

POLS 494 Honors: Senior Seminar
What is the role of women in an ideal society?
[SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO MINOR CHANGES BEFORE JANUARY]
Northern Illinois University
Department of Political Science
Spring 2015

Instructor	• Dr. Andrea Radasanu
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Email Address	• aradasanu@niu.edu
Office Hours	• Tuesdays & Thursdays 11am-12pm; and by appointment
Classroom	• Honors seminar room (CL)
Class Time	• Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30am-10:45am

Course Description:

Or, what is the appropriate or just role of women in political life? Are women fundamentally different than men? Is there such a thing as human nature or as female nature? And how does “femininity” qualify or disqualify women from political participation? How does the form of government affect the views of the appropriate role of women in society? These are the sorts of questions that this course poses. Answers are pursued through reading various philosophical, political, historical, and literary texts, from antiquity to the present. The National Endowment for the Humanities, through its Enduring Questions Program, is generously supporting the development of this Political Science course.

Readings:

The following are REQUIRED texts. They can be purchased at either of the campus bookstores.

- ❖ Aristophanes, *Three Plays* (ed. Henderson) - 9780415907446
- ❖ Boccaccio, *On Famous Women* – 9781599102665
- ❖ De Pizan, *Book of City of Ladies* (Trans. Richards) (Rev) - 0780892552306
- ❖ Engels, *Origin of the Family, Private Property & State* (Intro Hunt) - 9780141191119
- ❖ Gilman, *Herland* -9780486404295
- ❖ Machiavelli, *Mandragola* – 9780917974571
- ❖ Shakespeare, *Taming of the Shrew* (Arden edition) – 978-1903436936/1903436931
- ❖ Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* - 9780691158341
- ❖ Plato, *Republic* (Bloom translation)– www.archives.org
- ❖ Saxonhouse, *Women in the History of Political Thought* – 9780275916558
- ❖ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/816/816-h/816-h.htm>)

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance and Participation:

Your attendance and class participation are important components of the course and will make up 20% of your course grade. You are expected to participate in a lively manner, by answering questions about the texts, asking questions about the texts, and, generally, by offering insightful comments that will enrich your experience as well as that of your fellow students. This is a seminar. That means there is more emphasis on class discussion than in lecture courses. If there is a special class event (campus talk, pop culture night, etc.) then participation in these events is expected.

2. Reading:

All reading assignments must be completed BEFORE the beginning of the relevant class. Please keep in mind that your ability to participate effectively will depend on your diligence in completing the readings as assigned.

Since particular passages of the text will be referred to and read in class, please bring the appropriate texts to class.

3. Assignments:

i) 3 *Short response papers* (10% each). You choose three out of four short paper topics to write on. You may write all four and have the lowest grade dropped. These papers will be short (500-700 words). You will have to present your thoughts in the course of the relevant class. Your oral contributions will be calculated into the grade.

ii) Pop culture projects (10%). Students will choose a pop culture protagonist and place her into a wider historical context vis-à-vis the course.

ii) *Final Paper* (35%). The term paper will count for 25% of the grade, and the presentation of the paper will count for 10%. A list of paper topics will be presented in a first weeks of class. Students are encouraged to expand one of their short response papers into the term paper. The paper should be about 2500 words.

Grading Scheme:

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Three short response papers: 30% (10% each)

Pop culture projects: 15%

Final Paper: 35% (25% written product; 10% presentation)

Grading Scale:

93%-100% =	A	90%-92.9% =	A-	87.5%-89.9% =	B+
83%-87.4% =	B	80%-82.9% =	B-	77.5%-79.9% =	C+
70%-77.4% =	C	60%-69.9% =	D	Less than 60% =	F

Lateness Policy:

Short papers will be penalized for being late. If they are late, then you won't be able to participate in the class where said papers will be discussed. This is part of the short reaction paper grade. If the paper is not available at the beginning of the class in which it is due, then it will incur a 25% penalty. These short papers will not be accepted 24 hours after due date and time.

For the term paper, if it is not handed in on time (at the beginning of the class period when it is due), late penalties will apply. Each day of lateness will cost you 5% of your essay grade. Penalties accrue each day, including weekends and holidays, until the paper is received. For example, if you hand in the paper after the class period but on the same day the paper is due, you will incur a 5% penalty. Another 5% will accrue the following day, and so on. In principle, there are NO exceptions to this policy. This is a term paper. You will have over two months to work on it. It is your responsibility to work on it in a timely fashion such that last minute colds or work load surges or personal problems don't get in the way of your assignment. You are encouraged to seek guidance from the professor on the essay itself early in the semester to avoid last minute difficulties.

