Gender and Sustainability

Course Description: This course will critically analyze sustainability from gendered perspectives. This course will take a three-pronged approach to the study of sustainability and gender, engaging with the economic, social, and environmental components that contribute to our understandings of sustainability and sustainable development. Through readings, written assignments and class discussions, students will examine the intersectionality of gender and sustainability with class, race, ability, age, nationality, religion, power, politics, social movements and health from local and global perspectives. Students will critique practical applications of sustainable development and the role of gender in creating a more sustainable future. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, this course will draw on perspectives from anthropology, sociology, environmental studies, gender and development, human geography, public and international affairs, political science, economics, engineering, geology, business, urban studies, and a range of health sciences. Students will have the opportunity to learn about gender and sustainability through case study analyses stemming from a variety of geographic regions. There are no prerequisites for this course, although GSWS 0100: Introduction to Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, GSWS 0500 Introduction to Feminist Theory or another course on gender is recommended.

Learning Objectives: At the end of the course, you should achieve the following:

• Demonstrate an understanding of sustainability as complex interconnections between economics, culture, and the environment, and explain the significance of gender in the context of sustainability.
• Outline the history of sustainability and how it has influenced development, globalization and environmental politics.
• Develop a skillset to think critically and thoughtfully about the theoretical concepts for discussing development in gendered perspective.
• Enhance a critical understanding of the intersectionality of gender and sustainability with concepts including: power relations, environmentalism, politics, global health, class, race, religion, social movements, colonialism, economic development, and peace and justice movements.
• Reduce ethnocentrism and cultivate a language framework for thoughtfully and respectfully articulating the critical vocabulary in the interdisciplinary field of gender and sustainability.
• Improve reading and writing skills through effective synthesis of written material, and subsequently, the ability to convey course concepts in a concise and clear manner both verbally and in writing.

Peer Learning and Contacts: Learning from and offering instruction to your peers is very helpful to your development as a student and to your success in this course. You will have many opportunities for discussion and group work in class to help you get to know your peers. If you are absent from class or have questions, please reach out to your peers first for clarification. If you have further questions, please don’t hesitate to contact your instructor, but you are required to contact your peers first. To help facilitate this process, write the name and contact information of two students in this class in the space below for your future reference.

Name____________________________________________ Email: ________________________________

Name____________________________________________ Email: ________________________________
Course Materials

Required Texts:


As ethnography is important to anthropology and for case study review, students will read one of the following three ethnographies; however, the class will be split in thirds with each third reading one of the three different ethnographies. Therefore ethnography assignments will be made on a “first come, first serve” basis. Choices must be made and submitted to me via email BEFORE the third class meeting. Choices for the Ethnography Include:


In addition we will be reading several articles. All additional readings and articles will be made available on CourseWeb as .pdf files.

A couple of extra resources that will be useful for you as you develop your own research projects are listed here:

Sustainable Development from a Gender Perspective: A Glossary. Available in PDF on CourseWeb in the Links and Resources Tab.

The journal *Gender and Development* is published by Taylor & Francis. The journal’s website is here: [http://www.genderanddevelopment.org/page/index](http://www.genderanddevelopment.org/page/index) and articles can be accessed through your login via the Pitt Library.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Assignments

**Reading Responses: 15 points.**
You are responsible for reading the assigned readings listed in the Course Schedule BEFORE you come to class each week. In addition, you will submit 5 reading responses. You may choose which 5 dates you turn in a reading response; however, you may hand in ONLY ONE reading response per week. **In addition, 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, 2015, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.** The readings discussed in your reading response must be those discussed in-class the day you turn in your reading response. If you are absent for a class period, you are not eligible to turn a reading response for that class. Reading responses can be NO LONGER than 1-page single-spaced. Examples of previous student’s Reading Responses will be made available on CourseWeb for you to see an example of how I expect you to complete this assignment. This assignment will be very helpful for you when writing your final Research Paper.

Each reading response should include the following three components:

1. A list and explanation of key points and concepts learned from each of the assigned readings.
2. At least two questions for class discussion based on the readings. These can be questions you have about the readings, or concepts/ideas that you would like to explore in more depth during class discussion.

