

WGSS 6240/ PPPA 6085: Gender & Public Policy

Term: Fall 2026
Section: 80/81
Class Room:
Lectures: Wed 5:10–7:00pm
Instructor: Eiko Strader, PhD
Email: strader@gwu.edu
Office: Phillips Hall 342
Office Hours:

Prerequisites:

This course has no prerequisites and does not assume any previous knowledge of the subject matter.

Course Description and Learning Objectives:

This course serves as an introduction to the study of gender and public policy by exploring how ideas about gender, implicitly or explicitly, shape the formulation and implementation of policies and programs in areas strategic to promoting social equity. Moving beyond theory, students will actively apply these concepts to community organizing, coalition building, and policy analysis while planning, launching, and implementing a [social-action project](#). We begin with a brief survey of gender theories, followed by a discussion of social citizenship and welfare states, and then familiarize ourselves with the notion of "gender mainstreaming" and critically reflect on its practice in light of intersectional theories. Drawing on a variety of (inter)disciplinary perspectives, students will analyze how gender intersects with policy and other systems of power to reduce, maintain, or exacerbate inequality.

Upon completion of this graduate seminar, you will be able to:

- Critique advanced scholarly texts to formulate evidence-based policy solutions
- Evaluate the limits of "gender parity" to drive issue development and define both short- and long-term campaign demands
- Put knowledge into action through praxis, developing capacity in leadership, recruitment, facilitation, and consensus decision-making within small groups
- Apply gender theories to conduct power mapping and target analyses of institutional practices
- Analyze policy approaches to design effective campaign strategies and alliance-building models
- Execute and evaluate advocacy by managing media outreach, event planning, and negotiation for a collective social-action project

Credit Hour Guidelines:

- In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [34 CFR 602.24\(f\)](#) and the requirements of Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3-credit seminar expects students to spend a total of 112.5 semester hours.
- [The credit model is based on a 15-week semester](#), where you are expected to have 14 weeks of instruction and one week of examination/assessment period.
- This course is designed so that you are expected to spend a minimum total of 7.5 hours per week of combined direct instruction and independent learning for a total of 112.5 hours in a 15-week semester.

Required Readings:

- Scott Myers-Lipton. 2023. *CHANGE! A Student Guide to Social Action*, 2nd edition. Routledge.
- **All other required readings are available on Blackboard** (blackboard.gwu.edu).

Course Schedule and Readings:

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

08/26 Session 1: What is Gender? And What Are We Doing This Semester?

Read:

- 1) West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "[Doing Gender](#)." *Gender & Society* 1(2):125–51
- 2) Strader, Eiko, and Sonny Nordmarken. 2026. "[The Economic Penalty of Gender Nonconformity Among Sexual Minorities](#)." *Gender & Society* 40(1):5–37

OPTIONAL:

- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 2015. "[Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation](#)." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1(1):52–72
- Westbrook, Laurel, and Aliya Saperstein. 2015. "[New Categories are Not Enough: Rethinking the Measurement of Sex and Gender in Social Surveys](#)." *Gender & Society* 29(4):534–60
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2019. [Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory](#). Duke University Press
*CH1: Intersectionality as Critical Inquiry

GOAL: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Watch:

- 1) [Walk the Walk](#) (27min) *More info [here](#)

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH1 (p.1-16)

Do:

- Prior to class, please look through some of the [past and ongoing social action campaigns](#) carried out by your colleagues at other universities!
- Please also fill out a short survey via Blackboard to share the potential issues you would like to work on this semester!
→ **We will introduce ourselves, brainstorm these issues, and build on everyone's thoughts and experiences to form tentative groups based on overlapping interests!**

09/02 Session 2: Gender, Citizenship, and Welfare States

Read:

- 1) Walby, Sylvia. 1994. "[Is Citizenship Gendered?](#)" *Sociology* 28(2):379–95
- 2) Canaday, Margot, Nancy F. Cott, and Robert O. Self. 2021. [Intimate States: Gender, Sexuality, and Governance in Modern US History](#). University of Chicago Press. *Introduction

OPTIONAL:

- Hearn, Jeff, and Barbara Hobson. 2020. "[Gender, State, and Citizenships](#)." Pp. 153–90 in *the New Handbook of Political Sociology*, edited by Thomas Janoski, Cedric de Leon, Joya Misra, and Isaac William Martin. Cambridge University Press
- Williams, Rhonda Y. 2018. "[Women, Gender, Race, and the Welfare State](#)." Pp. 463–86 in *The Oxford Handbook of American Women's and Gender History*, edited by Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor and Lisa G. Materson. Oxford University Press

GOAL: ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

Explore:

- 1) Check out the [core issues](#) the National Organization for Women (NOW) works on

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH2 (p.20-25)

Do:

- Prior to class, please rank-order the potential issues we identified during Session 1 via Blackboard.
→ **We will discuss the issues with the most votes in relation to the readings on gender, citizenship, and welfare states to identify actionable issues and form groups!**
→ **We will also choose a name for your group!**



By now, you should be part of a group and have set up your team's communication channels!

