

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona Spring 2023

PHL4200-01 Feminist Philosophy
Wednesdays 5:30pm-8:15pm
Building 1, room 309
3 Credits

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(she/her/hers)
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Philosophy Department
Building 1, Room 328
Office Hours: by appointment,
Tuesdays 1-2:00pm on Zoom,
Wednesdays 2:30-3:30 in person or
on Zoom, and by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will consider ways that feminist approaches to philosophy differ from, challenge, and supplement non-feminist approaches. Feminist philosophers are concerned with ways that gender matters not only in theory but also in everyday life. Understanding the roles of gender also requires examination of aspects of social categories such as race, sexuality, disability, and class. Feminist philosophy encompasses a wide range of questions, methods, and positions in areas including metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, and phenomenology. This course will include a combination of historical and contemporary texts related to these and additional topics.

This course is designed for philosophy majors and non-majors alike. No background in philosophy is assumed. Please note that some of the material may be difficult to read, not only because it is philosophy, but also due to content related to topics such as sexual and other types of violence. I have included content warnings on some readings, but also please take care when reading the material in general in case I have missed something you may find difficult.

Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate understanding of common features as well as differences between various approaches to feminist philosophy.
2. Communicate effectively about issues within feminist philosophy through dialogue and written assignments (e.g. clearly articulate and defend a position, formulate philosophical questions, identify counterexamples).
3. Identify and evaluate arguments within complex philosophical texts.
4. Be able to explain the relevance of feminist philosophy for everyday life.
5. Reflect on one's own relationship to feminist theory and practice.

Required Texts and Technology

Living A Feminist Life by Sara Ahmed (Duke University Press, ISBN: 978-0-8223-6319-4) is the only book required for this class. Additional assigned readings will be made available to students on Canvas. Students are expected to complete the readings *prior* to coming to class on the day for which they are assigned. Students are required to have access to the assigned readings during class meetings.

You will need reliable access to a computer with stable Internet access, word processing, and software to read PDFs. Cal Poly Pomona provides each student with a Zoom account. See <https://www.cpp.edu/studentsuccess/zoom-resources.shtml> to set up your account and for additional information.

Accessibility

This course is intended for all students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive impairments, illness, injuries, and other conditions. If, at any point in the term, you are not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (but not required) to contact me by email or meet with me during office hours to discuss what types of support would be helpful for you. If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need academic accommodation, you must formally request accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (909)-869-3333, building 9, room 103. Services the DRC provides include but are not limited to test accommodations, note taking services, alternate media, modified attendance, Deaf and hard of hearing services, mobility assistance, housing accommodations, student success coaching, and peer mentoring.

Title IX Statement

Cal Poly Pomona faculty and staff are committed to supporting students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. We consider sexual and gender-based misconduct to be one of the most serious violations of the values and standards of the University. Unwelcome sexual contact of any form is a violation of students' personal integrity and right to a safe environment. Sexual and gender-based misconduct is also prohibited by federal regulations.

If you choose to confide in a member of Cal Poly Pomona's faculty or staff regarding an issue of sexual or gender-based misconduct, that faculty or staff member is obligated to tell the Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator will assist you in connecting with all possible resources for support and reporting both on and off campus. Identities and details will be shared only with those who need to know to support the student and to address the situation through the University's processes. Counseling & Psychological Services is available as a confidential alternative (see below).

More information can be found at <https://www.cpp.edu/officeofequity/titleIX/index.shtml> or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, Susan Hua.

Resources at Cal Poly Pomona

The University has an abundance of resources available to support you, which may be especially useful during the current pandemic. The following is a partial list.

Broncos Care Basic Needs: for students experiencing food or housing insecurity

Bronco Dreamers Resource Center: Supports the holistic success (academic, personal, professional) of undocumented students at Cal Poly Pomona. Our purpose is to educate the community about current issues and to convene campus allies in a dialogue of student success.

