

SO281 Feminist Approaches to International Law

Tue, 14:00-17:15

Seminar Leader: Zeynep KIVILCIM

Email: z.kivilcim@berlin.bard.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

Law as a discourse has the effect of privileging certain claims and voices over others. The course aims to read international law through a gendered lens and to search out its sexed and gendered subjectivity with its rhetoric and institutions. It will study the gender divide in international institutions where international law is made, implemented or enforced. The course will then critically approach the lack of participation of women and LGBTQ in international influential policy, decision-making and in judicial bodies. It will discuss the questions of gender within the international human rights legal framework, gender-related aspects of international refugee protection, the gendered dimensions of globalization and feminization of poverty, as well as the impact of the absence of any explicit gender concerns from international economic law.

Requirements

Attendance and participation

Your preparation for class, attendance, and participation are crucial. Please complete the required readings, be on time for each class, and contribute regularly to the discussions.

Please consult the Student Handbook for BCB's policy on absences and notify me in advance when you know you will miss a class. Attendance and participation make up 30% of the final grade.

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. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Readings

All the readings will be available via Brightspace. On a weekly basis, you will be expected to complete all the readings. As you read the assigned texts, please remember to annotate them: write down questions, comments, observations –we will use them as a basis for our class discussions.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

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.

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.

Assignments

Several assignments will add up to your final grade for this class alongside your participation grade:

Class preparation and participation:

Your in-class contributions will be marked on your ability to show a clear, close, and critical engagement with the readings. Complete all required readings before each class. Come to class prepared to discuss readings and themes. You will lead one class discussion by posing three critical questions regarding required readings and engaging with class response to those questions.

Reflection papers: Students have to read the articles assigned and to write reflection papers (one page at most) for at least three articles by critically engaging in the article's discussion, ie. commenting on the author's arguments whether they agree or not, commenting on how much the author can put her/his/their discussion convincingly etc. The students are also expected to formulate a question within the framework of the article's debate and write down together with the reflection paper. The questions raised by the students on the reflection papers will be the main questions that will direct the class discussions.

Final Paper: Students are required to submit a term paper on a chosen topic agreed by the lecturer (of about 5000 words). The final paper topic is of must demonstrate a strong connection to the themes and readings discussed in the course.

The final paper abstract must be 500 words, Reference at least three articles from the syllabus. It needs to provide an explanation of your chosen topic, your methodology and state your research question.

Grade Breakdown

Class preparation and participation: 30 %
Assignment 1: Reflection paper 1: 10%
Assignment 2: Reflection paper 2: 10%
Assignment 3: Reflection paper 3: 10%
Assignment 4: Final paper abstract and peer review: 10%
Assignment 5: Final paper: 30%

Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction (August 30)

Key terms, concepts and theories (Sex / Gender / Feminism(s))
Why gendering and queering international law matters?
Conversations between feminist/queer and mainstream international law

Week 2: Gender divide in international institutions (Sept. 6)

Week 3: Feminist lenses on international peace (Sept. 13)

Peace building, reconstruction and peacekeeping

Week 4: Feminism and international security (Sept. 20)

Gender and international armed conflicts
Feminist responses to “war against international terrorism”

Week 5: Feminist perspectives on human rights law (Sept. 27)

Week 6: Gendering international migration and refugee law (Oct. 4)

Week 7: International justice with feminist lenses (Oct. 11)

International courts (International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court)
Gender and transitional justice

Week 8: Feminism and international environmental law (Oct. 18)

October 24 – October 30: FALL BREAK & FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

Week 9: Gendering international economic law and institutions (November 1)

Week 10: Feminist perspectives on international humanitarian law (November 8)

Week 11: International/transnational feminist activism and networks (November 15)

Week 12: Presentations and discussion on term papers (November 22)

Week 13: Film discussion (November 29)

Week 14: Conclusion (December 6)