Salem State College
Course Syllabus
PHL 320  Philosophical Perspectives on Women
Spring Semester, 2004

Dr. Krishna Mallick

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Class time: Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays, 12:30 p.m. to 1:20 p.m., SB 106
Office: Sullivan Building, 203B- 4
Telephone: (978) 542-6298
E-mail address: kmallick@salemstate.edu
Website: www.salemstate.edu/~kmallick/
Office Hours: Mondays, 12:00 noon to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 pm –2:30 pm
Wednesdays/Fridays, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
and by appointment at other times

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

We will explore and critically analyze a variety of issues/topics confronting women through discussion of readings, videos and debates. Topics like the meaning of feminism, women and work, gendered power and violence, reproductive technologies and others will be discussed from feminist and anti-feminist western as well nonwestern viewpoints which will help students to make up their minds about different issues that they will be faced with.


COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Tests: Two in-class tests. They will be essay type. The dates will be announced at least one week in advance. 20 points each, total=40 points

   One take home test on Nectar in a Sieve. 10 points

Group Project: Each group will participate in a debate related to this course. Each student in the group will speak for at least five minutes on the side that s/he has selected. After the presentation, the class will participate in discussion. Group grade is worth 7 points and individual grade is worth 8 points, total=15 points

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Groups will be formed within the first few weeks of class. Each group can select one from the following topics:

1. Comparable Worth/Glass Ceiling
2. Sexual Harassment
3. Family and Medical Leave Act
4. Welfare Policy/Feminization of Poverty
5. Pornography Ordinance
6. Date rape
7. Lesbians with children/adoption
8. Surrogate Motherhood/In Vitro Fertilization
9. Divorce Law and transformation of legal marriage
10. Prostitution
11. Gender Issue and Art
12. Battered women
13. Anorexia/Bulemia
14. Children having children/Teenage Pregnancy
15. Women with AIDS delivering babies with AIDS
16. Legal rights of Gays/Lesbians
17. Women in the military
18. Women in athletics
19. Women’s issues in other parts of the world, like Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq etc.

Each group must do some research related to the topic they have selected and must be available to meet with the group outside of class time. Two groups cannot do their presentation on the same topic.

Your individual grade will be based on how clearly and consistently you present your side of the argument by relating it to the materials discussed in class from the textbooks. Your group grade will be based on team effort. All the students in each group will be required to meet with the instructor at least one week before their debate date and present a handout which will be handed out to all students so that they are familiar with the topic being debated.

2. Unannounced In-class and homework assignments: **10 points**

4. **Paper:** One critical paper on a women’s issue in India. Due date and instruction for the paper will be given later in class. **20 points**

5. **Class Participation:** Your participation throughout the semester. If you have difficulty in participating in class, give your written comment on the topics/issues discussed in class on a regular basis as the evidence of your involvement in the class discussion. **5 points**
If all the course requirements are not fulfilled, the student will get an ‘I’ (Incomplete) until the requirement is fulfilled.

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular attendance is required because your participation in the course is an important aspect of the course development and your development in the course. Attendance will be taken regularly. Any more than 3 unexcused absence will lower your final grade. If you have an excused absence, inform the instructor about that right after the class you are absent. Anyone having too many unexcused absences will get an ‘F’ for the course.

Method of instruction is mostly discussion, very little lecture. Audio-visual materials will be used to enhance classroom discussion. There is a possibility of having guestspeaker/s in class.

**Reading and class assignment:**

**Topic:** Oppression

1/21/04 Wednesday- Introduction to the course. What is feminism?


1/26/04 Monday- Continuation of discussion of Simone De Beauvoir’s article.

1/28/04 Wednesday- Read Part I.4, “White Privilege and Male Privilege…,” by Peggy McIntosh, pp. 30-38 from *Gender Basics*.

1/30/04 Friday- Continuation of discussion of Peggy McIntosh’s article.

2/2/04 Monday- Continuation of discussion of Peggy McIntosh’s article.


2/6/04 Friday- Continuation of discussion of Robert Daseler’s article.


2/11/04 Wednesday- Continuation of discussion of Part I.7 and review of Test #1.

2/13/04 Friday- Test # 1 on Part I.2, I.4, I.6 and I.7 from *Gender Basics*.

2/16/04 Monday- President’s day holiday. No class.
**Topic: The Book *Nectar in a Sieve***

**2/18/04 Wednesday**- Read *Nectar in a Sieve*. Finish reading the entire book before this class. Be prepared to discuss the reading in class.

**2/20/04 Friday**- Continuation of discussion of *Nectar in a Sieve*. Be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Topic: Rape and Sexual Harassment**


**2/25/04 Wednesday**- Continuation of discussion of Tim Beneke’s article. **Take home test on *Nectar in a Sieve* is due in class. Please note that due date will be strictly followed.**

**2/27/04 Friday**- **Presentation of Group I.**

**3/1/04 Monday**- See the video “Warrior marks: female genital mutilation and the sexual blinding of women,” (54 minutes) in class.

**3/3/04 Wednesday**- A possible guestspeaker from North Shore Rape Crisis Center.

**3/5/04 Friday**- **Presentation of Group II.**

Assignment for the rest of the semester will be given on 3/5/2004.
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Group Presentation/Debate format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favor</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(stating facts of the issue and introduce what each person is doing on your side—both sides have an introduction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position Statement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Position Statement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a brief statement of the side that you are taking—both sides have a position statement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspectives—three</strong></td>
<td><strong>Perspective—three</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(perspectives must be the same on both sides. State your ethical argument for the perspective selected)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(summarize what you have proved—both side)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rebuttal—speakers respond to each other’s point and then we open it up for class discussion.

