

Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts

Programme: BA Liberal Arts & BSC Liberal Arts Batch:2011-2015

Title of the Course Paper: Women Philosophers

Course Code:

Course Credits:4

Course Duration: 60 Hrs

A. Objectives

1. To introduce students to various perspectives on identity, language and ethics from the viewpoint of women philosophers.
2. To introduce students to the dynamics involved in being a woman philosopher.
3. To facilitate discussions on ideas presented.

At the end of the course the students are expected to:

- a) Be familiar with the core ideas of prominent women philosophers.
- b) Understand the biases involved in the presentation of ideas in spheres dominated by male influence.
- c) Get greater clarity on their own identity and respect the identity of the other.

B. Course Content (Total Duration 56 hours)

I. Unit 1 - Introduction (4 hours)

1. Introduction, Nature and Scope
2. Male Philosophers' take on Women (Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kant)

II. Unit 2 –Women and Religion (4 hours)

1. Indian Philosophy: Gargi, Maitreyi, Mirabai
2. Western Philosophy: St. Theresa, Hildegard

III. Unit 3 – The Second Sex (8 hours)

1. Simone de Beauvoir – Extracts from *The Second Sex*
2. Mary Wollstonecraft – Extracts from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

IV. Unit 4 – Women and Language (4 hours)

1. Hélène Cixous' *écriture féminine*,
2. Luce Irigaray's notion of writing the body

V. Unit 5 -Women and Identity (8 hours)

1. Judith Butler - Feminism and the Subversion of Identity
2. Moira Gatens - Imaginary Bodies
3. Virginia Woolf - Extracts from *A Room of One's Own*

Group Discussion - Students' Perspectives (2 hours)

VI. Unit 7 – Women and Ideas I (8 hours)

1. Simone de Beauvoir – On Ambiguity and Freedom
2. Hannah Arendt – On Violence
3. Gayatri Spivak - On Cultural Politics

VII. Unit 8 – Women and Ideas II (6 hours)

1. Carol Gilligan - On Ethics of Care
2. Iris Murdoch – On The Sovereignty of Good
3. Annette C. Baier – Essay 'How Can Individualists Share Responsibility?'
From *On Moral Prejudices*

Group Discussion - Students' Perspectives (2 hours)

VIII. Unit 9 –Contemporary Women Thinkers (6 hours)

1. Women Thinkers Today
2. Contemporary debates on Women and Philosophy
3. Conclusion – The Future...

Guest Lecture: (2 hours)

Movie + Discussion: (2 hours)

C. Evaluation (4 hours) Total Marks 100

Internal Evaluation (Total marks: 50) & Semester End Evaluation (Total marks: 50)

1. Term Papers
2. Class Presentation
3. Essay writing

D. Reference Books and Reading Material

Essential Reading:

Selected extracts from texts that will be provided to students and discussed in class.

Extra Reading:

- a. Marion Young, Iris. *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory*. Indiana University Press, 1990.
- b. Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 1990
- c. Gatens, Moira. *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power and Corporeality*.

E. Instructions for the Paper Setter (if any)

Evaluate the student's grasp of new concepts (*écriture feminine, embodiment etc.*) and ability to give an opinion on issues of identity, language and ethics as presented by the women philosophers discussed in class.

F. Instructions for the Candidates (if any)

To think, question and be open to diverse perspectives.