

POLS 392.001–Women and Politics

Tuesday – Thursday 10:50a – 12:05p in Maybank 316
Office Hours: MW 10-12 and always by appointment

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A *paradox* is a seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true. In many ways, women's quest for inclusion in the political realm and their quest for political, social, and economic equality present us with a paradox. In our lexicon, equality connotes *sameness* between two or more things. However, when we are talking about equality between men and women, we must confront biological differences. In some cases, the biological differences are meaningless. Alternatively, sometimes treating men and women "the same" severely disadvantages women due to the biological differences between men and women. How we understand, evaluate, and attach social value to the differences is a political act. In this course we will examine how women and men have confronted the paradox of equality throughout history and in a variety of contexts.

We will begin by looking at the philosophical origins of the women's equality argument and analyze how these ideas have informed the integration of women into the mainstream political sphere by examining several "movements" and their results. You will notice over time how strikingly similar the "important questions" are decade after decade, century after century.... We will discuss democratic citizenship as it relates to women, the concept of "rights," and evaluate women's rights under the U.S. Constitution and state and federal laws. In the middle section of the course, we will examine how women engage politics today. We will examine elections and women candidates, voters, and office holders. Once elected, we'll look at how women behave as public officials—the issues they care about and their effectiveness as legislators. On Thursday, January 4, 2007, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi became the first female Speaker of the House. We will pay particularly careful attention to how she exercises leadership and how she is portrayed in the media as she leads. In the final section of the course, we will look more closely at specific public policies regarding education, reproduction, families, work and wages, and the evaluate how women will fare in the "new economy." Throughout the course, whether you are male or female, you will have an opportunity to think about how these issues and phenomenon regarding gender equality currently impacts your life and how they will shape your future.

The questions and controversies we will examine in this course are far from settled. Women and men are not yet political, social or economic equals. In order to become follow the daily controversies of equality, you will need to follow the national and international news. You can do this in a number of different ways. I prefer you get into the habit of reading a daily national newspaper, but you can also make use of television news and cable political programs. Nearly all of the national papers are available free of charge online (for example, www.nyt.com; www.washingtonpost.com). The College of Charleston Bookstore offers a subscription to the *New York Times* or you can collect one from the library coffee shop or the lobby of any dormitory. However you access the news, keeping up with the national news is not optional!

*******REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS*******

Women and Politics: In Pursuit of Equality, second edition, Ford (2006)
Skirting Tradition: Women in Politics Speak to the Next Generation, Lia Larson, editor (2004)
It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office, Lawless and Fox (2005)
The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress, Swers (2002)

Additional Readings will be distributed in class and/or posted on Electronic Reserve (noted as ER below). To access these articles, choose my name (Ford) from the Instructor's list, then **POLS 392**. The password is Equality.

Course Orientation

Class sessions will involve some lecture, but will mostly involve discussion in depth of the assigned readings and the issues contained in those readings. Most classes will begin with a short presentation that frames the day's discussion and suggests issues and questions to be discussed. As a student in the course, you should consider it your responsibility to yourself and your colleagues to come to class prepared to engage in the discussion. If I find that the majority of the class is not prepared to intelligently discuss the material assigned, then I will be forced to resort to reading quizzes or some other means to compel your active, informed participation. You cannot be a free rider on the backs of others who take the time to prepare, nor can you sufficiently absorb the material as a passive observer.

Student Responsibilities

Regular class attendance, on-time arrival, and careful preparation for each class is required. I will not always take formal attendance, but you will be held accountable for your choices. While I would rather you come late than not at all if rare circumstances conspire against you, chronic tardiness is not acceptable. If you attend class and do the readings, but still have difficulty, I will do everything I can to help you understand the material. Don't expect much sympathy though if you are not holding up your end of the deal. If a crisis arises, get into see me immediately--don't wait, thinking it will go away. Every student will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Classroom Code of Conduct.

Special Circumstances

If you have any kind of special circumstances that I should be aware of, please let me know right away. If you have SNAP accommodations of any kind, please make the appropriate notifications and arrangements with the Center for Students with Disabilities within the first week of class. Alternatively, if you have any sort of undiagnosed learning disability, a physical impairment of any kind that will require special arrangements for exams or papers, if you are an athlete or member of any club or organization that will travel, let me know. I will keep the information you share with me strictly confidential, but in order to create the best environment for your academic success, I need to know if there are circumstances that may interfere with your performance in the course. I will provide you with an information sheet and you can include the information there or you are welcome to schedule an appointment with me to talk about any extenuating circumstances.

Office Hours and Ways to Contact Me

I have regular office hours scheduled on Monday and Wednesdays from 10-12 noon. I am very accessible by email for quick questions or by phone. Please take the initiative to contact me or come to see me if you have questions, problems, or special circumstances. I would also encourage you to use my office hours to come in and introduce yourself. I have also given you my office phone number at the top of the syllabus. My home number is 723-6910. If at all possible, please call between 8:00-9:00p, and then only when you have something that cannot wait until morning or that cannot be asked by email. Both numbers have Voice Mail. When you leave a message, please be sure to speak slowly, clearly and leave your name and a phone number so that I can return your call.

Academic Dishonesty

This subject is very important! When you enrolled in the College of Charleston, you signed an Honor Code. I expect you to abide by that code and it is the only way for you to maintain the integrity and value of your degree. If you are found to have cheated on an exam or plagiarized any portion of a writing assignment, or submitted previously graded work as new work for this class, you will fail my course. I will turn the case over to the Honor Board and vigorously pursue further disciplinary action. If you have any questions or are unsure what constitutes cheating or plagiarism--ask. Ignorance is not a valid defense and pleading ignorance will not prevent you from failing the course.

Course Requirements

Agenda for Equality Projects This comprehensive assignment will allow you to choose one issue related to gender equality that you are interested in learning more about and work on it throughout the semester both individually and in a group. You will research the history of the issue, detailing any relevant policy action that has already been taken and critically evaluating its effectiveness, and then you will develop a policy or action proposal with a viable political strategy for implementing your proposal. Along the way you will interview (in person, by email or phone) relevant parties—e.g. citizens, experts, lobbyists, politicians and policy-makers—as well as engage the traditional research sources. You will complete this project in stages and the final stage for the group portion of the project will be a presentation. Your final paper will include a section on which you are the sole author and a section completed with colleagues in your group. A more detailed handout on this assignment will be distributed in class.

Young Political Activist Profile This short research/writing assignment is tied to your Agenda for Equality project. As you are researching the policy and direct political action aspects of your issue, pay careful attention to what non-governmental actors are doing on the same issue. Choose one person or one group to profile in no more than three to five pages. A separate assignment sheet will be distributed in class.

Encountering the Controversies of Equality One feature of the primary text for the course identifies contemporary issues or examples where the two paths to equality (fairness or sameness) are at the heart of the issue. Since you will be regularly attending to the news relative to SC and the US as well as watching gender at work in popular culture, this assignment provides an opportunity to write your own “Encountering the Controversies of Equality.” You will receive a separate assignment sheet in class for this paper.

Examinations There will be two examinations given during the term, but final group presentations will take the place of a final exam (Thursday, April 26, 8a-11a). You will receive a study guide for each of the term exams.

Paper Policies and Due Dates Unless otherwise specified, all writing assignments are due at the start of class on the date noted on the syllabus or paper assignment sheet. For each day an assignment is late, 5% will be deducted from the final grade. This applies to everyone, no exceptions. You should print out a copy of your work a full 24 hours before it is due to avoid any delays due to computer problems or other glitches. Make sure to keep a hard copy of your work until I have graded and returned your paper.

Important Dates

Agenda for Equality Project –various dates, see separate assignment sheet (total project worth 40%)

Examination # 1 (20%)—Thursday, February 1, 2007

Young Political Activist Profile (10%)—Due at the start of class on March 15, 2007

Encountering the Controversies of Equality Paper (10%)—Due at the start of class on April 5, 2007

Examination #2 (20%)—Thursday, March 22, 2007

Agenda for Equality Group Presentations—Thursday, April 26, 8-11am (regularly scheduled final block)

Course Grades Your grade in the course is determined solely by the quality of your work in this course. I grade on a straight scale and do not curve or otherwise judge your performance against that of your colleagues. As you are aware, the College has adopted a new grading scale that now allows for the full range of +/- grades. Grades for individual assignments and the final grade in the course will be based on the following scale: 93-100 A; 90-92 A-; 88-89 B+; 83-87 B; 80-82 B-; 78-79 C+; 73-77 C; 70-72 C-; 68-69 D+; 63-67 D; 60-62 D-; below 60 F. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

For each day we meet, you will see a topic and a set of assigned reading. The chapters or articles listed should be read *before* we meet. You will also find links to websites for each topic. You can feel free to browse through those at your convenience. I think you will also find them helpful for your research and writing assignments. If you find other links that are particularly good, please forward me the information.