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

09/09 Session 3: What is Gender Mainstreaming? Change Theory?

Read:

- 1) UN Women. 2022. [Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming for Gender Equality Results](#).
*CH2: Principles and Approaches
Underlying Gender Mainstreaming
- 2) Hunting, Gemma, and Olena Hankivsky. 2020. "[Cautioning Against the Co-Optation of Intersectionality in Gender Mainstreaming](#)." *Journal of International Development* 32(3):430–36

OPTIONAL:

- Bowleg, Lisa. 2012. "[The Problem with the Phrase Women and Minorities: Intersectionality - an Important Theoretical Framework for Public Health](#)." *American Journal of Public Health* 102(7):1267–73
- Lombardo, Emanuela, Petra Meier, and Mieke Verloo. 2017. "[Policymaking from a Gender+ Equality Perspective](#)." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 38(1):1–19

GOAL: REFINE DEMANDS

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH3 (p.28-40)

Listen:

- 1) Thinking Allowed, BBC. 2026. [The Demise of Grand Theory?](#) (28min)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to discuss how different social theories help explain the factors contributing to the issue your team is focusing on, and map out the expected short-term and long-term outcomes.

→ **We will refine your actionable, short-term demands in class!**

09/16 Session 4: Gender-Class Equality in Political Economies, Part 1

Read:

- 1) [Cooke](#), Lynn P. 2011. *Gender-Class Equality in Political Economies*. Routledge.
– CH1: Gender-Class Equality Over time
- 2) Cooke – CH2: Paid and Unpaid Work in Context

OPTIONAL:

- [Profeta](#), Paola. 2020. *Gender Equality and Public Policy: Measuring Progress in Europe*. Cambridge University Press. – CH1: Introduction
- Profeta – CH2: The Scenario
- Profeta – CH3: From Public Policy to Gender Equality

GOAL: BECOMING ORGANIZED

Watch:

- 1) Institute for New Economic Thinking. 2023. [Intersectional Political Economy](#) (15min)

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH4 (p.43-58)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to plan your coalition-building efforts and discuss recruitment tools like social media or flyers. Develop an *organizational rap*—a maximum two-minute presentation that explains your issue and mobilize others.

→ **We will share in class how each group is organizing behind their issues and hear your individual reflections!**



At this stage, your group should have figured out core demands, mapped out initial coalition strategies, and agreed on a clear division of labor, including who will lead background research!

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

09/23 Session 5: Gender-Class Equality in Political Economies, Part 2

Read:

- 1) [Cooke](#) – CH3: Population Policies and Group Divides
- 2) Cooke – CH4: Educational Foundations of Gender-Class Equality

OPTIONAL:

- [Profeta](#) – CH4: How Women Affect Public Policy
- Profeta – CH5: How Women Affect Firms' Outcomes
- Acker, Joan. 2006. "[Inequality Regimes Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations](#)." *Gender & Society* 20(4):441–64

GOAL: KNOWING THE TERRAIN

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH5 (p.60-68)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to fill out the division of labor sheet. Indicate who will provide the historical overview, power map, and target analysis. Your team must also designate a meeting facilitator, a research coordinator, a coalition-building lead, and a communication and outreach coordinator. The communication and outreach coordinator must also fill out this student campaign survey.

→ We will review these roles and responsibilities in class!

09/30 Session 6: Gender-Class Equality in Political Economies, Part 3

Read:

- 1) [Cooke](#) – CH5: Policy Foundations of Gender-Class Employment Equality
- 2) Cooke – CH6: Current Gender-Class Employment Equality

OPTIONAL:

- [Profeta](#) – CH6: Global Challenges, Gender and Public Policy
- Profeta – CH7: Conclusions
- Profeta – Appendix: Useful Methods to Identify the Relationship between Gender and Public Policy

GOAL: SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH6 (p.72-79)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to chronicle the tasks accomplished so far in relation to your established division of labor.

→ We will do a pulse check and discuss your group dynamics in class!

