

School for New Learning

DePaul University

Course Syllabus: HC 184 Violence Against Women: A Human Rights Violation

December 2009

No books are required for this course

1. General Information

Faculty: Lu Rocha
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Location: O'Hare Campus

Dates/Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30-9:30pm

Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

This course will introduce students to issues of violence against women from cross-cultural perspectives and will explore this social problem from a human rights perspective. The course will give the definition of what is violence against women and what are the different forms of abuse used against women. This intense course will evaluate aspects of forms of violence and abuse in diverse cultures, which include India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico and the United States, as well as immigrant and minority communities in the U.S. The various ways in which women are abused will be evaluated and discussed in an effort to introduce students to patterns of abuse from a global perspective.

Students will also become familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Specific UDHR articles will be evaluated for their application to the issues of violence against women, including; the right to life, liberty, personal security (Article 3); the right to free movement in and out of the country (Article 13) and the right to education (Article 26). Students will have an opportunity to apply their understanding of human rights to the issues of violence against women in their own culture and others.

Lu Rocha has been an advocate for victims and survivors of gender-based violence for more than 12 years. She obtained her master's degree at De Paul University, in Women's Issues and Violence Against Women. She has worked with women's organizations from a variety of cultural backgrounds including African-American, Arab-American, Native American women and Latino groups to help establish programs that reflect their community's needs and cultural values.

Lu is a domestic violence consultant and trainer. She is currently writing a book that documents Latinas' experiences with gender-based violence. She is a board member of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She is also a co-founder of *Women for Economic Justice* (WEJ), a collective of community activists, advocates and academics that seek to address economic justice issues.

Competencies

A-3-X: Can analyze issues of violence against women from a human rights perspective.

1. Can understand and explain the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. Can analyze issues of violence against women from a human rights perspective.
3. Uses human rights perspective to raise or explore questions about issues of violence against women.

Students demonstrate this competence by using a human rights perspective to analyze the issue of violence against women. They may give their own understanding of human rights, but must use two or more examples from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to address the issue. Students should explore the implications of this analysis for their own experience.

How to demonstrate this competence:

For this competence students will give an example of a culture's customs regarding women (e.g. honor killings, early marriage, female genital mutilation) and argue how it is a human rights violation by applying articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The student must take into consideration not only the type of violence, but the cultural context from which the violence is being practiced.

H-2-A: Can understand a social problem and can analyze the effectiveness of social institutions in addressing it.

1. Identifies and frames a significant social problem.
2. Identifies a social institution that addresses this problem.
3. Articulates criteria used to assess the effectiveness of the social institution.

Students demonstrate this competence by choosing an institution that addresses an important social problem. Students develop a rationale for the selection that speaks to the following questions: What is a social institution? Does it address a significant social problem? Students explore the ways the institution may or may not be effective. Courses applied to this competence will emphasize the analysis of institutional effectiveness.

How to demonstrate this competence:

For this competence students will select a social institution (e.g. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, National Coalitional Against Domestic Violence) and answer the following questions: What is a social institution? How does it address violence against women? In what ways is the institution effective or not effective in addressing violence against women?

H-5: Can analyze issues and problems from a global perspective.

1. Analyzes one or more global issues, problems, or opportunities facing the human race.
2. Explains how these issues affect individuals or societies in both positive and negative ways.

Students demonstrate competence by discussing such issues as how local communities (in the U.S and elsewhere) deal with global concerns such as hunger, health, education, welfare, illiteracy, environmental issues, or infectious diseases. Or they might explore the impact of science and technology on people's lives worldwide. They may study world religions, literature or the arts as a means of better understanding other cultures. Students can fulfill the competence through courses and independent learning pursuits that analyze one or more aspects of global competence. International travel and work may also be helpful.

Global connections affect our lives in many ways. Many local issues have worldwide implications, and none are merely matters of science or of economics or of politics. Some may have cultural or ethical or religious components as well. This competence invites students to explore and demonstrate these connections bearing in mind that if an issue is big enough to cross geographical borders, it is complex enough to cross disciplinary borders.

How to demonstrate this competence:

For this competence students will examine how a country outside of the United States deals with the issue of violence against women (VAW). Or they might explore the impact of VAW on people's lives worldwide and its effects on communities. Students may study world religions; literature or local laws as a way to better understand a country's culture and its views of VAW.