If you miss your presentation date, no arrangements can be made to make up the grade unless there is an absolutely unavoidable medical or other very serious reason. It may become impossible to accommodate a make up in cases where inability to be present persists beyond allotted time frame for presentations.

Class Decorum:

You are expected to be courteous and collegial in this class. Here are some of the decorum guidelines:

- ❖ Be on time for class.
- ❖ Do not leave during class. Use the restroom, get a drink of water, etc. before class begins or after it ends or when there is a break. If you must leave early or come in late, please provide a reasonable explanation and be as undistruptive as possible when you are coming or going.
- ❖ Respect your classmates. Do not interrupt your colleagues, and make sure that your comments are civil. Discussion is wonderful and encouraged, but it is only possible when we listen to one another and make comments that are courteous.
- ❖ No cell phones, no private conversations, no snoring. If you wish to interrupt to ask a question, please put your hand up. Questions are encouraged!

Unannounced Quizzes:

The professor reserves the right to give unannounced quizzes if it becomes clear that students are not doing the assigned reading, and the quality of class participation and discussion is unsatisfactory.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit assignments will not be given on an individual basis to raise final grades.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

A student who believes that reasonable accommodations with respect to course work or other academic requirements may be appropriate in consideration of a disability must (1) provide the required verification of the disability to the Disabilities Resource Center, (2) meet with the Disabilities Resource Center to determine appropriate accommodations, and (3) inform the faculty in charge of the academic activity of the need for accommodation. Students are encouraged to inform the faculty of their requests for accommodations as early as possible in the semester, but must make the requests in a timely enough manner for accommodations to be appropriately considered and reviewed by the university. If contacted by the faculty member, the staff of the Disabilities Resource Center will provide advice about accommodations that may be indicated in the particular case. Students who make requests for reasonable accommodations are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the Disabilities Resource Center in this process, including but not limited to the Student Handbook.

A wide range of services can be obtained by students with disabilities, including housing, transportation, adaptation of printed materials, and advocacy with faculty and staff. Students with disabilities who need such services or want more information should contact the Disabilities Resource Center at 815-753-1303.

Academic Integrity:

University Policy: Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are responsible for plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students responsible for, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than

an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever such action is taken, and the [Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct](#) shall receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition of the case, which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a sanction greater than an F in the course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or flagrant violations), the faculty member shall refer the matter to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report. Additional sanctions greater than an F in a course can be levied only through the University Judicial System. With regards to finding the student either responsible or not responsible for his or her action, the ruling of the Judicial Hearing Board shall be binding. In cases where there is either a finding of responsibility or an admission of responsibility by the student, any recommendations by the hearing board regarding the course grade are non-binding on the instructor, who remains solely responsible for assigning a course grade, consistent with the policies set forth in the course syllabus.

Course policy: This course adheres to the University policy elaborated above. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported, and course sanctions will range from an F on the assignment to an F in the course based on the severity of the misconduct. In addition to the misconduct outlined above, from the point of view of this instructor in this course, handing in work that has been handed in for another class also counts as misconduct. You must produce your own original work specifically written for this class.

Department of Political Science Web Site

Undergraduates are encouraged to consult the Department of Political Science web site on a regular basis. This up-to-date, central source of information will assist students in contacting faculty and staff, reviewing course requirements and syllabi, exploring graduate study, researching career options, tracking department events, and accessing important details related to undergraduate programs and activities. To reach the site, go to <http://polisci.niu.edu>. For the most up-to-date information on scholarships, internships, and other department news, I encourage you to “like” the department on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NIU.PoliticalScience>) or follow us on Twitter (@niupols).

Undergraduate Writing Awards:

The Department of Political Science recognizes, on an annual basis, outstanding undergraduate papers written in conjunction with 300-400 level political science courses or directed studies, such as independent studies or honors theses. Winners are expected to attend the Department’s spring graduation ceremony where they will receive a certificate and a check for \$50.00. No more than two papers may be submitted by a student. There is no requirement as to the length of papers submitted for the award. Often the Department awards prizes for both an outstanding short paper and an outstanding long paper. The number and types of award is dependent upon the papers submitted for consideration in any given year. Authors do not have to be political science majors or have a particular class standing. Only papers written in the previous calendar year are considered for the award.