10/07 Session 7: Gender-Class Equality in Political Economies, Part 4

Read:

- 1) [Cooke](#) – CH7: Gender-Class Equality in Paid and Unpaid Work
- 2) Cooke – CH8: Sustainable Policy for Greater Equality

OPTIONAL:

- Hook, Jennifer L., and Meiyong Li. 2025. "[National Work-Family Policies and Gender Earnings Inequality in 26 OECD Countries, 1999 to 2019](#)." *Socius* 11
- Elias, Juanita, and Shirin M. Rai. 2019. "[Feminist Everyday Political Economy: Space, Time, and Violence](#)." *Review of International Studies* 45(2):201–20

GOAL: STRATEGIZING ACTION

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH7 (p.81-97)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to map out the specific strategy and tactics you will use for your social campaign. We are nearing our campaign kickoff, so be as specific as possible about the who, what, where, when, why, and how.

→ In class, each group will provide a maximum five-minute summary of your planned social action campaign!

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

10/14 Session 8: Looking Beyond the 9 to 5 Office Work – Campaign Kickoff!

Read:

- 1) Strader, Eiko, and Margaret Smith. 2022. "[Some Parents Survive and Some Don't: The Army and the Family as 'Greedy Institutions.'](#)" *Public Administration Review* 82(3):446–58
- 2) Blair-Loy, M. 2009. "[Work Without End?: Scheduling Flexibility and Work-to-Family Conflict Among Stockbrokers.](#)" *Work and Occupations* 36(4):279–317

OPTIONAL:

- Milkman, Ruth, Luke Elliott-Negri, Kathleen Griesbach, and Adam Reich. 2021. "[Gender, Class, and the Gig Economy: The Case of Platform-Based Food Delivery.](#)" *Critical Sociology* 47(3):357–72
- Hwang, Maria Cecilia. 2018. "[Gendered Border Regimes and Displacements: The Case of Filipina Sex Workers in Asia.](#)" *Signs* 43(3):515–37

GOAL: GOING PUBLIC

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH8 (p.99-112)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to develop campaign messages and a media plan for the kickoff. Your draft submission must indicate the name of your media relations coordinator and press release contact, as well as include a complete draft of your press release.

→ **We will review your draft press release materials in class and get ready to go public!**

10/21 Session 9: Looking Beyond the Western Nations

Read:

- 1) Esquivel, Valeria. 2021. "Care Policies in the Global South." Pp. 400–408 in [The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Economics](#), edited by G. Berik and E. Kongar. Routledge
- 2) Sarma, Kausiki, and Yang Hu. 2025. "[The Mundane and the Extreme: Women's Experiences of Housework and Marital Violence in India.](#)" *Gender & Society* 39(5):717–47

OPTIONAL:

- Pande, Amrita. 2025. "[Dirty Wombs and Cheap Whiteness: Labors and Erasures of the Global Fertility Industry.](#)" *Critical Times* 8(2):263–85
- Chang, Andy Scott. 2024. "[Masculinity on the Margins: Boundary Work Among Immobile Fathers in Indonesia's Transnational Families.](#)" *Social Forces* 102(3):1048–67
- Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2021. "[Discipline and Empower: The State Governance of Migrant Domestic Workers.](#)" *American Sociological Review (ASR)* 86(6):1043–65

GOAL: DRIVING ACTION

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH9 (p.114-120)

Do:

- Prior to class, meet with your group to develop a clear timeline of campaign actions and activities for the next four weeks. Clearly indicate who is in charge of each task and who will manage check-ins to ensure accountability.

→ **We will review and compare your group's timelines in class to identify common milestones and anticipate potential roadblocks.**

OPTIONAL:

- Mapes, Meggie. 2019. [Speak Out, Call In: Public Speaking as Advocacy](#). University of Kansas Libraries.



Now that your group's campaign has kicked off, it's time to turn your attention to your own policy advocacy portfolio and the three-minute policy pitch presentation!

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

10/28 Session 10: Moving Beyond the Binary

Read:

- 1) Vogler, Stefan, and Rocío Rosales. 2023. "[Classification and Coercion: The Gendered Punishment of Transgender Women in Immigration Detention.](#)" *Social Problems* 70(3): 698–716
- 2) Robinson, Brandon Andrew, and Amy L. Stone. 2024. "[Trans Family Systems Framework: Theorizing Families' Gender Investments and Divestments in Cisnormativity.](#)" *Journal of Marriage and Family* 86(5):1205–27

OPTIONAL:

- Strader, Eiko. 2022. "[Demographics of Transgender People and Transition-Related Healthcare Policies Across the European Union.](#)" Pp. 211–37 in *Demography of Transgender, Nonbinary and Gender Minority Populations*, edited by A. Baumle and S. Nordmarken. Springer
- Baumle, Amanda K., M. V. Lee Badgett, and Steven Boutcher. 2020. "[New Research on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Discrimination: Effect of State Policy on Charges Filed at the EEOC.](#)" *Journal of Homosexuality* 67(8):1135–44

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS LIVE!

