

PHI 141 Philosophy of Woman
Cedar Crest College
Thursdays 7:00-9:30
Fall 2008

Instructor

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Office Hours: Monday 12-1, Thursday 6-7, and by appointment

Course Description

Throughout the history of the world, the concept of “woman” has been defined by men: philosophers, clergy, scientists, psychologists, etc. In this course, we will examine the writings that have defined women and contrast them with contemporary feminist writings on the subject of woman. We will analyze why “woman” has been continually defined as other than and inferior to “man” or even “human.” In addition, we will also investigate the lives and situations of women in order to reach our own understanding of the concept and reality of “woman.”

Texts

Philosophy of Woman, edited by Mary Briody Mahowald

Course Objectives

Students completing this course will have achieved

- ❖ A good understanding of how “woman” has been defined in canonical Western texts of philosophy.
- ❖ A good understanding of the influence of these texts on women’s lives, historically and in the present.
- ❖ A introductory level knowledge of feminist theory.
- ❖ The ability to think critically about issues of gender.

These outcomes will be assessed on the basis of writing assignments and tests.

Honor Philosophy

This class will be conducted in complete accord with the principles of the Cedar Crest College Honor Philosophy.

Statement on Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with me during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center.

Course Policies

- ❖ Students must submit all required work to pass the course.

- ❖ Students must retain a hard copy of all submitted work.
- ❖ Work that is submitted late without prior consent from the instructor will be penalized 1/3 grade per day until it is received. Not being present in class on the due date does not give you an extension. You may email me your work if you cannot be in class.
- ❖ Plagiarism will be penalized either with a failing grade for the paper, or with a failing grade for the course, depending on the severity of the case, at my discretion.
- ❖ I will only respond to emails sent through your Cedar Crest email account, in order to comply with federal regulations designed to protect your privacy. In addition, I will only send emails to your Cedar Crest email account
- ❖ I will accept work emailed to me, from your CCC account only and only in Word format (.doc or .docx extension). HOWEVER, I will not accept the statement that the work was emailed as an excuse for not receiving it. It is YOUR responsibility to make sure that the work is received
- ❖ Please silence your cell phones.

Course Cancellation Policy

While weather is not usually an issue in the fall semester, the following policy is in effect. Normally, if the college is open, you should assume we are having class. If the weather is severe and I make the decision to cancel class, I will leave a message on my voicemail. Simply call the college at 610-606-4666, dial extension 3417 and you will hear my message.

Course Requirements

Enthusiastic Participation 15%

This course will be based on discussion rather than lecture. Therefore, all participants have an equal obligation to be present, prepared and willing to participate. Your grade will reflect both attendance and participation.

Midterm 20%

There will be an in-class midterm exam on the readings.

Papers 45%

There will be two papers. The first is a paper on a reading of your choice that is not on the syllabus. The second is a short research paper on a topic of your choice.

Final Exam 20%

This will be a take-home exam on the readings, due the last day of class.

Readings and Assignments

(Assignments are due on the day they are indicated.)

August 28	Introduction to the course.
September 4	Mahowald, pp. 5-22 (Plato) Jaggar, pp. 18-27 (Jaggar)
September 11	Mahowald, pp. 22-31 (Aristotle) Jaggar, pp. 430-432 (Lindsey); pp. 314-324 (Sherwin)
September 18	Mahowald, pp. 32-62 (Bible, Augustine, Aquinas)
September 25	Mahowald, pp.87-100 Jaggar, pp. 189-198 (Berger)
October 2	Midterm exam
October 9	Video
October 16	Jaggar, pp. 213- 220 (Dworkin); pp. 223-229 (Wolf); 239-256 (Morgan)
October 23	Mahowald, pp. 101-112 (Kant) “The Beauty Myth” (Handout) Paper 1 due
October 30	Mahowald, pp. 224-241 (Freud); pp. 245-256) (Horney)
November 6	Mahowald, pp. 112-128 (Wollstonecraft)
November 13	Mahowald, pp. pp. 151-186 (John Taylor Mill, Harriet Mill)
November 20	Class choice Paper 2 due
November 27	No class-Thanksgiving!
December 4	Class choice