

ID 300U-01: Women in the 20th Century

General Education Competency Area:

Interdisciplinary Capstone: Integrative Seminar in Ethics and Values

M/W 9-10:15

SGC 122

“The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.” --Gloria Steinem

“Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.” --Potter Stewart

Professor: Dr. A. Canfield
Email: aecanfield@lcsc.edu
Phone: 792-2362
Office: Spalding 218

Student drop in/office hours:
Mondays 12-1 pm
Tuesday 9-10:15 am
or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

Ethics are defined as a body of moral principles or values held by or used to govern a culture, group, or individual. Using this definition to guide us, we will examine the diverse ethical issues women and society confronted in the 20th century, focusing on the experiences women of different races, class backgrounds, locations, and cultures. Women faced a rapidly shifting world in the 20th century. Their individual rights expanded in numerous ways, yet new ideas about and definitions of womanhood, femininity, equality, and “women’s place” questioned the ethical values different parts of society placed upon women as a group. We will investigate major issues in the 20th century that challenged society’s overarching values and ethics in areas such as working women, wage discrepancies, suffrage, birth control, education, racism, feminism, political activism (and political apathy), motherhood, domestic violence, and sexuality. We will consider how different perspectives regarding women shaped larger cultural responses and ethical attitudes at different points in time. One of the goals of the course is to give you a larger historical and social perspective to help you consider contemporary ethical issues facing women and society.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Read and evaluate concepts and perspectives from multiple disciplines related to ethics and values.
- Use writing, discussion, research, and collaboration to analyze and understand how individuals and societies are shaped by ethics and values.
- Demonstrate self-reflection, broadened perspective, and respect for diverse viewpoints by exploring issues related to ethics and values.
- Integrate and apply accumulated knowledge to develop strategies that address issues of ethics/values.

Readings

- *American Women’s History: A Very Short Introduction* (1st edition), by Susan Ware
- *Passing*, by Nella Larsen
- *The Bell Jar*, by Sylvia Plath
- *The Handmaid’s Tale*, by Margaret Atwood
- Other readings (available on Canvas or online as noted in the course schedule)

Course Requirements and Grading

Reading Responses: Because so much of this course is based on class readings and discussions, I want to make sure that everyone has done the assigned reading and is well-grounded in context so they can participate fully in the class discussions. To achieve this, the Wednesday before responses are due, I will provide a response prompt on Canvas based on the next week’s readings. Those prompts are found under the “Assignments” link on Canvas and in the module called “Weekly reading response prompts.” Students are required to write *at least* a one-page (Times New Roman, 12 pt., one-inch margins, double-spaced) response to the question, which will be due the following Monday **in class**. This is the only assignment that I require hard copies for, as all other work will be

submitted through Canvas. Make sure that you fully answer the question(s) posed, that you address in some fashion **all** the readings assigned for the week, and that you consider ideas of “ethics” in your response. Each response also needs to include, in at least one sentence, what you see as the *major* ethical issue women and/or society faced during the time period covered in the readings. Students are expected to read all assigned readings each week, but you only need to respond to half of the response prompts. Students whose last names start with A-M will turn in papers for odd-numbered Reading Responses (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11) and students whose last names begin with N-Z will have the even-numbered Responses (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12). I will drop one of these papers (or you can just do five of them—your call!) These responses will be graded for their analysis of the question and comprehension of the readings, but are not formal essays. These five response papers are worth 20 points each, for a total of 100 points. See course schedule for response due dates.

Think piece essays on novels: I believe that novels (and popular culture in general) can both reflect larger trends in society and also help shape society and common views. Novels can help bring attention to specific issues and perhaps controversial ideas. They allow for fictional characters to explore ideas and subjects, which paves the way for discourse on issues. In this light, you are required to read three fictional novels over the course of the semester: *Passing* (by Nella Larsen), *The Bell Jar* (by Sylvia Plath), and *The Handmaid’s Tale* (by Margaret Atwood). Each of these is set during a different era and deals with ethical issues facing women and society during that time period. You need to read and participate in class discussions on all three novels, but you are only required to write a response think piece essay on **TWO** of them.

