

Glassboro State College Senate Curriculum Committee

Approval Form

Proposal Title: New Course: Philosophy and Gender 15-4-127

Sponsor(s) Lynn Nelson, Howard R. Cell Dept.: Philosophy/Religion Ext. 6048

Check one: Course Specialization Concentration Minor Achievement Certificate
 Certification Program Major Program Minor Change (please name deletion or credit/title/catalog change)

Undergraduate Graduate 3 Credit Hours

<p>Step 1 (Department)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <u>11/20/89</u> Date</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved</p> <p><u>Howard R. Cell</u> Dept. CC Chairperson</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <u>11/20/89</u> Date</p> <p><u>Howard R. Cell</u> Dept. Chairperson</p>	<p>Step 2 (Receipt)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> SCC# <u>89 90 04</u></p> <p>Proposal Received _____ Date</p> <p>_____ SCC Chairperson</p>	<p>Step 3 (School CC)</p> <p>Reviewed <u>11-16-89</u></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p><u>Charles W. Schultz</u> School Curr Comm. Chairperson</p>
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Step 4 (Academic Dean) **Comments:**

Recommend
 Not Recommend
 Conditionally Recommend (see comments)

Reviewed 11/20/89
Date

Menna Jackson
Signature, Dean of School

Step 5 (SCC)

Open Hearing 12/8/87 Approved by Senate Curriculum Committee 12/8/87
Date Date

Returned to sponsor(s) for the following reasons:

Step 6 (Senate)

Presented to Senate 12/15/87
Date

Approved Not Approved

Notification to Executive Vice-President/Provost 12/15/87
Date

Howard R. Cell
Signature, SCC Chairperson

Step 7 (Executive V.P./Provost)

Received 2/16/90
Date

Approved Yes No

If no, reasons are as follows:

Student credit hours 3

Faculty load hours 3

Equalized credit hours 3

Official copy and approval sheet filed 2/27/90
Date

[Signature]
Signature, Executive Vice-President/Provost

Registrar

Approved course description received 7/1/90
Date

Hegis Taxonomy and Course Number assigned 12 10000

Signature, Registrar

Date

Notification forwarded:

- Senate Curriculum Committee Chairperson
- Department Chairperson(s)
- Academic Dean
- Registrar
- Sponsor(s)

PROPOSAL FOR THE COURSE "PHILOSOPHY AND GENDER"

I. Details

- A. Course Title: Philosophy and Gender
- B. Sponsors
Lynn Nelson, Philosophy/Religion
Howard R. Cell, Chair, Philosophy/Religion
Philosophy/Religion Department
- C. Credit Hours: 3
- D. Course Level: Undergraduate (Freshman or above)
- E. Curricular Effect: This course is intended to become a general education elective and also an elective in the Women's Studies Concentration.
- F. Prerequisites: None.
- G. Implementation:
 1. Time of Implementation: Fall Semester, 1990.
 2. Scale of Implementation: At least one section of this course will be offered each year, depending upon student demand.
- H. Adequacy of:
 1. Staffing: The Philosophy/Religion Department presently has one member who is qualified to teach this course. It is expected that other current or new staff may be interested in preparing to teach this course subsequently.
 2. Library Facilities and Holdings: The Philosophy/Religion Department has ordered a number of books and also the principal journal, Hypatia, which deals with issues of philosophy and gender. With these, and future, additions, the library's collection will continue to suffice for the purposes of an undergraduate course in this field. It may be appropriate to note that the library has itself undertaken to enhance its collection in gender studies, and also that there now exists a core collection of books and journals in the Women's Studies Center.
 3. Space Needs: One classroom with blackboards and with seating for thirty students will be needed for at least one semester each year, depending on student demand for this course.

