Course Description: This course is designed to provide an overview of the ideas, issues and approaches that might be considered within the bounds of feminist political thought. It aims to provide a solid grounding for more advanced work in women’s and gender studies, as well as a general introduction for those curious about what ‘feminism’ means. The course will be divided into three sections, each representing a major form of feminist theory and theorizing. The first section will concentrate on feminists theorizing about the meaning and status of feminism itself. What is feminism about? What kinds of approaches fall under this heading? What kinds of issues should feminist theory explore? Different authors have had different answers to these questions throughout the course of history. The second section focuses on key issues and concerns in feminist theory, including addressing the growing bodies of literature that are being included under the heading of feminist theory. We will look at questions of sex and gender, intersectionality, the place of the body and desire, queer subjectivity and sample from the growing body of literature on affect. Finally, the third section of the course will examine the intersection between feminist theory and political thought, looking at some of the questions raised in the first two sections of the course through the lens of political theorists. In this section, we will examine both political theorists who have fought to include feminist issues within the discipline, such as Susan Okin and Arlene Saxonhouse, as well as major figures to whom political theorists turn in an effort to work through some of these questions, especially Antigone. The overall goal of this course is for students to become familiar with the world of feminist theory, as well as learn about the ways in which this field of study intersects with the world of political thought.

*Note: This course meets twice a week for 4 hours at a time. Over the course of the summer session, we will cover roughly the same amount of material that would be covered during a full semester. The readings are divided by class, and each class corresponds to what would be covered during a full week of class during a regular semester.

Assignments and Grading: Your grade for the course will be based on a variety of assignments and your class participation. This is a seminar class, which means that attendance and participation in class are crucial to the course. The grade breakdown is as follows:

- Class participation: 25%
- Presentation: 25%
- Short Papers: 50%

Everyone is granted one (1) grace absence, which does not affect your grade. If you need to miss more than 1 class, it is your responsibility to speak to the instructor and make up any work missed. Attendance is factored into the course participation portion of the grade (25%). Assignments are due when listed on the syllabus, unless otherwise specified by the instructor. In order to receive a grade in this course, students must complete all assignments in a timely fashion. This means turning in written assignments on the dates specified and agreed upon, and completing oral assignments as well. Extensions will only be considered if
addressed 48 hours prior to due dates. Students are encouraged to discuss extensions and potential conflicts with the instructor as soon as possible.

There are multiple assignments for this course, of varying types and lengths:

**Presentation:** Each student will give one 5-7 minute presentation on an issue introduced in the assigned reading. The instructor will provide guiding questions each class to help with presentations. (25%)

**Short Papers:** Each student will submit 2 short papers during the course. The due dates are listed on the syllabus. Prior to the due date, the instructor will distribute a set of questions to guide the paper-writing process. Students will also be given an opportunity to workshop paper ideas in-class at various points. (25% each, 50% total)

**Class Participation:** Again, class participation is crucial to a seminar course. Participation grades are made up of attendance as well as contributions to the classroom discussions and activities. Students are encouraged to do all of the readings before class in order to contribute to these discussions. In addition, students are expected to participate in the workshop days, giving comments about drafts of their fellow students’ papers. Students who are worried about participation are encouraged to speak with the instructor. (25%)

Assigned articles and chapters marked with an (*) on the syllabus are available electronically. They will be made available to all students in the course. The following books are required and available for purchase at the Penn Book Center (130 S. 34th Street):

- Simone deBeauvoir, *The Second Sex*
- Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*
- Iris Marion Young, *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays*
- Arlene Saxonhouse, *Women in the History of Political Thought*
- Sophocles, *Antigone*

**Section 1: What is Feminism?**

Class 1: Introduction to Feminism and Feminist Theory: Waves and Approaches (July 3)
- Simone deBeauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Introduction, ch. 3,4,8, 11, 17, 21, Conclusion

  *Rosalind Delmar, “What is Feminism?”*

  *Uma Narayan, "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism"*

Class 2: Feminist Theories (July 5)
- Carol Gilligan, *In a Difference Voice*, ch. 1, 2, 4

  *Nancy Hartsock, “The Feminist Standpoint: Toward a Specific Feminist Historical Materialism.”*
*Patricia Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought"

*bell hooks “Theory as Liberatory Practice”

**Recommended:** *Maria C. Lugones and Elizabeth V. Spelman, “Have We Got a Theory for You!”

Class 3: Categories of Analysis: Sex, Gender, and Beyond (July 10)
* Sandra Harding, “The Instability of the Analytical Categories of Feminist Theory” *Signs* Vol. 11, No. 4 (Summer, 1986)

*Sojourner Truth. Ain’t I a Woman? (1851)


**Section 2: Issues and Concerns in Feminist Theory**

Class 4: Feminism and the Body (July 12)
* Judith Butler, “Bodies and Power Revisited” *Feminism and the Final Foucault*

* Susan Bordo, “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity” *Unbearable Weight*

* Iris Marion Young, “Throwing Like a Girl” in *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays*

Class 5: Desire in Feminism: Visiting the French Feminists (July 17)

* Luce Irigaray, “When Our Lips Speak Together,” *Signs* Vol. 6(1)

* Ranjana Khanna, “The Ethical Ambiguities of Transnational Feminisms” in *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*


**Paper 1 Due**

Class 6: Intersectionality (July 19)

*Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement” Feminist Theory
Reader: Local and Global Perspectives

* Kimberle Crenshaw, “Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color”

Class 7: Affect Theory and Feminism (July 24)
* Selections from *The Affect Theory Reader* Melissa Gregg and Greg Siegworth (eds)
* Selections from Brian Massumi *Parables of the Virtual*

Section 3: Feminist Theory in Political Thought

Class 8: Feminism and Political Theory I (July 26)
Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*

* Selections from Plato *Republic* and *Symposium*

Class 9: Feminism and Political Theory II (July 31)
Arlene Saxonhouse, *Women in the History of Political Thought*

* Selections from Machiavelli *The Prince*

Class 10: Feminist Figures: Antigone (August 2)
Sophocles, *Antigone*

* Selections from Bonnie Honig, *Antigone, Interrupted*
* Selections from Judith Butler, *Antigone’s Claim*

**Paper 2 Due**