PHIL 3510: FEMINIST APPROACHES TO ETHICS AND POLITICS
WINTER 2012

Course Director: A. MacLachlan
Office: S418 Ross
Office Hours: Tues, 3-5pm
Email: amacla@yorku.ca

Class Location: CLH 110
Class Time: Thurs, 4pm-7pm
Phone: (416) 736 2100 x77587

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course examines recent feminist writings in ethics and political philosophy. We will discuss criteria for what qualifies as a “feminist” ethical theory, and will examine several candidates. Topics include the gendered nature of value, the relationship between justice and care, reproductive autonomy, sexual violence, sex work and global injustice.

COURSE READINGS:
All course readings are available as links on the course Moodle site, or in the PHIL 3510 coursepack, available in the York University Bookstore.

You are expected to come to class having read and reflected on the readings, and be prepared to respond and discuss the author’s position, arguments and examples. I will clarify any confusion, answer your questions and guide our class conversations.

Those readings listed under “Further Readings” are not required, but they may assist you with your essay, or help if you are particularly interested in the week’s topic. If more than two readings are assigned for a given week, two will be very short/accessible.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
At the end of this course:

1. You will be able to engage in contemporary debates in feminist ethics and political philosophy, and to identify and evaluate the insights, values and theories underlying various positions in those debates.
2. You will be able to think critically about the relationships between philosophical ethics, feminist theory, and gender politics, and to apply that thinking to concrete topics such as sexual and reproductive ethics, institutions of marriage and family, gendered violence and global justice.
3. You will have developed advanced analytic and communicative skills in philosophy; namely, the ability to articulate and defend a coherent thesis within an essay, as well as the ability to absorb, synthesize and reflect upon complex information gained from reading assignments or in a classroom setting.

York students are required to maintain high standards of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty:
(http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm)
Students are also expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website.
(http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity).

COURSE DROP DEADLINE: MARCH 9, 2011
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
There are six components to your course assessment in PHIL 3510:

a) Critical Response Paper:  (15% of final grade)
A critical response to an assigned reading, written as a formal essay and guided by a series of
critical questions (listed on your assignment, available on the course website).
2-3 pages double-spaced; Due January 26 by the beginning of class (submit through turnitin.com
link on Moodle).

b) Midterm In-Class Test:  (25% of final grade)
Held in-class on February 16; 75 minutes. Format: definitions, fill-in-the-blank, short answers.

c) Final Paper, First Draft:  (15% of final grade)
Paper topics and specific instructions will be given out in class on February 2.
You will submit two electronic copies of your paper draft: one to me, and one to another student in
the class, with whom you have been paired, by me.
5-8 pages double-spaced; due March 2 by the beginning of class.

d) Peer Criticism:  (15% of final grade)
You will be asked to provide constructive, respectful feedback on your partner’s paper draft.
Keep in mind, he or she will be offering the same service to you. Each of you will submit your
comments to your partner and to me. You will be assessed on how careful, thorough and
constructive your comments are. Due March 16 at the beginning of class.

e) Final Paper, Final Draft:  (20% of final grade)
You will be expected to edit and revise your draft in light of your partner’s comments. Your paper
will be evaluated both on its quality and on its relative improvement from earlier drafts.
7-8 pages double-spaced; due April 5 by 9am (submit through turnitin.com link on Moodle).

f) Participation:  (10% of final grade)
This includes your attendance, your respectful and engaged verbal contributions to class
discussion and group work (this is a matter of quality, and not quantity, of contributions) and
especially, your participation in our class’s online discussion forums. If you feel uncomfortable
speaking in a classroom setting, coming to office hours and pertinent email inquiries (again,
quality not quantity, please) will also count toward your grade.

Late work (or a missed test) will only be accepted without penalty if you have prior approval from
me, or in the event of a documented emergency. All other work will be penalized at a rate of 3%
per day. After 5 days it will not be accepted.

