

WMS 240.101: Special Topics in Women's and Gender Studies:
Campus Sexual Violence

Wednesdays
5pm – 7:40pm
LA 2303

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DESCRIPTION:

Colleges and universities are heralded as sites of intellectual freedom, upward mobility, and personal development. However, campuses across the country are also home to sexual assault, harassment, exploitation, and violence. Despite increased attention from politicians, administrators, and student activists, the prevalence of campus sexual violence remains stagnant. This course asks how can feminist theories and evidence-based strategies prevent sexual violence at institutions of higher education in the 21st century United States? We will consider sexual violence as an interpersonal and institutional problem that is inherently interconnected with gender, sexuality, race, and power. We will analyze the role of policy, education, and activism in sexual violence prevention, as well as related issues such as justice, alcohol, and technology. While grounded in feminist theories, this course will also draw upon the disciplines of social science, public health, and education.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and understand risk and protective factors for campus sexual violence
2. Apply feminist theories to campus sexual violence prevention methods
3. Analyze sexual violence prevention methods through evidence-based research, best practices in the field, and feminist activism
4. Create their own intervention, informed by research and feminist theories, to prevent campus sexual violence

DEPARTMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Feminist theories, critiques and social movements
2. The intersection of gender with race, class, nation, and sexuality
3. Issues of sexuality and the social construction of sexual identities
4. The diversity of experiences and contributions in global context
5. Social/cultural forces that shape and constrain gendered identities and the diverse experiences of women and men
6. Women's participation in and experiences of various social institutions such as the labor market/economy, the political system, religion, education, health, etc.

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SKILLS

1. Ability to apply gender as a category of analysis
2. Ability to use feminist theories and methodologies to analyze women's lives
3. Ability to use evidence to evaluate knowledge claims
4. Ability to think critically about prevailing normative assumptions, social and cultural institutions, as well as their own lives
5. Ability to examine women's lives different from their own while recognizing the assumptions and stereotypes that inform our perceptions of them
6. Ability to write and speak knowledgeably, thoughtfully, clearly, and critically

RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE NOTE

I am a responsible employee, and as such have an obligation to report all disclosures of sexual violence to Towson University. Sexual violence includes sexual harassment, sexual assault (both non-consensual penetration and non-consensual touching), sexual exploitation, stalking, relationship violence, and sexual intimidation. Disclosures can happen in person, in writing, and online. If you disclose incident(s) of sexual violence involving yourself, at any point in your life, or any members of the Towson community (faculty, staff, or students), I have an obligation to report the information shared to the Towson University Title IX Coordinator. After a report is made, they will reach out with an email offering resources and chance to meet, which you have the right to accept or decline. If you have questions about the requirements of a responsible employee please feel free to ask me or the Title IX Coordinator (410-704-0203 or titleix@towson.edu).

SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCES

This course covers many aspects of sexual violence that may be triggering, upsetting, or disturbing to students. If you would like to speak to a free and confidential therapist, contact the Towson University Counseling Center during business hours (410-704-2512) or TurnAround at any time (443-279-0379). People impacted by sexual violence are welcome and encouraged to take this course, but it is not an appropriate substitute for therapy.

DIVERSITY

Towson University values diversity and fosters a climate that is grounded in respect and inclusion, enriches the educational experience of students, supports positive workplace environments, promotes excellence, and cultivates the intellectual and personal growth of the entire university community. Should you feel that you are experiencing a negative environment related to diversity issues or cultural sensitivity, I encourage you to contact myself or the Office of Inclusion and Institutional Equity (410-704-0203).

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In order for you to benefit from the course—and to be fair to all students—I will not tolerate academic dishonesty, in any form. The following constitute violations of the Student Academic Integrity Policy:

- Plagiarism: Presenting someone else's work as your own
- Fabrication and falsification: Inventing or altering information for academic work
- Cheating: Using unauthorized materials in academic work
- Complicity in academic dishonesty: Assisting someone else in committing an academic violation
- Abuse of academic materials: Making resource materials inaccessible to other students
- Multiple submissions: Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization of the instructor(s)

Penalties for academic violations may include the following:

- a revision of the work in question and/or completion of alternative work, with or without a grade reduction
- a reduced grade (including "F" or zero) for the assignment
- a reduced grade (including "F") for the entire course

