**Monterey Peninsula College**

**POLS 10 / WOMN 10/ Women in American Politics**

**Spring 15 TTh 3:00pm-4:14pm SS202**

Instructor: Kerri Ryer

Office: SS105

Office Hours: 2:30-3:00pm

Email: KRyer@mpc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines American government at the national, state, and local levels, emphasizing roles and influence of women from contemporary and historical perspectives. Specifically this course will examine how gender has played a role in our historically male-dominated institutions by utilizing theoretical lens and empirical analyses. The legal and civil rights of women in areas of employment, law, and public participation are a major focus of the course.

The first section of the course will look at the historical development of the struggle for civil and legal rights for women. The second section will focus on women’s participation in political institutions as activists, voters, party members, and political candidates. The third section of the course will look at the influence women exert on policy as officials within governing institutions. The last section will survey the development of “women’s issues” and examine multiple public policy debates in detail.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Identify and describe women’s historical and contemporary legal status in the United States.
2. Identify the historical, cultural and political structures that shape contemporary political “women’s issues” and explain why/who defines them as such.
3. Identify and explain women’s historic and contemporary contributions to politics in the United States as citizens, activists and politicians.
4. Analyze and explain the feminist assumption that “the personal is political.”

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES: (MPC AREA D/ SOCIAL SCIENCE)

1. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated an ability to critically examine and comprehend human nature and behavior, social traditions and institutions.

TEACHING AND EVALUATION: This course will consist of both in person and online lectures and discussions. Students are required to read the assigned readings prior to the class date they are assigned. Your performance will be evaluated by your participation in class discussion and collaborative projects, a midterm exam, weekly quizzes, final exam and a final research paper. Unexcused absences and late work will significantly lower your grade. Instructor reserved the right to drop anyone with more than two unexcused absences. Your final grade will be based upon the following rubric:

Class participation 10%

Collaborative projects 10%

Weekly quizzes 10%

Mid-term exam 25%

Final exam 25%

Research paper proposal 5%

Final Research paper 15%

Total 100%

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Women in American Politics: History and Milestones,* Doris Weatherford 2012.
2. *Women’s Rights in the USA: Policy Debates and Gender Roles,* Dorothy E. McBride & Janine A. Parry 2010.
3. The instructor will also provide other assigned readings and media online.

HONOR CODE & CODE OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT:

All students are required to adhere to the college code of conduct and academic honesty policies. I will vigorously pursue any suspected cases of plagiarism, cheating or other violations of the MPC Code of Academic Conduct, whether completed or merely attempted. Even a first offense of academic dishonesty will result in a score of zero on that exam, and an Academic Dishonesty Report form will be filed with the Campus Disciplinarian.

MPC’s student rights and responsibilities can be found here: <http://www.mpc.edu/student-services/college-success/student-rights-and-responsibilities>

MPC’s regulations on plagiarism and cheating can be found here: <http://www.mpc.edu/home/showdocument?id=6219>

MPC’s attendance policy can be found here: <http://www.mpc.edu/home/showdocument?id=6221>

DISABILITY:

I am happy to make academic adjustments for students with documented disabilities. Students who require alternative formats for course materials or adaptive equipment need to visit the Access Resource Center that offers academic counseling, specialized instruction and classroom accommodations to students with a verified disability. You can find the center’s location and information here: <http://www.mpc.edu/student-services/specialized-programs/access-resource-center-arc>.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

I will drop anyone who does not show up to the first week of the course. After that, it is the student’s responsibility to drop the course if they wish to withdraw. Do not expect that I will initiate the withdrawal procedures for you after the first week of classes, I will not. Please see the important dates below.

IMPORTANT SPRING SESSION DATES AND DEADLINES:

Feb 14 Last date to add a course with an add code

Feb 14 Last date to drop courses and be eligible for refund of fees

Feb 16 Last date to drop course without receiving a “W”

Feb 17 Census Day

Feb 21 Last date to drop & be eligible for refund of nonresident tuition

Feb 28 Last date to request pass/no pass grade option

May 6 Last day to drop a course and receive “W” grade

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

\*Schedule is tentative and subject to change.

**Historical Perspectives on Women’s Movement for legal and civil rights**

Week 1

February 3: Introduction session will cover the course structure and requirements, as outlined in this syllabus. This class will provide a brief outline of identity politics and delve deeper into feminist legal theories.

February 5: The Women’s Liberation Movement: This class will present an

outline of the four waves of the women’s liberation movement, consider the required elements of a social movement, and

discuss inclusion and exclusion of gendered and other groups.