H-1-X: Can understand the issue of violence against women from a cross-cultural perspective and can analyze it from the cultural context from which the violence is being practiced.

1. Can explain and understand cultural beliefs around violence against women.
2. Can critically look at a culture and explain its views on violence against women.
3. Can explain and understand how violence against women can be addressed in a specific culture.

For this competence students will examine a variety of cultures and their views of violence against women. Students will look at different types of violence practiced against women and have an understanding of the cultural context from which the violence is being practiced. Students will look at customs, religions, and traditions from a variety of cultures and analyze the role they play in violence against women.

How to demonstrate this competence:

For this competence students will examine the issue of violence against women from a specific culture. Students must have an understanding of the culture's perspective of violence against women. Students will explore how violence against women can be addressed in a culture while having an understanding and taking into consideration its customs, religions, and traditions.

Learning Strategies

- Class discussions
- Video presentations
- Journaling
- Blackboard
- **Required readings:**
- Readings (articles)
- Electronic resources

Attendance and participation is very important! Everyone's learning experience will be enriched when every student participates. It is crucial that students attend every class, complete assigned readings on schedule and submit written work when due. Attendance counts! Missing one class will not allow you to meet the requirements for a passing grade.

Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should:

1. Have a better understanding of the definition of domestic violence/violence against women and recognize common types of abuse used against women.
2. Have a better understanding on how violence is used against women in different cultural settings (i.e. customs, relationships, or behavioral pattern in a culture or society).
3. Be familiar with the affects of violence on individual females, the variety of reactions women have to abuse, as well as, the social reactions to violence against women.
4. Be familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
5. Have a better understanding of how abuses of women constitute as types of human rights violations.
6. Have a better understanding of the unique challenges and obstacles minority women in the United States face while in an abusive relationship.
7. Be familiar with the special types of abuse used against women globally.
8. Be able to recognize that abuse of women is global, which crosses all cultural boundaries, and how some forms of abuse are associated with cultural institutions and values.
9. Will have a better understanding how women around the world are overcoming barriers and resisting violence.

Evidence the Students will submit:

-All students must hand in journal responses to help document their understanding of the class readings, questions posted by the instructor, class discussions, videos, and guests' presentations etc.

-Students will be placed in reading groups. They will work collaboratively with other group members in summarizing, analyzing, and leading class discussions.

- Students are expected to participate in all class discussions.

-Final project: all students will present a 20-minute power-point presentation for their specific competence. The presentation must have a minimum of 10 references and include a bibliography. More details will be provided during the first class session.

-Students must inform instructor by the second week of class if they intend to take the course for a Pass/Fail or a letter grade. Once students commit to taking a course for a Pass/Fail, they cannot switch back to a letter grade.

Homework Policy

- All students are required to submit class assignments, regardless of the competence.
- All homework assignments are due as scheduled. **No late assignments will be accepted.**

***It is critical that students attend every class, complete assigned readings on schedule, and submit written work when due.**

Grades:

- 25% Attendance
- 25% Class/group Discussions & Participation
- 20% Journals
- 30% Final Project

Class Schedule

I will make your homework assignments available on Blackboard each evening we meet for class.

Week One

Tuesday

An Introduction to “Domestic Violence (DV) /Violence Against Women (VAW)”

- **Introductions**
- **Review course requirements**
- **An introduction to Domestic Violence**
- **Understanding DV**

Week One

Thursday

Reviewing Violence Against Women /A look at history /Western Culture

- **The name of your country is due today!**
- **What is VAW?**
- **Class discussion**
- **How is DV different for women of color exercise**
- **The History of the DV Movement**

Week Two

Tuesday

Understanding Human Rights /A look at Saudi Arabia

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- “*The House of Saud*” film
- Class discussion
- Review Life Cycle of Violence

Week Two

Thursday

CEDAW /Mexico /Harmful cultural norms

- Understanding CEDAW
- “*China’s Lost Girls*” film
- Femicide in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

Week Three

Tuesday

A look at India

- Class discussion
- India and its women
- “Water” film

Week Three

Thursday (Last day of class)

Students’ Presentations on VAW: A Global Perspective

- Students’ final presentations

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THE LAST CLASS SESSION.
FAILURE TO ATTEND WILL SERIOUSLY AFFECT YOUR GRADE!