For a more extended explanation of these violations, visit this site:

<http://inside.towson.edu/generalcampus/tupolicies/documents/03-01.00%20Student%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf>

Please contact me if you are uncertain of the definition of these academic violations and their potential consequences.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY:

Conditions on campus sometimes force the university to close. Should this occur, I will send a message to your Towson e-mail addresses that explains any revisions to our schedule and assignments. The university's website (www.towson.edu) and the main University phone number (410-704-2000) state when conditions on campus force the university to close. To have text message alerts regarding campus closings sent to your cell phone, visit:

<http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/>

ACCESSIBILITY

This course complies with the Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), Administration Building, Suite 232, 410-704-2638 (Voice), 410-704-4423 (TDD). If you need accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me, and bring a statement from DSS authorizing your accommodation.

Do NOT audio, video, or otherwise record any part of class without the prior written consent of the professor.

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POLICY ON REPEATING COURSES

Students may not repeat a course more than once without prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

COURES REQUIREMENTS

Grading Category	Points
Attendance and Participation	10
Weekly Reading Responses	50 (5 points each)
Event Reflections	10 (5 points each)
Final Project	30
Total	100

GRADING GUIDELINES

It is the student's responsibility to read the Towson University Catalog sections on Academic Regulations. This course uses a plus and minus grading scale in accordance with Towson University grading policies. The number system is indicated below. Your final grade is the sum of the points received on all assignments throughout the semester.

A	92-100	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D+	68-69
A-	90-91	B	82-87	C	70-77	D	62-67
		B-	80-81			F	Below 62

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Class attendance and participation (10 points)

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class section. If you are not present at the start of class, I will count you as tardy. Two tardies will be counted as an absence. If you arrive after 6:20 you will be counted as absent. If you leave class and miss more than 20 minutes, you will be counted as absent.

Over two unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction of five points from your total grade per absence. If you are absent, excused or unexcused, it is your responsibility to make sure you obtain the information covered in class. Utilize your classmates first.

Excused absences require prior approval from the instructor. Please provide me as much notice as possible for your absence. It is university policy to excuse students' absences for the following reasons:

- Illness or injury when the student is unable to attend class
- Religious observance where the nature of the observance prevents the student from attending class
- Participation in university activities at the request of university authorities
- Compelling verifiable circumstances beyond the control of the student

Please email me documentation for any excused absences.

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Participation means coming to class prepared to reference the reading materials, share, and listen. In addition to being physically present for the entirety of class, your participation grade will be assessed on your contributions to class discussion. This requires that you read *all* assigned materials before class. I highly recommend you take notes on the readings, including both the authors' arguments as well as your own thoughts, so that you are prepared for rich class discussions. In addition to your comments in class, I am also looking for active listening skills and ability to apply the readings, films, and your classmates' perspectives to the in-class activities. All in-class activities including independent work, group projects, and class discussions will count toward your participation grade.

We have the privilege of being able to read more than we may have time to discuss in class. It is your responsibility to be engaged in class discussions in ways that enhance and strengthen your own interests. I encourage you to explore ideas that interest you in your reading reflections, final project, and settings outside of class. I ask that we all work together to co-create a rigorous and productive learning environment in which you challenge one another's ideas in a scholarly manner, but never insult or disparage one another.

You will not be able to participate fully if you are distracted by devices such as phones and computers. If devices prove to be a consistent distraction, they will be banned from class for all students.

Readings

We will be using two primary texts for the course. Both books are available for purchase the Towson University Bookstore. They are also both available through the Towson University Cook Library as hard copy and e-books.

Powell, A. (2010). *Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the Unwritten Rules*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511777080>

Harris, J.C. & Linder, C. (Eds.), *Intersections of Identity and Sexual Violence on Campus: Centering Minoritized Students' Experiences* Stylus Publishing, LLC.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/towson/detail.action?docID=4801051>

All other readings will be posted to Blackboard.

Weekly reading responses (50 points)

Each week you will complete a two page reading response based on the prompt in the syllabus. You must hand in a stapled, hard copy at 5pm. Late work will only be accepted in the case of an excused absence. You must utilize the course materials to support your response to the prompt. Responses are worth five points each. Points will be given based on thoughtful and thorough engagement with the prompt, correct APA citations and grammar, and utilization of the readings and in-class materials. I will drop your lowest reading response grade for the semester.

