

## **PT241 FEMINISM AND COMMUNITY**

OSUN Network Course  
at Bard College Berlin and  
BRAC University

### Seminar Instructors:

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Office Hours: by appointment

Schedule: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00 – 3:30 pm CET

Selected BCB-BRAC joint online sessions: Thursday, 9:00 – 10:30pm CET

### **Course Description**

This OSUN Network Course on Feminisms and Community is offered for advanced BA students at Bard College Berlin and students at BRAC University. Students will have in-person classes at their home institution, selected BCB-BRAC joint online sessions, and individual as well as shared student assignments.

The course will explore a variety of feminisms across time and place through the concept of community. The specific themes and topics we will focus on are theories of community, global feminisms, early twentieth-century feminisms, Black feminisms, intersectional communities, feminist communities and projects in Berlin. We will discuss how different forms of feminisms have generated different forms of communities, for example through the creation of smaller and bigger networks, through group engagements with larger societal issues, but also through all kinds of writings (letters, journals, manifestos, zines), different forms of art and literary practices, as well as the setting up of archives or organizing political activism.

The questions we will address include the following: What kind of communities do different feminisms create? (in/through salons, reading communities, women's movements meetings, political parties, concepts of sisterhood, communes, autonomous groups, bookshops, associations, work guilds, unions, etc.). How do feminist theories across different geographical, national, and temporal contexts address the topic of community? What *is* a community? Is a community something which by definition involves similarity (for example, internet communities, or communities based on gender, race, and/or class), or can it include larger entities and more diversity and be based on shared political goals?

And finally: is our class a community? How do we become a community, or even an active community, across the two participating groups of students at Bard College Berlin and BRAC University.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2022:** Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Depending on the circumstances, instructors may ask students to wear a mask at all times during class. Instructors will make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Please note: **No electronic devices** are allowed in class. Please come to class with **printed texts**.

### **Grading**

#### **Participation**

Students should arrive to each class on time and prepared. Being prepared means

- (1) having completed the assigned reading
- (2) bringing to class a non-electronic copy of the assigned reading, and
- (3) being ready to initiate and to contribute to discussion
- (4) contributing to the digital formats and shared tasks in collaboration with BRAC students and faculty. Engagement in class discussion should be regular as well as productive; quantity alone will not favorably affect the participation grade.

#### **Assignments**

The course assignments involve:

- writing of **four response papers (500-700 words)** on an assigned material from the syllabus. Response papers are always due before the class session covering

the material you selected. Note that you have to submit a minimum of two response papers in the first half of the semester.

- **“Adoption” of one text** from the syllabus that you are not writing a response to. You are responsible for introducing the text in class on the day that it is assigned and for animating and moderating our discussion. **Deadline** for choosing texts: **7 September**.
- Submission of a **final essay** (2000 words) on **16 December, 23:59 hrs**.
- **Posting comments** and brief statements **on digital platforms** (padlets or google docs), which are considered as part of the participation grade.

### Policy on Late Submission of Papers and Assignments

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors’ office hours.

Late submission of response papers and the final essay will result in failing the course.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### **Library and Book Purchase Policies**

Assigned texts will be available as a printed **course reader** that students must purchase from the library; the use of digital copies in class is not permitted. Recommended further readings will be made available electronically and on a BCB library course reserve shelf.

Students are required to buy the following books:

Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1939), London: Penguin Modern Classics, 2000  
ISBN: 978-0141184609

### **Grade Breakdown**

Participation (including posts on padlets): 30%

Response papers: 20%

Final paper: 30%

Text adoption and moderation: 20%

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Weeks 1- 3: Theories of Community and Sociability**

#### **Week 1**

**Monday, August 29**

Course Introduction: Lecture and discussion: What is a community?

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (1983) (“Introduction” and “Cultural Roots”)

Iris Marion Young, “The Idea of Community and the Politics of Difference” (1986)

**Wednesday, August 31**

Friedrich Schleiermacher, “Toward a Theory of Sociable Conduct” (1799)

#### **Week 2**

**Monday, September 5**

Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society* (1887), (selection)

**Wednesday, September 7**

Georg Simmel, “The Sociology of Sociability” (1949)

#### **Week 3**

**Monday, September 12**

Mette Louise Berg and Magdalena Nowicka, *Studying Diversity, Migration and Urban Multiculture* (2019), (“Introduction: Convivial tools for research and practice”)

