

# Course Syllabus

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## Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program

### WOMS 114: The Politics of Mothering and Reproduction

#### Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Tanya Bakhru
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Email:	Tanya.Bakhru@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 1-3pm and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous
Classroom:	On Canvas

#### Course Format

This course will be delivered via Canvas, the university's Learning Management System (LMS). Therefore you will need regular access to a computer and the Internet. You should also have familiarity with Canvas. It is in Canvas that you will find the central course homepage. Because all communication will take place through Canvas, you should plan on checking your account regularly. I encourage you to take advantage of the various notification systems offered through Canvas (apps, texting, email-linking, etc.) so that you can receive all important class communication in a timely manner.

Information about how to find your Canvas username, how to log into your account, and how to use Canvas can be found at the site listed below:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/index.html> [.\(http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/index.html\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/index.html)

If you encounter problems with Canvas and need help with technical support issues, (i.e. password reset, browser problems, etc.), you will need to contact the Informational Technology (IT) Help Desk. Their phone number is (408) 924-2377 and their email address is: [ecampus@sjsu.edu](mailto:ecampus@sjsu.edu). You may also visit the websites listed above.

### Course Description

This course uses a feminist perspective to examine the ways in which reproduction and mothering are socially and culturally constructed categories of experience. We will use an intersectional analysis to explore the ways in which motherhood and reproduction are understood and experienced. What does it mean to “mother?” How is “mother” defined? By whom? For what reasons? We will investigate how culturally and socially constructed categories of race, class, gender, and sexuality come to bear on maternal bodies and subjectivities.

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the ways motherhood and reproduction are socially constructed and not simply given with one’s biological sex identity. (Module 2 Class Discussion Questions)
2. Identify the relationship between reproduction, mothering, and other identity categories such as gender, race, class, sexuality, citizenship status, ability, etc. (Daddy and Pappa Film Response)
3. Describe the ways that mothering and reproduction are shaped by feminist politics. (Final Paper)

### Required Texts/Readings

#### *Textbook*

Ross, L., Roberts, L., Derkas, E., Peoples, W., & Tour, P., (Eds.). (2017). *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundations, Theory, Practice, and Critique*. Feminist Press: New York

#### *Other Readings*

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas and indicated as such in the course schedule.

### Course Requirements and Assignments

Discussion posts: 10x20 points = 200

Ten times throughout the course you will be asked post a response to a discussion question based on either the readings for that week, a short film, or current event. You must post an original response and respond to a classmate’s comment. Each response should be about 50 words in length. Guidelines for online discussion as well as the rubric that will be used for grading are posted on Canvas. These online discussions are my way of assessing that you are completing the reading as well as participating in the class.

Written Reading Responses 6X100 points = 600

To enhance our discussions you will be asked to prepare written reading responses (3 pages, typed, double spaced, proof read, and include a references page) each week. In the papers, I want you to address two or more of the assigned readings for that week. While the form and content of the papers can vary, it is imperative that you:

1) Identify the central argument of the authors of the readings you discuss;

2) Synthesize the articles

Synthesizing ≠ Summarizing

How are the articles related to each other?

What are the common themes, issues, ideas, that link them together?

3) State your response to the articles (do you agree, disagree, why, etc.);

4) Use evidence from the texts to support your own ideas.

Final = 200 points

Throughout the course of the semester we have interrogated the idea of reproductive justice and what that means for various groups of people. For the final paper you will need to conduct interviews with two mothers or queer identified parents about their pregnancy and/or birth and/or parenting experiences. Compare and contrast your interviews. What themes emerge? And how does the reproductive justice framework apply to their experiences? Be sure to contextualize your findings in light of the assigned readings for the course.

Your paper should 5-7 pages in length. It should be proof read, coherent, and include a references/bibliography page. It should be double-spaced and in standard size font (10-12pt).

More details for this assignment will be given when assigned.

Extra Credit:

There may be events throughout the semester, lectures, films, etc. that I will give you extra credit for attending. These opportunities will be on a TBA basis.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work.