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS): Provides quality mental health services to support your overall health and wellbeing. CAPS provides many services such as workshops, group or individual therapy, wellbeing coaching, crisis intervention, and support to access on- and off-campus resources

Inclusive Excellence: The role of Inclusive Excellence is to work with the campus community to ensure that Cal Poly Pomona's core institutional values of diversity and inclusivity are deeply embedded in every aspect of our community.

Institutional Equity and Compliance: Oversees the University's compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations and CSU System policies. Part of this compliance includes overseeing reports and investigations of prohibited conduct, including: discrimination, protected status, retaliation, Whistleblower Protection Act, dating and domestic violence, and stalking; sexual misconduct, consensual relationship, and religious accommodation. Additionally, the office is tasked with implementing proactive measures, including managing training on sexual harassment and sexual misconduct prevention, co-leading campus committees on sexual misconduct prevention and services, and supporting campus lactation rooms.

Learning Resource Center: The LRC is the University's most comprehensive tutoring service, promoting the development of students' critical thinking, problem solving, and analytical skills through Academic Skills Coaching, Subject Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, and the Writing Center.

Office of Student Life & Cultural Centers: Includes Clubs and Organizations, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Leadership Development, African American Student Center, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Center, Cesar E. Chavez for Higher Education, Native American Student Center, Pride Center, and Womxn's Resource Center

Student Health & Wellness Services: Health Educators and Peer Health Educators provide Cal Poly Pomona students with health education. Wellness Services provides resources and programs dedicated to various health topics including but not limited to nutrition, sexual health, mental health, physical activity, sleep, and stress management

Student Support & Equity Programs: Student Support and Equity Programs (SSEP) aspires to offer model programs and services that continuously evolve to meet the changing needs of our diverse students.

E-mail and Canvas

It is your responsibility to check your University e-mail and Canvas frequently. You have the option of receiving a notification via e-mail whenever I post an announcement on Canvas. These are the ways I will communicate with you outside of class meetings. I will attempt to respond to e-mails within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. If you do not receive a response from me within a few days, assume that I did not receive your e-mail.

E-mail Etiquette

When you are corresponding with a professor by email, be sure to:

- Include the course and section number and the reason for your email in the subject heading
- Begin your message with a polite greeting ("Dear Dr. Wieseler"...)
- Write full sentences and spell properly (emails are not text messages)
- Sign your name

Attendance and Participation Policy

Attendance at all class meetings is required unless there is a reason you cannot be present (illness, emergency, jury duty, etc.). I want to encourage you to prioritize attending class, but **please do not attend class if you are ill. You do not need to email me to tell me that you will not be in class unless you are scheduled to do a protocol or presentation.**

Learning is a collaborative process. If you are not in class, you will miss important opportunities to learn concepts and develop skills that you will need to demonstrate in order to pass the course. In my experience, students who have numerous absences tend to perform poorly on assignments and exams.

Grade	Examples of How to Earn this Grade for Participation
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows evidence of excellent preparation: has analyzed the reading well, relating it to other discussions, experiences, course materials, etc.• Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the reading, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop approaches that advance the class discussion• Contributes in a significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps comments focused, responds thoughtfully to others students' remarks, suggests alternative ways of approaching material.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows evidence of good preparation: not only of completion of the reading but of having thought carefully about it• Offers interpretations and analyses of the reading• Makes multiple contributions to discussion by: responding to other students and posing questions in a constructive way• Demonstrates consistent involvement in discussion
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows evidence of having completed the reading but not of having thought carefully about the content• Offers straightforward information from the reading without elaboration• Does not offer to contribute to discussion but contributes a moderate amount when called on• Demonstrates infrequent involvement in discussion
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present, not disruptive• Attempts to answer questions when called on but does not offer much• Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absent or• Present and disruptive to classmates/the instructor• Texts in class• Sleeps in class• Is not engaged and does not contribute to the class discussion

Adapted from Maznevski, Martha. 1996. "Grading Class Participation." *Newsletter of the Teaching Resource Center for Faculty and Teaching Assistants*.