3. A one-paragraph discussion on how the readings link to broader course content. You should NOT mention every reading in this section. Here you have the opportunity to focus on what you found most provocative. You will link the readings for this class period to other class concepts by specifically mentioning another course reading, film, or activity. You may reference personal experiences, current events, readings that are not required but all references must be very specific (use author names and/or titles). If you reference readings/websites not assigned in this course, you are required to provide a citation.

Reading Responses will be graded on a scale of 1, 2 or 3.

1. (Poor): Response is insufficient and short and does not demonstrate that the student actually read all of the assigned readings. Response includes only unsubstantiated opinions or irrelevant autobiographical anecdotes AND/OR only 1 or 2 readings were referenced AND/OR one of the three components of the reading response listed above is missing.

2. (Average): At least half of the readings were included in the reading response AND the response demonstrates that the student read the material, but did not critically engage with the material.

3. (Excellent): All of the readings are included in the reading response AND the student engages with the course material demonstrating a deeper level of understanding.

All Reading Responses with instructor comments on them will be turned in again at the end of the semester, and your grade for this assignment will be based on your progress throughout the semester and your set of Reading Responses as a whole.

Gender and Sustainability Activities and Paper: 15 points.
You will complete one (1) of the following activities and write a corresponding paper. You can choose from a possible three (3) options. Regardless of the topic you choose, all papers are due on the date listed in the course schedule. Each of the activities is briefly described below, and more detailed instructions about these assignments in general and what specifically you need to turn in for each is listed on a separate handout.

Media Analysis:
Choose three (3) articles from a selection of newspapers or other appropriate media sources that address gender and sustainability. Read and analyze the media treatment of these issues. Then, write a 4-5-page paper highlighting the approach used by the author and media outlet, critique the article’s success at communicating the concepts of gender and sustainability based on our course readings and discussions, and conclude with how you can apply course concepts to suggest better communication and education of the concept of gender and sustainability to a wider audience.

Programmatic Interventions:
Identify a program that strives to achieve a sustainable development goal. Write a 4-5-page paper in which you describe the program and proposed intervention, analyze whether you think the intervention is engaged with sustainability or not, describe the role that gender plays in this intervention, and conclude with your opinions of how this program could be improved.

Sustainability In Action:
You will participate in two (2) gender and sustainability community actions (community service, community awareness, protest or demonstration, Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies Program event etc. that is related to sustainability). You MUST have your sustainability community-based actions approved by the instructor PRIOR to your participation! After you participation in these two events, you
will write a 4-5-page paper comparing and contrasting the events, and critically analyzing how these actions relate to one of the themes discussed in this course.

**Ethnography Discussion Presentation (10 points)**
Students will be split into three groups and will each read a different ethnography. You will then work to present information about your ethnography to your classmates who did not read that particular text. This is an opportunity for you to teach your peers about your learning, and learn about additional case study examples of gender and sustainability from your peers. A detailed description of this assignment will be handed out on the 3rd class meeting, along with the list of which students are reading each ethnography.

**Final Research Project: 45 Total points**
Develop a research project on a topic of your choosing. There are six (6) graded Milestones that comprise this project that are due throughout the semester: the Research Topic and Summary, Research Project Proposal, Rough Draft and Peer Review, Presentation of Research Paper, Final Research Paper, and the Reflection Summary Paper. These are described below, and a more detailed assignment sheet will be distributed in class.

**Milestone 1: Research Topic and Summary (2 points)**
Early in the term you will identify your research topic and write a one-page summary of your topic. This overview will also include a list of 3 course readings that you plan to use to help inform your research and an outline of your thinking for this project.

**Milestone 2: Research Project Proposal (2 points)**
Incorporating feedback from Milestone 1, you will craft a proposal for your project. The proposal will be no more than 250 words and should effectively summarize all of the components of your project. Look to examples we discuss during class as well as abstracts of readings throughout the semester for ideas about crafting your abstract. Use this to frame your writing and research for the rough draft of your paper.

**Milestone 3: Rough Draft and Peer Review (6 points)**
Bring your draft of at least 7 pages to class for in-class peer review. You are expected to write notes on your partners’ paper, as well as fill out a peer review form provided in class. You will each comment on two papers, and receive comments on two papers.

**Milestone 4: Presentation of Research Paper (5 points)**
As part of developing your oral communication skills, you will create and deliver a presentation based on your research paper. Presentations will be brief, and you will have time to highlight the most important aspects of your research. In an effort to broaden your media skills, you will use Prezi to create and share your presentation via their website at [www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com). Everyone can create a free Prezi education account by using your @pitt.edu email address. By completing this task in advance of the due date of your final paper, you will have an opportunity to get feedback about your project, and provide constructive feedback to your peers.

**Milestone 5: Final Research Paper (25 points)**
This is the final draft of your 8-10 page research paper. You must use APA style citations and include a work cited page that and parenthetical citations within your text. Additional information on this assignment will be provided later in the semester.

**Milestone 6: Reflection Summary Paper (5 points)**
This will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your learning in the entire course and how your research project intersects with the interests of your peers. Pedagogical research shows that reflective assignments focus, “on students’ awareness of how they interact with the content rather than solely on
what the content is…. [and] that following the journal process, students are better able to anchor their new learning in experience and have the opportunity to solve actual problems” (Pavlovich et al. 2007). Here you will have an opportunity to demonstrate the cumulative knowledge you acquired throughout the course, as you write a 2-page summary paper describing the intersections of your learning in this course with that of your classmates. A more detailed description of this assignment will be posted on Courseweb and discussed in-class near the end of the semester.

**Attendance, Preparation and Participation: 15 points**
Attendance is VERY important to your success in this course! You will notice that this is 15% of your grade. Simply showing up is not enough to earn an A. These points are based on your active participation in discussions. You will be expected to contribute meaningful reflections and questions on the reading assigned and materials presented in this course. There are no stupid questions, and everyone is to be respectful of others’ comments and questions. You are allowed two (2) free absences but every additional absence will result in a subtraction of 5% of your total grade. Students who miss 5 or more class periods will not pass the course. Please be respectful of both our time and yours, and be punctual to classes and meetings. Excessive tardiness will result in a reduction of points from your attendance grade. Many of the films used in this class are not available at Hillman library. You are responsible for all the class content you miss due to an absence. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain any information regarding the missed class from your classmates.

**Courseweb:** This class will be using the University’s Courseweb (Blackboard). You can access courseweb through the following webpage: [http://courseweb.pitt.edu/](http://courseweb.pitt.edu/)

**Course Grading and Policies**

**Grading:** The grading scale below will be used to evaluate your work and assignments in this course, and to determine final grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points Earned (100 total possible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>63-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 or Below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Late Work:** Late work is NOT accepted. You must turn in hard copies of all graded assignments. You must be present in class to turn in assignments.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Cheating includes but is not limited to: copying someone else’s work and claiming it as your own, copying someone else’s answers during an exam or quiz, having someone else do your work (this includes tutors and friends), using pre-written or recorded material in an essay, exam, or quiz that has
not been authorized in advance. The consequences for cheating are severe, and the University of Pittsburgh like other colleges nation-wide is cracking down on cheating and plagiarism. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes cheating and plagiarism, and for avoiding it in your work. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me about this!

Disabilities Services: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you must notify your instructor within the first two weeks of the course. Please also notify Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890. You may be asked to provide appropriate documentation of your disability.

Technology and Cell Phones: The use of new technology, computer programs, e-books, and applications has greatly advanced in the past several years, and course policies are evolving to follow the fast-paced development of these products. Your instructor recognizes the value of accessing new technology to aid and advance the learning process, but also realizes that when used inappropriately these can be a major hindrance to student learning. Because this is a very small class and we will be engaging in lots of dialogue, laptop computers will NOT be permitted in class. E-readers will be permitted in class, only if you purchased an electronic version of a text, but the instructor reserves the right to ask a student to discontinue their use if it is believed that the student is using the device for non-class related purposes. This includes checking email and Facebook. Students are required to have the required books readily available during class so that we can discuss and read from assigned texts during class discussions. Cell phones must be off, NOT on vibrate, as to avoid distracting your peers, and texting will be strictly prohibited! Disruptions caused by cell phones and texting will result in a decrease in your course participation grade. For more information on studies that show the negative effects of using laptops in the classroom please see: http://chronicle.com/blogs/linguafranca/2014/08/25/why-im-asking-you-not-to-use-laptops/

First Annual Undergraduate Sexuality Studies Symposium

This is not a required event; however, the project you will be working on this term will fit very well with the goals of this symposium and could be a great opportunity for students. Visit: http://www.wstudies.pitt.edu/news/announcing-first-annual-undergraduate-sexuality-studies-symposium

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!
• Are you writing a seminar paper that discusses sex or sexuality?
• Are you working on a project on a topic related to sexuality studies that you would like to share with a wider audience?
• Do you have a paper or project from a previous class that you would like to share?

Consider submitting an abstract of your paper or project to the first annual Undergraduate Sexuality Studies Symposium. This all-day event, hosted by the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program, will take place on Friday, April 17, 2015. Paper and project abstracts should be a maximum of 200 words in length. Abstracts must describe the paper or project and indicate what course the project was prepared for. You can submit an abstract for an individual paper or a complete panel of 3 or 4 papers on a similar topic. If you propose a complete panel, it must include a title and description of the panel session and abstracts from each presenter.

Please send submissions to the symposium committee at pitt.sexuality.studies@gmail.com

Please send submissions by Friday, March 6, 2015 (early submissions welcome!)

Questions? Contact us at pitt.sexuality.studies@gmail.com
Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. In the event of any changes you will receive advance notice. You are expected to have completed the readings listed on the syllabus BEFORE you come to class each week. Preparation is critical to successful discussion and your participation grade in this course.

Week 1: Monday, January 5, 2015 Introduction: Why Study Gender and Sustainability?
What is sustainability and how is it related to gender? Introductions, course goals and schedule.

In-Class Reading of News Articles
These brief articles will be read in separate groups and shared for class discussion. Reference these and our growing understanding of the distinctions between environmentalism and sustainability and the role of gender in sustainable development.


Film: The Shape of Water

Week 2: Monday, January 12, 2015 What is Sustainability? A Framework for Moving Forward in this Course
What is sustainability and how is it different from environmentalism? What does gender have to do with sustainability? This week we will begin to examine the differences between sustainability and environmentalism, and how sustainability came to grow in popular discourse.

Readings:


3. Chapter 1: Introduction: Gender and Sustainability (GS)


Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.

Monday, January 19: NO CLASS, MLK Observance
Week 3: Monday, January 26, 2015 Human Rights, Women’s Rights: The Social Side of Sustainability

What is the importance of linking culture with sustainability? How are women’s rights important to sustainable development?

Readings:

Due: Ethnography choices must be emailed to me BEFORE class. Final list will be shared in class. We will discuss the ethnography assignment.

Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.

Film: Excerpts from “Girl Rising”


Week 4: Monday, February 2, 2015 Sustainable Development and Economics: You can’t have development without economics

What is political economy? Isn’t development all about the economy? Can you have sustainable development without economic development? What is the role of women in economic development and how is that different from their role in sustainable development?

Readings:

Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.
Additional Optional Resources:

Week 5: Monday, February 9, 2015 Sustainable Development and the Environment: Adding the environment back into the mix
What is political ecology? Is it possible to promote economic and environmental development at the same time? How does gender fit into sustainable development?

Readings:
1. Chapter 2: Environmentalism and Gender in Intag, Ecuador (GS)

Due: Final Project Milestone 1: Research Topic and Project Summary

Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.

Week 6: Monday, February 16, 2015 Feminist Theories of Sustainable Development: Working toward a theoretical synthesis
How does feminism fit into sustainable development? Can feminist theory and sustainability theories inform each other effectively? How can we envision theories of sustainable development in both the developed and the developing world? Can sustainable development be used as a bridge between the developed and the developing world?

