WMST W3903 Senior Seminar I: Knowledge, Practice, Power
Institute for Research on Women and Gender

Tuesdays 2:10-4:00PM
754 Schermerhorn Extension
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-4 and Fridays 10-12 (Butler Cafe), by appointment only at http://tinyurl.com/joanofficehours

Course Description:
This course offers you the opportunity to develop a capstone research paper by the end of the first semester of your senior year. Senior seminar essays take the form of a 25-page paper based on original research and characterized by an interdisciplinary approach to the study of women, sexuality, and/or gender.

You must work with an individual advisor who has expertise in the area of your thesis, who can advise you on the specifics of method and content, and who will serve as the second reader of your paper. Your grade for the semester will be determined by IRWaG’s Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Alondra Nelson and the teaching assistant, in consultation with your advisor. Your final grade is based upon the research paper as well as active participation in peer feedback and regular class attendance.

Students receiving a grade of "B+" of higher in Senior Seminar I will be invited to complete Senior Seminar II in Spring 2013 and will be eligible for honors in the major. Senior Seminar II students will complete a senior thesis of 40-60 pages that builds on the fall semester research paper. This course is facilitated by IRWaG director, Professor Saidiya Hartman.

Responsibilities:
1. Attendance. The class is run as a workshop and peer-support is central to the process. You are expected to come to all class sessions; if you cannot be present, please let the professor or teaching assistant know in advance. Your grade will be docked after one unexcused absence.
2. Circulation of written work. Please submit your work in at least two days in advance of the Tuesday on which it will be discussed, in order to allow plenty of time for reading and constructive feedback by your classmates. Reading each other's work is a
key part of the seminar. Please read attentively and provide useful, and clearly written, commentary and suggestions.

**Goals:**
1. By the 5th week of the semester, you should have a Advisor/Second Reader for your paper;
2. By the 7th week of the semester, you should have a clearly and concisely conceived paper outline;
3. By the end of the semester, you will have produced a 25-page research paper.

**Required Readings:**
Because this course is a workshop and research seminar, there are just two required readings; these have been uploaded to New Courseworks. The bulk of our reading will consist of your peers’ writings.


*******Highly Recommended Resources*******
For your own reference, there are several excellent books and guides on how to write a thesis.

Columbia University-Butler Library Subject Guide for Resources on Women’s and Gender studies [Website].

Harvard University Guide to Writing a Senior Essay in Sociology [PDF]


**Schedule of Classes:**

**September 4:**
Introduction to course; review of course requirements; brainstorming paper topics.

**September 11:**
Ramazanoglu, Feminist Methodology, chapter 8.

Stanford, More than Just Words.
ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY: Compose a one-page, double-spaced statement of your paper, including a clear research question and thesis. *Distribute via email to the class by Sunday September 9th.*

**September 18:**

**Library Resources for Your Thesis:** Meeting with Women's and Gender Studies Librarian Sarah Witte Spurgin, Butler Library, Room 305

ASSIGNMENT: 1) Compose an annotated bibliography (6 sources) of the scholarly works you have read so far, pertaining to your paper. 2) Please also identify two possible Second Readers of your paper. *Distribute via email to the class by Sunday September 16th.*

**September 25:**

Discussion of circulated work on research questions, thesis statements and archives, including possible research challenges, supplementary materials, methodological concerns, IRB and permissions. Discussion of possible advisors/second readers.

ASSIGNMENT: Write an annotated bibliography of 6 possible sources (three scholarly books; three scholarly articles or primary resources) for your paper drawing on insights learned at Butler Library session. Append to that a preliminary abstract of how your own work will complicate, texture, reimagine, challenge, support, redirect, or hone that body of extant scholarship. *Distribute via email to the class by Sunday September 23rd.*

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**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 27TH 4PM: IRWAG UNDERGRADUATE OPEN HOUSE**

Panel on Women’s and Gender Studies Featuring Joan Robinson, JD and Lauren Herold, CC ’12 and Awardee for Best Senior Essay in Gender Studies, 754 Schermerhorn Extension; refreshments served.

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**October 2:**

Discuss annotated bibliographies and abstracts. Discuss how and why your contribution to the field will be relevant and enriching for scholars other than yourself. *Paper advisor/second reader should be in place at this time, please email Professor Nelson with a confirmation of this person’s role, cc:ing the advisor by October 2nd.*

ASSIGNMENT: Continue working with/on your archive and secondary materials, and prepare a one-page single-spaced outline of your paper. The outline should clearly follow from your research question and thesis. *Circulate to the class by Sunday September 30th.*

**October 9:**
Discuss paper outlines.

**Assignment:** Continue working with/on your archive and secondary materials, and prepare a detailed **five-page** single-spaced outline of your paper. The outline should clearly follow from your research question and thesis. *Circulate to the class by Sunday October 7th.*

**October 16:**
No class meeting—work on thesis; hold in-depth meetings with the professor, TA and/or advisor about your paper.

**Assignment:** Continue reading in and around your archive, build from your extended outline to paper sections, units of argumentation, supporting points, and relevant scholarship for each section. Write the introduction to your paper (**five double-spaced pages**). *Circulate to the class by ***Sunday October 21st.***

**October 23:**
Discuss full outlines and introductions.

**October 30:**
Discuss first section drafts.

**Assignment:** Continue working with your archive and secondary materials to deepen and develop your **first** paper section (the section following the introduction), what materials it will need to cover, what questions it will raise, and how its sets up the rest of your paper’s argument. Compose a draft of the first section of the paper—**5 double-spaced pages**—that clearly follows from your research question and thesis as established in your introduction **and** builds/propels your argument. *Email section one to the class by Sunday October 28th.*

**November 6:**
No Class-Election Day
No class meeting—work on thesis; hold in-depth meetings with the professor, TA and/or advisor about your paper.

**Assignment:** Draft **section two** of your paper, **5 double-spaced pages.** Email section two to the class by Sunday November 11th.

**November 13:**
Discuss section two drafts.
November 20:
ASSIGNMENT: Compose a draft of your third paper section--5 double-spaced pages--that clearly follows from your research question and thesis as established in your introduction and builds/propels your argument. *Email section three to the class by Sunday November 18th.*

November 27:
ASSIGNMENT: Compose a draft of your paper's conclusion--5 double-spaced pages--that clearly follows from your research question and thesis as established in your introduction and builds/propels your argument. *Email the conclusion to the class by Sunday November 25th.*

December 4:
Discussion of papers and plans for completion, troubleshooting, etc.

December 11: Research papers due to Professor Nelson and designated second reader/advisor by 12 noon.