Sample Assignments, Handouts, and Background Readings

The WOST Program encourages writing and research in all of its classes. To help students achieve our program goals, we particularly encourage a range of writing assignments, from informal ones that ask students to reflect on personal experiences and/or the assigned readings to formal ones that require original research. To ensure our students benefit from productive, writing-intensive courses, we strongly encourage that every class have some kind of formal research writing assignment that requires students to read and interact with scholarly sources.

The following pages include sample essay assignments, for both informal and formal writing, that instructors might wish to adopt/adapt, as well as a collection of supporting handouts given out to students in various subjects. In addition, the publishers of our W210 textbook offer a very useful instructor’s guide/question bank for the book, which you may request from McGraw-Hill.

The final contents of the guide include several book chapters and essays that discuss the history of women’s studies as a discipline, as well as the theories of feminist pedagogy that inform the WOST Program goals and the course objectives of all of our courses. The latter discussions are designed to help you reflect on the nature of feminist teaching and how your courses, assignments, and teaching style might best work toward the discussion-based, collaborative, and student-centered pedagogy that is at the heart of the women’s studies classroom.
WOST 210 Interview Assignment

Assignment: Conduct a casual interview, collecting some form of notes as a record
Written Component: A typed summary of your findings (at least two pages)

In “The Movement That Has No Name,” Deborah Siegel writes that a “mounting generation gap” keeps women – and, we might add, men – of different generations from understanding and appreciating other women’s experiences and feeling a sense of common cause (WVFV 32).

Contact a woman of a different generation than your own, and ask permission to interview her about her opinions and experiences – as a girl, as a woman, in her own life.

This can be done whenever and wherever is most convenient for you and your interviewee: in person, at home, at a public location (on campus, at a library, coffee shop). If you want to interview a person who lives too far away to meet in person, the interview can be done by phone, but not by email.

Draft a list of questions in advance, and share them with your interviewee in advance if possible.

The questions you decide to ask are your choice, depending on your interests and the particular person you choose to interview. You might consider...

- Questions about the person’s experiences and opinions
  - What was it like for you, growing up as a girl?
  - In what ways has your life been affected by your gender?
  - In your life, does gender play a role in matters of race, religion, money, etc?
  - Are women more ‘liberated’ or ‘empowered’ today than they used to be?
  - Do you think that young boys and girls should be treated the same, raised identically? Why or why not?
  - In your life, what have been the biggest challenges you’ve seen women face? Do women face any particular problems or challenges that men do not...

- Questions about their views on feminism
  - What does the word ‘feminist’ make you think?
  - Do you think the position and treatment of women in society has improved during your lifetime? (For example?)
  - Have you seen any movies, read any books, or learned any history about the women’s movement in the US or abroad? (For example?)
  - Is there still a need for a ‘women’s movement’ today, in your opinion? What work is left to be done, and who needs to do it?

Find a way to take notes during or immediately after the interview, and make sure to record your own reactions immediately afterwards.

Finally, type a summary of the experience, including who you spoke to and why, and the comments you found most interesting. You may want to share a brief self-reflection on what you learned as a result of this experience. Sharing the whole interview orally in class is not necessary, but turning in the typed summary is required.
WOST 210 Creative Project

Our textbook, *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions*, is designed to provide “a variety of learning activities...ideas for activism, and other sidebars that can engage students with the material in various ways” (xiii). Using ideas from the textbook as examples, students will propose, undertake, and present the results of their own independent creative projects.

**Choosing a Project**
- Flip through the textbook’s chapter introductions, looking for the items labeled “Learning Activity” and “Ideas for Activism.” These exercises suggest various ways to analyze culture, undertake original research, and plan and carry out WOST-themed activities.
- Choose two or three items that sound particularly interesting to you.
- Discuss your interest in those activities with others, and brainstorm different ways that you might carry them out. You may want to do an online search for information related to those topics and activities.
- Feel free to alter or adapt activities that you think might be improved upon in some way. For instance, could you involve other people, create original artistic content (a scrapbook, work of art, or a song?) or otherwise personalize your project...?

**Proposal**
- Preliminary Proposal. You must post online, by the end of Week 5, a brief proposal explaining which specific 2-3 activities you’re considering and why you think they sound interesting.
- Proposal Confirmation. By Week 6, you must confirm which activity you’ve chosen.

