**International Relations/Political Science**
Academic year 2019-2020

**Feminist Approaches to War and Security**
RI-SP108 - Autumn - 6 ECTS
Fridays, 12.15-14.00

**Course Description**

In order to advance intersectional approaches to war and security which foreground feminist questions, this course puts feminist scholarship into conversation with critical approaches to security, war, and militarism. We will interrogate the binary constructions of masculinity and femininity upon which war and systems of militarism depend as well as how such gendered constructions always intersect with other systems of power such as race, sexuality, capitalism, and (neo)colonialism.

The first half of the course will engage a variety of critical approaches to war, militarism, and security, including scholarship from the fields of critical security studies, feminist security studies, postcolonial studies, and poststructuralist theory. In the second half of the course, these critical theories will be put into conversation with issues which preoccupy feminist scholars focused on war and security. Such issues include: women’s rights, gender equality and development; sexual and gender-based violence; border security; the privatization of military contractors and security; ‘humanitarian war’ and imperial feminism; and the ‘global war on terror,’ counterterrorism, and the countering violent extremism agenda. Ultimately, the goal of this course is to introduce students to a broad range of critical approaches to the study of war, militarism and security which enable productive, feminist interventions.

**Syllabus**

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance and Participation (25%)**
Students are required to come to all classes having closely and critically read the assigned texts and prepared to engage in conversation with their peers. Please bring to class the readings for a given day; the text can either be in hard copy or digital, but please make sure you are able to refer to it easily. This course is discussion based and your attention and participation are required. If you feel uncomfortable speaking up in class or prefer to communicate in alternative ways, please speak with me privately. Class participation requires you to show up physically — but also intellectually, thoughtfully, and respectfully to engage your classmates and professor.

Discussion Leaders (20%)

For each class selected students will be responsible for presenting the main theoretical and/or methodological contributions of the readings to the class. The student(s) will not summarize the readings in their entirety, but rather identify the main arguments of the text and discuss the theoretical and/or methodological interventions made by the authors. The presentation will be 15 minutes, and end with at least three questions posed to the class in order to generate class discussion. While you are not expected to have complete mastery of the scholarship, you are expected to be able to follow lines of argumentation and, if you lose the argument, you must be able to point that out and let that prompt discussion with your classmates.

Op-Ed (20%)

Inspired by Carol Cohn's op-ed on gender and security published in *The New York Times* in 2018, this assignment will explore the publication of feminist analyses of war and security in a popular forum. Students will write an op-ed or opinion piece (800-1000 words) of publishable quality on a current issue related to gender, war, or security. The topic might be one we cover in class, but it could also be something we don’t address that you would like to know more about. The choice is yours. Regardless of the selected topic, this piece of writing should not be descriptive but provocative with a clear grasp of the issue(s).

This assignment will serve as the genesis for your final writing project, giving you a chance to develop a working hypothesis on an issue that you will go on to explore more in-depth in your final research paper. Students will receive feedback on the op-ed and are to meet with the professor to discuss next steps for the final paper. **A hard copy of the assignment is due November 1, 2019 in class.**

Final Paper (35%)

This final assignment will build on the topic identified in the op-ed. The paper must follow the conventions of academic research and writing and be approximately 15 pages in length. **The assignment is due December 30, 2019 via email.**

COURSE OUTLINE

**September 20: Welcome and Introduction**

In class film: *War Redefined* (2011)


**PART I: CRITICAL APPROACHES**

**September 27: Rethinking ‘Security’**


October 4: Feminist Approaches to Security


October 11: Feminist Approaches to War and Militarism


October 18: Postcolonial Approaches to War and Security


October 25: Post-structural Approaches to War and Security


PART II: CRITICAL APPLICATIONS

November 1: Gender Equality, Security and Development


November 8: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence


November 15: The Gendered Politics of Border Security


November 22: Gender and the Privatization of Security


November 29: “Humanitarian” War and Imperial Feminism


**December 6: Women, Gender, and Counterterrorism**


**December 13: Women “Terrorists” and Returnees from “Violent Extremism”**


**December 20:** No Class. Use this time to edit and revise your paper!

**Final Papers Due by December 30, 2019 via email. No late papers will be accepted.**

* The Professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any point during the semester.