

**POLI 332–Women and Politics**  
**Tuesday – Thursday 8:00 – 9:15am**  
**Robert Scott Small (RSS) 251**

Professor Lynne E. Ford  
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Office for the Academic Experience

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and always by appointment

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A *paradox* is a seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true. In many ways, women's quest for inclusion in the political realm and their quest for political, social, and economic equality present us with a paradox. In our lexicon, equality often connotes *sameness* between two or more things. However, when we are talking about equality between men and women, we must confront biological differences. In some cases, the biological differences are meaningless. Alternatively, sometimes treating men and women "the same" severely disadvantages women due to meaningful biological differences between men and women. How we understand, evaluate, and attach social value to the differences is a political act. In this course we will examine how women and men have confronted the paradox of equality throughout history and in a variety of contemporary contexts.

We will begin by looking at the philosophical origins of the women's equality argument and analyze how these ideas have informed the integration of women into the mainstream political sphere by examining several "movements" and their results. You will notice over time how strikingly similar the "important questions" are century after century, decade after decade.... We will discuss democratic citizenship as it relates to women, the concept of "rights," and evaluate women's rights under the U.S. Constitution and federal and state laws. As you will learn, your gender equality rights often depend on where you live in the US. In the middle section of the course, we will explore how women engage in politics today. We will examine elections and women candidates, voters, and office holders. Once elected, we'll look at how women behave as public officials—the issues they care about and their effectiveness as legislators. In the final section of the course, we will look more closely at specific public policies regarding education, reproduction, families, work and wages, and the evaluate how women will fare in the "new economy." Throughout the course, whether you are male or female, you will have an opportunity to think about how these issues regarding gender equality currently impact your life and how they will shape your future.

The questions and controversies we will examine in this course are far from settled. Women and men are not yet political, social or economic equals. And, we are in the midst of the run up to a presidential election. There are currently two women in the race—Hillary Rodham Clinton and Carly Fiorina. In order to immerse yourself in the daily controversies of equality, you will need to follow the national and international news. You can do this in a number of different ways. I prefer you get into the habit of reading a daily national newspaper, but you can also make use of television news, social media outlets, blogs, late night comedy, and cable political programs. However you access the news, keeping up with the national news is not optional!

\*\*\*\*\***REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**\*\*\*\*\*

Lynne E. Ford, *Women and Politics: the Pursuit of Equality*, 3rd edition ISBN 978-0-495-80266-2 (paper)

Susan J. Carroll and Richard L. Fox, eds. (2014) *Gender and Elections: Shaping the Future of American Politics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ISBN 978-1-107-61161-0 (paper)

Deborah L. Rhode, (2014) *What Women Want: An Agenda for the Women's Movement*. ISBN: 987-0-19-934827-5 (cloth)

Additional Readings will be distributed in class and/or posted to OAKS. Please get in the habit of checking OAKS daily for news and course content. You can also set up a notification for the course.

### ***Course Orientation***

Class sessions will involve some lecture, but will mostly involve deep discussion of the assigned readings and the issues contained in those readings. Most classes will begin with a short presentation that frames the day's discussion and suggests issues and questions to be discussed. As a student in the course, it is your responsibility to yourself and your colleagues to come to class prepared to engage in the discussion. If I find that the majority of the class is not prepared to intelligently discuss the material assigned, then I will be forced to resort to reading quizzes or some other means to compel your active, informed participation. You cannot be a free rider on the backs of others who take the time to prepare, nor can you sufficiently absorb the material as a passive observer. Politics, particularly in a presidential year is very dynamic. You will need to check OAKS daily for updated reading material and assignments.

### ***Student Learning Outcomes and Relevant Assessments:***

Through active engagement in and completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate the philosophical origins of women's equality claims and explain how liberalism both advances and constrains women's progress toward full inclusion in the American political system.
- Analyze women's role as citizen, voter, candidate, and policymaker recognizing how the historical context conditions the contemporary role.
- Evaluate women's interests in a variety of public policy contexts.
- Understand women's equality claims and resulting action agendas across time in order to create a contemporary action plan.

