

Syllabus: WMST 30095 – Special Topics – Me Too Time's Up & What's Next for Feminism Summer 2018

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Course Information

Course Description

Studying #MeToo.

There are many ways to conduct a study of women-centric, women-driven phenomena and likely no single best one—though invariably there'll be something like feminism (something that has a *Women's Studies* feel to it) informing our perspectives, language, and quandaries. That said, it can be limiting to confine ourselves altogether to angles that will insist on what we're able to find, how we must judge it.

#MeToo—and subsequent discussions of #MeToo—have already exposed the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary commentators' capacities to comprehend it. What can be seen, understood and judged from the given angles of various feminisms? From the more or less utilized angles of Women's Studies? Or of Gender Studies? Worthy angles though they each and all of these are, they beg for yet another angle. An angle that's tough to cover.

It reminds me of the oft-referenced question by Juvenal, Who will watch the watchmen? Who will, in our case, watch the watchwomen? Who will oversee the seers, guard the guardians? Who will judge the judges? It's a question enmeshed in every field of study devoted to critiquing and correcting the record. It's a vitally important consideration for Women's Studies as one such field. Our credibility depends on it.

#MeToo is the perfect feminist moment: the open secret of situations wherein patriarchal powers abuse women—because they can—and don't stop until women rise up and say, Stop. Feminists have, for almost two centuries, been seen as the women who'll do that.

Indeed, if a woman dare say, *Stop what you're doing*, that seems to make her a *feminist*.

We'll employ a range of approaches and tactics; and we'll cover a lot of ground, some of which you'll choose yourself, pursuing your unique line of inquiry. Somewhere near the center of our study is a **felt tension between woman-as-long-understood**—between object and subject. Is woman the classic "object" sexed/gendered/contested? Is woman the acting (the agential) subject? For the last several decades, feminisms have gone to great pains to establish woman by design as her own. In contemporary discourses (there are multiple discourses to be sure), "woman" is most basically the agential subject *who chooses for herself*.

#MeToo—as phenomenon and movement—zooms straight to the crux wherein both man and woman are both: both subject and object—but not equal, not equally so.

Our Summer Course.

The course is squeezed into FIVE weeks; it'll feel at times a bit jam-packed—but not (we hope) in a bad way. There'll be built-in means to manage your workload—optional materials, flexible deadlines and plenty of assistance available if you need it.

It is our intention to focus not only on the details, the facts, the real cases that have given gravitas to *Me Too*, but also on the myths, narratives, perspectives, cultural conversations, debates and controversies abuzz in "the news" and on social media sites and, increasingly, given voice in academic research and commentary.

Talk matters, trends matter, headlines matter, airtime matters, but they can't matter more than the realities about which we seem to care. Can they? They can?

This course is an inquiry into meaning: into questions and issues; assumptions, misunderstandings, motives; traditions of struggle and progress, moralities, permissions and socio-political practices; also into women's experience, knowledge, power, impact. It's also an inquiry into where feminisms have fit into the unfolding chapter in which we find ourselves and an entire globe aware of four seemingly simple, straightforward words that WOKE us—and will have their way(s). Yep, MeToo Time'sUp are those words. They remind us where we are and of our past. They also intimate our future(s).

Women's Studies.

This course fits readily into Kent State's Women's Studies Program. Our declared mission is to "re-consider it all"—with women included as fundamental, integral and real.

In service to that end, we'll do our darnedest to provide you a range of useful tools to open and explicate vital subjects that lead to more vital subjects, all of which invite a sustained "second look."

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. And this course does not presume you have prior knowledge of the scholarship or frameworks you'll discover in the ensuing materials/modules.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Place and process the MeToo Movement in context--many contexts, complex contexts.
- Conceptualize and frame the moment and movement in fresh, expansive ways.
- Analyze and critically appraise not only the media coverage and other public discourse narrating the saga currently but also the dominant discursive trends that have thus far informed our particular cultural understandings of MeToo & TimesUp.
- Meet conversation-partners halfway, problem-solving beyond easy given answers, balancing commitments/values with the realpolitik of real-world, actual people, living contexts and volatile dynamics (You'll gain experience in class).
- Test hypotheses, develop theoretical lenses.

Learning Materials

They are all on Blackboard! As this is a developing situation, there is no text.

The vast majority of the learning materials can be found within each module folder. There are some additional resources available at the KSU library, but all mandatory materials are on Blackboard. Each new module will open the weekend prior to our upcoming class meetings. Modules will remain open.

