

## **Brief Course Description of MA in Gender Studies 2020-21**

### **REQUIRED COURSES**

#### **GDRS 5011 - Introduction to Gender Studies**

This course introduces students to the main streams of the current academic discourse on gender theory and feminism. It will explore various schools of thought in feminism and relate theoretical frameworks to issues of current interest such as the ability of women to earn an independent income, social security, occupational segregation, women sexuality, body politics and discrimination against women in different fields of society. It also introduces students to some basic methodology in gender and feminist research.

#### **GDRS 5087 - Feminist Methodology**

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the intellectual debate between feminist epistemology and scientific knowledge production as well as to equip them with the abilities of critical thinking about their methodologies and conducting research with proper methods. Topics include: 1) critically questioning the validity of knowledge production, the power relations between the researcher and his or her research subjects, and the representation of the research and the researcher; 2) cautiously examining the influence of globalization on feminist research and the intersectionality among race, class and gender; and 3) innovatively connecting theory with praxis through participatory action and writing. We will begin with a brief introduction to the history and development of feminist research, followed by discussions on feminist methodologies by exemplary researchers. In the final weeks, we will shift our focus to the application of theory and groundbreaking feminist writing through collaboration.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

### **GDRS 4007 - Gender, Sexuality and Race in Political Issues**

The course will examine the relationship between the development of gender and sexual identities and that of the contemporary politics mainly in, but not limited to, Asian societies. We will look into how the contemporary politics and gender structures in the regions interplay and produce racial identities through the lens of gender. For example, the Korean-Japan and China-Japan dispute over issues of comfort women in World War II; Gender activism in Gaza and Arab Spring, the female suicide bombers in middle-East, and religious right-wing movements in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Students will learn how to examine the issues of gender and sexual identities and how they are deeply embedded within the global politics as well as local social mores.

Specifically, the course is divided into two parts. First of all, we will review the key theories of citizenship, war, democracy, nationalism, human rights and so on – through the lens of gender. Students are expected to learn the core theoretical debates and methods through reading key texts. The second part of this course will analyze these theories and debates through cutting-edge case studies. Topics will include comfort women, sexual violence in war, terrorism, female suicide-bombers and right-wing religious movements, human trafficking, grassroots feminist organizations, anti-war activism and so on. Students are expected to establish a more solid and critical range of views to examine these global issues and political controversies.

(For GDRS4007, the passing grade is C for postgraduate students and the assessment criteria is different from that of undergraduate students. For details, please refer to the course outline of the course.)

### GDRS 5030 - Advanced Topics in Gender Studies I

This seminar aims at engaging students in the most current researches in gender studies, providing them with intellectual stimulation and support for the preparation of the M.Phil./ Ph.D. thesis. The content of the course will cover a wide range of topics including theory of gender analysis, gender and culture, gender and language, etc.

### GDRS 5040 - Advanced Topics in Gender Studies II

This seminar aims at engaging students in the most current researches in gender studies, providing them with intellectual stimulation and support for the preparation of the M.Phil./ Ph.D. thesis. The content of the course will cover a wide range of topics including theory of gender analysis, gender and culture, gender and language, etc.

### GDRS 5050 - Contemporary Women's Issues

This course aims to introduce methods and approaches of Women's studies for the understanding of Women's issues in contemporary society. It shall examine a broad range of issues facing women today, including job segregation, gender stereotypes in education, double-burden of working women, health and globalization, as well as discrimination against middle-aged women, single mothers and new women immigrants. The course will also review the continuous development of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Women's Commission established by the government, and their impact on Hong Kong society.

### GDRS 5083 - Making Change: Feminism, Civil Society and Social Transformation

This course is for those who aspire to social justice but are short of skills and consciousness. Drawing on feminist and critical theories, and Nonviolent Communication, the course will explore the myths of human nature that stand in the way of a large-scale and sustainable social transformation, and discuss the dynamism between gender, feminisms and civil society. The first four lectures will lay a theoretical foundation that cultivates a need-based

perspective, weaving the gap between the personal and the social. On that basis, the course will examine how feminist-inspired campaigns intervene into social issues of significance to contemporary world, namely space, body politics, neoliberalism, and institutional reform. Alternative practices such as restorative justice, shared economy, ecovillages and intentional communities, new ways of governance such as Holacracy and Sociocracy will be introduced.