### ***Student Responsibilities***

Regular class attendance, on-time arrival, and careful preparation for each class is required. I will not always take formal attendance, but you will be held accountable for your choices with regard to attendance. While I would rather you come late than not at all if rare circumstances conspire against you, chronic tardiness is not acceptable. If you attend class and do the readings, but still have difficulty, I will do everything I can to help you understand the material. Every student will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Classroom Code of Conduct.

### ***Use of Technology in the Classroom***

Please silence your cell phone and other electronic devices when you enter the classroom. Your full attention should be on this class for the 75 minutes we are together twice a week—this means that you will refrain from any extraneous virtual conversations during class just as you would refrain from talking to your seatmate while I or one of your colleagues is talking.

### ***Special Circumstances***

If you have any kind of special circumstances that I should be aware of, please let me know right away. If you have SNAP accommodations of any kind, please make the appropriate notifications and arrangements with the Center for Students with Disabilities within the first week of class. Alternatively, if you have any sort of undiagnosed learning disability, a physical impairment of any kind that will require special arrangements for exams or papers, if you are an athlete or member of any club or organization that will travel, if you are a primary caregiver, let me know. I will keep the information you share with me strictly confidential, but in order to create the best environment for your academic success, I need to know if there are circumstances that may interfere with your performance in the course. You are welcome to schedule an appointment with me to talk about any extenuating circumstances.

## ***Office Hours and Ways to Contact Me***

Although I am not in the political science department full-time, I am easy to find and you shouldn't hesitate to come to my office. My office is in Randolph Hall, first floor, room 110 "Office of the Academic Experience." I will do my very best to keep regular **office hours on Mondays 1-2p and Thursdays 10-11a**. There may be times when I am called into a meeting that I didn't anticipate. However, I am always accessible by email and I will get back to you ASAP. Please take the initiative to contact me or come to see me if you have questions, problems, or special circumstances. I would also encourage you to use my office hours to come in and introduce yourself. My office phone number is at the top of the syllabus. If you leave a message, please be sure to speak slowly, clearly and leave your full name and a phone number so that I can return your call.

## ***Academic Dishonesty***

This subject is very important. When you enrolled at the College of Charleston, you signed an Honor Code. I expect you to abide by that code. It is the only way for you to maintain the integrity and value of your degree. Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. If you are found to have cheated on an exam, or plagiarized any portion of a writing assignment, or submitted previously graded work as new work for this class, you will fail my course. I will turn the case over to the Honor Board and vigorously pursue further disciplinary action. If you have any questions or are unsure what constitutes cheating or plagiarism—please ask. Ignorance is not a valid defense.

## ***Course Requirements***

***Critical Reading Papers*** (2 @ 15%) There is a lot of reading for this course because there is a tremendously rich body of research and new work being done on the topic. Rather than have you read too far beyond what I've assigned, this short paper assignment will begin with the material on the syllabus. You will each produce TWO PAPERS that focus on the reading for the day on which you intend to submit the paper. The paper is due by the start of the class period and you must be present on the day you submit the paper—no email submissions. By short I mean a paper of between 3-5 pages that starts with the ideas, theories, and research findings in the reading assigned for the day/topic you choose and then moves beyond those to include at least two additional sources. These additional sources can include a variety of types of material—an opinion essay, editorial, a piece of media, a scholarly article, a book, a political cartoon, an advertisement, a news article, etc.

Every critical reading paper must begin with a critical thesis—in other words, you adopt a clear perspective on the topic you've chosen as well as demonstrate an understanding about the topic you are covering more broadly. You should support your critical thesis with three supporting arguments drawing on the sources you have collected from within and beyond the course. Be certain that you have a conclusion to each paper and that each paper has a "take away" point related to your critical thesis. I want to learn something about the topic through your perspective and the way you have organized your arguments and source material. The first paper is due before fall break (by and including and including the class on October 15) and the second paper is due by and including November 12. You have a great deal of discretion when you decide to submit the paper, but there will be no extensions granted.