The think piece essays (worth 100 points each) are designed to improve your writing skills, your critical analysis skills, and your understanding of different themes and ethical choices in women’s lives. For these two 3-4-page papers, focus on a theme of your choosing that the book featured and explore what this theme (and the book in general) reveals about societal perceptions of women. Ideas for you potentially to consider: what the novel contributes to the general understanding of women’s place(s) in society, how it treats women and ideas of gender in general, views on childbirth and patriarchy, and/or sexuality. There are many potential avenues you could explore for this paper; I want you to write about something that stood out to you. I do not want a book summary with these. You should be able to sum up the basic plot of the book in **TWO** paragraphs. The rest of your paper needs to focus on a theme and explore the book’s contributions to understanding that theme.

Passing, by Nella Larsen, is set in the 1920s, a decade full of change for women. The novel deals with race issues at a time when the nation as a whole moved into modernity. The author is part of the Harlem Renaissance, an artistic movement led by African-Americans who sought to use art as a way to discuss race and racism in the United States. The novel deals with racial perceptions and the cultural and social reasons behind “passing” for a different race. It contends with identity confusion, racism, sexuality and sexual identity, social class standings and expectations, and women’s limited opportunities. If you write on this novel, the paper is due **Oct. 5**. *The Bell Jar*, written by Sylvia Plath, is set in the 1950s. It was written in the early sixties, and reflects some of the changing ideas about and society’s expectations of women, public spaces, private pressures, and femininity. The novel deals with a young woman’s growing dissatisfaction with her life, and her feelings of isolation as she tries to balance others’ expectations of her with her own goals. It deals extensively with issues of gendered depression and the oppressive nature of society that many women faced in the 1950s. If you choose to write on this novel, the think piece is due on **Nov. 2**. The final novel, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, is by Margaret Atwood. It deals with the last quarter of the twentieth century. This book is a dystopian novel, and is concerned with the impacts of the feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s as well as the backlash against feminism in the 1980s. If you choose to write on this book, the paper is due on **Nov. 30**. Remember: you only need to write a paper on **TWO** of these books, but you need to read all three.

Final reflection paper: For this paper, I want you to reflect on the class and its main themes as a whole. You could discuss areas of learning and growth for you (events, peoples, themes, etc., you hadn’t known about before), or areas you want to explore more on your own, or if the class (or certain readings, concepts, etc.) challenged you, or other areas. In the assignment instructions on Canvas, there are some questions you may want to consider as you think through this paper. Please see those, as they might guide your thinking. This 3-4-page paper is due **Dec. 7** and worth 100 points.

Final research project: This 8-10-page paper is the major project for the course and is worth 250 points. It is a culmination of everything the class has read and discussed over the semester, and as such should incorporate ideas from class readings, discussions, and lectures. I expect outside research for this paper, as well, including other secondary sources (come talk to me for title and author suggestions) and perhaps even primary sources (newspapers, club notes, government documents, films, TV shows, songs, letters, diaries, etc.). You are required to have at least FIVE out-of-class sources in your final paper. One of the goals for this paper is to make the course relevant for each of you and for you to see how ethical considerations are part of our daily lives. **You need to research what you feel is a significant ethical issue facing women in either your major in school or in your anticipated career choice.** You could consider salary issues, discrimination (or reverse discrimination), female representation, sexual harassment, job opportunities, etc. I highly encourage you to speak with faculty in your program and/or with women in the field. I want you to deal with the following two questions in your final paper: (1) How has gender both limited and expanded women's opportunities during the 20th century? and (2) How have different (and changing?) ethical concerns impacted women's opportunities? Your paper must consider changes over the course of the 20th century and how these changes affect women now.

The following assignments are designed to ensure that students are completing their research in a timely fashion. You cannot skip any of these assignments and you cannot hand in a subsequent assignment without completing the one before it. This means that you cannot skip the topic proposal and head straight to the proposed outline assignment; you will have to do the first assignment (although, with my late policy, this might mean receiving no actual points for the assignment). Canvas has examples of these "stepping stone" assignments so you can see how to approach each of them.

First, you need to hand in a **topic proposal**. This should be just a short, one-paragraph description of your topic. Are you examining women in a career field, or in an academic program? What is your goal with the project? What do you think (early in the semester, so don't worry if this changes) the major ethical issues for women in your area are? My objective is to help you focus your research a bit more at this point. When I grade this assignment, I will also provide you with research suggestions, including some sources and, potentially, contacts. The goal of this assignment is to make sure that you are beginning to consider your research project early enough to fully complete all of your research. This proposal is due **Sept. 21**, and is worth 25 points.