Readings:
3. Chapter 7: Meaningful Waters: Women, Development, and Sustainability along the Bhagirathi Ganges (GS)

Due: Gender and Sustainability Activity Paper

Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.
Case Study Analysis and Systems Thinking—While Case Studies have been employed throughout our discussions, for the remainder of the term well will focus on closer readings of specific examples of gender and sustainability. How are theories of gender and sustainable development employed in these case studies? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these cases as examples of sustainable development? How can you apply your learning from these examples to your major or career and professional goals? Use these questions to guide your thinking for the remainder of the course.

Week 7: Monday, February 23, 2015 Governance: Sustainability and Policymaking
What roles does the government play in sustainable development? How can governments promote and create sustainable development policy?

Readings:
1. Chapter 3: Democratic Spaces across Scales: Women’s Inclusion in Community Forestry in Orissa, India (GS)

Due: 3 of your 5 reading responses need to be completed by Monday, February 23, and the final 2 can be completed at any point during the course.

Additional Optional Resource:

Week 8: Monday, March 2, 2015 Sustainability and Global Health
How does sustainable development impact health? What are syndemics, and why should we be concerned about the interconnections of health and the environment? This week we will look at gendered health disparities and how they tie to sustainability.

Readings:

Due: Final Project Milestone 2: Research Project Proposal

Monday, March 9, 2015: NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK
Week 9: Monday, March 16, 2015  
Ethnographic Length Case Studies: Ethnography Discussion Reports
You will read ONE (1) of the following ethnographies, and prepare your Ethnography Discussion Report Due in-class today.


Due: Ethnography Discussion Presentation

Week 10: Monday, March 23, 2015  
Peace and Social Justice
What role does sustainable development have on creating a more peaceful future? What role does social justice play in sustainable development? How can social justice be achieved through sustainable development practices or policies? Should sustainable development play a role in peacemaking? We will also have in-class time for peer review of your research papers.

Readings:

Due: Final Project Milestone 3: Research Paper Draft and Peer Review

Week 11: Monday, March 30, 2015  
Food and Water
Basic necessities of life, food and water are often the focus of sustainable development projects. In what ways are these types of projects gendered? How can using food and/or water be a productive lens for more careful analysis of sustainable development projects?

Readings:

Classroom Event: Classroom Visit and Campus Lecture by Maria Cruz-Torres  
6:00-7:30 Lecture in ROOM 324 Cathedral of Learning  
Meet in the lecture hall for her talk and then be back in our classroom by 7:45 for further discussion of the readings with Dr. Cruz-Torres.
Week 12: Monday, April 6, 2015 Resistance and New Forms of Sustainable Development

What is ecofeminism? How are new forms of feminist sustainable development creating social change? Is sustainable development a social movement?

Readings:
1. Chapter 11: Why Gender Matters, Why Women Matter (GS)

Classroom Event: For half of class we will attend a lecture by Sandra Steingraber: “Fracking is a Feminist Issue: Women Confronting Fossil Fuels and Petrochemicals in an Age of Climate Emergency” from 7:00-8:30 in the William Pitt Union Assembly Room. We will meet and discuss the readings and hear a few presentations at 6:00 and then walk over to the lecture together.

Due: Final Project Milestone 4: Presentations. Part of class will be devoted to your presentations of your research projects (1/3 the class will present this week, and 2/3 will present next week). Final papers will be due, Monday of Finals week. A presentation schedule will be posted on CourseWeb.

Week 13: Monday, April 13, 2015 Research in Sustainable Development: The Way Forward

This week we will continue to examine new forms of feminist sustainable development. How can sustainable development be used to create a more just future, and what would that future look like? What key themes of gender and sustainability can we bring with us as we engage in practical application of this knowledge.

Readings:

Due: Final Project Milestone 4: Presentations. Part of class will be devoted to your presentations of your research projects (2/3 the class will present this week, and 1/3 will present in previous weeks). Final papers will be due, Monday of Finals week. A presentation schedule will be posted on CourseWeb.

Finals Week: Monday, April 20, 2015: Class will NOT meet during finals week.

Due in Hard Copy by 5:00pm in my mailbox in 402 Cathedral of Learning
1. Milestone 5: Final Research Paper
2. Milestone 6: Summary Reflection Paper