**Presentation**
- Students will present the fruits of their efforts in class at the end of the semester.
- Presentation format can be personalized by students to suit the nature of their particular project (such as oral presentation describing the student’s experience or results, a PowerPoint, actual presentation of a final product or performance, etc.)

**Presentation Dates**
- Presentations will take place in class during the final two weeks of the semester.
- Students may sign up for a specific date after their Project Confirmation is posted online and approved by the instructor.

**Grading: 150 points possible**
- Preliminary Proposal of 2-3 ideas online (10 points)
- Proposal Confirmation online (10 pts)
- Project Effort and Preparation (80 pts)
- Project Presentation (50 pts)
WOST 210, Introduction to Women’s Studies
DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP GROUP

Chapter/Week Options
Ch. 5, Inscribing Gender on the Body (Week 9)
Ch. 6, Health and Reproductive Rights (Week 10)
Ch. 10, Resisting Violence Against Women (Week 11)
Ch. 9, Women Confronting and Creating Culture (Week 12)

Group Formation and Preparation
- First, form groups of 4-6 people and choose a specific chapter/week.
- Each member should read the Introduction and all assigned readings.
- Work together to create a Reading Guide for your chapter, by selecting who will cover which reading and by composing short (1 paragraph) summaries of each reading, and a list of the most important or interesting quotes from each. (Aim for 2-5 quotes.)
- Your group should also brainstorm and compile a series of at least two content questions and two open-ended discussion questions for each of the readings you’ll cover.

Your collection of summaries, quotes, and questions is your group’s Reading Guide.
- The Reading Guide should be emailed to the instructor and posted online by the assigned date (which is before your presentation date -- this will enable your classmates to use the reading guide to prepare for class on your presentation day.)

On your scheduled Presentation Day, group members should be prepared to summarize the main ideas of the readings, to offer their own thoughts and responses, and to initiate and contribute to open class discussion.
- Group members might initiate and fuel class discussion by sharing their own reactions to the readings and their Reading Guide’s open-ended questions.
- Groups may also bring in outside resources (such as using PowerPoint presentations, images, or YouTube clips) that exemplify the main themes of their chapter.

An electronic copy of the Reading Guide must be submitted in advance of the presentation day. Copies of any additional materials (links to websites, PowerPoint files, handouts etc.) must also be submitted at least one day in advance.

Grading
This project accounts for 20% of your final grade.
- Reading Guide shared score, up to 100 points
- In-class and Online Discussion Leadership individual, up to 100 pts
- Follow-up Email optional, individual, 10 pts*

* The Follow-up email is an opportunity for students to touch base with the instructor independently to discuss their specific contributions to the group and their level of satisfaction with the group’s overall performance. Emails must be received no later than one week after the group’s presentation day. This email will count as ‘extra credit’.
WOST 210, Introduction to Women’s Studies

RESEARCH PAPER

Length and Format
- At least 6 full pages
- MLA (or, if requested in advance, APA) format

Topic
- Students should skim the WVFV readings not covered explicitly in class, particularly those in the list that follows.
- Based on their own interests, students should select one reading (including that chapter’s Introduction) and use it as a starting point for individual research into a question, controversy, or issue of their choice.

Sources
- A minimum of four sources are required.
  - At least one source must be a scholarly source outside the textbook
  - One class session will be devoted to what constitutes ‘scholarly’ and how to navigate research databases
- Sources may exceed the minimum of four, particularly if the student would like to use independent, multimedia, and nontraditional sources (such as advertisements, films, music, art, or interviews). However, at least one scholarly source will still be required.

Grading
This paper accounts for 200 points, or 20% of your final grade:
- Critical Thinking and Organization up to 100 points
  - Follows a clear, compelling thesis statement
  - Deals with issues directly pertaining to Women’s Studies
  - Topic sentences and transitions guide the reader from point to point
  - Strong paragraph organization and development
  - Seems purposeful; no sloppy, ‘last minute’ conclusions
  - Appropriately formatted and delivered
- Research and Use of Sources up to 40 pts
  - Strong, credible, appropriate sources
  - Smart use of direct quotes and paraphrasing
  - Use of the textbook as well as scholarly materials
- Quality of Writing up to 40 pts
  - Smooth, well-crafted sentences
  - Good punctuation and grammar
  - Complies with EWSE guidelines
- Originality and Creativity up to 20 points
  - More than ‘just a report’
  - Interesting and insightful
SUGGESTED WVTW RESEARCH PAPER READINGS: The chapter’s Introduction, and...