Grading Policy

I grade using a point system. My grading system is very straight-forward and simple. Your final grade is an accumulation of points you have earned throughout the semester.

The grading scale is as follows:

Grade	Points
A plus	960 to 1000
A	930 to 959
A minus	900 to 929
B plus	860 to 899
B	830 to 829
B minus	800 to 829
C plus	760 to 799
C	730 to 759
C minus	700 to 729
D plus	660 to 699
D	630 to 659
D minus	600 to 629

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

#### Class Protocol

To be successful in this online class, you will need to do the following things:

\*\*Learn how to access and use Canvas. Given that this class is web-based, I am assuming that each student enrolled is fairly confident utilizing technology (or at least willing to learn!). You are responsible for becoming familiar with the online systems used

in the course and for resolving any computer issues and/or problems that you might have accessing and/or using any of the course materials.

\*\*Understand that a web-based course such as this requires a fair amount of self-direction and independence. You are responsible for accessing and understanding the course materials and completing the assignments. This course is not less work than a traditional course; in fact, due to the limited in-class contact that we will have, success in this course requires perhaps a higher commitment to following through with readings and assignments than does a traditional course.

\*\*Complete assignments in a thoughtful and timely manner. The activities and assignments for this course are designed to help you better learn and understand the course material. Having computer problems is NOT a valid excuse for not completing your work. Thus, make sure that you do not wait until the last minute to access materials, complete online assignments, etc. in case you encounter any technological issues.

\*\*Keep in touch with me if you are struggling or having problems. The best way to reach me is via Canvas, as I check my email account there every weekday. Due to my workload I am unable to respond to every email that students send me. Thus, I do not respond to emails that request information easily found on the syllabus and/or the Canvas site (such as: When is the exam? What are we doing next class? When are your office hours?) If you have a legitimate question or concern than I will try my best to respond to your email within 24 hours (excluding weekends).

### University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

### **WOMS 114: Course Schedule**

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

### Course Schedule

Module 1: Introduction to the Course

Module 2: Ross et al. pgs. 9-31 AND Rich- *Introduction from of Woman Born* (Canvas)

Module 3: Ross et al. pgs. 39-85 AND Walker- *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* (Canvas)

Module 4: Ross et al. pgs. 86-138 AND Hooks- *Revolutionary Parenting* (Canvas)

Module 5: Ross et al. pgs. 139-169 AND Leisenring- *Balancing Motherhood, Work, and Mental Health in Midlife: One Mother's Personal Struggles* (Canvas)

Module 6: Ross et al. pgs. 170-232

Module 7: Ross et al. pgs. 233-250 AND Lorde- *Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist's Response* (Canvas)

Module 8: Copper- *The Radical Potential in Lesbian Mothering of Daughters* (Canvas)

Module 9: Ross et al. pgs. 251-284 AND Rothman- *Beyond Mothers and Fathers: Ideology in a Patriarchal Society* (Canvas)

Module 10: Ross et al. pgs. 285-325

Module 11: Cheng- *Right to Mothering: Motherhood as a Transborder Concern in the Age of Globalization* (Canvas) AND Noonan- *The Globalization of Love: Transnational Adoption and Engagement with the Globalized World* (Canvas)


Module 12: Ross et al. pgs. 326-346 AND Thomas- *The Baby and the Bath Water: Disabled Women and Motherhood in Social Context* (Canvas)

Module 13: Ross et al. pgs. 347-380 AND Gore- *High Risk: Who a Mother Should Be* (Canvas)

Module 14: Conlon- *The Fragility of Respectability for Lone Mothers* (Canvas)

Module 15: Ross et al. pgs. 381-414 AND O'Reilly- *Feminist Mothering* (Canvas)

## Course Summary:

Date	Details
Sun Jan 26, 2020	 <a href="https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1357984/assignments/5188285">DQ1. Taking a Women's Studies Class</a> due by 11:59pm <a href="https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1357984/assignments/5188285">https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1357984/assignments/5188285</a>