***Examinations*** (2 @ 15%) There will be two examinations given during the term. The first will be given in class on September 24 and focus on the material in Part I. The second will be a take-home format covering material in Part II. Questions will be distributed in class on and due on October 30 by 5:00pm. There will not be a final examination given in this class. The Equality Agenda group project and presentation will take the place of a cumulative final exam.

***Encountering the Controversies of Equality Essay*** (15%) One feature of the primary text for the course identifies contemporary issues or examples where the two paths to equality (fairness or sameness) are at the heart of the issue. Since you will be regularly attending to the news relative to SC, the United States and the

globe, as well as watching gender at work in popular culture, this critical analysis assignment provides an opportunity to write your own “Encountering the Controversies of Equality.” It is by design, a rather short essay exercise. The important element to the assignment is to think about issues, policies, and current events going on right now or in the recent past and identify a situation in which you see the tension between equality defined as “fairness” and equality defined as “sameness” and/or the tension in the pursuit of equality along the two paths: different treatment or legal equality. You can choose any issue—just look around, there are loads of them. Since this is a class in American politics, your choice of example should be also be domestic or involve Americans and/or their behavior (as in the Abu Ghraib example in Ch 9). The essay should be between 750 – 1000 words, typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins on the page. Your feature should have an interesting and appropriate title and you should carefully proofread your paper before submission. Include a bibliography of source materials consulted and/or quoted in your essay. You may include images or links to other media.

**Group Project – Creating an Equality Agenda for the Presidential Candidates** (25% total)

The 2016 presidential election is already underway and although there are two female candidates competing in the primaries, issues important to advancing gender equality tend to get distorted in this arena. This project is intended to allow you to create a Gender Equality Agenda for each party’s candidate in the general election. You will work on this project in small groups. Groups will be assigned after the drop/add deadline. Half of the groups will design an agenda for the Republican candidate and half will design an agenda for the Democratic candidate. We’ll draw assignments to party by lot. If any progress is to be made, both political parties have to be involved. Deborah Rhode’s book *What Women Want* will provide everyone with a common starting point. Beyond that, you can dream about what type of world you would most like to live in and make recommendations consistent with your vision. You must, however, take into account the political realities of the U.S. political system and climate. As a group, you will create a common agenda and a single presentation of your ideas. Your presentations should be highly polished as if you were making the pitch to the candidate himself or herself. Each of you will write an individual paper using the common agenda as the framework but supporting the framework and policy recommendations in greater detail. You will receive a separate assignment sheet for this project. Presentations will be in mid-November; you’ll write a draft and a final individual paper.

**Paper Policies and Due Dates** Unless otherwise specified, all writing assignments are due at the start of class. For each day an assignment is late, 5% will be deducted from the final grade. This applies to everyone, no exceptions. Critical Reading papers are due on the day that the topic is listed on the syllabus—no late papers, no exceptions.

**Important Dates**

(15%) Examination #1 In class on September 22, 2015

(15%) Examination #2 Take Home Exam available in OAKS October 19, due October 30, 2015

(15%) Short Critical Reading Paper #1 Due on or before class on October 15, 2015

(15%) Short Critical Reading Paper #2 Due on or before class on November 12, 2015

(15%) Encountering the Controversies of Equality Paper—Due on November 24, 2015

(25%) Equality Agenda Group Project (group presentation 15%, individual paper 10%) November/December

\*This project will have a separate assignment sheet with relevant deadlines\*

**Course Grades** Your grade in the course is determined solely by the quality of your work in this course. I grade on a straight scale and do not curve or otherwise judge your performance against that of your colleagues. As you are aware, the College has adopted a new grading scale that now allows for the full range of +/- grades. Grades for individual assignments and the final grade in the course will be based on the following scale: 93-100 A; 90-92 A-; 88-89 B+; 83-87 B; 80-82 B-; 78-79 C+; 73-77 C; 70-72 C-; 68-69 D+; 63-67 D; 60-62 D-; below 60 F. If you have any questions, please let me know.