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Event reflections (10 points)

Students are required to attend two sexual violence prevention events throughout the semester. Events at Towson University and the surrounding area will be announced in class. If you would like to attend an event not mentioned in class, email me a flyer and/or description of the event for approval. After the event, you will submit a hard copy, stapled, two-page reflection on the event. Your reflection should include a *short* summary of the event, but focus primarily on assessing the effectiveness of the event through one of the prevention frameworks or theories discussed in class. Each event reflection is worth five points. Both reflections are due, as a hard copy by the last day of class. However, I encourage you to hand in reflections one week after the event. It is your responsibility to make sure you attend at least two approved events before the last day of class.

Final Project (30 points)

You will each submit a proposal for your final project. Your proposal must be printed and stapled 1 - 2 pages and include: the option you have selected for your final project, a specific topic that includes the intended audience, objectives, outcomes, and the prevention methods and theories you will engage in your final. Students have the option to re-submit their proposal once if their first proposal is not accepted.

Pick ONE of the following three options for your final project:

1. Event

Create a template for an event on a college campus to prevent sexual violence. Your template should include: a detailed schedule of both the event and the planning process for the event, talking points, discussion questions, and/or background information for individuals staffing the event, any materials needed for the event, e-mail templates soliciting collaborators, advertisements for the events (flyers, blurbs, sample social media posts, and any other innovative advertising strategies), evaluations, and an evaluation plan.

2. Training

Create a one-hour training to prevent sexual violence on college campuses. Your training should include a script for the presenter(s), slides (if you are including slides), a list of materials for any activities included in the presentation, advertisements for the trainings (flyers, blurbs, e-mail templates soliciting participants, sample social media posts, and any other innovative advertising strategies), evaluations, and an evaluation plan.

3. Policy or initiative pitch

Create a pitch for a new policy or initiative to prevent sexual violence on college campuses. Your pitch must be addressed to a specific person or group who has the power to implement your proposal. In your pitch, include your plan with detailed goals and objectives, funding needs, and evaluation strategy. You must include evidence to convince the recipients of your pitch that your plan will be successful.

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All finals must include the intended audience, the purpose of the event, training, policy or initiative, the intended outcomes, an evaluation strategy to measure success, and at least three citations to support your claims. Your project should be informed by both evidence-based and emerging best practices in the field as well as feminist theories.

Your final will be graded on the following:

- Purpose, objectives, and audience are well thought out and align with the goal of preventing campus sexual violence (5 points)
- The event/training/policy is clearly informed by feminist theories and activism (5 points)
- The event/training/policy is both innovative and could be feasibly realized (5 points)
- Compelling evidence is presented to suggest sexual violence would be prevented if event/training/policy was implemented (5 points)
- The evaluation strategy is sound, and if completed would provide meaningful insights (5 points)
- The final is clear, organized, and effectively uses APA citations (5 points)

INCOMPLETES

According to the policies of Towson University, an incomplete only applies in cases in which there is a verified illness or other similar circumstance over which the student has no control.

ASSIGNMENTS

All written work for this course must be 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, with APA style citations. Please refer to [OWL](#) or the [Towson University Cook Library](#) if you have questions on formatting. Unless otherwise stated all work must be handed in as a printed and stapled hard copy.

Late work will only be accepted in the case of documented emergencies. If you require an extension due to an excused absence, you must make arrangements with me *before* the due date of the assignment.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Email is the preferred form of correspondence in this course. Please put WMS 240 in the subject line of your email. All emails will be answered within one business day. Use professional writing standards when communicating via email. Please note, I do not check my email on nights and weekends, so plan ahead when contacting me and make use of office hours for in-depth questions.

This course will rely on blackboard as a mode of communication. Please be sure to check blackboard regularly. If you have a question, the answer is likely in the syllabus or on blackboard.

Your continued enrollment in the course beyond the first week of class indicates that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the aforementioned policies and procedures as well as the consequences of academic violations as defined by Towson University.