44. Satcher, “American Women and Health Disparities” (2001)


89. Fang, “The Talibanization of Iraq” (2007)


92. Brown, “Fundamentalism and the Control of Women” (1994)


96. Plaskow, “Standing Again at Sinai” (1990)

WOST W210: Informal Media Analyses and Scrapbook

As discussed in your course syllabus, throughout this semester each of you will collect cultural "artifacts" from contemporary media sources and assemble a scrapbook/file. Your scrapbook will include a cross-section of materials from a variety of sources: college recruitment brochures, public service pamphlets, medical pamphlets, news and sports magazines, church newsletters and bulletins, teen magazines, music and film magazines, travel brochures, advertisements, textbooks, university and high school newspapers, local and national newspapers, tabloids, local entertainment newspapers, mass mailings, TV Guide, etc. As you gather material, strive for variety. Remember, we're looking to make connections across various discourses and institutions this semester. Try to provide the original artifacts where possible (xeroxed material is acceptable, provided the text and/or images are legible and clear). Don't forget to jot down the sources of these clippings (issue number, page number, magazine title, etc.) as you clip an item. If the artifact, you've found comes from television, such as a commercial, you can collect the artifact by writing a detailed description of it and dating your viewing of it. Detailed is the key here. Try to get direct quotations into your description whenever possible. You can also try to locate the commercial on youtube and provide a link to it so that I too can access it.

As you peruse the media and make your selections, focus on texts and images that urge a particular way of thinking about women, about their bodies or personalities, about their weaknesses and strengths. Look for the obvious messages as well as the hidden ones, and try to determine whether your selected texts and images appeal to tradition, challenge it, or both—and how. At four points in the semester (see syllabus course outline for specific due dates), I will ask you to select an example artifact from your collection. You will then examine your selected artifact in a two-paragraph media analysis (of between 200-250 words) that identifies telling patterns or anomalies in the text or image and draws conclusions about the significance of these patterns or anomalies. Your exploration of the evidence (the artifacts themselves) should entail a close look at both the whole piece and its. Your analysis should begin with a topic sentence that makes a precise claim or "conclusion" about the images, while the rest of your writing should describe (or perhaps quote) and then analyze and interpret each relevant part of the text/image. Focus on using thick description to unlock the secrets of these images. In short, pay attention to details.

Remember, these are examples of informal writing, so they do not have to be polished pieces of writing. However, please type them and strive to write with clarity. Grammar and punctuation errors are okay, as long as they don’t become so excessive that they interfere with your ability to communicate your ideas to your reader.

You should also bring your scrapbook to class regularly, as I will routinely ask students to share their recent findings when relevant.
Working with the materials and skills gained from your informal media analyses, you will complete a 5-6 page (1250-1500 word) formal paper that examines a trend within contemporary popular representations of women that transects multiple discourses. As part of your work on your scrapbook, you should already have a cross-section of materials from a variety of sources that speak in some way to the issue of gender and the representation of women. To begin this researched critique, you should take some time to sort through your scrapbook, noting the trends, patterns, and questions that emerge that relate to the wide-range of issues we’ve discussed this semester. Just as you did with your informal critiques, you will focus on texts and images that urge a particular way of thinking about women. You should look for the obvious messages as well as the hidden ones, and try to determine whether your selected texts and images appeal to tradition, challenge it, or both—and how they do so.

