

## POLI.3200 Gender, Law & Politics (Spring 2016)

**Instructor:** Susan E. Gallagher [Susan\\_Gallagher@uml.edu](mailto:Susan_Gallagher@uml.edu)

**Time:** Mon-Wed 12:30 – 1:45 **Room:** Coburn 402

**Faculty Page:** <http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher>

**Office:** Dugan 201

**Office Hours:** Mon-Wed, 3:30 – 5:00 pm (on campus)  
Fri, 9 – 10 am (online); and by appointment.

**Note:** All required readings and assignments are accessible on the course web page, available at <http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher>.

This course explores legal constructions of gender by examining Supreme Court cases, federal legislation, historical documents, news stories, and

scholarly essays on various aspects of 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.

During the first two thirds of the course, we will review landmark legal cases and classic readings on gender and politics. During the final third, students will give presentations and write papers on legal rulings, news stories, and historical events that illuminate the intersections between gender and politics in American law and society.

**Outcomes\*:** Course readings and assignments are designed to enable students to enhance their critical thinking and writing skills as they gain a comprehensive understanding of evolving approaches to gender in American law and politics.

\*This course meets the UML Essential Learning Outcome of Written and Oral Communication.

**Requirements:** 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 two 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. To review UML’s policies on academic integrity, visit <http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx>



Margaret Dawn Pepper,  
*Gender Dysphoria, F1*

**Assignments:** The lecture/discussion portion of the course is divided seven Units. We will generally spend a week covering each Unit, but a few will require additional sessions.

1. The Legal Construction of Gender in the United States
2. 1st Wave Feminism: Gaining Admission to the Public Sphere
3. 2nd Wave Feminism: A Struggle for Personal Liberation
4. The Public/Private Dichotomy in the 20th Century
5. Gender, Race & Justice
6. Gender and the Expansion of Civil Rights in the 21st Century
7. Gender & Economic Inequality in the U.S.: Current Trends

To complete each Unit, you must provide brief answers to questions on the required readings. All assignments must be submitted via email. In most cases, you will also be required to bring a copy of your answers to class to facilitate discussion. 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 last part of the term, each student will give a presentation on specific issues related to gender, politics, and law. On the date of their presentations, students will be required to submit a summary of their main points either in PowerPoint or in Microsoft Word. Please note that you must choose the same topic for your presentation and final paper.

**Exams:** For your midterm exam, you will be required to write two two-page essays on specific aspects of the required readings. 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 and revise a five-page paper on a topic chosen from a detailed list that I will supply well in advance.
2. You may write and revise a five-page paper on a topic of your own choosing so long as you discuss it with me beforehand.
3. 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.

No matter which of these options you choose, you must submit a thesis statement on your topic approximately three 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. Then you must submit a complete and polished first draft approximately two weeks before the end of the term. Finally, after I review and correct your first drafts, you must submit a revised version of your paper.

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