11/04 Session 11: Moving Toward Collective Action Against Violence

Read:

- 1) Hill Collins, Patricia. 2023. [Lethal Intersections: Race, Gender, and Violence.](#) Polity Press *CH1: Lethal Intersections and Violence
- 2) Westbrook, Laurel. 2022. "[Violence against Transgender People in the United States: Field Growth, Data Dilemmas, and Knowledge Gaps.](#)" *Sociology Compass* 16(6):e12983

OPTIONAL:

- Preston, Kayla, Michael Halpin, and Demeter Lockyer. 2025. "[Incels and Gender Inequality: Changing Tides in Defining the Far Right.](#)" *Social Problems* spaf052
- Sweet, Paige L. 2024. "[Clustered Vulnerabilities: The Unequal Effects of COVID-19 on Domestic Violence.](#)" *ASR* 89(3):421–48
- Bonnes, Stephanie. 2022. "[Femininity Anchors: Heterosexual Relationships and Pregnancy as Sites of Harassment for U.S. Servicewomen.](#)" *ASR* 87(4):618–43

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS LIVE!

↓ Knowing ↓

↓ Doing ↓

11/11 Session 12: Shifting the Reproductive Landscape?

Read:

- 1) Everett, Bethany G., and Catherine J. Taylor. 2024. "[Abortion and Women's Future Socioeconomic Attainment](#)." *ASR* 89(6):1044–74
- 2) Pew Research Center. 2026. [Public Opinion on Abortion](#)

Listen:

- 1) National Constitution Center. 2025. "[The Past, Present, and Future of Abortion in America](#)." *We The People* (55min)

CAMPAIGN ACTIONS LIVE!

OPTIONAL:

- Luna, Zakiya. 2025. "[Diving in: Connecting Reproductive Justice, Sexualities, and Knowledge Production](#)." *Sex & Sexualities* 1(2):183–91
- Weingarten, Karen. 2022. "[50 Years since Roe v. Wade: Forum](#)." *Feminist Studies* 48(3):824–49

11/18 Session 13: Shifting Power from the Ground Up?

Read:

- 1) Collins, Patricia Hill. 1986. "[Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought](#)." *Social Problems* 33(6):S14–32
- 2) Spade, Dean. 2015. [Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law](#). Duke University Press. *CH2: What's Wrong with Rights?

OPTIONAL:

- Saguy, Abigail C., and Juliet A. Williams. 2024. "[Too 'Full of Gender' How Activists Conceptualize the Promises and Pitfalls of Gender-Neutral Identity Documents](#)." *Social Problems* 71(4): 1247–61
- Bilge, Sirma. 2013. "[Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies](#)." *Du Bois Review* 10(2):405–24

GOAL: CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

Read:

- 1) CHANGE! – CH10 (p.122-124)
- 2) CHANGE! – CH11 (p.125-129)

Do:

- Before class, meet with your group to document your campaign as a blueprint for others. Create a GoogleDoc and upload it to our shared folder for class access. Following CH10, complete all nine evaluation sections. Clearly attribute authorship for each section, mirroring your original division of labor (e.g., researchers should write the research evaluation).
→ **We will review your campaign evaluation notes in class and identify areas that need revision.**

12/02 Session 14: Wrapping Up!

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT!

THREE-MINUTE POLICY PITCH!

- Attend the Fall '26 [College Summit on Social Action](#)!

12/09 Policy Advocacy Portfolio Due at Midnight

Course Assignments:

- 1) Class Participation: Because social action requires collective effort, your active and consistent engagement is essential to our classroom community. Your participation grade is split into two equal parts: 20pts

Consistent in-class engagement makes up 10 points toward your grade, evaluated through your active and meaningful contributions to weekly class discussions.

The remaining 10 points come from a theory-to-practice reflection. Once during the semester, you will bridge the gap between our readings and social action campaign work by serving as a translator between our text and our practice. Following the lecture, you will provide a 5-minute verbal reflection to the class on how the readings shaped your approach to that week's social action campaign task, and then facilitate a 5-minute discussion session by posing one question that emerged from your personal reflection.