#### GDRS 5084 - Genders and Sexualities in a Globalizing World

This course looks at the critical sites of gender/sexuality formations in different societies and the many meanings of gender/sexuality in globalized cultures by drawing on a cross-cultural perspective and a comparative approach. Issues surrounding the constructions of gender/sexuality and the changing gender relations and sexual politics in the context of global modernities against the backdrop of postcolonialism, globalization and transnational capitalism will be addressed. The course covers topics such as the sex/gender systems, categories of gendered and raced identities, representations of femininities/masculinities in popular culture and media, and gendered migration and displacement.

#### GDRS 5085 - Gender and Work

How is work different for men and women? Why does gender matter in shaping the experience of work? Beginning with these questions, this course explores the distinct positions of men and women in the workplace and in the labor markets and examines gender relationship, gender segregation and gender discrimination across a variety of research topics on farm work, factory work, migrant work, business, housework, service work, entertainment and leisure. We will be reading about, analyzing, and discussing diverse empirical studies on men and women as workers, homemakers, care workers, organizers, or entrepreneurs, which provide fresh ways to look at the relationship between gender and work. This course provides students with key concepts and theories about the gendered institutions of economic development, organization, migration, and culture. Based on lectures, class discussions, and analytical practices, this course will help students to be an independent thinker and educated reader of social issues from a gender perspective. Students are expected to acquire critical thinking and analytical

skills to reflect on theories and research findings, and to evaluate social facts and trends with implications for education, policy interventions and public participation.

#### GDRS 5086 - Gender and Family

This course explores the concept of the family as a gendered social construction, considering how the institution of the family perpetuates gender roles and how social changes transform the familial structure at the same time. The course puts a premium on feminist thoughts on the reproduction of gendered family. We'll start with introduction to how family is formed in different cultural contexts, and then proceed to discuss how family and kinship can be redefined under the development of reproductive technology, transnational migration, and globalization. Topics will include familial formation in contemporary patrilineal/matrilineal societies, non-mainstream marriages like walking marriage and bride kidnapping practices, gendered division of labor in conducting housework, the social construction of motherhood, domestic violence, cohabitation, non-married family, single-parent family, gay family, surrogacy, and transnational adoption and so on.

#### GDRS 5088 - Chinese Women and Development

This course explores the distinct roles of Chinese women in social and economic development and examines the historical and regional diversities of women's images based on various topics including work, family, organization, migration, culture and so on. Women have not only played an important role in various areas of economic activities, but also helped to shape family management, public participation, and consumption. This course points to a variety of women's living and working conditions in China, as well as their experiences of social changes brought about by patriarchal traditions, socialist rules, market reforms, and changing policies of family planning and migration. As a result, Chinese women have appeared in various research traditions differently as iron girls, laid-off workers, working sisters, left-behind women, flower vase, housewives, dama and so on. Based on lectures, class discussions, and analytical practices, this course will help students to be an independent thinker of ideological shifts, policy changes, and social transformations from a gender perspective. Students are expected to acquire critical thinking and

analytical skills to reflect on theories and research findings on work ethics, urban-rural divide, family relationship, intimacy and romance, and consumerism.

#### GDRS 5090 - Special Topics in Gender Studies

The course is aimed to teach students a particular gender issue (or particular set of gender issues) and their practical and theoretical implications.

#### GDRS 5131 - Women and Literature

This course explores the historical and theoretical connections between literature and women. Besides the focus on the idea and image of the woman in a selection of literary texts, the course will also examine the roles of women in literary activities.

#### GDRS 5210 - Gender and Law

The course aims to introduce students to the relationship between gender and law in different jurisdictions, to introduce students to the legal concept of equal opportunities under the framework of gender politics and to encourage students to be aware of possible gender bias in their future careers.

#### GDRS 5403 - Gender and History

The course demonstrates critically how the gender perspective as an important new academic paradigm challenges the mainstream historical analysis and explanation and influences feminist historiography. Topics may vary from year to year based on the respective teacher's research specialization in women's/gender of China, Asia or the West. (Not for students who have taken HIST3420.)

#### GDRS 5640 - Psychology and Gender

This course reviews historical and cultural perspectives of the psychology of gender. Various genetic, biological and social determinants of gender similarities/differences in physical and sexual attributes, cognitive abilities,

personality, and social behaviour are examined. Socialization processes and their consequences will be explored in relation to individual development, education, work, and mental health; and related research findings will be critically reviewed. Current issues in gender relations and conflicts such as battering, sexual assault, and sexual harassment will be explored. (Not for students who have taken PSYC3640).

