

Working Woman in American Society

Instructor: Amy Tracy Wells

Email: Please use Canvas email

Calls/Texts/Emails will be returned within 24 hours.

In this course we will examine a specific segment of Americans – working women. We will explore ideas/concepts such as:

1. what do we mean by paid and unpaid work;
2. what is meant by gender, equality and, conversely, inequality;
3. what are the historical and current trends (quantitative data) in work;
4. what is the contextual history of women's work by industry and profession; how have women's experiences varied by class and race; and
5. through worker experiences, what issues and reforms affect women's work.

Assignments/grades will include participation in Discussion Forums, Brief Response Papers, an Autoethnographic paper, Exams and two extra credit options.

This course includes readings, media, and discussion around topics such as sexual harassment and assault and online violence. I acknowledge that this content may be difficult. Feel free to reach out especially when developing your autoethnography or when we reach Class 11. I also encourage you to care for your safety and well-being.

Rutgers University Core Curriculum Goals addressed and to be assessed through short items on exams:

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work (Contemporary Challenges goal CCD-1)
- Analyze issues of social justice both in the U.S. and globally (Contemporary Challenges goal CCD-2)
- Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives, theories, and concepts (Social analysis goal SCL-1)
- Apply those concepts, along with substantive institutional knowledge, to contemporary developments (Social analysis goal SCL-2)
- Assess and critique relevant evidence and research findings (Social analysis goals SCL-2)
- Access high-quality historical, qualitative, and/or quantitative evidence (Social analysis goal SCL-2)

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations (Goal 1)
- Apply those concepts, along with substantive institutional knowledge, to contemporary developments (Goal 2)
- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work (Goal 6)

School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives, theories, and concepts (Goal IV)
- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work (Goal V)
- Apply those concepts, along with substantive institutional knowledge, to contemporary developments (Goal VI)

Instructor:

- Discuss differences between employment law and policy, and workers lived experience.

Subject to change

Unit I. Introduction

Class 1: Introduction to Working Women in American Society

Become familiar with the web site that has the on-line course. This is called the “course shell.”

Assignment:

1. Learn about the instructor and introduce yourself to other students by writing an on-line introduction as well as read the introduction to this course.
2. Kingsberry, J. (2021). [U.S. women are largely dissatisfied with how they're treated. Most men don't see a problem.](#) The Lily, Washington Post. (5 pgs.)
3. Click! (2015). [Women's Work.](#) Clio Visualizing History, Inc. (4 pgs.)
4. Read, sign and upload a copy of “How to get an A Writing an Essay” to the Dropbox.

Unit II. Paid & unpaid work

Class 2: What is work?

1. Ferrant, G, Pesando, L.M. & Nowacka, K. (2014) [Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes](#), Issy-les-Moulineaux: OECD Development Centre. (pp. 1-11)
2. Swiebel, J. (1999). [Unpaid Work and Policy-Making: Towards a Broader Perspective of Work and Employment.](#) New York: United Nations. (Introduction & pp. 1-10 & pp. 15-30)
3. Hochschild, A. & Machung, A. (2012). The Second Shift: Working Families and the Revolution at Home. *The Family Speedup.* (Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 1-21)

Assignment:

Brief Response Paper: In the context of this course, how do people and organizations define work? What are the ramifications of this definition for women?

Unit III. Gender equality & inequality

Class 3: Gender

1. Crash Course. (2017). [Gender Stratification: Crash Course Sociology #32.](#) (10:49 min.)
2. Barres, B.A. (2006). Does Gender Matter? *Nature*, 442. 133-136 (3 pgs.).
3. England, P. (2011) [The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled.](#) Clayman Institute. (12 min.)

Assignment:

Discussion Forum: Answer either one of the two following questions:

1. Identify and discuss 3-4 ways in which the concept of gender influences everyday life such as education, training, work, health care, wealth etc.
2. How do gender stereotypes affect your own thinking?

Class 4: Equality & inequality

1. Correll, S. (October 21, 2010). [How Gender Stereotypes Influence Emerging Career Aspirations.](#) (47:09).

- Frye, J. (2020). [Centering Equity in the Future-of-Work Conversation Is Critical for Women's Progress](#). Washington, DC: The Center for American Progress. (18 pgs.)

Assignment:

Exam #1 (Covers Classes 1 through 4)

Unit IV. Now & Then

Class 5: Pay

- Jones, J. (2021). [5 Facts About the State of the Gender Pay Gap](#). Washington, DC: Department of Labor. (1 pg.)
- Shaw, E., Hegewisch, A., Williams-Baron, E., & Gault, B. (2016). [Undervalued and Underpaid in America](#). Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research. (pp. 1-41.)
- Chang, M. (March 21, 2011). [Shortchanged: Women and the Wealth Gap](#). Clayman Institute. (7 min.)