Technology Requirements and Skills

Computer Hardware and Software

Students new to Kent State University should review Information Service's Technology Viewbook (link available in the Preparing your computer section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder). A personal computer with consistent, reliable Internet access is required:

1. A DSL or cable connection to the Internet; dial-up is not sufficient.
2. Laptop or desktop computer with a minimum of a 2 GHz processor and 2 GB of RAM

You should have one of the following computer operating systems and additional software applications installed on your computer:

1. Windows 7 system operating software or newer for PC computers OR Mac OS X 10.6 or newer for Apple Mac computers.
2. Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) discounts available at The Microsoft Store, link available in the Preparing your computer section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder.
3. A free version of Microsoft Office is available for students. Instructions and information can be found on support.kent.edu.
4. Antivirus for Windows OS, Microsoft Security Essentials OR Antivirus for Mac OS, Sophos
5. A Blackboard Learn compatible browser, such as the latest version of Mozilla Firefox. Blackboard also supports Chrome and Safari. **Internet Explorer is NOT a supported browser and should not be used.**

Technology Skills

The following fundamental technological skills are necessary for your success in this course: navigating a computer operating system, launching and quitting applications, connecting to the Internet, using a web browser to search the World Wide Web, downloading, saving, and uploading files, and sending and replying to email. You will also need to be proficient in using MS Word and working with files in various formats.

Blackboard (Bb) Learn

This class will use Blackboard (Bb) Learn, the official learning management system (LMS) used by Kent State University to deliver course materials to university students. ALL course materials and activities will take place in Bb Learn.

In order to login to the online Bb Learn LMS, students will need a Kent State FlashLine User Name ID and password. Students can login to Bb Learn either through a student FlashLine account or via a direct link to the login page: <https://learn.kent.edu>

For help using the Blackboard (Bb) Learn system use the “Bb Learn Tutorials for Students” link in the main navigation of your course. In general, Bb Learn works best using the latest version of most major web browsers, including Firefox, Chrome, and Safari.

Technology Help Guidelines

- 30-Minute Rule:** When you encounter struggles with technology, give yourself 30 minutes to ‘figure it out.’ If you cannot, then post a message to the discussion board; your peers may have suggestions to assist you. You are also directed to contact the KSU Helpdesk 24/7. As a last resort, contact me. However, do not expect an immediate reply, and I cannot guarantee that I will be able to help with any and all technology issues.
- When posting or sending email requesting help with technology issues, whether to the Helpdesk or me, use the following guidelines:
 1. Include a descriptive title for the subject field that includes 1) the name of course 2) the issue. Do NOT just simply type “Help” into the subject field or leave it blank.
 2. List the steps or describe the circumstance that preceded the technical issue or error. Include the exact wording of the error message.
 3. When possible, always include a screenshot(s) demonstrating the technical issue or error message.
 4. Also include what you have already tried to do to remedy the issue (rebooting, trying a different browser, etc.).

Policies and Expectations

Online Attendance Policy

Online courses are conducted on the premise that regular attendance requires students to log into the Bb Learn learning management system (LMS). Attendance is measured both by virtual presence in the online course and student interaction with course learning materials and assignments. Students are expected to check their Kent State e-mail and to log into the system multiple times (at least every other day) during the week.

All actions by students in the Bb Learn LMS can be tracked. At any time during the course, an instructor may generate a report that indicates when and how long individual students have been logged into the LMS, or engaged with course materials or course tools.

Students who anticipate an absence from the online course due to technical or medical reasons should consult with the instructor individually. An absence due to illness or injury requires verification from a medical professional and should be presented to the instructor.

Communication Policy

1. Email course questions and personal concerns, including grading questions, to me privately using your @kent.edu email. Do NOT submit posts of a personal nature to the discussion board.
2. Email will be checked at least twice per day Monday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday, email is checked once per day. During the week, I will respond to all emails within 24 hours; on weekends and holidays, allow up to 48 hours. If there are special circumstances that will delay my response, I will make an announcement to the class.
3. General Course Questions discussion boards will be checked once per day Monday through Friday; Saturday and Sunday, these discussion boards will be checked once per day.
4. For questions related to technology, please contact: 330-672-HELP for 24/7 support.

Online Student Conduct and (N)etiquette

Communicating appropriately in the online classroom can be challenging. In order to minimize this challenge, it is important to remember several points of "internet etiquette" that will smooth communication for both students and instructors:

1. **Read first, Write later.** Read the ENTIRE set of posts/comments on a discussion board before posting your reply, in order to prevent repeating commentary or asking questions that have already been answered.
2. **Avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive.** Language can be easily misinterpreted in written electronic communication. Review email and discussion board posts BEFORE submitting. Humor and sarcasm may be easily misinterpreted by your reader(s). Try to be as matter-of-fact and professional as possible.
3. **Follow the language rules of the Internet.** Do not write using all capital letters, because it will appear as shouting. Also, the use of emoticons can be helpful when used to convey nonverbal feelings. ☺
4. **Consider the privacy of others.** Ask permission prior to giving out a classmate's email address or other information.
5. **Keep attachments small.** If it is necessary to send pictures, change the size to an acceptable 250kb or less (there are several programs you can use to do this such as: Photoshop, Paint, GIMP, and picresize.com).
6. **No inappropriate material.** Do not forward virus warnings, chain letters, jokes, etc. to classmates or instructors. The sharing of pornographic material is forbidden.

