GSWS 318-4: SPECIAL TOPICS IN GSWS: FAT STUDIES

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Office: Harbour Centre
Office hours: TBA
Lecture: Tuesdays 17:30 – 21:20; HC 1325

Course Description:
As a locus of privilege, discrimination, subjectivity, and sociability, fat reveals intersections of gender, sex, sexuality, race, class, ability, place, and history. This course unpacks fatness, employing feminist and queer theories of embodiment, difference, subjectivity, and social justice. We critically examine valuations of fat, “adipose tissue” (the anatomical term for fat), and body weight, shape, size, and composition, all of which are heavily circumscribed by science, medicine, society, and culture. We explore fatphobia, fat acceptance, health at every size, “obesity,” BMI, media and popular representations, moral panics, dietary guidelines, “disorders”, and other phenomena of interest to students. Recognizing the topical and controversial nature of fatness as well as the role of GSWS in transforming students into critical advocates for social change, assignments encourage students to engage in public dialogues by considering feminist approaches to fat.

Educational Goals:
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website: http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/courses/Educational_Goals.html

Course Texts and Courseware:
The required text is: ISBN: 978-1-910849-00-2 Fat Activism Cultural Theory, Social Movements. Author: Charlotte Cooper. Please purchase from the bookstore.

You will also join groups and these groups will select one fiction book (children’s, YA, or adult fiction), and one non-fiction book (academic, popular, “self-help,” etc.) that deal with themes related to the course. Selections will be exclusive, so two groups cannot select the same book.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
1). 20% Participation and attendance
2). 20% First Person Piece OR Twitter Rant: Individual
   Write a 900-1200 word “First Person” piece based on guidelines from the Globe and Mail and using feminist perspectives learned in the course (https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/first-person/submissions/)
   OR
   Write 10x ~280 character “tweets” about a course theme
3). 30% Reading Group Project (non-fiction)
   A project and presentation on your group’s book selection. The style, format, and purpose of the project/presentation is open, with guidance from the instructor.
4). 30% Reading Group Project (fiction)
   A project and presentation on your group’s book selection. The style, format, and purpose of the project/presentation is open, with guidance from the instructor.

Prerequisite: 30 units, including 3 units in GSWS or WS or GDST.

THE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT. IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT WILL FOLLOW POLICY T10.02 WITH RESPECT TO “INTELLECTUAL HONESTY,” AND “ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE” (WWW.SFU.CA/POLICIES/TEACHING)
**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**Part I: Ground Work**
Week 1 – January 9 – Introduction
Week 2 – January 16 – Fat Histories and Feminisms on Fat
Week 3 – January 23 – Science and Medicine of Fat
   □ Formation of Groups and book selections
Week 4 – January 30 – Intersectionality of Fat and
   ⚫ First Person Piece OR Twitter Rant due
Week 5 – February 6 – Fat Activism

**Part II: Fat in Fiction**
Week 6 – February 13 – Reading Group Seminar
Week 7 – February 20 – Reading Week
Week 8 – February 27 – Reading Group Seminar
Week 9 – March 6 – Fiction Presentations

**Part III: Fat in Non-fiction**
Week 10 – March 13 – Reading Group Seminar
Week 11 – March 20 – Reading Group Seminar
Week 12 – March 27 – Reading Group Seminar
Week 13 – April 3 – Non-Fiction Presentations

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**Content Awareness**
- This course WILL address topics that may not be safe for you to discuss or hear about
- If a triggering topic is brought up in class, please take care of yourself in the way you see fit, without worry or judgment
- Please take care of each other
- Please avail SFU Counselling Services: https://www.sfu.ca/students/health/counselling.html