January

9: The Pursuit of Equality---Introductions and Syllabus Review

I. At the Founding: Arguments in Favor of Equality for Women

11: The Argument in Favor of Full Equality for Women

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 1

16: Feminism as a Direct Challenge to Gender Ideology

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 1 (focus on pp. 19-26)

18-23-25: Movements for Women's Equality: Suffrage

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 2 (pp. 31-51)

"Declaration of Sentiments" (pp. 34-35)

Chapters 1 and 2, *Skirting Tradition*

Susan B. Anthony Trial website:

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/anthony/sbhome.html>

Video in class: *One Woman, One Vote*

Related Web links:

National Women's History Project: <http://www.nwhp.org>

Places Where Women Made History: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/pwwmh/>

Women's Rights National Historical Park: <http://www.nps.gov/wori/wrnhp.htm>

The National Women's Hall of Fame: <http://www.greatwomen.org>

30: Movements for Women's Equality: The Equal Rights Amendment (1920-?)

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 2, pp. 51-65

Exploring Constitutional Conflicts: The ERA

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/era.htm>

Updates on the status of the ERA: <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/>

February

1: Examination #1 – in class

II. Suffrage Accomplished--Women as Voters, Candidates & Political Actors

6: Women as Voters and Participants in Politics

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 3

8: No Class—Tasks as Assigned (Ford away at a Conference)

13: Who Votes for Women? Do women vote for Women Candidates?

Reading: "Gender Stereotypes and Vote Choice." Kira Sanbonmatsu (ER)

Selected chapters from *Voting for Women*, Kathleen Dolan (ER)

15: The Gender Gap in Voting: Is it real or a media creation?

Reading: "The Changing Politics of American Men: Understanding the Sources of the Gender Gap," Karen M. Kaufmann and John R. Petrocik (ER);

"They Dynamics of the Partisan Gender Gap," Steffensmeier, DeBoef, and Lin (ER)

Web Links:

Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University:

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp>

Feminist Majority: <http://www.feminist.org>

National Women's Political Caucus: <http://www.nwpc.org>

Women's Policy, Inc.: <http://www.womenspolicy.org>

Women Leaders Online: <http://www.wlo.org>

20: Women as Candidates: the Big Overview

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 4; Chapters 1 and 2, *It Takes a Candidate*
Chapters 3-6, *Skirting Tradition*

22: Women as Candidates: Where are they and why aren't there more of them?

Reading: Chapters 3 – 5, *It Takes a Candidate*; Chapters 7-10, *Skirting Tradition*

"Do Parties Know that 'Women Win'? Party Leaders Beliefs about Women's Electoral Chances (ER)

Selected Chapters from *Where Women Run*, Kira Sanbonmatsu (ER)

27: Women as Candidates: Why not you?

Reading: Chapters 6-8, *It Takes a Candidate*; Chapters 11-13, *Skirting Tradition*

March

1: Will 2008 be the year a Woman is elected President? What does the Research Say?

Reading: Chapter 18, *Skirting Tradition*; readings in ER folder titled "Glass Ceiling"

Web Links:

EMILY's List: <http://www.emilyslist.org>

The Wish List: <http://www.thewishlist.org>

Gender Gap: <http://www.gendergap.com>

The White House Project: <http://www.thewhitehouseproject.org>

The Women's Campaign School: <http://www.wcsyale.org/contents.html>

Women Under Forty PAC: <http://wufpac.org>

National Organization for Women: <http://www.now.org>

National Political Congress of Black Women: <http://www.npcbw.org>

League of Women Voters: <http://www.lwv.org>

National Federation of Republican Women: <http://www.nfrw.org>

Women's National Democratic Club: <http://www.democraticwoman.org>

Women's Leadership Forum (Democrat) - <http://www.wlf-online.org/>

Winning Women (Republican) - <http://www.winningwomen.org/>

National Federation of Republican Women (Republican) - <http://www.nfrw.org>

Emerge -Women Leaders for a Democratic Future (Democrat) - <http://www.emergeca.org>

Spring Break: March 5 – 9, 2007

13: Does it make any difference if women are elected? Women as Political Actors
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 5; *The Difference Women Make*, Chapters 1 and 2

15 - 20: Women in Congress: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress
Readings Assigned in Class—Group Presentations in specific Aspects/Chapters
Group 1: Bill Sponsorship and Co-sponsorship, Chapters 3 and 4 *The Difference Women Make*
Group 2: Amendments in Committees and From the Floor, Chapters 5 and 6
Group 3: Roll Call Voting, Chapter 7
ALL: Chapter 8, Conclusion

Web Links:

National Foundation for Women Legislators: <http://www.womenlegislators.org>
Institute for Women's Policy Research: <http://www.iwpr.org>

22: Examination #2—in class

III. Gender and the Politics of Public Policy

27: The Politics of Education Policy
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 6
“The War Against Boys” <http://theatlantic.com/issues/2000/05/sommers.htm>
(Read both the article and the letters in response to the original article)
Readings on Title IX (see folder labeled Title IX in E-reserve)

29: No class--Tasks as Assigned (Ford in Seattle at meeting)

Web Links:

Save Title IX: <http://www.savetitleix.com/>
The Women's Educational Equity Act Equity Resource Center: <http://www.edc.org/womensequity>
International Federation of University Women: <http://www.ifuw.org>
American Association of University Women: <http://www.aauw.org>
National Women's Studies Association: <http://www.nwsa.org>
Women's College Coalition: <http://www.academic.org>
Working Groups on Girls: <http://www.girlsrights.org>
Girls, Inc.: <http://www.girlsinc.com>

April

3 - 5: The Politics of Work and Pay
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 7; Video in class: *Fast Food Women*

Web Links:

AFL-CIO: <http://www.aflcio.org/women>
National Partnership for Women and Families: <http://www.nationalpartnership.org>
Employment Policy Foundation: <http://www.epf.org>
Catalyst: <http://www.catalystwomen.org>
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: <http://www.eeoc.gov/>
National Committee on Pay Equity: <http://www.feminist.com/fairpay/>
Families and Work Institute: <http://www.familiesandwork.org/>
Mothers are Women: <http://www.mothersarewomen.com/wwc.htm>

10: Are work and family compatible? Concept vs reality and the debate

Reading: Chapter 8, *Women and Politics* (pp. 284-301)

“The Opt Out Revolution,” Lisa Belkin (ER)

“Homeward Bound,” *American Prospect Online*

<http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=ViewPrint&articleId=10646>

12: The Politics of Families, Conception and Reproduction

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 8, pp.301-324

Video in class: *When Abortion was Illegal: untold stories*

Web Links:

ACLU Reproductive Rights: <http://www.aclu.org/issues/reproduct/hmrr.html>

Reproductive Health and Rights Center: <http://www.choice.org>

Alan Guttmacher Institute: <http://www.agi-usa.org>

National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League: <http://www.naral.org>

International Planned Parenthood Federation: <http://www.ippf.org/>

Center for Law and Reproductive Policy: <http://www.crlp.org/>

Feminists for Life: <http://www.feministsforlife.org/>

Susan B. Anthony List: <http://www.sba-list.org/index.cfm>

17: Women and War: Militarism, the Draft, and the Wars

Reading: “Sneak Attack: The Militarization of U.S. Culture,” Cynthia Enloe (ER)

“Gender Trouble at Abu Ghraib?” (ER) (see also pp. 334-335, *Women and Politics*)

Other readings as assigned (ER)

19: Where do we go from here? What are the Prospects for Gender Equality?

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 9; Chapters 14-20, *Skirting Tradition*

“The Gender Gap in Attitudes and Beliefs about the Place of Women in American Political Life: A Longitudinal, Cross-Generational Analysis,” M. Kent Jennings (ER)

Group Presentations: Thursday, April 26, 2007—8:00am – 11:00am

(Attendance required, this is our regularly scheduled final exam period, there should be no conflicts!)