NOTE: *The instructor reserves the right to remove posts that are not collegial in nature and/or do not meet the Online Student Conduct and Etiquette guidelines listed above.*

University Use of Electronic Email

A university-assigned student e-mail account is the official university means of communication with all students at Kent State University. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their university-assigned e-mail account. If a student chooses to forward information in their university e-mail account, he or she is responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other e-mail account. To stay current with university information, students are expected to check their official university e-mail account and other electronic communications on a frequent and consistent basis. Recognizing that some communications may be time-critical, the university recommends that electronic communications be checked minimally twice a week.

Assignments and Grades

Attendance and Participation/Discussion.

A rubric for the discussion board initial post and replies has been provided in the course.

Notebooks

Each of the 5 modules will contain a notebook that will include a prompt for contemplation and reflection – for your eyes only, as if in a private notebook, diary or journal. Your entry should provide an articulate and pertinent answer to the provided topic. It should be at least two well-developed paragraphs (approximately 6-8 sentences or more per paragraph).

A rubric for the notebook entry has been provided in the course.

Final Essay

Your final "project" will be a personal essay that incorporates both the perspective of others and your own evolving points of view and judgements. In addition to the preparation of collecting quotes throughout the session, there are three steps you will need to complete to be successful in this assignment.

Assessment and Grading Feedback

Grades and feedback on notebook entries will generally be available in the Grade Center within 3-4 days upon their completion.

The Final Essay will be graded during at the end of our term.

Late and Make-up Work Policy

Late work will only be accepted with instructor approval. Circumstances that warrant consideration for late work include university recognized absences such as illness and injury, or a death in the immediate family. **DO ASK ME.** Any work submitted late with instructor consultation or under university absence policy will be assigned full or partial credit. I'll use my considerable discretion 😊

Grading

Scale.....

Work is assessed as follows: Attendance 20% Notebook 40% Final Essay 40%

Percentage of Earned Points	Earned Points	Grade
94% - 100%	1692-1800	A
90% - less than 94%	1620-1691	A-
87% - less than 90%	1566-1619	B+
84% - less than 87%	1512-1565	B
80% - less than 84%	1440-1511	B-
77% - less than 80%	1386-1439	C+
74% - less than 77%	1332-1385	C
70% - less than 74%	1260-1331	C-
67% - less than 70%	1206-1259	D+
64% - less than 67%	1152-1205	D
Under 64%	1151 and under	F

University Policies

Students are required to be aware of and follow all general and academic policies established by Kent State University. A list of the general academic policies is listed on the Kent State University Policy Register, which can be found in the University policies section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder. Specific policies related to the successful completion of this online course can be located and reviewed in your Blackboard Learn course.

University policies are located in the University policies section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder in your Blackboard Learn course.

Students with Disabilities

University policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).

The Blackboard accessibility statement can be found in the University policies section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder.

Course Enrollment and Withdrawal

University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated.

If registration errors are not corrected by this date and you continue to attend and participate in classes for which you are not officially enrolled, you are advised now that you will not receive a grade at the conclusion of the semester for any class in which you are not properly registered. Also, it is your responsibility to check the withdrawal dates for each semester.

Every class has its own schedule of deadlines and considerations. To view the add/drop schedule and other important dates for this class, go to Student > Resources > Courses and Registration in FlashLine. Choose View or Print Course Schedule and Purchase Textbooks. To see the deadlines for this course, click on the CRN. The add/drop schedule and important dates may also be found on the Drop or Add a Course link. Click on the green clock next to the course under Registration Deadlines.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Students enrolled in the university, at all its campuses, are to perform their academic work according to standards set by faculty members, departments, schools and colleges of the university; and cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied.

For more information see the Kent State policy on plagiarism in the University policies section of the Getting Started in Your Online Course link within the Start Here folder.

Subject to Change Statement

The syllabus and course schedule may be subject to change. Changes will be communicated via email or the Blackboard Learn announcement tool. It is the responsibility of students to check email messages and course announcements to stay current in their online courses.

YOU CAN FIND OUR ***COURSE'S IDEASTREAM*** in a separate document. It showcases our topics for the week, the leading questions under inquiry, and it reflects the course narrative, but in a nutshell, here it is.

COURSE IDEASTREAM

Week 1 The Emergence of #MeToo

Week 2 The Backstories—direct and indirect initiatives aimed to raise awareness about and take action against sexual harassment, misconduct, assault and the socio-political defaults that permit it

Week 3 The Cases—in Context: We study the specifics of select instances, names, details, allegations, media coverage, ensuing story

Week 4 Controversies of #MeToo—In house. Extramural.

Week 5 #MeToo, Feminisms, Women, Progress, Backlash and Future(s).