#### GDRS 5920 - Media and Gender Representations

This class will examine the different forms of media and discuss the role of media in constructing notions of gender and social identities.

#### ANTH 5540 - Anthropology of Gender, Sexuality, and The Law

This course will be a cross-cultural and historical study of the contexts in which gender and sexuality are articulated and contested in law. Premised on a social constructivist understanding of gender and sexuality, the course aims to provide a set of tools for students to understand and analyze the norms and frameworks regulating human sexuality through the law. The course further locates the making of gender and sexuality in the law within histories of colonialism and imperialism. Students will learn to evaluate different legislative and judicial responses to issues directly related to sexuality such as consent, rape and adultery, prostitution and human trafficking, violence against women, homosexuality, same-sex and heterosexual marriage etc. They will also learn to examine how legal regulation of gender and sexuality extends into other areas of the law about urban space, inheritance, citizenship, immigration and asylum, as well as the prison system. The course aims at providing students with the critical tools to analyze the cultural and historical constructions that inform “laws in the books, laws in the mind, and laws in action.”

#### ANTH 5670 - Gender and Culture

This course looks at the relationship between gender and culture, by comparing women in societies with different modes of production and social organization. Through analysing their sex roles, enculturation process, kinship, division of labour by sex, power and control, and social development, students

will understand how culture influences the concept of gender and its related behaviour among human groups.

#### CULS 5203 - The Body in Culture and Art

Images of the body represent systems of thought, aesthetics beauty and our identity. This course takes a comparative approach to theories of body and embodiment in the Western and the Chinese traditions. In this course we will ask: What is a body? How do we define and represent different bodies? In what ways do cultural values mold our perception of the body? How is the understanding of the body informed and transformed by scientific development? Throughout this course we will seek answers to these questions by focusing on the Western and the Chinese traditions from the cultural and the scientific perspectives. We will analyse some important themes of the subject by integrating a theoretical approach with art, photography, films, novels and short stories.

#### CULS 5206 - Gender, Love and Sexuality in Intercultural Studies

This course aims at enhancing consciousness of the variations among humans in their sexualities and more accepting of individuals with sexualities different than your own. To accomplish this we will examine a number of variations with a sympathetic perspective without regard to their acceptability within the current cultural perspectives of our society. Students are encouraged to examine their sexuality in both critical and sympathetic ways incorporating the insights gained in the course.

#### CULS 5216 - Queer Movements and Sexual Politics

The last two decades witness the rise of vibrant new social movements in the field of sexuality, which, together with many other intersecting social forces, has tremendously reshaped the socio-political landscapes, here and abroad. This course aims to examine the historical trajectory of queer movements as well as the issues and debates pertinent to them so as to make sense of the complexity of sexual politics in the late modern society. It also poses challenges to the commonly held division between academy and social activism by examining their intertwined but not very smooth relationship. To that end, the course will draw on the works of lesbian and gay historians such

as Lillian Faderman, Jeffrey Weeks, John D'Emilio and Michel Foucault to lay a social constructionist framework through which the emergence of polymorphous sexual subjects is understood. The social construction of homosexuality in Hong Kong since the 1980s will be discussed as a case in point. The works of Diana Fuss, Judith Butler and Eve Segewick will guide us to explore the internal dilemma of identity politics and the queer turn in the study of sexuality.

## CULS 5220 - Cross-Dressing and Hong Kong Cinema

In her "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," Judith Butler initiates her concept of "gender performativity." She proclaims that gender is a drag, and it is an imitation and a performance that produces the illusion of an inner sex or psychic gender core. In other words, gender and sexuality is the production of "self" structured and motivated by various kinds of sociopolitical, cultural, racial and historical forces. Engaging the configuration of gender, sexual identity and body politics by Butler as well as other queer theorists such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Halberstam, Mary Ann Doane and Marjorie Garber, this course is designed to investigate the cross-dressing and the gender-crossing of Hong Kong cinema in comparison with Western filmmaking. We will study the cross-dressers and their visual representations in both Chinese and Western cinema. Issues addressed include the historical construction of cross-dressing, the redefinition of masculinity and femininity of transvestites, the queer spectatorship of audience reception, gay and lesbian identities, homophobia and heterosexism, transsexualism and the discourse of AIDS. What we are going to interrogate is how clothes make gender and sexuality in cinematic representation and stage performance especially in martial arts genre and opera film.