Class Policies and Information

- Make sure to devote your full attention to class lecture/discussions. (This means reducing distractions by silencing your phone and turning off other kinds of notifications, not attempting to multitask, etc.)
- Students may record class lectures only with written permission of the professor. Students are prohibited from distributing recordings of those lectures or posting them online.
- Students are expected to take notes during class and obtain notes from a classmate in the case of absence.
- *Note: I reserve the right to change the readings/topics/due dates as necessary.*

Assignment Policy

All written assignments must be typed, unless otherwise noted. You will also be required to submit papers to Turnitin on Canvas by their deadlines. Please plan accordingly. I will *not* accept assignments via email, unless otherwise specified. In addition, you must follow all formatting requirements specified for each assignment.

Course Requirements

- Attendance/Participation – Attendance and participation will be worth 5% of the final grade. See discussion above.
- Protocol – Students will prepare and present a 300-600 word (1-2 page) summary of the material discussed during the previous class.
- Presentations – Students will collaboratively facilitate discussion of one course reading. This will involve creating a 1-2 page handout for the class and submitting a narrative about what you and your assignment partner contributed. Further details will be discussed and posted on Canvas.
- In-Class and Take-Home Assignments – Students will be expected to complete tasks individually and in small groups during class. These assignments will be worth 20% of the total grade.
- Textual analyses – Students will be required to write two short (900-1500 words/approximately 3-5 pages) analyses of readings. Each will be worth 15% of the student’s grade for a total of 30%. Make sure to follow criteria specified in the textual analysis rubric.
- Final exam – Students will complete an essay final exam worth 25% of the total grade.

Course Requirements Overview

Attendance/Participation	5%
Protocol	10%
Presentation	10%
In-Class and Take-Home Assignments	20%
Textual Analyses (2)	30%
Final Exam	25%
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TOTAL:	100%

Grading Policy

Students do not receive an “A” grade simply for meeting requirements. “A” and “B” grades are issued according to the quality of the student’s work and the comprehensiveness of the student’s understanding (as demonstrated in her/his work and class participation), and are not based solely on a student’s effort.

Letter grades indicate the following:

- A Superior performance
- B Excellent performance
- C Average performance
- D Below average performance
- F Failure

The grade scale for this course will be as follows:

- A 93-100
- A- 90-92
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 73-76
- C- 70-72
- D+ 67-69
- D 63-66
- D- 60-62
- F 59 and below

Please see the instructor about the S/U option.

The grade of “Incomplete” is used rarely, at the discretion of the instructor. This temporary grade may be assigned when a student has completed the majority of the assignments but is unable to complete the work for the course due to serious medical, personal, or academic difficulties.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Cal Poly Pomona expects students to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity involves being honest in your academic work. The main kind of dishonesty relevant to this course is plagiarism. The University’s statement on academic integrity says that plagiarism is:

...presenting words, ideas or work of others as one's own work. Plagiarism includes copying homework, copying lab reports, copying computer programs, using a work or portion of a work written or created by another but not crediting the source, using one's own work completed in a previous class for credit in another class without permission, paraphrasing another's work without giving credit, and borrowing or using ideas without giving credit.

(This statement is part of the University's Student Conduct Code). I will observe Cal Poly Policies on Honesty and Plagiarism. Students that fail to observe honesty and plagiarism policies will fail the assignment or course and will be reported to the Judicial Affairs Committee. I'll be using the plagiarism tool in Blackboard to check for plagiarism in textual analyses. Plagiarism pertains to material copied word for word from books, journals, Internet sites, professor's course notes, etc. It could also be the work of a fellow student – for example, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report a paper or assignment completed by another student, your own assignment from another class, or a paper purchased through one of the many available sources. Simply put: *DO NOT COPY ANYTHING FROM ANYWHERE WITHOUT STATING THE SOURCE.*

Class Schedule (subject to change)

Readings and other assignments should be completed before class on the date listed. Additional assignments will be announced in class and on Canvas. Assignments due by 11:59pm PST/PDT the day before class are likely to draw on readings assigned for the following day.

