Do not ask me to summarize content that you have missed.

Tardiness: Class begins promptly at 4:00pm; late entries are disruptive and are strongly discouraged. If you are more than 20 minutes late, I will mark you absent.

Laptops/phones: I do not allow the use of laptops, iPads, tablets, e-readers, phones, or any other electronic devices in class. Phones should be turned OFF (not on vibrate or silent) before entering the classroom. You should not be talking or texting using *any* electronic means, including your watch.

Academic Honesty: I take very seriously our shared obligation to academic integrity, and all of your work in this class—including informal papers and paper proposals—should be entirely your own.

Access: The Accessible Education Center (uoacc@uoregon.edu) handles requests for accommodation of disabilities. I and the University want this class to be an inclusive learning environment. Please notify me as soon as possible if aspects of the course are creating barriers to your participation or if you need to share an accommodations letter from the AEC.

Correspondence: Allow 48 hours for responses to emails. If you are requesting information that is already available in the syllabus or on Canvas, you are likely to receive a response to that effect. Please make sure you consult those resources *before* contacting me.

Deadlines: I take deadlines extremely seriously. For formal papers, submitting even one minute past the deadline counts as a late submission and will result in a penalty of 1/3 letter grade for each day that it is late. Please avoid this scenario by seeking out extensions early – I grant them quite readily, but you must request them at least 24 hours before the due date.

Class May 30: Please note that class will not be held in person on May 30. In order to get credit for attending class that day, you will need to complete an online activity that is circulated prior to that class session.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Canvas posts (410 only): Over the course of the quarter, you must submit a total of 10 Canvas posts. Posts are due each day that we have a class meeting between April 4 and May 28, and posts are due by 3:00pm that day (i.e., an hour before class starts). Posts should be 100-150 words and should outline a topic or aspect of that day's reading that you would like to suggest for our class discussion. You will receive full credit for posts submitted by the deadline that are at least 100 words long.

Response papers (510 only): Over the course of the quarter, you must submit a total of 10 reading response papers. Papers are due by the start of class each day, should be 300-500 words long, and can take any shape/format. However, each paper should engage (deeply) at least one of that day's readings. Response papers are great opportunities to begin a close reading, to pose questions that you attempt to answer, to identify common patterns or relationships among readings, etc. These papers are intended to be informal but rigorous – they should move your and our thinking forward, rather than simply demonstrating your comprehension/mastery of a text or engaging solely in critique. You will receive full credit for response papers submitted by the relevant deadline.

Paper 1: Your first paper will be a brief personal reflection on an encounter that you have had with law.

Supreme Court Opinion Analysis (410 only): Your second paper will be a 4-5 page analysis of a recent Supreme Court opinion of your choice and a proposal for how you would dissent with the majority opinion.

Final project/paper: Your final project in the course will be on a topic and in a format of your choice. For undergraduates, this assignment should be the general equivalent of a 6-8 page paper; for graduate students, this assignment should be the general equivalent of a 12-15 page paper. You will submit a (separately graded) proposal several weeks before the final project is due.

In-class Presentation (510 only): Each graduate student will sign up to lead a class discussion/activity for one of our class sessions. As part of this presentation, you will need to 1) submit a lesson plan to me at least 48 hours in advance; and 2) prepare/execute a classroom discussion or other activity that should last for approximately 30 minutes. The choice of format is up to you.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1		
T	Apr. 2	Introductions
Th	Apr. 4	Patricia Williams, "The Pain of Word Bondage," from <i>Alchemy of Race and Rights</i> (available at http://www.dariarothmayr.com/pdfs/assignments/Williams,%20%20The%20Pain%20of%20Word%20Bondage.pdf)
Week 2		
T	Apr. 9	Excerpts from Salem trial transcripts (on Canvas)
W	Apr. 10	Paper #1 due via Canvas by 8pm
Th	Apr. 11	Maryse Conde, <i>I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem</i>
Week 3		
T	Apr. 16	Maryse Conde, <i>I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem</i>
Th	Apr. 18	Maryse Conde, <i>I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem</i> ; Excerpts from the Code Noir (on Canvas)
Week 4		
T	Apr. 23	Suzan-Lori Parks, <i>Venus</i>
Th	Apr. 25	Suzan-Lori Parks, <i>Venus</i>
Week 5		
T	Apr. 30	Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" (available at https://collectiveliberation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Lorde_The_Masters_Tools.pdf); Combahee River Collective Statement (available at https://americanstudies.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Keyword%20Coalition_Readings.pdf)
W	May 1	Supreme Court Analysis (410 only) due via Canvas by 8pm
Th	May 2	M. NourbeSe Philip, <i>Zong!</i>
Week 6		
T	May 7	M. NourbeSe Philip, <i>Zong!</i>
Th	May 9	Charlotte Perkins-Gilman, <i>The Yellow Wall-Paper</i>
Week 7		
T	May 14	<i>Alias Grace</i> (Episodes 1-3)
W	May 15	Final Project Proposal (510 only) due via Canvas by 8pm
Th	May 16	<i>Alias Grace</i> (Episodes 4-6)
Week 8		
T	May 21	<i>Buck v. Bell</i> and <i>Loving v. Virginia</i> (on Canvas)
W	May 22	Final Project Proposal (410 only) due via Canvas by 8pm
Th	May 23	Simone Browne, <i>Dark Matters</i>
Week 9		
T	May 28	Simone Browne, <i>Dark Matters</i>
Th	May 30	NO CLASS – online activity to be submitted in lieu of class

Week 10		
T	Jun. 4	Evaluations, workshop/informal presentations of final projects (in progress)
Th	Jun. 6	Reflections
		Final Project Due – TBD