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SCHEDULE

Class 1: Welcome, syllabus, expectations, and goals

January 31st

Class 2: An introduction to campus sexual violence and theory as liberatory practice

February 7th

- hooks, b. (1991.) Theory as liberatory practice. *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism* 4(1), 1 – 12.
- Clark, A. E., & Pino, A. L. (2016). *We Believe You: Survivors of Campus Sexual Assault Speak Out*. New York: Holt Paperbacks. (Excerpts, pp. 44, 102, 112, 114, 128-9, 141, 197 -8, 204-5, 242-4, 284 -6, 335-345)

Reading reflection prompt: Reflect on what you have been formally and informally taught about sexual violence and sexual violence prevention. Compose three critical questions on campus sexual violence that you would like to explore this semester.

Class 3: Surviving campus sexual violence

February 14th

- Krakauer, J. (2016). *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town*. Anchor. (Excerpts: Author's Note & Part One pp. 1 - 48)

Reading reflection prompt: Consider the narrative of a survivor from *Missoula* or *We Believe You*. Identify and explore *institutional* factors that facilitated and/or hindered healing from sexual violence.

Class 4: Consent

February 21st

- Powell, A. (2010). *Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the Unwritten Rules*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 4 and 5)

Reading reflection prompt: Pick any sexual encounter depicted in popular culture (song, music video, television show, movie, book, etc.) and identify where consent is present and where consent is absent. Where consent is absent, create a consensual alternative.

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Class 5: Bystander intervention

February 28th

- Coker, A. L., Bush, H. M., Fisher, B. S., Swan, S. C., Williams, C. M., Clear, E. R., & DeGue, S. (2016). Multi-College Bystander Intervention Evaluation for Violence Prevention. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 50(3), 295–302.
- Katz, J., Merrilees, C., Hoxmeier, J. C., & Motisi, M. (2017). White Female Bystanders' Responses to a Black Woman at Risk for Incapacitated Sexual Assault. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 1–13.
- Lorde, A. (2007). The transformation of silence into language and action. In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Reprint edition, pp. 40–44). Berkeley, Calif: Crossing Press.

Reading reflection prompt: Describe a scenario in which you did NOT intervene as a bystander (or pick a scenario in the media). Consider changes (individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and/or policy) that could have facilitated intervention.

Class 6: Campus activism

March 7th

- Linder, C., & Myers, J. S. (2017). Intersectionality, power, privilege, and campus-based sexual violence activism. In J. C. Harris & C. Linder (Eds.), *Intersections of Identity and Sexual Violence on Campus: Centering Minoritized Students' Experiences* (pp.175 - 193. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Aspray, J., Blustein, A. Gorodilova, A. Jahangri, M., Moore, M., Rickard, A. Singh, S. Ridolfi-Starr, Z., and Tyne, B. (2016). Know Your IX Campus Organizing Toolkit.

Reading reflection prompt: Complete the power mapping activity on page 70 of Know Your IX Campus Organizing Toolkit.

Class 7: Intersections of racism and sexism

March 14th

- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 1241-1299.

Reading reflection prompt: Pick one example of sexual violence covered by the media this semester. Identify and reflect on how gender and race intersect in the reporting of the case.

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Class 8: Justice

March 28th

- Critical Resistance and INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence. (2016). Gender violence and the prison-industrial complex. In INCITE! (Ed.), *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology* (pp. 223 - 226). Durham: Duke University Press Books.
- Kaba, M. (2017, May 8). Free Us All. *The New Inquiry*. Retrieved from <https://thenewinquiry.com/free-us-all/>
- The Chrysalis Collective. (2016). Beautiful, difficult, powerful: Ending sexual assault through transformative justice. In C.-I. Chen, J. Dulani, & L. L. Piepzna-Samarasinha (Eds.), *The Revolution Starts at Home: Confronting Intimate Violence Within Activist Communities* (Reprint edition, pp. 189–206). Chico, CA: AK Press.

Reading reflection prompt: write a letter to an individual currently imprisoned for surviving sexual violence. *Extra credit opportunity*: mail a copy of your letter to the individual.