II. Rationale

Though the Philosophy/Religion Department has already contributed one course, Religion and Human Sexuality, to the Women's Studies Concentration, the absence of a course which directly confronts issues of gender in philosophy, and also -- what is not the same -- philosophical questions about gender, is a glaring and serious lacuna in that concentration. It is a no less serious gap in our general education offerings, at a time when a concerted effort is being made to integrate issues of gender, race, class and ethnicity into the curriculum.

The proposed course, Philosophy and Gender, is thus intended to meet a pressing need, to fill an unfortunate gap. For, it will enable students to explore the ways in which well-established theories about self, society and world may be gender inflected; it will encourage them to consider common assumptions and ideas in the light of current philosophical scholarship which explicitly deals with issues of gender. Insofar, this new course will significantly augment and complement not only our present course in Religion and Human Sexuality, but also other existing courses which treat gender issues from various perspectives -- historical, anthropological, literary and so on.

III. Essence of the Course:

- A. Course Objectives: Jean Grimshaw, in her recent book Philosophy and Feminist Thinking, notes that the task of simply documenting instances of misogyny in philosophy is fairly easy once one starts on it, . . . but there are more difficult questions that need asking. Are there cases where a philosophical view or theory would have had to be different if a different view of women had been adopted? Are there cases in which philosophical views or theories which are not apparently 'about' women at all are nevertheless inflected or influenced by a view of gender and gender relationships? . . . Are there, indeed, male and female 'voices' or points of view in philosophy?

The central objective of the course, Philosophy and Gender, will thus be to raise these questions, and to explore the ramifications for our understanding of self, society and world which follow from one or another sort of answer. More specifically, a student who successfully completes this course should have minimally acquired the following:

1. Some familiarity with historically and presently significant philosophical theories or claims which are clear instances of misogyny -- e.g., Aristotle's account of the limited capacity of women to reason.
2. An appreciation of particular philosophical theories whose gender inflected status is much less certain -- e.g., Descartes' epistemology.
3. An understanding of the potential impact of gender inflected theories on our ways of knowing and living.
4. An enhanced sensitivity to the moral and political implications of philosophical questions about gender.

As this list indicates, the student will confront not only various theoretical issues in which gender is a possible ingredient, but also the practical import of deciding such issues one way rather than another.

- B. Topical Outline/Content:** Given the course objectives stipulated in the preceding section of this proposal, the topics to be included in Philosophy and Gender will be approached primarily as questions requiring careful exploration rather than as information to be assimilated. Indeed, Aristotle supplies a paradigm for the former approach in Book Beta of the Metaphysics, which begins with an admonition to list and consider philosophical issues, those which have been neglected no less than those frequently discussed; which proceeds to supply such a list (as an aporia, or set of issues); and which concludes with a discussion of the arguments for and against each side of each problem.

Though far from exhaustive, the following list is at least indicative of the nature and scope of topics pertinent to philosophy and gender. However, the approach to these (or any such) topics should parallel that taken by Aristotle in the third section of his Metaphysics, Book Beta.

1. Whether conceptions of human knowledge and human reason are invariably gender inflected.
2. Whether there are gender specific ways of knowing.
3. Whether conceptions of nature, and more specifically of human nature, and the self, are gender inflected.
4. Whether there are distinctive male/female natures -- i.e., to what extent 'biological determinism' is plausible.

5. Whether conceptions of the good life -- of human well-being or happiness -- are gender inflected.
6. Whether there are gender specific approaches to moral issues and methods of moral reasoning.
7. Whether conceptions of the well-ordered society -- of optimal social and political arrangements -- are gender inflected.
8. Whether there are distinctive male/female strategies for realizing the good society.

In effect, consideration of these topics entails an exploration of the three fundamental branches of philosophical inquiry (theory of knowledge, theory of reality, and theory of value) in order to determine the extent to which such inquiry is, or has been, 'influenced by a view of gender and gender relationships.' The goal, however, is not so much that of eliminating philosophical theories and their proponents, should these prove to reflect a 'male voice,' but rather to discover ways of using such theories in the construction of more viable accounts of knowing, being and valuing.