Next, you need to hand in a **proposed outline** of your paper. The goal of this assignment is to make sure that you have considered how to frame and organize your work in terms of writing. If you want feedback on your larger argument, thesis, or theme, you can ask for assistance within this assignment. A good way to do this is to also hand in your introductory paragraph, so I can see how you are setting up the paper and its argument, but this is not required. This assignment is due on **Nov. 9** and is worth 75 points.

Your **final paper** should use information from class discussions, lectures, course readings, and (primarily) outside research. It needs to be well-researched with a strong argument, demonstrate a firm grasp of the topic, incorporate ideas of ethics and respond to the larger questions posed in the assignment, and contain relevant and accurate evidence. It is a formal paper and cannot include any first-person references (I, we, me, us, our, etc.) or contractions. This 8-10-page (worth 250 points) paper is due **on Monday, Dec. 12**. No late work will be accepted.

Participation and attendance: This class will have some lectures to give each student an overview of specific subjects, but it is primarily a discussion-based class. As such, participation and attendance constitute a large portion of your final grade. Please come to class with the reading assignments completed, as they will provide a foundation for that day's discussion. In an upper-division course, I expect a high degree of critical discussion from everyone, so don't just skim the readings quickly. Read carefully and thoughtfully. Be prepared to offer and defend your opinions. Participation from everyone is required and is worth 150 points. The daily attendance is worth an additional 100 points. If it appears that students are not doing the assigned reading (even on weeks when not required to hand in a reading response), I reserve the right to give quizzes based on the reading. Trust me: this

is not a right you want me to exercise. The class is more enjoyable if you are well-grounded in the readings and ideas before you come to class, I promise.

Canvas Component

We will utilize the Canvas component of this course in a few ways. Some of your assignments (reading responses, novel think piece essays, final reflection essay, and the and final research project assignments) will be submitted through Canvas, and all of those will be due by 11:59 pm PST on the date noted. Your reading responses will be submitted **IN CLASS** each week (hard copies required). On Canvas, you will find examples for the topic proposal and proposed outline assignments for your final research paper, all of your additional readings, the weekly prompts for your reading responses (these will open the Wednesday before), writing tips, and the syllabus. I will use Canvas for announcements about the class (which you can set up to have forwarded to your email). The grade book is also on there so you can always track your points during the semester. Points for attendance and participation, though, will only be entered right before midterms and after the last day of class.

Miscellaneous class information

Late assignments: Assignments are due on the day noted on the course schedule. Late work will be accepted for everything except the final research paper. Late assignments will lose five percent for each day late, including weekends. **Late work won't receive any feedback.** Late assignments also have a one-week deadline, after which I will no longer accept them without documentation demonstrating why you could not get your assignments in on time. There are no make-ups on quizzes or in-class writings.

Attendance: As noted above, attendance matters and will help you succeed in this class. However, we are still living in a challenging world right now, and I completely understand that we all need to be flexible. If you or someone in your household is sick or has tested positive for Covid, **DO NOT COME TO CLASS.** We can get you caught up and I will work with you to get class notes from another student. You will not lose any points for missing class if you are sick, but I will need some sort of documentation if your illness takes you away for more than two class periods in a row. If you have to miss class for more than two weeks, please communicate with me so I can work with you on deadlines. I may need to see documentation, because I will only extend due dates or excuse late points if there is a legitimate reason that you could not attend and hand in assignments.

Excused absences: These definitely still include medical and family issues. Just stay in communication with me if issues come up and I can be understanding since life is weird right now. Excused absences can include jury duty, school-related activities, documented emergencies, etc. If you have a documented excused absence, let me know as soon as you can so I can work with you.

Student drop-in/office hours: On Mondays from noon to 1 pm and Tuesdays from 9 to 10:15 am, I will be in my office (Spalding 218). These times are for students to come in and meet with me. If you have questions about assignments or course content, or just want to discuss women's history, class, college in general, or the wonder and beauty that is Elvis, this is a great time to stop in. If you would like to meet on Zoom, you will need to make an appointment with me. Just email me so we can set up a time, within or outside of my posted office hours.

Disability accommodations: Students requiring special accommodations or course adaptations due to a disability and/or a health-related issue should contact Accessibility Services at 208-792-2677 or by visiting their office at LIB 161. Official documentation may be required in order to receive an accommodation and/or adaptation. I am happy to work with you so that you can be successful, and will find the best possible solution. Please communicate with me and the Accessibility Services office so we can do this.

Classroom Etiquette: We will often discuss highly sensitive subject matter in this class including, but not limited to, issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and politics. Since history and ethics are open to multiple interpretations, disagreement is fine—but disagreements are to be grounded in historical interpretation. They must be targeted at *ideas* and they must be delivered respectfully. Personal attacks against individuals *will not* be tolerated. You can expect the same respect from me that I expect from you.

