Course Description:
In this course, we will examine questions of gender and sexuality central to feminist critiques of knowledge and power structures, and resituate them within the context of post-colonial conditions, globalization, and racialization.

Broadly conceived as the field of postcolonial studies, the critical investigation of questions of race and ethnicity, identity and alterity, hybridity and origins, class and capitalism, nationalism and cultural imperialism has been at the forefront of “postcolonial” theoretical work. Yet less attention has been paid to the specificity of sexuality and gender relations, as well as varied feminist interventions, or “feminist longings,” within colonial and postcolonial conditions.

The first objective of the course is therefore to address and intervene in this “containment,” which is also a sign of the dominant position of male critics in the making of “theory” at large.

The second objective is to respond to the challenges to Western feminist theories on the part of women of colour and, especially, the Global South. The axis of our investigations will, therefore, be re-shifted from East/West to South/North, but will also gesture toward recent interrogations on questions of gendered identification from transgender perspectives.

Our readings will help us develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of different, yet interrelated, areas of inquiry (voice, subjectivity, the gaze, representation, Orientalist and colonial legacies, the gendered body and nationalism, the veil, reproduction, sexuality, diaspora, war and violence, transnational migrations, and labour conditions) and particular attention will be paid to questions of methodology and ethical relations. Marjane Satrapi’s graphic novel, Persepolis, will also allow us to explore these issues further and provide the platform to imagine future possibilities for feminist critical and creative work.

Course Texts and Courseware:
Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis I and II. New York: Pantheon, 2003
Adrien Katherine Wing (ed.). Global Critical Race Feminism: An International Reader (GCRF, online)
Additional readings available on WebCT.

In-class screenings:
Wedding in Galilee (1987), dir. Michel Khleifi
The Battle of Algiers (1966), dir. Gillo Pontecorvo
Under One Sky: Arab Women in North America Talk about The Hijab (1999)

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance and active participation (includes Blog and presentation response) 20%
Presentation 10%
Midterm Essay (6-8 pages) 20%
Critical responses (2 x 2-3 pages each) 20%
Final Research Essay (10 pages) 30%

Prerequisites: Prerequisite: 60 units including two Women’s Studies courses, one of which must be WS 101 or 102.