- 2) Social Action Campaign Contribution: Successfully complete ten campaign tasks throughout the semester (listed under the "Do:" section). These tasks focus specifically on the campaign preparation and evaluation phases, ranging from initial issue identification and research to the final post-campaign assessment. 40pts

Each task is worth 4 points toward your grade and must be completed before the beginning of that week's class.

- 3) Three-Minute Policy Pitch: Deliver a three-minute policy pitch during Session 14, designed to hook an audience, define a specific problem, offer a policy solution, and deliver a clear call to action. Your pitch should be a maximum of 400 words and strictly follow the three-part framework: **Problem, Solution, Action**. 10pts

Focus on a single issue and offer one clear solution. You are welcome to build on your group's issue, pitch an alternative solution that didn't make it into the final group campaign, or choose an entirely new issue. No visual aids or presentation slides are required.

- 4) Policy Advocacy Portfolio: Submit a policy advocacy portfolio that compiles two distinct deliverables designed for specific advocacy targets. Your deliverables can include a policy brief, fact sheet, prepared testimony, op-ed, press release, or flyers designed for or building upon your group campaign. To ensure a cohesive advocacy message, your materials must follow the three-part framework: **Problem, Solution, Action**. You are welcome to utilize the research and ideas generated during your group discussions and campaigns, but **all content must be written in your own words to showcase your policy research, writing, and strategic communication skills**. 30pts

Your portfolio must include **at least three single-spaced pages and may not exceed five single-spaced pages in total**, consisting of one or multiple documents (such as a single three-page brief or one-pager with two-page testimony). **Across all materials, your portfolio should total between 1,000 and 2,000 words** to ensure sufficient depth while maintaining concise, high-impact policy messaging. To maintain readability and structural consistency, **all titles and headings must be set in 12-point or 14-point font, body text must be set in 12-point single-spaced font, and page margins must remain between 0.5 inches and 1 inch**. While following these parameters, you are encouraged to be creative with your visual design, graphics, and layout elements.

Total: 100pts

Grading Policy:

- Final letter grades will be assigned based on your total points earned out of 100, following GW Blackboard's default grading scale:

A	93.5% – 100%	B-	79.5% – 83.49%
A-	89.5% – 93.49%	C+	76.5% – 79.49%
B+	86.5% – 89.49%	C	73.5% – 76.49%
B	83.5% – 86.49%	C-	69.5% – 73.49%
- Per the [TSPPPA Student Handbook](#), A grades signify excellent work, B grades indicate good work, and C grades represent the minimum passing standard.
- No grade adjustments will be made after the close of the semester, except to correct clerical errors.
- Please review Blackboard for instructions and grading rubrics of each assignment.**
- If you are new to Blackboard, please check out [this tutorial](#) to learn how to view rubrics and submit assignments. To access feedback on your work, click the assignment title under Grades and open your submission.
- Late assignments will incur **a 10% penalty per day**. No late assignment will be accepted **3 days** after the original deadline.
- For information regarding incomplete grades, please consult [CCAS policies](#).

Communication:

- Announcements will be posted on Blackboard, with the most recent one appearing first.
- Email inquiries will be responded to promptly during normal business hours (8am to 5pm ET on weekdays). Emails received outside of these hours will be answered on the following business day.

University Policies, Student Support, and Campus Emergency Information:

Syllabus Appendix:

- Information on University policies, such as the academic integrity code, the policy on observance of religious holidays, and rules regarding electronic materials, as well as academic support, student services, and GW campus emergency information can be found at:
<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-syllabus-policies/>

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) Tools:

- In accordance with the default rules specified in [University Guidelines](#), students may not submit content for evaluation that was generated, in whole or in part, by GAI tools. Doing so without instructor's explicit permission constitutes cheating under the [Code of Academic Integrity](#) and is therefore prohibited.
- Students are permitted to use GAI tools to generate content that is not submitted to an instructor for evaluation.** For example, using GAI tools for learning, studying, and brainstorming.

Additional Resources:

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Related Conduct Policy:

- Under the [university policy](#), faculty are considered “designated reporters” and are required to “report all known information, including the identities of the parties, the date, time, and location, and any details about the reported incident to the Title IX Coordinator”
- Confidential resources are available through the [Student Health Center](#) at 202-994-5300 and the Office of Advocacy and Support ([OAS](#)) at 202-994-0443.
- To make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, please call 202-994-7222 or visit <https://titleix.gwu.edu/>

Reproductive and Sexual Healthcare:

- For a full list of resources made available through GW RAGE (Reproductive Autonomy and Gender Equity), please visit <https://www.gwrage.org/resources>.

<<< DISCLAIMER: I reserve the right to revise this syllabus if the need arises >>>