Week 1

1/25: “My Feminism” by Aurora Levins Morales pp. 18-33 (*Medicine Stories: Essays for Radicals* 2019); “A Black Feminist Statement” by The Combahee River Collective pp. 15-27 (*How We Get Free* by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor 2017)

Week 2

2/1: “Introduction: Bringing Feminist Theory Home” by Sara Ahmed pp. 1-18 by (*Living a Feminist Life*); Ch. 1 “Feminism is Sensational” by Sara Ahmed pp. 21-42 (*Living a Feminist Life*)

Week 3

2/8: Ch. 3 “Willfulness and Feminist Subjectivity” by Sara Ahmed pp. 65-88 (*Living a Feminist Life*); Ch. 5 “Being in Question” by Sara Ahmed pp. 115-134 (*Living a Feminist Life*)

Week 4

2/15: “Queer Matters” by Kim Hall pp. 21-45; “Oppression” by Marilyn Frye pp. 1-16

Week 5

2/22: “Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology” by Alison Jaggar pp. 151-176; “The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism” by Audre Lorde pp. 124-133

Week 6

3/1: “Disappearing Black People through Failures of White Empathy” by Janine Jones pp. 86-100; “Tracking Privilege-Preserving Epistemic Pushback in Feminist and Critical Race Philosophy Classes” by Alison Bailey pp. 59-77

Week 7

3/8: “Lived Body vs. Gender: Reflections on Social Structure and Subjectivity” by Iris Marion Young pp. 12-26; “Pregnant Embodiment: Subjectivity and Alienation” by Iris Marion Young pp. 46-61

*****Textual analysis #1 due 3/10-3/13 at 11:59pm PDT*****

Week 8

3/15: “Playfulness, ‘World’-Traveling, and Loving Perception” by María Lugones pp. 77-98; “The Phenomenology of World-Traveling” by Mariana Ortega pp. 87-116

Week 9

3/22: **Please note: these readings reference violence against trans people, transphobia, and trans panic.** “Trans Identities and First-Person Authority” by Talia Mae Bettcher pp. 98-116; “Puzzle Pieces: Shapes of Trans Curiosity” by Perry Zurn pp. 10-15; “Merleau-Ponty, Fanon, and Phenomenological Forays into Trans Life” by Tamsin Kimoto pp. 16-20

3/29: No Class (Spring Break!)

Week 10

4/5: “Anorexia Nervosa: Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture” by Susan Bordo pp. 388-410;

Optional Reading “The Trust Gap” by Maya Dusenbery pp. 61-105

Week 11

4/12: “The Flight from the Rejected Body” by Susan Wendell pp. 85-116; “Disparate but Disabled: *Fat Embodiment and Disability Studies*” by April Herndon pp. 245-260

Week 12

4/19: **Please note: these readings discuss sexualized violence.** “A Nonideal Theory of Sexual Consent” by Quill Kukla (PDF on Canvas) pp. 270-292; “Sexual Subjectivity” by Linda Martín Alcoff (PDF on Canvas) pp. 110-147

Week 13

4/26: “Let’s Call It What It Is: The Tragedy of Heterosexuality” by Jane Ward pp. 1-32; “Romance: Sweet Love” by bell hooks pp. 167-188

*****Textual analysis #2 due between 4/28-5/1 11:59pm PDT*****

Week 14

5/3: “Queer Ethics” by Kim Hall pp. 115-135; “Values: Living by a Love Ethic” by bell hooks pp. 85-101

Week 15

5/10: Conclusion 1: A Killjoy Survival Kit by Sara Ahmed pp. 235-250 (*Living a Feminist Life*); Conclusion 2: A Killjoy Manifesto by Sara Ahmed pp. 251-268 (*Living a Feminist Life*)

*****Final Exam due 5/17 at 11:59pm PDT*****