

Fall, 2005
M/W 1:30-4:20 Steffe/ B103
Syllabus Subject to Change!
Allegheny College

Professor Judith Rose
Women's Studies Program
Professor Catharina Coenen
Biology Department

Women's Studies 582 Junior Seminar:

Women, Plants, and Politics

Course Description: This interdisciplinary junior seminar is designed to explore questions provoked by the genetic engineering of plants in relation to a feminist analysis of nature and "the natural." Using a range of materials, including a textbook focused on botanical questions; films produced by the American Society of Plant Biologists; and writings by Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Evelyn Fox Keller, Rachel Carson, Frances Moore Lappe, Lorna Schiebinger, Ursula LeGuin and Barbara Kingsolver, this seminar will examine the response of feminist scholars, female and male scientists, and imaginative writers to topics of agriculture, food production, biodiversity, and agricultural ecology. The course will also focus upon feminist theoretical questions raised by these issues, using the work of various feminist theorists. As an important corollary to this investigation, we will interrogate the methodology implicit in all these sources, developing a sense of the range of feminist methodological approaches. The laboratory portion of the course will be similar to that of other non-majors' courses taught in the biology department (0-100 level courses). It will combine observation of and experimentation on organisms with basic quantitative analyses and discussions on experimental design and interpretation. Students are expected to spend an average of 2-3 hours per week in the laboratory, a time commitment that is equivalent to other non-majors' biology courses. The lab fulfills the lab requirement of the natural science division.

Performance Objectives: This class has a number of purposes: 1) to introduce students to the debate concerning women's roles in science and scientific theory; 2) to explore political and social questions linked to biodiversity and food production as well as the responses of women scientists to these contested questions; 3) to give students a basic understanding of botany and its challenges through hands-on lab work; 4) to understand and utilize feminist methodology; and 5) to prepare students who will soon write a senior project for the challenges of feminist research in a variety of subject areas. In the course of the semester, we expect students to develop their research and writing proficiency, sharpen their discussion skills, understand and explore basic scientific principles, and increase their knowledge of theoretical and critical approaches to Women's Studies.

Office Hours & Contact Information:

Professor Rose: M/W 11-12; T/Th 3-5 p.m. in Oddfellows 233, and by appointment.
Phone 332-2836; email jrose@allegheny.edu

Professor Coenen: Tu 10:30-12:00 noon & 2-3:30 pm; W 10-11 am; Th 10:30-11 am, 2-3pm, and 4:30-5pm in Steffe B219, and by appointment. Phone 332-2789, email ccoenen@allegheny.edu

Required Texts:

Kingsolver, Barbara, *Prodigal Summer*. New York: Perennial, 2001.
Levetine and MacMahon, *Plants and Society*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2002.
Course Reader for Women's Studies 582 (Available in the bookstore)
Maathai, Wangari, *The Greenbelt Movement*. Lantern Books, 2003.
Watts, May and Tom, *Tree Finder*. Nature Study Guild, 1970. (will be available in the bookstore later in the term)

Class Requirements:

We expect you to read each assignment with care and to come to class prepared to analyze and discuss the readings. Allegheny policy requires class attendance; unexcused absences will lower your final grade. More than four unexcused absences may result in a failing grade. In order to pass the course, you must also complete all major assignments. Please remember that it is your responsibility to keep track of any changes in the schedule.

During this semester you will read extensively; write a position paper and do two presentations on these readings; participate in a series of lab experiments, writing up three lab reports which will include feminist analysis; and take a series of quizzes on the botany readings. As the semester continues, you will undertake a critical research project and write a prospectus for a possible senior project based upon your research.

WebCT:

Quizzes, updated schedules, and other class materials will regularly be posted on the WS582 WebCT site. Please be sure to log on to site well before the first quiz deadline (i.e. try it at least once this week!), so that you can alert us to any problems you may encounter when trying to access the site.

Logging into WebCT:

1. Open Microsoft Internet Explorer
2. Into the "address" box at the top of the screen, type "http://webct.allegheny.edu"
3. Click on "Log in to" my WebCT
4. under WebCT ID, enter your e-mail user name
5. under Password, re-enter your e-mail user name

Changing your Password:

6. Click on "Password Settings"
7. enter your old password (i.e. your username)
8. enter your new password twice
9. click on "update password"
10. you may want to consider entering something in the "Login Hint" section, so that you can re-obtain your password without delay in case you should forget it at the decisive moment before your quiz deadline
11. to get back to your WebCT entry page, click on "myWebCT" at the top of the page

Grading:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Position Paper	40
Presentation on Readings	30
Quiz 1	20
Quiz 2	20
Quiz 3	20
Quiz 4	20
Quiz 5	20
Quiz 6	20
Quiz 7	20
Quiz 8	20
Quiz 9	20
Quiz 10	20
Lab Paper 1: Field Project	70
Lab Paper 2: Morphology	50
Lab Paper 3: Peroxidase	50
Mock Proposal	80
Research Paper	150
<u>Participation</u>	<u>100</u>
TOTAL	770

Due Dates

Position papers & Presentations	Assigned on a rotating basis
Quizzes	Due before class on the days indicated in the schedule.
Lab Paper 1	11/7
Lab Paper 2	11/16
Lab Paper 3	12/12
Research Project	
Topics due	10/26
Research prospectus	11/2
Annotated Bibliog.	11/9
Research paper due	12/17 (check on this!)
Mock Proposal	11/21

A Note on Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Please read the Honor Code in the College Catalogue. We will discuss various ways to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Please note that plagiarism includes direct or indirect use of any words or ideas other than your own without proper acknowledgment. Using the words or ideas of another person, including internet sources, without proper citation is a crime and could result in failure of the assignment or course. In addition, all cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Honor Committee. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the plagiarism guidelines on the Writing Center Website; (<http://webpub.allegheny.edu/dept/writingcenter/Links/plagiarism.htm>). Scrupulously avoid any possibility of plagiarism!