

The University of Western Ontario
 Political Science 4455G/9755B
**Gender and the Challenges of Transnational Politics:
 A Critical Approach**

Winter 2014

Instructor: Verónica Schild
Office: SSC 4148
e-mail: vschild@uwo.ca

Classes: Fridays, 9:30 am -11:30 am

Class location: Rm. SSC 4103

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30 - 3:00 pm
 Or by appointment

This course explores the challenge posed by feminist and critical theory to the study of transnational politics. It proceeds through cross-cultural and historical comparisons to discuss the centrality of gender to three processes: work and migration; citizenship and human rights; and indigenous mobilizations.

Transnationalism is a broad ranging concept that emphasizes the flow of capital, people, ideas, and objects across the borders of nation-states in contexts where states shape but do not contain these relations and flows. Transnationalism, and its associated transnational political processes, is not a new phenomenon. It is, however, one which we have until recently been ill equipped to study because of the nationalist and gender bias of our methodological approaches.

Methodological nationalism assumes national borders to be the natural unit of study for political phenomena. It also assumes that particular nations provide the constant units of observation through all historical transformations. Gender bias assumes the conspicuous absence of women and their particular (racialized and classed) experiences from transnational political processes. These biases have hampered scholars in their ability to move beyond dominant nationalist and gendered paradigms.

Prerequisites: Political Theory plus either one advanced Comparative Politics or one advanced International Politics course, or instructor's permission.

Course Evaluation:

Class Participation and Journal Writing	20%
Presentation	20%
Research Essay: (15-18 pages)	
(graduate students: 20-25 pages)	35%
Final Review Entry: (10-12 pages)	25%
(graduate students: 12-15 pages)	

Every participant is expected to read and discuss all the required readings for each week. As part of the weekly reading assignment you will be asked to bring a one-page “journal entry.” You are asked to submit **6** of these entries for evaluation. Regular attendance and timely submission of journal entries will earn you 50% of the participation/journal writing mark. The total mark for this component of the course evaluation will take into consideration the quality of your participation in seminar discussions, and of your engagement with ideas in the entries. In addition, each person will select one week’s topic/readings as the basis for a seminar presentation. The presentation should be approximately 30 – 45 minutes in length. You should be prepared to present: (1) a general analytic overview of the readings, **NOT** a descriptive summary – in short, your sense of how the key issues, concepts, methods, assumptions, problems and questions which emerge from the readings relate to the key questions highlighted above; and (2) a critical interpretation of the readings – strengths and weaknesses in terms of logic of argument, gaps or silences, assumptions, methodological implications, and so on.

This is a discussion seminar and as such the success of the seminar depends on your capacity to engage in a discussion of the texts and of the ideas offered by your peers. The use of laptops in this type of seminar format detracts from attentive and respectful engagement with your peers and is, therefore, not permitted. Exceptions will only be made for students who request accommodation through Student Development Services. For each week’s reading I’d like you to come to class with 2-3 questions and/or comments, as part of your journal entries. We start each class with a brief 15 minute reading of these questions/comments, and then move into the presentation and discussion for the day.

A Final Review Entry, or review of the ideas explored in the journals, of 10 - 12 double-spaced type-written pages in length (for graduate students, 12-15 pages), and a term paper of 15 - 18 double-spaced type-written pages in length (for graduate students, 20-25 pages), will be the final requirements for this course. **The term paper is due in class on March 7. The Final Review Entry is due on April 4.** Late assignment submissions will be subject to a penalty of 5 percent per day (from due date until the date that the assignment is received by me, including weekends and holidays). Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and only if you approach me in advance with your request. Please note Western’s new Medical Accommodation Policy. For detailed information and forms, please visit <http://studentservices.uwo.ca/semc/index.cfm> and for further policy information please visit http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

(Graduate) Statement of Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf