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ID L300U
Women in the 20th
Century

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Course Guide

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Interdisciplinary L300U (Ethics) Women in the 20th Century

Lewis-Clark State College
3 Semester-Hour Credits

Prepared by:

Amy E. Canfield, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of History
Lewis-Clark State College

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ID L300U: Women in the 20th Century

3 Semester-Hour Credits: LCSC

Welcome!

Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about assignments and grading. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the ISI office for clarification before beginning your course.

Policies and Procedures

Refer to the ISI website at www.uidaho.edu/isi and select *Students* for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

Course Description

The ethical issues confronted by American women are examined by study of literary and historical text as well as through their own writing.

Required: Internet access, course textbooks

Recommended: Microsoft Word

13 graded assignments, 1 topic proposal for final research paper, 1 research paper, no exams

Students may submit up to 2 assignments at a time/2 per week. Students must wait for grades and feedback on assignments, which may take up to three weeks after date of receipt by the instructor.

ALL assignments must be submitted to receive a final grade for the course.

Course Materials

Required Course Materials

The 3rd, 4th or 5th editions of the textbook will work for this course:

- Woloch, Nancy. *Women and the American Experience*, 5th Edition (Mcgraw Hill Education, 2010) ISBN-13: 9780073385570 and ISBN-10: 0073385573.
- Woloch, Nancy. *Women and the American Experience*, 4th Edition (Mcgraw Hill Education, 2010) ISBN-13: 9780073205816 and ISBN-10: 0073205818.
- Woloch, Nancy. *Women and the American Experience*, 3rd Edition (Mcgraw Hill Education, 2010) ISBN-13: 9780072293197 and ISBN-10: 0072293195.
- *Note: the 1st and 2nd textbook editions do not contain all the required chapters.*

Course Introduction

All ISI courses are delivered through Canvas, an online management system that hosts the course lessons and assignments and other items that are essential to the course. Upon registration, the student will receive a *Registration Confirmation Email* with information on how to access ISI courses online.

Women faced a rapidly shifting world in the 20th century. Their individual rights expanded in numerous ways, yet new ideas regarding “womanhood,” “femininity,” “equality,” and “women’s place” questioned the ethical values different parts of society placed upon women as a group. Ethics are defined as a body of moral principles or values held by or used to govern a culture, group, or individual. This course will be an examination of the diverse ethical issues women and society confronted in the 20th century. Students will examine major issues in the 20th century as these issues challenged

society's overarching values and ethics in areas such as working women and wage discrepancies, suffrage, birth control, education, racism, feminism, political activism and political apathy, motherhood, domestic violence, and sexuality. Keep in mind that different groups and individuals define "womanhood" and "femininity" very differently, and we will consider how these different views shaped larger cultural responses and ethical views. One of the goals of the course is to give students a larger historical and literary perspective to help them consider contemporary ethical issues facing women and society. In this course, we will be paying attention to the intersection of political and social/cultural history and trends, gendered responsibilities and expectations, the role of literature and media in shaping societal values concerning women, and how ethical issues affected and continue to affect women's personal and private lives.

Course Objectives

- Read and evaluate concepts and perspectives related to ethics and values.
- Use writing, discussion, research, and collaboration to analyze and understand how individuals and societies are shaped by ethics and values.
- Demonstrate self-reflection, broadened perspective, and respect for diverse viewpoints by exploring issues related to ethics and values.
- Integrate and apply accumulated knowledge to develop strategies that address issues of ethics and values.
- Gain a solid understanding of the ethical issues facing women at different times in the 20th century and of women's changing statuses through different time periods.
- Increase research and analytical skills in examining key issues in women's lives (both public and private) in the 20th century.

Lessons

Overview

This class is divided into thirteen modules, and is roughly chronological through the 20th century. The modules are based, for the most part, on chapters from the textbook, *Women and the American Experience*, but there will be additional short readings (short stories, articles, editorials, etc.) within each module. Every module has a listed set of goals/objectives to clarify what students are expected to learn. Within each module, there is a mini-lecture (in written format) that will provide additional content or analysis to help you understand and interpret the readings from the book. Sometimes the lectures will provide links to more information or to videos. Make sure that you read each lecture and click on the links. Each module has a short answer response. For these short answer responses, you will need to give a two- or three-paragraph response to a question I pose, incorporating in analysis and an ethical discussion. These responses are worth 30 points each, and you will complete one for Lessons 1-12. In total, they are worth 360 points (12 responses @30 points each). In addition to the short answer responses, there will be longer research paper due (worth 250 points) and an associated topic proposal (worth 40 points).