Assignment:

[No assignment this week]

Unit V. The history of women's work (Paid & unpaid, by historical period, by occupation, by education and by union)

Class 6: Background

- Hesse-Biber, S. N., & G.L. Carter (2005). "A Brief History of Working Women." *Working Women in America* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Ch. 2, pp. 20-45)
- Sarah Graves. (1941) [Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States](#). Washington, DC: Library of Congress. (11 pgs.)
- Davis, Angela (1983). "[The Legacy of Slavery: Standards for a New Womanhood](#)". Women, Race & Class. New York: Random House. (8 pgs.)
- Dublin, T. (1975). [Women, Work, and Protest in the Early Lowell Mills: "The Oppressing Hand of Avarice Would Enslave Us"](#). *Labor History*, 16, 99-116. (18 pgs.)

Assignment:

Discussion Forum: Answer either one of the two following questions:

- What is the myth of womanhood and what has been the reality or the trends?
- Many believe that the issues we've covered to-date are now historical while others believe many of the issues are ongoing. What do you believe and why?

Extra Credit Brief Response Paper: Answer either one of the two following questions:

- From your own perspective and in your own words, what is the importance of learning the history of working women in the U.S.?
- Why or why not are the issues covered to-date, issues for males as well as females?

Class 7: 1900-1970

- Cornell, (n.d.) [Sweatshops & Strikes before 1911](#) (Includes sections on Fire, Mourning & Protest, Relief Work & Investigation & Work, (6 pgs.)
- Williams, C.L. (1995). The Rise and Fall of the Women's Profession in *Still a Man's World: Men who Do Women's Work*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press. (Ch. 2, pp. 23-49)
- Gazit, Chana. (Director) (2003). *The Pill*. Boston, MA. WGBH. (56 min.)¹

¹ Available via Amazon & on DVD via the Rutgers Libraries

Assignment:

1. **Autoethnographic paper** – draft due

Class 8: 1970 to present

1. Slaughter, A-M. (2012). [Why Women Still Can't Have It All](#). The Atlantic. (18 pp.)
2. Landsburg, S.E. (2005). [The Price of Motherhood Ready to have a baby? You'll earn 10 percent more if you wait a year](#). Slate. (1 pp.)

Assignment:

Exam # 2: (Covers Classes 5 through 8)

Unit VI. Issues & reforms affecting women's work

Class 9: Wages

1. Babcock, L. & Laschever, S. (2003). [Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide](#). Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Introduction, pp. 1-16)
2. Imbriano, R. (2010). [A Call to Act: Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.](#) Annenberg Classroom. (22:48 min.)
3. Burkus, D. (2016) [Why Keeping Salaries a Secret May Hurt Your Company](#). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Review. (4 pgs)

Assignment:

[No assignment this week]

Class 10: Sex-segregation, Tokenism & Institutional Constraints

1. National Academy of Sciences (2007). [Institutional Constraints](#) in *Beyond Bias and Barriers : Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering*. (Ch. 5, pp. 166-188)
2. McGrew, W. (2016) [Gender segregation at work: "separate but equal" or "inefficient and unfair"](#). The Washington Center for Equitable Growth. (pp. 1-8)

Assignment:

Discussion Forum: Answer either one of the following:

1. Define and discuss the significance of institutional constraints?
2. Is sex segregation diminishing, why or why not?

Class 11: Sexual Harassment & Assault

1. Schiffrin, N. and Sagalyn, D. (2021). [U.S. military grapples with a rising epidemic of sexual assault in its ranks](#). PBS News Hour. (8:44 min.)
2. Fowler, S. (2017). [Reflecting On One Very, Very Strange Year At Uber](#). Blog post. (4 pgs.)
3. The Economist Intelligence Unit. (2021). [Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women](#). The Economist. (12 pgs.)
4. Equal Rights Advocates. (2022.) [Know Your Rights at Work: Sexual Harassment](#). (9 pp.)

Assignment: Respond to either one of the two following questions

Brief Response Paper:

1. What are the implications if women do not feel completely safe using the internet? Identify and discuss 2-3 issues general issues (e.g., workplace, economic, career etc.) or those professional issues faced by female law makers, actors, journalists, attorneys, athletes, etc.
2. What is the status of sexual harassment in the workplace-are the number of incidences rising, decreasing or can we even know?