Magdalena Nowicka and Tilmann Heil, “On the Analytic and Normative Dimensions of Conviviality and Cosmopolitanism” (2015)

### **Weeks 4-6: Introduction to (Global) Feminisms**

**Wednesday, September 14**

Lucy Delap, *Feminisms. A Global History* (2020), (“Introduction”)

#### **Week 4**

**Monday, September 19**

Guest lecture: Lucy Delap, Cambridge University, TBC

**Wednesday, September 21**

Students bring feminist texts from different contexts to present and discuss in class

**Week 5**

**Monday, September 26**

Students bring feminist texts from different contexts to present and discuss in class

**Wednesday, September 28**

Discussion of texts chosen by BRAC

**Thursday, September 29 at 9am (CET) – JOINT ZOOM SESSION WITH BRAC UNIVERSITY**

Student-led discussion on feminist texts chosen and presented by students

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, *Sultana's Dream and Padmarag* (1905)

*The Indian Ladies' Magazine*, Madras

**Week 6**

**Montag, October 3 - Federal holiday - NO CLASS**

**Wednesday, October 5 - NO CLASS**

(Replacement: BCB-BRAC joint session on September 29)

**Week 7 - Women in the Public Sphere around 1800: Salonnières, Writers, and Artists**

**Monday, October 10**

Guest lecture by Magdalena Nowicka (Humboldt University) on "Feminism & Conviviality"

**Wednesday, October 12**

Henriette Herz, "Memoirs of a Jewish Childhood" (1850)

Rahel Varnhagen, "Selected Letters" (1805-1819)

**Weeks 8-9 - Early Twentieth-Century Political Feminisms around the World**

**Monday, October 17**

Deborah Hertz, "Public Leisure and the Rise of Salons" (1988)

**Wednesday October 19**

Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess* (1957, selections)

**FALL BREAK** (October 24 – 28)

**Week 9**

**Monday, October 31**

Essays, manifestos, and pamphlets on suffragism and women's rights from Europe, South America, North America, Asia, Africa

**Wednesday, November 2 – JOINT ZOOM SESSION WITH BRAC UNIVERSITY**

Guest lecture by Seuty Sabur (BRAC) or Elora Shehabuddin (UC Berkeley)

Seuty Sabur, "Women's Rights and Social Movements in Bangladesh: The Changing Political Field" (2021)

Elora Shehabuddin, *Sisters in the Mirror: A History of Muslim Women and the Global Politics of Feminism* (2021, selections)

**Week 10 - Communities of Outsiders: Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1939)**

**Monday, November 7**

Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1939)

**Wednesday, November 9**

Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1939)

**Week 11 – A Berlin feminist journalists collective / Black feminism and LGBTQ+**

**Monday, November 14**

Carole Boyce Davies, *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (2008), (chapter 5)

**Wednesday, November 16**

Guest lectures by Marion Detjen and Hella Dietz on "10 nach 8: politisch, poetisch, polemisch" - a collective of female writers, intellectuals, and journalists publishing regularly in *Die Zeit*

**Weeks 12-13 - Black feminism and LGBTQ+**

**Monday, November 21**

bell hooks, "Sisterhood" (1986)

Maria C. Lugones and Pat Rosezelle, "Sisterhood and Friendship as Feminist Models" (1995)

**Wednesday, November 23**

Angela Davis, *An Autobiography*, introduction and chapter 1 "Nets"

**Thursday, November 24 at 9am (CET) – JOINT ZOOM SESSION WITH BRAC UNIVERSITY**

Guest lectures by Dina Siddiqi and Adnan Hossein on Solidarities and Marginal communities in South Asia

Dina Siddiqi, "Do Bangladeshi factory workers need saving? Sisterhood in the post-sweatshop era" (2009)

Adnan Hossain, "Hijras in South Asia: Rethinking the Dominant Representations" (2020)

**Week 13**

**Monday, November 28**

Discussion of film: Audre Lorde, *The Berlin Years*

**Wednesday, November 30**

Excursion to *Missy Magazine* with a guest lecture by Sonja Eismann

**Week 14 – Political communities – EU and others**

**Monday, December 5 – NO CLASS**

(Replacement: BCB-BRAC joint online session November 24)

**Wednesday, December 7**

Guest lecture (TBC)

**Week 15 - Completion Week (December 12 – 16)**

ESSAY DEADLINE: DECEMBER 16, 23:59 HRS