Class 9: Queer genders and sexualities

April 4th

- Garvey, J. C., Hitchins, J., & McDonald, E. (2017). Queer-spectrum student sexual violence: Implications for research, policy, and practice. In J. C. Harris & C. Linder (Eds.), *Intersections of Identity and Sexual Violence on Campus: Centering Minoritized Students' Experiences* (pp. 155 - 174). Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Marine, S. (2017). For Brandon, for justice: Naming and ending sexual violence against trans* college students. In J. C. Harris & C. Linder (Eds.), *Intersections of Identity and Sexual Violence on Campus: Centering Minoritized Students' Experiences* (pp. 83 - 100). Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Reading reflection prompt: Develop a 1 - 2 page hand out/flyer on consent OR bystander intervention that centers queer genders and sexualities. Consider risk *and* protective factors.

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Class 10: Masculinities

April 11th

- Crosset, T. W. (2015). Athletes, sexual assault, and universities' failure to address rape-prone subcultures on campus. In S. C. Wooten & R. W. Mitchell (Eds.), *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response* (pp. 74 – 92). New York: Routledge.
- Boswell, A. A., and Spade, J. S.. "Fraternities and collegiate rape culture: Why are some fraternities more dangerous places for women?" *Gender & Society* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 1996): 133–47.
- Tilapaugh, D. (2017). "The wounds of our experience": College men who experienced sexual violence. In J. C. Harris & C. Linder (Eds.), *Intersections of Identity and Sexual Violence on Campus: Centering Minoritized Students' Experiences* (pp. 101 - 118). Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Reading reflection prompt: Pick one of the posters from the Men Can Stop Rape "Where do you stand?" bystander intervention campaign. Analyze the merits and drawbacks of the poster through one of the following lenses: male survivors of sexual violence, queer sexualities, queer genders, or intersectionality.

Class 11: Educating for sexual violence prevention

April 18th

- Powell, A. (2010). *Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the Unwritten Rules*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 7 and 8)

FINAL PROPOSALS DUE. No reading reflection this week.

Class 12: Alcohol

April 25th

- Abbey, A. (2002). Alcohol-related sexual assault: A common problem among college students. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol, Supplement*, (14), 118-128
- Cowley, A. D. (2014). "Let's get drunk and have sex" The complex relationship of alcohol, gender, and sexual victimization. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 29(7), 1258–1278.
- Thompson, E. H., & Cracco, E. J. (2008). Sexual aggression in bars: What college men can normalize. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 16(1), 82–96.

Reading response prompt: Design a campus intervention (poster, social media campaign, event, policy, etc.) to prevent sexual violence. The intervention must take place in the first six weeks of the semester and addresses alcohol. Include a rationale of *why* your intervention will reduce campus sexual violence.

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Class 13: Technology

Mary 2nd

- Powell, A. (2010). *Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the Unwritten Rules*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch 6)
- Talbot, M. (2016, November 28). The attorney fighting revenge porn. *The New Yorker*.

Reading reflection prompt: Pick one threat scenario or defense strategy from hackblossom.org. Go through the process of making the recommended changes. Reflect on the process of enhancing your cybersecurity in the feminist context of the personal as political.

Class 14: Futures free of violence

May 9th

- Adelman, L. (2015). Finding an erotic transcendence: Sex in a feminist utopia. In A. Brodsky & R. K. Nalebuff (Eds.), *The Feminist Utopia Project: Fifty-Seven Visions of a Wildly Better Future* (pp. 251–259). The Feminist Press at CUNY.
- Dusenbery, M. (2015). Dispatch from the post-rape future: Against consent, reciprocity, and pleasure. In A. Brodsky & R. K. Nalebuff (Eds.), *The Feminist Utopia Project: Fifty-Seven Visions of a Wildly Better Future* (pp. 17–27). The Feminist Press at CUNY.
- Giorgis, H. (2015). Not on my block: Envisioning a world without street harassment. In A. Brodsky & R. K. Nalebuff (Eds.), *The Feminist Utopia Project: Fifty-Seven Visions of a Wildly Better Future* (pp. 97–99). The Feminist Press at CUNY.
- Lorde, A. (2003). The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, 25, 27.

No reading reflection this week.

BOTH EVENT REFLECTIONS DUE BY MAY 9TH. Hand in your printed and stapled reflections in person by the last day of class.

FINAL PROJECT DUE SUNDAY MAY 20TH BY 11:59pm via email to kailahcarden@towson.edu.