However, papers completed in the current spring semester are eligible for the following year's competition even if the student has graduated. Papers can be submitted by students or faculty and must be supplied in triplicate to the undergraduate secretary. All copies must have two cover pages – one with the student's name and one without the student's name. Papers are not to be stapled or bound. Instead, please use paper clips. Papers are generally due in March and notice of call for papers and submission deadlines will be published in the department e-announcements. You may also contact the department for information at 753-1015.

Religious Observance:

If classes or assignments coincide and conflict with your religious observance, please let the professor know as soon as possible so that you can be accommodated in the best possible way.

Course Outline and Due Dates:

January 13	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose and aims of course • Saxonhouse, chapter 1 – “The Context: Liberal and Preliberal Views of Political Life”
January 15 & 20	Ancient Thought Experiments: Of Female Guardians and the Rule of Women <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristophanes, <i>Assemblywomen</i> (in <i>Three Plays by Aristophanes</i>) • Saxonhouse, pp.17-24 and 32-36
January 22 & 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plato, <i>Republic</i> (www.archive.com -Bloom edition), book 5 • Saxonhouse, pp.37-52. • Okin, chapters 2 and 3 <p>First Short Paper Due January 27 in class –Is Aristophanes/Plato in favor of political equality between the sexes?</p>
January 29, February 3 & 5	Mirror for Princesses – From Lucrezia to Virgin Mary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boccaccio, <i>On Famous Women</i> <p>Preface I Eve, Our First Mother II Semiramis, Queen of the Assyrians XLII Dido or Elissa, Queen of Carthage XLV Rhea Ilia, a Vestal Virgin XLVI Gaia Cyrilla, Wife of King Tarquinius Priscus XLVIII Lucretia, Wife of Collatinus LV Veturia, a Roman Matron LVIII Virginia, Virgin and Daughter of Virginius LXII Claudia, a Vestal Virgin</p>

	<p>LXIII Virginia, Wife of Lucius Volumnius LXIV Flora the Prostitute, Goddess of Flowers and Wife of Zephyrus LXVII Sulpicia, Wife of Fulvius Flaccus LXXIX Sempronia, a Roman Woman LXXXII Portia, Daughter of Cato Uticensis LXXXIX Antonia, Daughter of Antony XCIV Pomeia Paulina, Wife of Seneca CI Joan, an Englishwoman and Pope CIII Gualdrada, a Florentine Maiden CVI Joanna, Queen of Jerusalem of Sicily Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (recommended) Saxonhouse, chapter 5
February 10, 12, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pizan, <i>City of Ladies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part One: chapters 1-9; also, chapters 27-28, 32, 46. • Part Two: chapters 12-13; also, chapters 19, 22, 25, 41-47, 53-56. • Part Three: chapters 1-3; also, 18-19. • Saxonhouse, chapter 6 <p>Second Short Paper Due February 17: Compare Boccaccio and Pizan on what constitutes “virtue” for women?</p>
February 19, 24, 26	<p>Modern Sexual Revolutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Machiavelli, <i>Mandragola</i> • Saxonhouse, pp. 166-173.
March 1 & 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare, <i>Taming of the Shrew</i>
March 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie up loose ends • Paper topic development <p>Third Short Paper Due: What is the Machiavellian basis for the liberation of women from patriarchal authority?</p>
March 10 & 12	<p>MARCH BREAK</p>
March 17 & 19	<p>From the Bourgeois Family to Socialist and Feminist Utopias</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i>, II.2.9, II.3.8-12; also, II.1.2, 5-7; II.2.1-4, 8-9. •
March 24 & 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engels, <i>Origin of the Family</i>, II, VIII, IX •
March 30 &	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perkins, <i>Herland</i>

April 2	Fourth Short Paper Due April 1: Is religion compatible with sexual equality?
April 7, 9, 14	Paper Presentations
April 16	No class
April 21	Paper Presentations
April 23 & 28	TBA/ pop culture presentations
April 30	Conclusion –Okin, chapters 10 and 12
	Essays Due
	Monday May 5 -2pm –meeting to return papers