Some of the topics in PHIL 3510 are very personal, and may be painful to discuss. If you have
particular circumstances you feel may prevent you from participating fully in the class or that
require you absent yourself from a particular week’s discussion, please let me know as soon as
possible so that we can make all the necessary arrangements.
## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Required Readings (to be completed before class that week)</th>
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Further Suggested Readings:  
2. Rosemarie Tong and Nancy Williams, “Feminist Ethics”, *SEP* (link on Moodle) |
| 12/1 | Gender, Oppression and Agency | 1. Marilyn Frye, “Oppression”  
2. Iris Marion Young, “The Five Faces of Oppression”  
http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/young.pdf  
Further Suggested Readings:  
4. Audre Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”  
5. Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege”  
http://www.iub.edu/~tchsotl/part2/McIntosh%20White%20Privilege.pdf |
| 19/1 | Doing Feminist Ethics I: Care and its Critics | 1. Carol Gilligan, “Moral Orientation and Moral Development” (coursepack)  
(you can read it online for free, but can’t download it without subscribing)  
2. Virginia Held, “The Ethics of Care as Moral Theory” Ch 1, *Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global* (OUP, 2006), available as ebook through library (Moodle)  
Further Suggested Readings:  
3. Marilyn Friedman, “Beyond Caring: The De-Moralization of Gender” (coursepack)  
| 26/1 | Doing Feminist Ethics II: Justice, Rights and Relations | 1. Claudia Card, “Gender and Moral Luck” (coursepack)  
Further Suggested Readings:  
3. Annette Baier, “The Need for More than Justice” (coursepack)  
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Further Suggested Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9/2</strong></td>
<td>Global Justice, Global Feminisms I</td>
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1. Chandra Mohanty, “Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience” (coursepack)  
Further Suggested Readings:  
| **16/2** | *Test, 75 min*  
Global Justice, Global Feminisms II |  
Further Suggested Readings:  
3. Serena Parekh, “Gender and Human Rights” (Moodle) |
| **23/2** | READING WEEK | **NO READING: GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR PAPER DRAFTS!** |  |
| **1/3** | Sex and the Sex Industry |  
2. Martha Nussbaum, “Whether from Reason or Prejudice: Taking Money for Bodily Services”  
http://philosophy.uchicago.edu/faculty/files/nussbaum/Whether%20From%20Reason%20or%20Prejudice.pdf |  
Further Suggested Readings:  
3. Laurie Shrage, “Feminist Perspectives on Sex Markets” *SEP* (Moodle) |
| **8/3** | Sexual Violence and Conflict I  
*Final Paper, First Draft Due* |  
1. Ann Cahill, “Feminist Theories of Rape: Sex or Violence?” (coursepack)  
2. Susan Brison, “Surviving Sexual Violence” (coursepack) |  
Further Suggested Readings:  
4. Rebecca Whisnant, “Feminist Perspectives on Rape” *SEP* (Moodle) |
| **15/3** | Sexual Violence and Conflict II |  
1. Andrea Smith, “Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide” (coursepack)  
2. Sarah Clark Miller, “Atrocity, Harm and Resistance: a Situated Understanding of Genocidal Rape” (coursepack) |  |
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| 22/3  | Autonomy and Reproduction | 1. Sue Sherwin, “Normalizing Reproductive Technologies and the Implications for Autonomy” (coursepack)  
|       | *Final Paper, Peer Criticism Due* | Further Suggested Readings:  
3. Carolyn McLeod, “For Dignity or Money: Feminists on the Commodification of Women’s Reproductive Labour” (coursepack)  
4. Anne Donchin, “Feminist Bioethics” *SEP* (Moodle) |
2. Patricia Hill Collins, “Shifting the Center: Race, Class and Feminist Theorizing about Motherhood” (coursepack)  
|       | *Final Paper Draft due by 9am on Thursday, April 5 (by email) * | Further Suggested Readings:  