Cross-cultural studies in the social sciences seldom go beyond opening little windows onto different cultural communities and examining the "wealth" of cultural diversity that can be observed. To what extent are these multitudes of diversities interlinked? To what extent have they historically been impacted upon by each other in the context of international structures of power? To what extent have these structures of power stood in the way of those who seek to "liberate" themselves? These significant questions are, unfortunately, only marginally addressed by many who endeavor to study societies. Women's Studies being much more than a discipline for "interpreting" and "examining", faces the task of not merely looking at women of various cultural communities to ascertain how different they are, but of learning from these women:

- In what situations and how did they consciously empower themselves?
- What traditional strategies did they invoke and what new ones did they devise in order to empower themselves?
- Under what circumstances were their strategies and source of strength undermined?

This course roots itself in the historical struggles of women for social change in various societies and focuses on the impediments and control exercised by the State and Patriarchy in various spheres of women's lives. It compares and contrasts the impact of; (1) state-sponsored initiatives to effect control or change in women's lives through war or reform, (2) Peoples' movements for structural change like national struggles and revolutions, and their commitment to the women's concerns, and (3) women-centred autonomous struggles of women. The course proceeds thematically and adds a fourth and the most fundamental issue to the three announced above, Global Sisterhood: Can there be a global perspective of struggle for women which would cut across barriers of culture and class and unite women?

REQUIRED READING


NOTE: A reader will be prepared for the course. It will include chapters and articles from several books and journals.
ASSIGNMENTS

15%  Oral Presentation on Readings
20%  Simulation Exercise (3-4 pages)
30%  Case Profile (5-7 pages)
35%  Final analytical paper (8-10 pages)

Prerequisite: WS 100 (may be taken concurrently with the approval of the Co-ordinating Committee).

THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED TO THE CERTIFICATE IN LIBERAL ARTS.

THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED AS 3 LOWER DIVISION CREDITS IN SOCIOLOGY FOR STUDENTS WHO OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR THIS FROM SOCIOLOGY.