- C. **Evaluation and Grading Procedures:** Student performance will be variously assessed -- through written examinations, papers, homework assignments, oral reports, class participation, individual or group projects. The particular mix of such standard devices for evaluating student performance will be at the discretion of the instructor.
- D. **Course Evaluation:** This course will be reevaluated by the Philosophy/Religion Department at least every other year, beginning with the first year of its implementation. The review will take into account student evaluations of the course and the views of those who have taught the course. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that Philosophy and Gender continues to satisfy the goals of general education, of the Women's Studies Concentration, of the Philosophy/Religion Department and, to be sure, of the course itself.

IV. Results of Consultations

A. N/A

B. Those consulted include:

Linda Jeffries, Psychology Department,
Present Coordinator, Women's Studies Concentration.
Pearl Bartelt, Sociology Department,
Past Coordinator, Women's Studies Concentration.

C. Letters from those consulted are attached.

Catalog Description

1509.245 Philosophy and Gender

This course will investigate both issues of gender in philosophy and philosophical questions about gender and gender relationships. Students will consider various theories and common assumptions in order to determine to what extent these may be influenced by conceptions of gender.



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Sociology Department

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1762 (609) 863-6077

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Howard Cell, Chair
Philosophy and Religion Department

From: Pearl Bartelt *PB*
Sociology Department

Date: April 11, 1989

RE: Philosophy and Gender Course Proposal

I support the proposed course Philosophy and Gender and feel it would be a worthwhile addition to the Women's Studies bank of offerings.

I agree with the lack of prerequisites for the course, but suggest that an introduction to the study of philosophy be an explicit early component in the course content.

If there is any other information you desire from me, please do not hesitate to call.

ja



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Women's Studies

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1701
(609) 863-5249

August 15, 1989

Dr. Lynn Nelson
Philosophy and Religion Department
Glassboro State College
Glassboro, N.J. 08028

Dear Dr. Nelson:

I write to express my support for the course that you and Howard Cell have developed, "Philosophy and Gender." The course proposed is intellectually sound and stimulating. It will teach students to think critically about the categories of analysis used to understand social life. I would be delighted to submit it to the Women's Studies Advisory Board for inclusion in the Women's Studies Concentration after it has been approved.

Attached is some information about textbooks in the area of gender and philosophy/religion that has come to the Office of Women's Studies. I would be happy to cooperate with your department in ordering such works from the Women's Studies library budget to facilitate your course development.

I understand that this course was first developed as part of Howard's participation in the GSC Gender Integration Project. It is wonderful that his efforts are bearing fruit in such a positive way.

I hope that you will be able to participate on the Women's Studies Advisory Board. We welcome your suggestions and look forward to meeting you.

Yours truly,

Linda R. Jeffrey

Linda R. Jeffrey, Ph.D.

cc: Dean Minna Doskow
Howard Cell



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

Dean of Academic Administration

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028-1701 (609) 863-5337

February 21, 1990

TO: Dr. Harley E. Flack, Executive Vice President/Provost
FROM: Kenneth R. Clay, Dean of Academic Administration
RE: Curriculum Approval - "Philosophy and Gender" Course

I have reviewed the course proposal for the course, "Philosophy and Gender," which was submitted to you by Dr. Linda Ross, Chair, Curriculum Committee, on February 9, 1990. I recommend approval of this course.

KRC:jmp

Enclosure



GLASSBORO STATE COLLEGE

GSC Senate

Glassboro, New Jersey 08028

(609)863-5273

February 9, 1990

To: Dr. Harley Flack, Executive VP/Provost

From: Dr. Linda Ross, Chairperson
Curriculum Committee

RE: Curriculum Approval

The following course has been approved by the Senate
Curriculum Committee:

*Philosophy and Gender, Philosophy/Religion Department, 3
credit hours.*

I am submitting it to you for your approval and
implementation.

r
enclosure