READINGS: Jo Freeman, (1973) “The Origins of the Women’s Liberation Movement”, *American Journal of Sociology.* 78:4 pp.792-811. AND Carol Hanisch, (1969) “The Personal is Political”, *Notes from the Second Year.*

Week 2

February 10: Female officeholders prior to the nineteenth Amendment: This session will discuss the barriers and challenges women faced in obtaining elected, appointed and civil service positions prior to the 19th Amendment.

READING: Weatherford, Chapter 2

February 12: The Battle for the Vote: This session will cover the history

of the suffragists and the political strategies they employed to pass the 19th Amendment.

READING: Weatherford, Chapter 1

Week 3

February 17: Women and the Law: This class will overview the concepts and

key terms utilized by political scientists to analyze policy debates on gendered issues.

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 1

\*Census Day

February 19: Is Feminism still politically relevant?: This class will survey the

state of women’s representation within the traditional institutions, the status of “women’s issues” and the limits to intersectionality in policymaking. We will also discuss the role that media play in shaping women’s policy debates and attitudes toward running for office.

READINGS: *Miss Representation* (streaming on Netflix and in the

library on reserve)

**Women’s participation in Electoral Politics**

Week 4

February 24: Participation in Electoral Politics & voting: This week we will survey the various barriers to women’s political participation, and discuss the gender gap. We will then review theories of representative democracy and popular sovereignty as they materialize in our gendered political system. Empirical studies on the gendered differences in political attitudes and vote choice will be presented

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 3

February 26: ***No in-person class, please participate in the online discussion section for this week about the following film.***

READINGS: *Makers: Women in Politics* (link on online classroom and streaming on Netflix)

Week 5

March 3: Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates: This class will outline the few female president and vice presidential candidates throughout American history and discuss the challenges that they faced. Candidate framing will be a main focus.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 10

March 5: Political Parties and Conventions: This class will discuss the role that women play in major and minor political parties at all three levels of analysis. The primary, caucus and convention systems will be analyzed in regards to women candidates and political actors.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 16

Week 6

March 10: Interest Groups: This class will discuss the involvement and

exclusion of women in interest groups and the history of “women’s” interest groups. What incentives for membership do interest groups provide to women, and what tactics they employ will be discussed.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 17

March 12: Political Action Committees: This class will discuss the gendered

differences present in PAC’s and pay-to-play politics. Furthermore, we will survey the history of PAC’s who focus on women candidates and women’s issues and compare them to the PAC climate as a whole.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 18

**Women in Governing Institutions**

Week 7

March 17: Statewide Elective Officeholders: This week we begin our historical analysis of women in governing institutions. We will look at the presence and absence of women in statewide elective and appointed office. The hierarchy of statewide office will be discussed and the impact of time and location on election outcomes.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 3

March 19: State Representatives & Senators: This class will outline the

history of women holding office in the House and Senate of state legislatures. A comparative historical analysis will be presented and discussed.

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 4 & 5

Week 8

March 24: Governors, Lieutenant Governors & Mayors:

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 8, 9

March 26: United States Representatives:

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 6

Week 9

**SPRING RECESS NO CLASSES**

Week 10

April 7: United States Senators

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 7

April 9: **MIDTERM EXAM \***bring blue book

Week 11

April 14: Pioneers in the Judiciary & State Courts

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 13 &14

April 16: Federal Courts

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 15

Week 12

April 21: **Term paper workshop**

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 11

April 23: Cabinet and Subcabinet & Ambassadors

READINGS: Weatherford, Chapter 12

Week 13

April 28: Councilwoman Libby Downey Q & A session

**\*TERM PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

April 30: The 2016 election: A Woman President? Clinton, Palin and Warren

READINGS: Karrin Vasby Anderson and Mathew Streb articles online. And Real Clear Politics Election 2016 Presidential Polls.

**Women and Public Policy**

Week 14

May 5: Public Opinion & The US Constitution and Women’s rights

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 2 and Harrison Chapter 2 (0nline)

May 7: The gender gap in employment

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 7

Week 15

May 12: Reproduction & Sexuality

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 4 & 9.

May 14**: Term Paper discussion / workshop.**

Week 16

May 19: The Family and Liberalism

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 6

May 21: Work and Family: the public/private divide

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 8

Week 17

May 26: Economic Status

READINGS: McBride & Parry, Chapter 10 & 11.

May 28: Post-feminist?

READINGS: Adrienne Rich, Rebecca Walker & Jonah Gokova articles online.

**\*Final term paper due by 3pm** submitted hard copy in person AND

electronically through turnitin.com.

Week 18

June 2: **3:30pm!!** **FINAL EXAM \***bring blue book

Enjoy your break and thanks for a great semester!