Email: I highly recommend using the email feature in Canvas. If you use my LC email, make sure you use the correct email (aecanfield@lsc.edu). I do not have an lmail.lsc.edu address. I am not responsible for emails sent to an incorrect address. I will always respond to let you know that I received your message. If I have not replied within two

working days, assume that I did not get it. I only check my work email during work hours (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm PST), so don't worry if you don't get a response from me to an email sent in the evening or on the weekend. If you are emailing me outside of the Canvas email system, please put ID 300 in the subject line.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of all students. Instances of academic dishonesty will result in the failure of the class. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism (the use of someone else's words or ideas without acknowledgement), cheating on assignments or exams, multiple submissions, and assisting someone else in committing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will be treated as such. Violations of academic honesty will be reported to the appropriate school officials and the student **will fail the course**. No exceptions.

Basic paper guidelines: All papers are required to cite any works used (using whatever citation style is appropriate for your discipline) and be in Times New Roman, 12-point, font. Please double-space all papers, too. Use of any font besides Times New Roman, 12 point, will lose five points. Papers that are not double-spaced will lose five points. Make sure that your first and last name is at the top of the first page for the reading responses, and that you have proofread your work.

Incomplete policy: I understand that unforeseen circumstances can arise in students' lives, making them unable to complete a course. You can request an Incomplete grade (I) in certain circumstances; however, you will only have one semester to make up the work before the I turns into an F grade. To receive an Incomplete, you need to discuss the issues and options with me, and then make a "formal" request (an email is fine). You need to have completed at least 80% of the work for the course. Please see me as soon as you can if you believe you will need an Incomplete. Pay attention to the dates in the syllabus for dropping courses and withdrawals, as well. My mantra over the last year has been all about flexibility and compassion. There is much out of control in everyone's lives and I am here to help you succeed in this class however I can. Just try to stay in communication with me if things change suddenly on you.

Good dates to keep in mind:

- September 3: Last day to add classes or drop without "W" grade on transcript
- September 5: Labor Day (campus closed)
- November 3: Last day to drop from classes or withdraw from college for the semester
- November 21-25: Fall/Thanksgiving Break (no classes)
- December 20: Final grades posted to WarriorWeb

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade scale:</u>
Reading responses: 100 points	A 920-1000 points
Think piece essays (two novels): 200 points	A- 900-919
Final reflection paper: 100 points	B+ 880-889
Topic proposal: 25 points	B 820-879
Proposed outline: 75 points	B- 800-819
Final research paper: 250 points	C+ 780-799
Attendance: 100 points	C 720-779
Participation: 150 points	C- 700-719
Total points: 1000	D+ 680-699
	D+ 600-679
	599 and below F

Course Schedule:

Week 1, August 22 and 24: Welcome, Overview, and Introduction

Week 2, August 29 and 31: Overview of 20th Century Women's History

Film: "Triangle Fire" (53 minutes)

Read:

- Chapters 3 and 4 of *American Women's History*

*****September 3 is the LAST day to drop class without a "W" grade on your transcript*****

Week 3, September 7: Women at Work at the Turn of the Century

Sept. 5: Labor Day, NO CLASS

Read:

- "The Woman Who Toils: Being the Experiences of Two Ladies as Factory Girls," (1903) by Bessie Van Vorst and Marie Van Vorst
- "From the Russian Pale to Labor Organizing in New York City," by Annelise Orleck
- "Voluntary Motherhood," by Harriot Stanton Blatch

Due:

- Reading response 1, Sept. 7

Week 4, September 12 and 14: Rise of the New Woman

Read:

- "Winds of Change: New Women and the Bicycle around the Turn of the Twentieth Century," by Audrey Lopez
- "The New Womanhood," by Winnifred Harper Cooley
- "The Yellow Wallpaper," by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Due:

- Reading response 2, Sept. 12

Week 5, September 19 and 21: Feminism and Suffrage

Film: Iron-Jawed Angels (123 minutes)

Read:

- "How Racism Tainted Women's Suffrage," by Monee Fields-White
- "Tactics and Techniques of the National Woman's Party Suffrage Campaign"
- 1906 *Life* editorial on woman suffrage
- Don't forget to read our first novel, *Passing*, as we will be discussing it next week in class!

