

## Gender, Law & Politics 46.310.201

**Instructor:** Susan E. Gallagher [Susan\\_Gallagher@uml.edu](mailto:Susan_Gallagher@uml.edu)  
**Time:** Tuesday-Thursday, 5:00-6:15 **Room:** 401 Coburn Hall  
**Faculty Page:** <http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher> (Click on Gender, Law & Politics.)  
**Office:** Coburn 400  
**Office Hours:** On campus: Thursday, 3:30 – 4:45 (or by appointment via email)  
Online: Friday, 7:00-10:00pm

**Note:** Links to all required readings are included on the course web page.

This course explores legal constructions of gender by examining Supreme Court cases, federal legislation, historical documents, news stories, and scholarly essays on sexual inequality in the United States. Topics include the evolution of the family as a legal (and illegal) reality; political regulation of reproduction and sexual activity; feminist critiques of economic inequality; the changing role of gender in class consolidation; and ongoing debates about the relationships between public and private life.

You can find extracts from all of the Supreme Court Cases listed below, as well as links to the full texts of opinions and background information on [The Supreme Court Page](#).

During the first half of the course, we will review landmark rulings related to gender and politics. During the second half, students will give presentations and write papers on legal cases, news stories, and historical events that illuminate the intersections between gender and politics in American law and society.

### Requirements

You must have regular access to the Internet in order to take this course. You are not required to purchase any books. All course materials, including required readings and assignments, are available at <http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher>.

When you contact me via e-mail, you must include the letters “GLP” in the subject heading of your message. If you do not include “GLP,” your e-mail could be misdirected or rejected as spam. Also, you must use your UML e-mail address whenever you contact me.

If you need to miss a session, please e-mail a valid excuse beforehand if you can or as soon as possible after that session. If you miss more than three sessions without providing a valid excuse, you will receive an “F” for the course.

You must not plagiarize. If you copy from any outside source without providing proper attribution in any of your assignments, you will receive an “F” for that assignment. If you copy from any outside source without providing proper attribution on either the midterm or the final paper, you will automatically fail the entire course.

## Assignments

The first half of the course is divided into seven Units. We will generally spend a week covering each Unit, but a few might run a bit longer. To complete each Unit, you must provide brief typewritten answers to questions on the required readings. In some cases, you will be required to submit your answers via e-mail; in others, you will be required to print out your answers and bring them with you to class. Please follow the instructions included with each set of reading questions and always arrive in class prepared to show that you have completed your work.

In all of your assignments, you must demonstrate your ability to write college-level prose. Consequently, all of your work must be thoughtfully composed and free of grammatical errors. I will do my best to help you solve writing problems, but if your assignments are carelessly written, or if you neglect to proofread, or if you submit work late without a valid explanation, you will not do well in this class.

During the second half of the term, you will work with other students to prepare and give presentations on specific issues related to gender, politics, and law. On the date of each presentation, each of the students involved will be required to submit a summary of the main points made.

## Exams

For your midterm exam, you will be required to write two two-page essays on specific aspects of the required readings. In order to help you complete the exam, I will supply a list of thesis statements that you may use as the opening paragraph for each of your midterm essays.

Your work will be graded according to your ability to write college-level prose. Consequently, like your answers to the reading questions, your midterm must be carefully written and proofread. If your essays do not conform to the basic rules of college-level composition, you should not expect to receive a passing grade.

For your final exam, you must choose one of the following options:

1. You may write a five-page paper on a topic chosen from a list that I will supply well in advance.
2. If you already possess the required technical skills, you may create a web page on a specific aspect of one of the major issues covered in class.
3. If you would like to conduct further research on a topic related to issues raised in class, you may make an in-class presentation of your findings near the end of the term. Note: choose this option only if you are prepared to carry out significant extra research.

No matter which of these options you choose, you must submit a thesis statement on your topic approximately two weeks before the work is due. In order to help you complete this task, we will discuss possible thesis statements in class well in advance of the due date for the final exam.

**Grade Formula:**      Weekly Assignments and Class Participation = 30%  
                                 Midterm = 30%  
                                 Final Paper/Presentation = 40%

## Course Calendar

9/6 – 9/13	1. Legal Construction of Gender
9/15 – 9/22	2. First-Wave Feminism
9/27 – 10/6	3. Second-Wave Feminism
10/11– 10/18	4. Public Regulation of Private Life, Part 1
10/20 – 10/25	5. Public Regulation of Private Life, Part 2
11/1 – 11/3	MIDTERM EXAM WORKSHOP
11/4	MIDTERM EXAM DUE VIA E-MAIL
11/8 – 11/10	6. Gender, Politics & Crime
11/15 – 11/18	7. Gender & Class
11/22	THESIS STATEMENT & SOURCES FOR FINAL PAPER DUE FINAL PAPER WORKSHOP
11-29	1 <sup>ST</sup> DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE VIA E-MAIL
11/29– 12/8	Presentations & Papers
12/7	REVISED FINAL PAPER DUE VIA E-MAIL