Once you have a question/issue/pattern you wish to focus on, your next step is to research your question/issue/pattern, focusing your attention on credible and current secondary sources (please note that we discuss just what counts as a scholarly source in class, but if at any point in your research you have questions about your sources, just ask me and I will tell you if they are suitable or not). You should do as much research as you find useful, but note that you must incorporate at least two secondary sources into your paper that are from outside our anthology of readings. By all means, you should feel free to draw on the course readings as well, but you must still have two sources that come out of your own research. Remember, too, that the reason writers incorporate scholarship into their writing is not because they need the padding. Rather, they do so to establish credibility by showing they’re conversant with scholars on the subject and to bolster their own claims, often by either acknowledging the ways their own ideas build on existing ideas/research or by showing the ways their ideas are better than what’s been said before (e.g., they address something that’s been overlooked until now or some idea that just seems wrong). Thus, secondary sources should be incorporated sparingly and judiciously, and they obviously need to be documented very carefully so it’s clear where a scholar’s ideas end and your own ideas begin. To help you with this area, I’ve provided several handouts on Blackboard that discuss successful strategies for quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and integrating sources into your arguments.

While research is obviously important to this paper, please note that your focus is still on the primary cultural texts you choose from your scrapbook and that your main goal is to provide a close and detailed analysis of these cultural texts. Just as your informal critiques did, your writing here should describe, quote, analyze and interpret each relevant part of the cultural texts/images. In short, once again you must pay attention to details throughout your analysis and argument.

In terms of the format of the essay,

- Your essay should have a clear, arguable, and significant thesis that is stated in the introduction—one that makes a precise claim about the relationship between your cultural texts and its messages about women.
- It should follow MLA Documentation Style, using parenthetical citations and including a works cited page with the appropriate bibliographic information for all sources, primary and secondary. Please note that I also want you to provide Xeroxed copies of the pages within your secondary sources from which you cited information, as well as your cultural texts (where possible).
- It should be polished and free of grammatical errors and misspellings.

Deadlines:

Apr. 6: Bibliography for Media Critique Due (this should include complete bibliographic citations of your secondary sources, along with a brief paragraph that summarizes the source and how it is relevant to your cultural texts)
Apr. 15: Draft of Media Critique Due for Peer Review; you will bring enough copies for me and your peer review group (TBA)
Apr. 27: Final Draft of Media Critique Due
Plagiarism and Some Tips for Avoiding It

What follows are definitions of plagiarism taken from three writer’s handbooks randomly selected from my bookshelves.

*The Everyday Writer* defines two types of plagiarism: **Deliberate plagiarism** is the act of copying "passages directly from source materials" (119). **Unintended plagiarism** is "a quotation accidentally used without quotation marks, a paraphrase that too closely resembles the original, background details used without acknowledgment in the mistaken belief that none was necessary" (119).

*The Little, Brown Compact Handbook* also differentiates between deliberate and accidental plagiarism. **Deliberate plagiarism** is "copying or downloading a phrase, a sentence, or a longer passage from a course and passing it off as your own by omitting quotation marks and a source citation"; "summarizing or paraphrasing someone else's ideas without acknowledging your debt in a source citation"; "handing in as your own work you have bought, had a friend write, or copied from another student" (334). **Accidental plagiarism** is "forgetting to place quotation marks around another writer's words" (334).

*Keys for Writers* says "you will be perceived as plagiarizing if you include in your own essay a passage, an identifiable phrase, or an idea that you have copied from someone else's work without acknowledging and documenting your source"; "use exactly the same sequence of ideas and organization of argument as your source"; "fail to put an author's words in quotation marks"; "use in your paper long sections that have been rewritten by a friend or tutor"; "buy, find, or receive a paper that you turn in as your own work" (84-85). It goes on to add: "Substituting synonyms for some or most of the words in an author's passage still results in a plagiarized passage. When you summarize or paraphrase . . . you should use your own sentence structure as well as your own words. Even if you are careful to cite your source, your writing will still be regarded as plagiarized if it resembles the original source too closely in working or sentence structure" (85).

Like most universities, IPFW considers plagiarism to be a form of academic dishonesty, which it defines for students and faculty in the undergraduate handbook section entitled, "Regulations, Policies, Rights, and Responsibilities." What follows is the policy as it is worded in the handbook:

> Academic honesty is expected of all students. You are responsible for knowing how to maintain academic honesty and for abstaining from cheating, the appearance of cheating, and permitting or assisting in another’s cheating.

> Your instructor is responsible for fostering the intellectual honesty as well as the intellectual development of students, and for applying methods of teaching, examination, and assignments that discourage student dishonesty. If necessary, your instructor will explain clearly any specialized meanings of cheating and plagiarism as they apply to a specific course.