## ***Course Schedule and Reading Assignments***

(Subject to change as necessary at the discretion of the instructor; check OAKS daily for new readings or news)

### ***August***

25: Introductions and Syllabus Review

27: Important Concepts in Pursuit of Equality: Sex, Gender, Equality, Difference

Reading: *What Women Want*, Introduction and Chapter 1

“The Ideology and Biology of Gender Difference,” OAKS

“How Easily Does a Social Difference Become a Status Distinction: Gender Matters,” OAKS

## **I. At the Founding: Arguments in Favor of Equality for Women**

### ***September***

1: The Argument in Favor of Full Equality for Women

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 1

“What’s in a name? Two Approaches to Evaluating the Feminist Label,” OAKS

“Debate Over the Future of Feminism...” (New Republic) OAKS

“Feminism’s Ugly Internal Clash...” (Salon) OAKS

3-8-10: Movements for Women’s Equality: Suffrage

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 2

“Suffrage History in South Carolina” OAKS

Films: *One Woman, One Vote* (excerpts); *A Single Woman* (excerpts)

15-17: Movements for Women’s Equality: The Equal Rights Amendment (1920-?)

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 2, pp. 51-65

“The Subtle Side of Sexism,” OAKS

“The Equal Rights Amendment: Why the ERA Remains Legally Viable...” OAKS

Films: *Makers* (excerpts)

### ***September 22: Examination #1 – in class***

## **II. Suffrage Accomplished--Women as Voters, Candidates & Political Actors**

24 - 29: Women as Voters and Participants in Politics

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 3

*Gender & Elections*, Chapter Introduction, 3, 4, 5, and 6

### ***October***

1: Who Votes for Women? Do women vote for Women Candidates?

Reading: "Do Gender Stereotypes Transcend Party?" ER

“The Impact of Gender Stereotyped Evaluations on Support for Women Candidates,” ER

6-8-13: Women as Candidates: candidate emergence, political ambition, persistent stereotypes

Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 4

*Gender & Elections*, chapter 8

“Electing Women of Color: the Role of Campaign Trainings,” OAKS

“Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office,” OAKS

“If Only They’d Ask: Gender, Recruitment, and Political Ambition,” OAKS

14: Mayoral Candidate Forum/Debate (7:00p, Sottile Theatre)

15: The Political Geography of Female Candidates and Officeholders  
Reading: “Comparing Predictors of Women’s Success...” OAKS  
*Gender & Politics*, chapters 7 and 10

**October 19-20 Fall Break      Take Home Examination Questions Available on OAKS**

22- 27: Is the Presidency the Ultimate Glass Ceiling? The case of Hillary then and now....  
Reading: *Gender & Elections*, chapters 1 and 2  
“Women are Never Front-runners” OAKS  
“Reflections on Gender and Hillary Clinton’s Presidential Campaign...” OAKS  
Films: *Chisholm ’72 Unbought and Unbossed* (excerpts)

29: Does it make any difference if women are elected? Women as Political Actors  
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 5  
“Linking Women’s Descriptive and Substantive Representation in the US” OAKS  
“Exploring Gender Differences in State legislators’ Policy Preferences” OAKS  
Films: *14 Women* (excerpts)

**October 30, 2015 TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 5:00pm**

**November**

### III. Gender and the Politics of Public Policy

3-5: The Politics of Work and Pay  
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 7  
*What Women Want*, chapter 2 and chapter 7  
Additional articles posted to OAKS

10: The Politics of Families, Conception and Reproduction  
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 8  
*What Women Want*, chapters 3 and 4  
Additional articles on OAKS

12: Are work and family compatible? Concept vs reality and the debate  
Reading: Chapter 8, *Women and Politics*  
*What Women Want*, chapter 5  
Additional articles on OAKS

17 and 19 In-class Group Presentations: “An Equality Agenda for the Presidential Candidates”

24: Where do we go from here? What are the Prospects for Gender Equality?  
Reading: *Women and Politics*, Chapter 9  
*What Women Want*, Chapter 9