Class 12: Race, Nationality & Work

1. Sue DW, Capodilupo CM, Torino GC, et al. (2007). [Racial microaggressions in everyday life: implications for clinical practice](#). *American Psychologist*. 62(4):271. (pp. 271-279)
2. IWPR (2018) [Status of Women in the States: The Economic Status of Women in New Jersey](#). (IPWR #R511) Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research. (pp. 1-4)
3. DuMonthier, A., Childers, C, Milli, J. (2016). [The Status of Black Women in the United States](#). Washington, D.C.: Institute for Women's Policy Research. (pp. 19-56).

Assignment:

Discussion Forum: This forum has two parts:

Complete and submit Worksheet *Work, Life & Balance* and then share specifics and/or observations in the DF.

Class 13: Gendered roles

1. Thomas, L. (2021). [The Transformation of a Soccer Club, and the Ways We Value Women's Sports](#). New York, NY: The New Yorker (10 pgs.)
2. Smith, S.L., Pieper, K. & Choueiti, M. (2017). [Inclusion in the Director's Chair?: Gender, Race, & Age of Film Directors Across 1,000 Films from 2007-2016](#). (Preliminary 4 pgs of graphics, pp. 1-3 & Solutions, pp. 18-21)
3. Peterson, A.H. (2020) "[Other countries have social safety nets. The U.S. has women.](#)" Culture Study. (10 pgs.)

Assignment:

[No assignment this week]

Class 14: Collective Action

1. Jones, J., Schmitt, J., & Woo, N. (2014). [Women, Working Families, and Unions](#). Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR). (pp. 1-25)
2. Collins, C. (2020). [Mothers Don't Need Balance. They Need Justice](#). TEDxUniversity of Nevada. (13:50 min.)
3. UN Women (2020). [Twelve small actions with big impact for Generation Equality](#). United Nations Women.

Assignment:

Autoethnographic paper due

Class 15: Final Assignments

Assignment:

Exam #3 (Covers Classes 9 through 14)

GRADING CRITERIA AND COMPONENTS

Grading Criteria:

A	90-100%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
C+	75-79%
C	70-74%
D	60-69%
F	59% and below

Grades are based on the following components:

- #1 – Discussion Forum: Classes 3, 6, 10 & 12
20% of the grade
- #2 – Brief Reading Response: Classes 2 & 11 (Two-page paper)
20% of the grade
- #3 – Autoethnographic Paper: Classes 7 & 14 (Four-page paper)
30% of the grade
- #4 - Exams: Classes 4, 8 & 15 (Exams are True/False, Multiple Choice, and Brief Answer Questions)
30% of the grade
- #5 – Extra Credit Brief Reading Response: Class 6
Can be used to increase lowest test score by up to 15 points (=> 90 then 15 points, =>80 then 10 points & =>70 then 5 points)

Each Discussion Forum is worth 5% of one’s grade, which is based on content and timing. That is, readings etc. as well as instructor and other student posts will provide the basis of content and all postings/responses should be provided during the week within which the topic/issues are examined.

Brief Response Papers are worth 10% of one’s grade, which is based on content, persuasiveness and readability. Papers must be double-spaced throughout and 2 pages in length, each numbered with standard one-inch margins and 12-pitch font. In addition, papers must include a “References” section of sources cited.

The Autoethnographic Paper is worth 30% of one’s grade. For more specifics, see “Autoethnographic Paper” below.

Each Exam is worth 10% of one’s grade and is composed of true/false, multiple choice and brief answer questions. Content will cover the classes specified (i.e., tests are not cumulative). Exams must be completed in 1.5 hours. Though you may consult class materials to complete an exam, you may *not* consult with another student in any way.

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the

documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Autoethnographic Paper

Autoethnography is a form of narrative writing that views the author's own experience as a topic of investigation in its own right. (For more on Autoethnography, see [Autoethnography: An Overview](#).) Key to this experience and hence the paper is clarifying how culture (e.g., the sexual division of labor, gendered use of communication styles & tools, gendered attributes of leadership, equation between productivity and hours worked, etc.) shapes norms & events according to the themes we've explored in this course. This paper will explore

1. your current and/or past working life – compensated and/or non-compensated – and/or
 2. work/family balance, an issue that affects men and women,
- using data you collect (e.g., quotes, pay rates, social security income, numbers of employees, length of employment, etc.) and will include a thesis, select references and a bibliography. That is, while the paper will focus on you, it is important to frame or contrast your experience using class materials including readings, videos, audio and/or lectures. You will produce and provide a draft for review along the way. Papers must be double-spaced throughout and 4 pages in length, each numbered with standard one-inch margins and 12-pitch font. Late papers may be downgraded. Note: data does NOT include academic references, but is from your experience.

Examples of autoethnographic writing:

- Fowler, S. (2017). [Reflecting On One Very, Very Strange Year At Uber](#). Blog post. (4 pgs)
- Papers from previous students are available in Files -> Autoethnography Examples in Canvas