Each student should do Intro and a perspective, position statement and a perspective and conclusion and a perspective.

Requirements:

On Monday of the week when your debate is scheduled, submit a short handout that you have found from the internet which will help your classmates to know about the issue. I will make copies for the class and distribute them on Wednesday in class.

A debate statement in the form of question or this vs. that must be given to the instructor for each group. The debate topic should not be too general. It has to be narrowed down to a specific issue, by discussing a specific controversial case or a specific law etc.

Every member of each group has to meet the instructor a week before the debate date. If everyone does not meet the instructor, points will be taken off from that student’s individual grade.

Grades will be based on how well you make your argument by relating it to the topics/issues discussed in class. If you do not make any connection to the issues/theories discussed in class, you will not get the highest grade even if your presentation is very good, otherwise. If any of the above information is not clear, see the instructor and clarify it before your debate date. Individual grade—out of 8 points, group grade—out of 7 points, total=15 points
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Topic: Western and Nonwestern Women’s Contributions to the World

3/10/04 Wednesday- See a video on Andrea Dworkin and discuss the handout on her article given in class.

3/12/04 Friday- Presentation of Group III.

S P R I N G B R E A K

3/22/04 Monday- Powerpoint presentation on Aung San Suu Kyi (a woman leader in Burma/Myanmar) and discuss what you found from websites about her.

3/24/04 Wednesday- Continuation of discussion of Aung San Suu Kyi.

3/26/04 Friday- Presentation of Group IV.

3/29/04 Monday- See the rest of the video “Warrior marks: female genital mutilation and the sexual blinding of women,” in class followed by discussion.

3/31/04 Wednesday- Go to the Philosophy department event, guestspeaker Ghita Hintikka during class time. Flyer for the event will be given in class. Written comment due next class. It will be counted as an in-class assignment. **Outline of the paper is due. Either e-mail to the instructor the outline in word document with cc to yourself or submit the outline to the instructor at the lecture that you are attending today.**

4/2/04 Friday- Powerpoint presentation on the Chipko, an environmental movement of India.

4/5/04 Monday- Continuation of discussion of the Chipko movement handout.

Topic: Reproduction: Hi Tech/Low Tech

4/7/04 Wednesday- Read Part X.2, “Childbirth,” by Christine Overall, pp. 431-438 from Gender Basics.

4/12/04 Monday- No class. Go to the poster session on Earth Day, from 11 am – 12:15 pm, Vets Hall, Ellison Campus Center. Write your comments on at least four posters that you have viewed and submit your comments in the next class. This will be counted as an in-class assignment.

Topic: Raising Children: Mothers and Fathers

4/14/04 Wednesday- Read Part XI.1, “Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo in Latin America,” by Evelyn P. Stevens, pp. 456-463 from Gender Basics.


4/19/04 Monday- Read the handout from Atlantic Monthly. Written paper is due in class.

Topic: Messages on the Surface: Looks and Language

4/21/04 Wednesday- Read Part II.1, “Sexism and the English Language: The Linguistic Implications of Being a Woman,” by Karen L. Adams and Norma C. Ware, pp. 70-78 from Gender Basics.


4/28/04 Wednesday- Continuation of the discussion of the previous article and review of the second test.

4/30/04 Friday- Test # 2 on all the materials covered after Nectar in a Sieve.

5/3/04 Monday- Check the website, magazine, newspaper and be prepared to talk about a current issue on women.

5/5/04 Wednesday- Please note that an in-class assignment will be given. Last day of class.

Instructions for the paper
Due date: Monday, April 19, 2004 in class. One day grace period is Tuesday, April 20, 2004 (Drop the paper in my office SB 203B-5). If the office door is locked drop it in the pocket on my office door and make sure that you write my name on the cover page of the paper. Save your paper in the disk in case it gets lost. Anyone turning in the paper later than the grace period will lose 5 points for being late and more late the paper is, more points will be taken off.

Approximate length of the paper: 6-7 pages, double-spaced (approximately 2500-2700 words)

In the introduction, state your thesis. For example, in this paper I will critically analyze such and such article and show its relation to such and such issue in India and prove that…………………………..

Take a specific case related to women’s issue/feminist movement in India. Describe the case in some detail. (Approximately 1 ½ - 2 pages)

Select an article from the book that we have not read in this class on the same topic as your case. For example, if you have selected a case on pornography, select an article related to pornography from the textbook. Critically analyze the article in your own words. What does it mean? Do you agree with it or not? Explain in your own words why you agree with it and why you don’t agree with it. What is interesting about the article? How does it apply to your life? etc. You might add other ideas in your critical analysis.

Explain the relation between the article that you have selected and the woman’s issue/case that you have selected. What are the similarities and difference between your case and the article? What are some of the positive as well as negative aspects of the case/issue that you have selected? What have you proved? (Approximately 2 – 2 ½ pages)

Give a bibliography of the source of your case and other articles/books that you have used. Follow the guidelines of academic dishonesty stated in p. 293 of the undergraduate catalog. Note that if you are cutting and pasting from websites without acknowledgment it is considered as plagiarism, which can lead to suspension from the college.

Please note that your case cannot be on the same topic that you have debated in class. Get the article from the textbook and the women’s issue in India that you have selected for the paper approved by Prof. Mallick. Write a paragraph on it and submit by Wednesday, March 31, 2004. Again, note that the due date will be strictly followed.

There is no final exam for this course.