



# Working for Women: Service-Learning and Gender Inequality

Credit Hours: 306

Term Year: Spring 2012

**Instructor: Elise LoBue**

---

## **Course Description**

*Women perform 66 percent of the world's work, produce 50 percent of the food, but earn 10 percent of the income and own 1 percent of the property.*<sup>1</sup>

*"Forget China, India and the internet: economic growth is driven by women."*<sup>2</sup>

Through relevant and meaningful community work and critical academic reading, analysis, and online discussion, this course explores the various reasons behind and consequences of the continued lack of economic, political, cultural, and social gender equality at the local, national, and global levels. Both in scholarly work and in their service capacities, students will examine various aspects of gender inequality, different theories behind such disparity, and the mixture of policies, programs, and organizations fostering women's empowerment and addressing gender inequity. Through this experiential service learning course, students will make "real life" connections between theory and practice as they plan and implement a gender project to meet a community need and work to develop their own approaches to solving the problem of gender inequality.

This course is divided into two primary sections. In the first section, students will consider the state of the world's women and explore *why* women perform 66 percent of the world's work, produce 50 percent of the food, but earn 10 percent of the income and own 1 percent of the property. The course will look at women's social, political, and economic inequality, as well as the issue of violence against women, in both U.S. and transnational contexts.

In the second section of the course, students will analyze various policies, programs, and

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.unifem.org/gender\\_issues/women\\_poverty\\_economics/facts\\_figures.php](http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_poverty_economics/facts_figures.php)

<sup>2</sup> *The Economist*, April 15, 2006.

**Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. A documented disability can include: physical, psychological, chronic health, vision, hearing, learning, traumatic brain injury, Asperger's Syndrome and/or autism, cognitive, and A.D./H.D.D. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. While O.D.S. does accept late applications, accommodations are not retroactive. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (217-206-6666), HRB 80.**

organizations working toward gender equality and women's empowerment. In particular, students will examine different theoretical and practical approaches to addressing gender inequality, documents from international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and the idea that funding women's (and girls') empowerment "makes good economic sense" for a woman's entire household, community, and economy.

### **Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Understand the purpose, techniques, and impact of service learning.
2. Comprehend foundational questions related to various forms of gender inequality.
3. Assess women's roles in social, economic, cultural, and political development, as both the recipients and providers of assistance.
4. Identify strategies for effective social change regarding gender issues at local, national, and global levels.
5. Explain the mission, value, and key issues for the community organization for which they are working.

### **Expectations or Teaching Philosophy**

While learning is always an active process and dialogue between instructor and student, the service learning foundation of this course requires a particularly strong commitment and sense of responsibility to one another on the part of the instructor and student. This course is designed to allow students flexibility in meeting their academic and service learning goals by offering a wide variety of service projects and project partners. Along with this freedom to determine gender projects and goals comes the important responsibility of open dialogue between the student, instructor, and project site, as well as accountability on the part of both student and instructor in meeting individual service goals and commitments. Student and instructor are expected to maintain an attitude of openness and respect for new ideas, others' opinions, and various life situations both in the classroom and at the project site. Students must express any questions or concerns about the course, their service learning project, and/or their ability to meet course requirements to the instructor so that appropriate solutions may be found.

### **UIS Academic Integrity Policy**

I support the UIS policy on Academic Integrity, which states, in part: "Academic integrity is at the heart of the university's commitment to academic excellence. The UIS community strives to communicate and support clear standards of integrity, so that undergraduate and graduate students can internalize those standards and carry them forward in their personal and professional lives. Living a life with integrity prepares students to assume leadership roles in their communities as well as in their chosen profession. Alumni can be proud of their education and the larger society will benefit from the University's contribution to the development of ethical leaders. Violations of academic integrity demean the violator, degrade the learning

process, deflate the meaning of grades, discredit the accomplishments of past and present students, and tarnish the reputation of the university for all its members.”

Academic sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of your violation and your history of violations. Whatever the sanction, I will file a report of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Provost.

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the UIS Academic Integrity Policy available at <http://www.uis.edu/campussenate/academicintegrity.htm>

### **Required Text**

Molyneux, Maxine. 1985. Mobilization without emancipation: Women’s interests, state, and revolution in Nicaragua. *Feminist Studies* 11 (2): 227-254. (Available online)

Nussbaum, Martha. 2003. Capabilities as fundamental entitlements: Sen and social justice. *Feminist Economics* 9(2): 33-59. (Available online)

Sen, Amirita. 1999. *Development as freedom*. New York: Anchor Books. (Available at the UIS Bookstore or Amazon.com)

Visvanathan, Nalini, Lynn Duggan, Laurie Nisonoff, and Nan Wiegersma, eds. 1997. *The women, gender, and development reader*. London: Zed Books. (Available at the UIS Bookstore or Amazon.com)<sup>3</sup>

### **Course Requirements**

Students are required to work through online units, as well as participate in 60 hours of community service while completing the assignments. Students will (1) complete all reading assignments, (2) participate in online discussions, (3) develop an action plan for their service work, (4) keep a journal of reflections on course readings and field work, (5) write two analytical essays, (6) complete a service learning project they have created, and (7) write a final reflection paper at the end of the semester. *All written assignments must be typed, double spaced, and in 12 point font with 1 inch margins.*

### **Assignment Policy**

- All assignments need to be turned in by uploading them to the correct place under the assignment tab by 11:59 p.m. on the date they are due. Students need to upload the file to the instructor rather than copying and pasting them in the comments section. Not understanding how to correctly upload an assignment will NOT be an excuse for a late paper. Emailed assignments will NOT be accepted.
- As a rule, the instructor will NOT accept late assignments. Emergencies do arise, however, and if a student wishes to request an extension s/he must do so BEFORE the due date. Extensions on or after the due date will NOT be a possibility.

---

<sup>3</sup> We will use the second edition of this reader, which will be released in paperback on August 16, 2011.

- The instructor is happy to provide feedback on any assignment before it is due. If a student wishes to take advantage of this opportunity, s/he must email it to the instructor at least 7 days before it is due. Requests for feedback any closer to the due date than 7 days will be denied.

## **Methods of Evaluation**

### **1. Reading Responses/Online Discussion Board (20%)**

Readings are one of the foundations of this course and critical in fully understanding women's social, political, and economic inequality around the world. Students are expected to critically digest and analyze course reading material and reflect on their service learning experiences through online group discussions. The instructor will post multiple questions about each unit topic, and each student is expected to respond at least once to the posed question and once to another student's posting. The unit questions are designed to generate thoughtful analysis and discussion, not just opinionated answers.

**The discussion board for each unit will close down at 5:00 p.m. on the date the unit is to be completed.** *This portion of the grade will be evaluated by the number of times a student responds, the quality of a student's responses in terms of analytical reflection and thoughtful questions posed, and the effectiveness of a student's communication of ideas.*

### **2. Service Action Plan (10%)**

The service action plan has two components: (1) an outline of the student's proposed service project and (2) an outline of the student's proposed learning objectives and what the student hopes to gain from the service project experience.

(1) The outline of the proposed service project needs to include the following: (1) a description of the project or agency with whom the student is working, (2) the reason why the student chose this particular agency and project, and (3) the agency coordinator who was contacted, including telephone number and email. Student service projects must be with an established non-profit organization. The instructor will contact the agency listed.

(2) The outline of the student's proposed learning objectives should delineate a minimum of 3 of the student's personal learning goals, as well as what the student hopes to gain from the project experience. The student is encouraged to think about what s/he wants to personally accomplish over the semester and ways in which resulting goals may be evaluated. The course action plan should be 4-5 pages and written in essay (not outline) format. Each of the learning objects should address the following: (1) what the student wants to learn, (2) how the student will learn it, (3) what resources the student will consult, and (4) how the student will show what s/he learned.

**The service action plan is due on February 6, 2012.** *This assignment will be evaluated on the student's ability to effectively communicate the project and learning objectives s/he wishes to achieve, as well as the quality of writing.*

### 3. Service Participation (15%)

This course requires a total of 60 hours of community service for the semester (nearly 4 hours a week) in relation to the student's project outlined in her/his service action plan. Students need to begin talking with the instructor about their proposed project and service work by the second week of the course. **The student's service hour tracking sheet will be turned in on March 5, 2012 and again on May 7, 2012. Along with the final service hours tracking sheet, the student must also turn in a 1-2 page self-evaluation of service participation.** *The instructor will work with the student and agency contact to assign the service participation grade. The grade will be determined on the student's total number of service hours, her/his interaction with the agency contact and agency staff, and her/his progress of the proposed service project.*

### 4. Reflection Journal (15%)

Reflection journal entries should chronicle the student's academic and personal growth throughout the semester and should explore the sociological implications of issues arising at her/his project service site. Readings and site experiences must be incorporated into weekly entries. The reflection journal should include a minimum of 20 entries (1 entry for every 3 hours of service), and the length of each entry should be 1-2 typed, double spaced pages in 12 point font. Journal entries should outline the service experience in 2-3 sentences, followed by the student's own critique, explanations of what the student learned from the experience, and possible connections to course readings. **The first 10 journal entries are due on March 26, 2012. The second 10 entries are due on May 7, 2012.** *The reflection journal will be evaluated on how well the student fulfilled the number and length of required entries, as well as the student's analytical reflection and connections between course readings and service experiences.*

### 5. Essay Analyzing Theories of Gender Inequality (10%)

The purpose of this assignment is to critically analyze the theories behind and circumstances surrounding women's social, economic, and political inequality. From the first section of course readings, the student is to choose 2-3 theories of gender inequality s/he finds most compelling and (1) explain and analyze the theories and how they account for social, economic, and/or political gender inequality, considering the theories' strengths and weaknesses and (2) explain why these particular theories are compelling, drawing on experiences and connections with her/his community service project. This paper should be 3-4 pages in length. **This first analytical essay is due on March 5, 2012.** *The assignment will be evaluated on the student's ability to meet the above requirements, critically analyze the reading material, and effectively relate the reading material to her/his own service experience.*

## 6. Essay Analyzing Approaches to Addressing Gender Inequality (10%)

The purpose of this assignment is to critically analyze projects, programs, and approaches addressing gender inequality and the empowerment of women. For this paper, the student will choose one author's perspective from the second section of the course and (1) explain and analyze the author's approach to addressing gender inequality presented in the reading, considering its strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness, (2) analyze the ways in which this approach relates to the student's community service project, and (3) offer any approaches addressing gender inequality evident at the student's community service site not discussed in course readings. The paper should be 3-4 pages in length.

**This second analytical essay is due on April 23, 2012.** *The assignment will be evaluated on the student's ability to meet the above requirements, critically analyze the reading material, and effectively relate the reading material to her/his own service experience.*

## 7. Final Reflection Paper (20%)

The final paper is a reflection of the student's service project and the ways in which it relates to course readings. In this paper, the student must answer the following:

- i. What was the project?
- ii. How did you attempt to implement the project?
- iii. What worked well? What could have been done differently? What did you learn from your experience?
- iv. How does your experience connect with the readings throughout the semester? What theories and concepts presented in the readings does your service experience affirm, challenge, and/or illustrate? To what extent did the theories and case studies we read in class inform the practical approaches to gender inequality you encountered at your service site? (The student should directly connect relevant readings to her/his project and provide illustrative examples from her/his site experience.)
- v. How were your personal learning objectives accomplished?
- vi. Drawing from the readings and your service experience, what is your definition of women's empowerment? How might service organizations and those "working for women" put your definition into practice?
- vii. Do you think that "working for women" ultimately benefits a woman's entire family, community, and country? Do you feel your service this semester empowered women? Why or why not?

**This assignment is due on May 7, 2012.** *It will be evaluated on the student's ability to critically reflect on the coursework and her/his service experiences, analyze connections between course theories and her/his service practice, and effectively communicate these thoughts in the final paper.*

## **Grading**

The traditional scale of grading will be used.

A	>92	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	<60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

## **Delivery Method**

Online

## **Course Calendar or Schedule**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Course Introduction</b> Completed by Monday, January 23, 2012	
<b>2</b>	<b>The Status of the World's Women</b> Completed by Monday, February 6, 2012	United Nations. 2010. <i>The world's women 2010: Trends and statistics</i> . (link below)  <b>Service action plan due</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Women in Households, Families, and the Global Economy</b> Completed by February 20, 2012	Visvanathan, et al., eds., p. 42-51, 103-111, 142-149, 155-162, 177-190, 216-238
<b>4</b>	<b>Women, Social Transformation, and "Progress"</b> Completed by March 5, 2012	Visvanathan, et al., eds., p. 257-263, 293-309, 333-344  United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). 2010. Executive summary of <i>Progress of the world's women 2008/2009: Who answers to women? Gender and accountability</i> . (link below)  Dollar, David and Roberta Gatti. 1999. <i>Gender inequality, income, and growth: Are good times good for women? Policy research report on gender and development, working paper series no. 1</i> . The World Bank Development Research Group/ Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network. (link below)  <b>Updated hour tracking sheet due</b>  <b>First analytical essay due</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Social Justice, Gender Justice, and the Capabilities Approach</b> Completed by March 26, 2012	Sen, Introduction: Development as Freedom; Ch. 1: The Perspective of Freedom, Ch. 8: Women's Agency and Social Change; Ch. 12: Individual Freedom as Social Commitment  Nussbaum, "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice"  <b>First 10 reflection journal entries due</b>

Unit	Topic	Assignment
6	<b>Approaches to Women, Gender, and Development</b> Completed by April 9, 2012	Molyneux, “Mobilization without Emancipation: Women’s Interests, State, and Revolution in Nicaragua”  Visvanathan, et al., eds., p. 1-32, 51-92, 366-374
7	<b>Women, Gender, and Development in Practice through International Organizations</b> Completed by April 23, 2012	United Nations. 1979. <i>The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</i> . (link below)  United Nations. 2010. <i>The Millennium Development Goals Report</i> . Read the Forward and Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. (link below)  The World Bank. 2006. <i>Gender Equality as Smart Economics: A World Bank Group Gender Action Plan (Fiscal Years 2007–10)</i> . (link below)  <b>Second analytical essay due</b>
	Final items due on May 7, 2012	<b>Final tracking hours sheet</b>  <b>Second set of 10 reflection journal entries</b>  <b>Self-evaluation on service participation</b>  <b>Final reflection paper</b>

### **Assignment/Discussion Web Links**

Week or Topic	Link
Unit 2	United Nations. 2010. <i>The world’s women 2010: Trends and statistics</i> . <a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_BW.pdf">http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_BW.pdf</a>
Unit 4	United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). 2010. Executive summary of <i>Progress of the world’s women 2008/2009: Who answers to women? Gender and accountability</i> .

Week or Topic	Link
Unit 7	<p><a href="http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/media/English-PoWW-ExecutiveSummary.pdf">http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/media/English-PoWW-ExecutiveSummary.pdf</a></p> <p>Dollar, David and Roberta Gatti. 1999. <i>Gender inequality, income, and growth: Are good times good for women? Policy research report on gender and development, working paper series no. 1</i>. The World Bank Development Research Group/ Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network.</p> <p><a href="http://darp.lse.ac.uk/frankweb/courses/EC501/DG.pdf">http://darp.lse.ac.uk/frankweb/courses/EC501/DG.pdf</a></p> <p>United Nations. 1979. <i>The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)</i>.</p> <p><a href="http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm">http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm</a></p> <p>United Nations. 2010. <i>The Millennium Development Goals Report</i>. Read the Forward and Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women.</p> <p><a href="http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml">http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_FS_3_EN.pdf">http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_FS_3_EN.pdf</a></p> <p>The World Bank. 2006. <i>Gender Equality as Smart Economics: A World Bank Group Gender Action Plan (Fiscal Years 2007–10)</i>.</p> <p><a href="http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/GAPNov2.pdf">http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/GAPNov2.pdf</a></p>