Each lesson will include the following components:

- lesson objectives
- reading assignments
- lecture
- writing assignment (short response)

Study Hints:

- Keep a copy of every assignment submitted.

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- Complete all reading assignments.
- Set a schedule allowing for course completion one month before your personal deadline. An *Assignment Submission Log* is provided for this purpose.
- Web pages and URL links in the World Wide Web are continuously changing. Contact your instructor if you find a broken Web page or URL.
- Start thinking about a topic for your final research paper early. Find something that interests you and that you can trace over the 20th century. Don't forget that your topic proposal is due with Lesson 6 and your final paper is due with Lesson 13.

Refer to the **Course Rules** in Canvas for further details on assignment requirements and submission.

Final Research Paper

The 8-10 page research paper is the major project for the course and is worth 250 points. It is a culmination of everything you have read and written about over the course, and as such should incorporate class readings and your own responses. The majority of your paper, though, should come from outside research, including other secondary sources (email me if you need a title and author suggestions) and perhaps even primary sources (newspapers, club notes, government documents, etc.). The topic is of your own choosing, but whatever your topic, I want you to deal with the following two questions in your final paper: (1) How has gender both limited and expanded women's opportunities during the 20th century? and (2) How have different ethical concerns impacted women's opportunities? Your paper must consider the whole of the 20th century, no matter what your topic is. For example, if you choose women working in wartime, you cannot focus exclusively on World War II. I want you to reflect on the numerous changes women and society faced in the 20th century; dealing with just one era will not allow you to do so.

I want each student to guide her or his own research, and so you must come up with a way to frame your topic and paper in a manner that reflects your own interests as well as a manner that considers the differing ideas of ethical issues concerning women in the 20th century. Potential topics include women working outside of the home, changing views of housework, birth control and/or abortion, political involvement, racism, feminism, women's roles in wars, prostitution, the fight for equal rights (or, more specifically, the Equal Rights Amendment), gender roles in popular culture, the role of religion, wage discrepancies, changing views of femininity, etc. Please feel free to email me if you need help identifying a topic.

First, you will need to hand in a **topic proposal with two outside class sources listed (they can be books, films, scholarly articles, newspaper articles, etc.)**. This proposal is a one-page description of your topic, including short summaries of your two sources. Why did you choose this topic? What drew you to it? How do you think it reflects ethical issues for women? My objective is to help you focus your research a bit more at this point. When I grade this assignment, I will also provide you with additional research suggestions, including some sources. The goal of this assignment is to make sure that you are beginning to consider your research project early enough to fully complete all of your research. This proposal is due at the same time you complete Lesson 6 (roughly halfway through the course) and is worth 40 points.

Your **final paper** is due during the final lesson (Lesson 13) and should use information from class lectures, course readings, and (primarily) outside research. It needs to be well-researched with a strong argument that is identified and articulated clearly. The paper needs to demonstrate a firm grasp of the topic, incorporate ideas of ethics, respond to the larger questions posed in the assignment, and contain relevant and accurate evidence. It is a formal paper and cannot include

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any first-person references (I, we, me, us, our, etc.) or contractions. This 8-10 page paper is due at the end of the course; it is the only assignment due for Lesson 13. This paper is worth 250 points.

Grading

The course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

Assignments	Points
Short answer responses	360
Topic proposal	40
<u>Final research paper</u>	<u>250</u>
Total points	650

The final course grade is issued after all assignments have been graded.

Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism, are considered a very serious transgression and may result in a grade of F for the course.

About the Course Developer

Your course developer is Dr. Amy E. Canfield, an Associate Professor of History at Lewis-Clark State College. She earned her Ph.D. in History from Washington State University in 2008. She specializes in Women's history, and within that, her areas of expertise are imperialism and women, women in the American West, American Indian women's history, domestic violence, suffrage, and feminist movements.

Contacting Your Instructor

Instructor contact information is posted on your Canvas site under *Course Rules*.

<u>Assignment Submission Log Template</u>				
Lesson	Projected Date for Completion	Date Submitted	Grade Received	Cumulative Point Totals
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				

Lesson 1 Introduction to Ethics and Overview

Lesson Objectives

At the completion of this module, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of ethics and values.
- Differentiate between basic belief systems
- Recognize different values placed upon women, and why ethics change over time.

Reading Assignment

“The Miniature Guide to Understanding the Foundations of Ethical Reasoning” (BlackBoard readings)

Introductory Lecture

Overview of Ethics and Women in the 20th Century

Ethics are defined as a body of moral principles or values held by or used to govern a culture, group or individual. This is a simple definition, but it lets us see accurately what ethics are in their simplest sense. Once we get further into discussions on ethics, we will see that the issues are much more complicated than what this definition might suggest.

The ancient Greeks first attempted to systematize the study of ethics and to make it a branch of learning. In the twentieth century, colleges and universities began to employ within their departments of philosophy, professors of ethics, or people specially trained to assist students and the community at large in understanding ethics not only as an academic discipline but also as a guiding force for human behavior.

Human beings learn ethics from a variety of sources; consider what you have learned about moral systems from your culture, family, religious group, political group, and education. Media and popular culture play a larger role, as well, in shaping individual ethics and group ethics. What is most interesting about ethics, though, is when these systems collide. Let’s take a look at a few examples.

Is it possible to be a Roman Catholic and obstetrician/gynecologist at the same time? Most of us would say of course, and there are undoubtedly many examples of this combination of religious affiliation and occupation. But what if this medical doctor was called to do abortions, as so many obstetricians are? The Roman Catholic Church has taken a strong stand, through the years, against abortion; presumably, this hypothetical medical doctor would be caught between two conflicting value systems, the medical and the religious. Some people have no problem reconciling such issues, but most of us do. Put yourself in the place of President Harry S. Truman in the final stages of World War II. It was President Truman, you will recall, who ordered that two atomic bombs be dropped on major cities in Japan, resulting in death and injury for hundreds of thousands of people. Can any one of us seriously doubt the conflict between his basic humanistic instincts and what he felt he needed to do as president?

One could cite dozens of examples where the values that we learned from one source conflict with those we learned from another. Every student in this class could create a nearly endless list, from issues of great importance to lesser ones having to do with day-to-day life. Is it all right to lie to one’s parents, for example, in order to protect a friend? Is stealing ever justified? Murder? Treason? These are

questions that have haunted people throughout history, so do not be concerned that you are all alone in trying to wrestle with them.

Philosophers have an expression for these situations. They call it being on the horns of a dilemma. Think of it this way: a bull is charging at you, and you have three choices. Grab one of his horns, grab the other, or go somewhere in between the two. Resolving ethical dilemmas is just like this---there will often be two clear choices and a middle of the road choice to go with them.

In each of the sections of this course, you will read and study real women who were faced with ethical choices. Sometimes the conflict was between the drive for self-fulfillment and the conflicting wishes of a husband. Other times, women have been forced to break existing laws to work for a principle in which they deeply believed. In other words, every conflict you may face in your life has most likely been faced by women of the past century.

This course is about how and why they chose to solve their problems in the ways they did. Women we study often chose the more difficult path and became famous or revered as a result of that choice. Women who simply went along with the status quo likely are not memorable generations later, but fame and a place in history are not the only things important in life, as you will learn.

One guiding principle probably remains to be enunciated at this time. We must be careful to avoid judging others by our own system of moral principles. This is not to say that you, as a twentieth-century student, should not have ultimate beliefs. Simply remember that while you are entitled to your beliefs---your ethics if you will---other people are similarly entitled to theirs. When systems conflict, the same rules apply to resolving conflict as pertain when you are trying to solve your ethical dilemmas. One of the big goals for this course is not to convince others that our own perspectives are “right,” but rather to understand each other’s perspectives. We will not always agree, but understanding another perspective gives us a larger view and a better understanding of our own perspectives.

In the last several decades there have been dramatic changes in women’s visibility at every level of world and American life---politics, the labor force, and popular culture---accompanied by important shifts in women’s perceptions of their own potential. The new visibility sparked a reconsideration of the history they had been told. Women wanted to know about their past. Indeed they found it difficult to envision future changes without some grounding in a history that included their experiences. There has never been a better time for women to claim the possibilities for full democratic participation in political and social spheres.

So, why do we study ethics? Keep in mind that society’s ethics can be different than our own individual ethics. Also, keep in mind that ethics change as society transforms and adapts. These are issues we will grapple with over the whole semester. LCSC puts a large emphasis on ethics— it is why the college requires an ethics/values course as part of the General Education coursework. To help you further understand why we study ethics and what ethics are, please view the following two short YouTube clips. The first is from Stanford University, with two ethics professors explaining the importance of studying ethics. The second has a few different people defining what ethics means to them.

“Why Study Ethics?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1PdT5LntPc>

“What are ethics?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7B-52oOUpM>

Written Assignment

Before beginning the first written assignment, refer to the *Course Rules* in Canvas for your instructor's assignment requirements. Please copy the ISI office at indepst@uidaho.edu if emailing your instructor.

Submit a short answer response to the following prompt:

What drew you to this class? Provide a bit of an introduction to yourself. Why do we study ethics and why do you think it is important to study ethical considerations of women?