> Your instructor will thoroughly investigate signs of academic dishonesty, take appropriate actions, and report such activity properly to prevent repeated offenses and to ensure equity.
Of course, some of these statements about plagiarism leave some things undefined—what constitutes a citation, for one? This is why it’s important that you follow the citation methods and documentation styles prescribed by your instructor and assignment and why, if you’re ever unsure about your use of a source and how to cite it, you should seek help from the instructor.

**Practical Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism:**

As writers and researchers, we can learn a number of lessons from definitions of plagiarism and IPFW’s policies regarding academic dishonesty—lessons that, if put into practice, ought to help us avoid the suspicion of plagiarism:

- Do not borrow or buy a paper from another person or an online source and submit it as your own
- Do not incorporate ideas from another person’s work, published or unpublished, in print or online, without properly citing the source
- Do not use the structure or organization of ideas from another person’s work, published or unpublished, in print or online, without properly citing the source
- Do not cut and paste or retype passages or phrases from another person’s work, published or unpublished, in print or online, without properly citing the source
- Do not try to avoid plagiarism by substituting synonyms for the source’s original words or by rearranging the word order of the source
- Do not forget to place quotation marks around any words, phrases, or sentences you take from a source
- Do not forget to include acknowledgments and citations that attribute words, phrases, sentences, or ideas to their original source
Reaction papers with listed topics  (From Joan Uebelhoer)

- Briefly summarize the first week of this class and state your own reactions to the definitions of feminism on the handouts you received with the class syllabus. How did these definitions fit with the definitions you had in mind coming into this class?

- Describe your reactions to assigned readings these first couple weeks. Quote three statements you especially liked, disliked, or didn't understand (or all of the above).

- State your reaction to the film Tough Guise and analyze your reactions.

- Describe the rules you were taught when you were learning your gender roles. Where and from whom did you learn them?

- Find two advertisements in magazines that show positives images of women and two that sow negative images. Attach the ads to your paper, analyzing your choices.

- Why is abortion a political issue in the United States rather than a medical issue?

- Rosie the Riveter (video) demonstrates the power of propaganda. What is the societal message in the media today telling women what they should be and be doing?

- Many of the members of this class said that you did not experience with Native Americans, Latinas, and African Americans in your schools, in your neighborhoods, or in your friendship circles when you were growing up. What do you think was the cause of this separation, this isolation? What would help to change the situation?

Monthly reaction papers  (From Diane Jackson)

These papers should be typed, 3-4 pages in length, and about the subject which interested you most from the past weeks - our readings, audio-visuals, discussion, etc. These papers must be numbered according to the month they are due. One paper should be your reaction to attending a woman-centered event during the semester. (There are 4 reactions required, at 30 points each.) Each student will also be required to give an oral summary of an article provided by instructor. This article will be one related to class topics but not assigned to entire class. Specific topical guidance can be offered for those preferring guided essays

Assessment of Services for Women (From Judy Harris)
The project will help you to become familiar with services for women within the Fort Wayne community. You will apply your course knowledge to evaluate the effectiveness of the local program offerings in meeting the needs of women.

In an attempt to provide a comprehensive assessment of the institutions women must often rely upon, students are required to gather information for a proposed directory, which will be available on the Web or in print. Data sheets are available for recording information; some of which can be obtained from printed sources such as current directories and annual reports. Besides the obvious information that can be obtained from a number of sources, students are expected to do an in depth evaluation of the institutions they are assigned. They are expected to interview the director (preferably in person whenever possible) to gain the less commonly available information and to get a sense of whether women’s needs are being met to the degree that the feminine gender will become empowered rather than sustained.

After data is gathered, the interview is completed and observations are made, students are asked to rate the organization. Along with the data sheet, a written report must be submitted (600-800 words) to substantiate the rating. Refrain from writing in sentence form information that is already recorded on the data sheet. Instead, support the ranking and provide reasons. Pick several ways the agencies/services positively/negatively relate to your course readings or other materials presented in class. Also provide constructive recommendations and/or solutions to increase the effectiveness of the programming and services offered by the institutions.

What's in the News and How It Affects Women Project (From Judy Harris)

On-going assignment to help you integrate your course studies with what is happening in your community, the state and the world. The newspaper provides information about history in the making and contains various topics relevant to many different interests. Newspaper writing style is clear and concise and may help you improve your skills in writing your papers as you regularly review articles.

Select one topic of major importance to you that is also important to women’s studies. Find examples of news and feature stories, editorials, comic strips, advice columns, ads, etc. on some aspect of your key focus and maintain a file of your findings throughout the course session. You do not have to limit yourself to local news publishers but you are encouraged to do so. If using e-news articles, maintain hard copies in your file. Making notes, getting background information, learning more about individuals in the articles, checking facts on what you’ve gathered may also prove helpful. On occasions, during classroom discussions, you will be expected to share from your file any relevant news. You will be asked to submit your files for review three times during the term (see the course schedule).
13 Reading Responses (From Theresa N. Rojas)

For each week’s reading assignments, you will post a reading response that includes:
- A brief discussion of the main idea(s) of the pieces, including specific references to the majority of the text and online readings.
- How these readings connect to your own life experience (self, family, school, observations of the world in general). While this may include an assessment of whether or not you agree with the ideas presented, you must not approach it as an “opinion piece”. Instead, demonstrate that you have read the assignments and have a strong understanding of the material. If not, you may also pose questions.
- 700 words minimum (this is about a page and a half, single spaced).

At the end of your response, include one question for class discussion. Questions should be thoughtful and provide the opportunity to spark conversation, not something that could be easily answered with a “yes” or “no”.

BLOG (From Theresa N. Rojas)

Create a blog (weblog/online journal) using blogger.com and post short (minimum of 250 words) weekly entries focusing on your observation of a topic related to the class. Entries do not have to be related to the topic we are covering that week, but they must show that you are making critical connections between what we are learning in the class in general and your own observations of the world. Pay special attention to representations of women in every day life. You may use things that you see, hear, read, etc. The objective here is to examine the every day through a more feminist lens than you might normally.

Learning Experientially Project (From Joan Uebelhoer)

1. Go to a local toy store such as “Toys R Us” (or any toy department of a local retail stores such as K-Mart, Target, Wal-Mart, Meijer, etc). 5 points

2. Ask a clerk to show you the “girls’ toys”. Report your interaction with the clerk. Explain the clerk’s reactions. 5 points

3. Include the following in your report: (30 points – 6 each)

A. The colors of the packaging of toys in the “girls” aisle. Describe the packaging.
B. The types of toys you found that were clearly designed for girls. How did you know?
C. The colors of the packaging of toys in the “boys” aisle. Describe the packaging.
D. The types of toys you found that were clearly designed for boys. How did you know?
E. The packaging you noted on toys that were clearly designed for androgynous use.

4. Include in your report, the characteristics (skills) that are encouraged in boys and girls by the toys society designs for each. (10 points)

5. Describe the effects on boys and girls by toys. (10 points)

6. Using your definitions (from your notes) of feminism, describe why toys would be considered sexist. (10 points)


8. Include a brief summary of your own reactions. (10 points)

Learning Experientially Project (From Joan Uebelhoer)

Poverty is a woman’s issue. The majority of the poor are women and children. Of the people receiving help through the state and federal social agencies, 75% are women and children. Some basic needs of human beings are: food, shelter and health care. In this class we will examine, from a feminist perspective, how the basic needs of women and children (who are without the means to supply them for themselves) are being met. Choose one of the following to investigate and report about:

1. No food
2. No place to live
3. No health care

1. Find out what your county (government as well as private organizations) is doing to help people have enough to eat. What services are available for supplying food to a family? How does one access the services? Visit places that work with families who do not have enough food. What do women need to do/know to be eligible for help with food? Who furnishes the food? What about Food Stamps? Are there limits to what you can buy with them? What are the regulations of any of these agencies and how do they hinder/help recipients?

2. Find out what your county is doing (government as well as private organizations) to help people who have no where to live. What places are available? How does one access the services? Visit places that provide shelter for families. Find out about regulations, length of stay, services provided. How does one access government housing? Is there help to move into a government apartment? What about utilities?