Due:

- Reading response 3, Sept. 19
- Topic proposal, September 21

Week 6, September 26 and 28: Cross-Currents of the 1920s and Nella Larsen's *Passing*

September 28: Discussion of *Passing*

Read:

- "How Flappers Redefined Womanhood (Hint: It Involved Jazz, Liquor and Sex)," by Sarah Pruitt
- "Two views on ERA"
- 1923 teacher contract
- "The Case for Birth Control," by Margaret Sanger

Due:

- Reading response 4, Sept. 26

Week 7, October 3 and 5: The Great Depression

Read:

- “Last Hired, First Fired”
- “When I was Growing Up,” by Nellie Wong
- “Will Women Lose Their Jobs?” by Norman Cousins

Due:

- Reading response 5, Oct. 3
- Think piece on *Passing*, Oct 5

Week 8, October 10 and 12: World War II

Read:

- Letter from Mary McLeod Bethune to FDR on Black women
- “Working for Victory: Women and War, 1941-1945,” by Ellen Carol DuBois and Lynn Dumenil
- “Japanese American Women During WWII,” by Valerie Matsumoto
- “1943 Guide to Hiring Women”

Due:

- Reading response 6, Oct. 10

Week 9, October 17 and 19: World War II, con’t

Film: “League of Their Own” (128 minutes)

- Don’t forget to read our second novel, *The Bell Jar*, as we will be discussing it next week in class!

Week 10, October 24 and 26: The Role of Consensus for Post-War Ideas of Women; and Sylvia Plath’s *The Bell Jar*

October 26: Discussion of *The Bell Jar*

Read:

- “The Perfect 50s Housewife Myth Busted,” by Lucy Waterflow
- “The Second Sex,” (introduction) by Simone de Beauvoir
- “The Cold War and the ‘Feminine Mystique,’” by Sara Evans

Due:

- Reading response 7, October 24

Week 11, October 31 and November 2: The Civil Rights Movement and Women’s Roles

Read:

- “A Mass Movement for Civil Rights,” by Ellen Carol Dubois and Lynn Dumenil
- “Black Women and Black Power: The Case of Ruby Doris Smith and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,” by Cynthia Griggs Fleming
- “‘It Was like All of Us Had Been Raped’: Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle,” by Danielle L. McGuire
- “How It Feels to be Colored Me,” by Zora Neale Hurston

Due:

- Reading response 8, October 31
- Think piece on *Passing*, November 2

*****November 3—Last day to withdraw from classes or college for the semester*****

Week 12, November 7 and 9: A Changing Society and the Beginnings of the Women's Movement

Read:

- “Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo,” by Casey Hayden and Mary King
- “The Problem That Has No Name,” by Betty Friedan
- Excerpt from *Power of the Positive Woman* by Phyllis Schlafly
- [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) (web link)
- “The President's Commission on the Status of Women: Studying Women's Issues and Making Proposals,” by Jone Johnson Lewis
- Don't forget to read our final novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, as we will be discussing next week!

Due:

- Reading response 9, November 7
- Proposed outline for final research project, November 9

Week 13, November 14 and 16: Second-Wave Feminism and Defining Rights; and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*

November 19: Discussion of *The Handmaid's Tale*

Film: “Anita: Speaking Truth to Power” (95 minutes)

Read:

- [Case summary of *Roe v. Wade*](#) (web link)
- “Why I Want a Wife,” by Judy Syfers
- “The Politics of Housework,” by Pat Mainardi
- “The Impact of Title IX,” by Barbara Winslow

Due:

- Reading response 10, Nov. 14

****November 21-25: Fall Break, NO CLASSES****

Week 14, November 28 and 30: In Search of Equality and the Backlash

Film: “Baby Boom” (110 mins)

Read:

- *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women* by Susan Faludi (introductory chapter)
- “Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America,” by American Association of University Women

Due:

- Reading response 11, Nov. 28
- Think piece on *The Handmaid's Tale*, Nov. 30

Week 15, December 5 and 7: Women in the 21st Century and “Having it All”

Read:

- “Why Women Still Can't Have It All,” by Anne-Marie Slaughter
- “The Fatherhood Bonus and the Motherhood Penalty: Parenthood and the Gender Gap in Pay,” by Michelle J. Budig
- [Household activities statistics](#) (web link)
- [Gender pay gap research](#) (web link)

Due:

- Reading response 12, Dec. 5
- Final reflection paper, Dec. 7

**Final research papers on 11:59 pm, Monday, December 12.
NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED**