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367 Gender and Politics: Women, Elections and Representation

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Xavier University
POLI 367 – Gender and Politics: Women, Elections and Representation

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This writing intensive course will examine the role of gender in American politics, with particular attention to public opinion and political behavior, electoral politics, and theories of representation. This course is a Political Science elective which also counts as an elective in the Gender and Diversity minor and fulfills 3 credits towards the core diversity curriculum requirement.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course helps meet the following departmental learning objectives:

- **Governmental and Nongovernmental Institutions:** Students will explain how governmental and nongovernmental institutions such as election laws, party nomination procedures, and gender quotas) impact women’s representation in the United States and other nations.
- **Major Political Theories:** Students will, both orally and in writing, identify, explain, analyze, and critique major political theories on women’s representation and elections, including representation theory, ambition theory, role model theory, and institutional, structural, and situational explanations for the gender gap in participation and women’s underrepresentation in legislative bodies.
- **Critical Reading:** Students will engage in detailed reading and analysis of primary texts, journal articles, and scholarly books on contemporary and historical gender issues and the origins and impact of gendered patterns of participation and engagement.
- **Interrogate Assumptions Underlying Claims:** Students will interrogate assumptions underlying assertions about fairness, equality, representation, and gender roles.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATION

The best way to reach me is by e-mail at marianim@xavier.edu, but if the question is a simple one, you can text me at 513-508-6849. Be sure to include your name and the course number in your text so I know who I am talking with. Please contact me by e-mail or text if you would like to set up an appointment to meet with me. Note that you should not send me important e-mails on Canvas. Feel free to leave comments there, but any important messages or questions should be sent to my Xavier e-mail.

REQUIRED BOOKS

The following books are required for the course:

- Carroll, Susan J. and Richard L. Fox. 2013. Gender and Elections: Shaping the Future of American Politics, 3rd Edition. Cambridge University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1107611610.
- Krook, Mona Lena and Sarah Childs (eds). 2010. Women, Gender and Politics: A Reader. Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0195368819.
- Whitaker, Lois Duke. 2008. Voting the Gender Gap. University of Illinois Press. ISBN-13: 978-0252075254.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade in this course will be based on the following three paper assignments.

Paper 1: Gender Socialization, Due June 15

Write a five page paper on gender and socialization in a particular area of American life. The readings provided examples of socialization in science, advertising, humor, but you can choose another area if you wish. Incorporate concepts from the class readings, in particular the readings on the three waves of feminism. This paper is worth 25% of your course grade.

Paper 2: Due July 15

Write a five page paper on gender and the economy. Again, you can narrow the topic to something more specific that you are interested in, but you should draw on the concepts from the readings. This paper is worth 25% of your course grade.

Paper 3: Due August 15

Write a ten-page essay on descriptive and substantive representation of women. What theories explain why women are underrepresented? How does women's representation matter? What changes in American politics or society would promote greater levels of female representation? Are we likely to see more women representatives in the future? Why or why not? Please draw heavily from the module readings. This paper is worth 50% of your course grade.

The following point totals are needed to secure the following grades:

95%	A	79%	C+
92%	A-	75%	C
89%	B+	72%	C-
85%	B	65%	D
82%	B-	<65%	F

COURSE POLICIES

- **Academic needs** – Xavier University will make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation, please discuss it with me early in the semester or contact the Learning Assistance Center at (513) 745-3280.
- **Late Papers** – Late papers will receive a one-half letter grade penalty per-class period (an A paper becomes an A-, an A- becomes a B+ and so on).