3. Find out what your county is doing (government as well as private organizations) to help people who have no health insurance. How do they get routine maintenance, especially for children? What about emergencies? What about mental illness treatment? Visit places that provide health care for the indigent. What are the eligibility requirements?

This report should include:
1. A description of how you tackled the issue, where you got information to start. 15 points
2. An analysis of how important (or not) transportation was to your (or the client’s) search. What happens if transportation is lacking? 15 points
3. A description of your visit to the places you chose — the demographics of the clients, of the workers, the conditions of the place, the length of wait, the attitude of the helpers. 15 points
4. An analysis of the importance of literacy on the part of the client — a recognition of illiteracy on the part of the service providers. What about non English speakers? 15 points
5. Your suggestions for changing the situation of the clients. Your suggestion for improving the services supplied by the government or private organization. 15 points
6. Your feminist analysis of the poverty of women in the USA. 25 points
7. Institutions are created by power to maintain the status quo. Show how the institutions you examined were doing just that. 25 points

Midterm Autobiographical Concept Essay (100 points) (From Theresa N. Rojas)

During this assignment, you will begin the process of analyzing your own gendered experiences by using the theoretical perspectives that we are studying in class.

You will write a 5-7 page autobiographical essay focusing on a memory of an event or series of events sparked by one of the class discussions. Pay particular attention to the ways in which gender operated or was operated upon during this event. Make connections between your story and the readings and concepts discussed and developed in class. In other words, sketch a moment in your life and then make a "bigger picture" connection using material from the course. You must draw upon at least four of the readings from the first half of the course. At least one of the references must be an online-only source. You may use outside sources as well.

Final Critical Thought Project and "Presentation" — (105 points: 100 for the paper and 5 for the online "Presentation") (From Theresa N. Rojas)

Using concepts from the class to facilitate your exploration, this assignment will serve as a way for you to begin to express your thoughts and come to terms with the issues and perspectives on women’s studies presented in this course. It will be graded based on how well you connect the author’s arguments with your own thoughts/questions.

You will write a 5-7 page essay raising and discussing a questions or issues that was raised for you during the course. You must draw upon AT LEAST THREE of the class readings form the text and AT LEAST TWO of online resources in the body of your essay. The essay should focus on those issues that are most meaningful to you and should contain:

1. A clear articulation of a question and/or thesis statement that lays out the issues you will address in your essay.
2. An exploration of your questions or statement that draws upon at least five resources total (three from the text and two on line). Compare and contrast the ideas offered by the authors you choose. You may also use other sources. Be sure to lay out the ideas of each source before you respond to it or compare it to the ideas of someone else.

3. The authors' ideas must be appropriately applied to the question/issues you raise.

4. A clear explanation of why this question or issues interests you. What is significant about this question? Personal experience may be used to explore the question or issue. Do not shy away from addressing this question in terms of your own life. At the same time, you must push beyond the personal to get at the larger collective significance of the question—the "bigger picture". This will make for an essay that is at once grounded and connected to a larger cultural context.

Include a Works Cited page. Use the APA format to document sources both in your Works Cited page in the text of your paper. This page is not included in the 5-7 page count. If you must go beyond 7 pages, that is fine, but please limit your work to 10 pages as an absolute maximum. Work should be succinct enough to fit well into the allotted page guidelines.

The "presentation" is a short paragraph posting to Blackboard that describes your project, the important points you make, and anything else you'd like to share about your project.

Research Paper (From Lisa Beringer)

Students will be required to research one area of women's studies in more detail. Each student must do original research that is not duplicated by another student. No less than four scholarly sources may be used. Web sources must be academic in nature and may account for no more than two of your sources. Possible areas for research may include, but are certainly not limited to:

- How we learn gender
- Issues of privilege and inequality
- Gender and the body
- Gender and family
- Gender and work
- Politics of choice (i.e. the stay-at-home-mom/dad vs. the CEO)
- How women can create their own culture or challenge current systems
- Women and Activism

One-page abstract on research paper

A one-page abstract explaining the topic and major finding of the student's research will be required on the day the research paper is due. Students must present a copy for each student and the instructor. This will assist students in learning how to present their ideas in an academic forum, as well as expanding the knowledge of women's studies issues for their classmates.