Gender and Empowerment in Development Practice

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Spring 2021 (3 credits)
Tuesdays, Periods 3-5 (9:35-12:35)
AFS 6905 / LAS 6938

Course description

This course examines the concepts, and associated practices, related to gender equity, women's empowerment and men's involvement. Gender equity is widely perceived as both a goal of development and a means for attaining wider societal goals. Given the predominance of gender norms that place women in an inferior position, increasing women's empowerment and involving men in a process of normative change are widely regarded as preconditions for greater gender equity. However, there are contrasting views, in both research and development practice, on what constitutes women's empowerment, how individual empowerment is linked to societal change, and what works best in attaining gender equity.

This course will encourage students to develop the analytical and practical skills for reflecting on, and contributing to, such themes in development theory and practice. After reviewing the key underlying concepts, we will examine the main debates on women's empowerment, men's involvement and gender equity in the literature. We will then review the main practical methods used for assessing and measuring progress. Readings will draw from different developing regions, and students will be required to compare distinct contexts within and across regions, to analyze how local realities interface with development initiatives and actors. Some of the study material will be quite practical, and several assignments will involve application of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The course is suitable to graduate students in development studies, in any social or interdisciplinary science, conservation, women's studies, area studies, etc. who aim to deepen their knowledge on how gender considerations affect development work. It is highly recommended that students have taken previous coursework in gender or development or have some relevant field expertise.

Course goals
The course aims to provide students with the opportunity to:
- Strengthen their knowledge of key theories and concepts of gender equity, empowerment, and intersectionality;
- Critique assumptions underlying development practice, while appreciating the challenges from integrating gender considerations into development practice;
- Learn from comparing and contrasting different developing contexts/regions;
- Enhance both analytical abilities and practical skills, including methods for data collection, measurement, and analysis.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, successful students will have acquired the:

1. Knowledge of main theories and approaches for explaining gender (in)equality and its impact on development;
2. Ability to critically discuss prevailing assumptions underlying past and current development interventions, identifying what has (or has not) changed in gender and development in the last ten years;
3. Ability to examine key differences across time and geographical areas, and appreciation for a comparative regional perspective, especially between the regions of Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa;
4. Familiarity in locating and interpreting gender and development indicators, including for monitoring, evaluation and learning (M&E, MEAL) purposes, identifying the pros and cons of qualitative and quantitative methods; familiarity with the WEAI-type surveys (including A-WEAI, pro-WEAI, WELI);
5. Skills to conduct professionally an expert interview;
6. Capability to work in groups to develop, facilitate, and conduct a number of activities around gender and development in and out of the classroom.

Class format and philosophy in Hy-Flex environment

Whether attending remotely or in-person, students will need to attend during the designated class times – as the class is synchronous. Students attending remotely and in-person will have access to the same resources, amount and quality of attention from the instructor, and the same opportunities to learn and engage productively.

Classes will consist of lectures, class discussions and a variety of individual and group hands-on activities – with increasing emphasis during the semester on peer learning and flipped classroom approaches. The success of such approaches rests on everyone's contribution and attitude: it is thus essential that you, as student, take the responsibility for reading the materials before class and submit the assignments according to deadlines. You are required to come to class prepared for critical, cooperative, and collegial discussions and activities.

Readings

Required readings consist of journal articles, book chapters, policy reports, videos and various online resources. These are fully listed in the weekly pages on UF Canvas E-learning site and available under Modules section (for download or through a website link or through UF library reserve system).

Two useful but not required resources are:

- Harcourt, W. ed. 2016. *The Palgrave Handbook of Gender and Development. Critical Engagements in Feminist Theory and Practice*. Palgrave McMillan. (We will read several chapters from this book, and given its high cost, it will be made available via the University Library system, as licensed e-book)
- Hodgson, D.L. 2017. *Gender, Justice, and the Problem of Culture. From customary Law to Human Rights in Tanzania.* Indiana University Press. (Optional reading for a final project.).

Assignments

The description of activities provided below are a brief explanation of what is required for class. Detailed assignment instructions along with specific requirements and grading criteria will be provided on the Canvas course website.

- **Engagement and participation in class activities (10% of total grade)**: You will be graded on your attendance (remote or in-person), preparation for in-class activities, participation in class discussion, and contribution to group activities.

- **Weekly activities (15%)** are meant to demonstrate your understanding of class material and promote class learning. These include discussion postings, 5-minute presentations on reading, group-prepared class exercise, and more.

- **Unit Assignments:** There are five learning units, with one assignment at the end of each unit. They are intended to elicit your knowledge of the unit material and develop your ability to apply some of the skills learned. These are:

    - **Unit 1 Essay (15%)**: a 4-5 pages, double spaced, essay addressing a given question stemming from the literature and your own reflection on it (includes peer review).

    - **Unit 2 Expert Interview (15%):** As part of your building skill set, you will interview an expert, in person or via Skype, asking about their experience, challenges and lessons learnt while conducting research or development work in the field of gender and development. You will develop and learn in class the methods for conducting a professional interview, recording and transcribing it, as well as writing a summary/reflection on it.

    - **Unit 3 WEAI-type tools (15%):** A multi-part assignment that guides you to locate, interpret and compare data on women's empowerment in development projects. You will have to understand and report on a project based on WEAI type of data collection.

    - **Unit 4 M&E exercise (15%):** Group assignment involving developing a MEL plan for a gender & development project.

    - **Unit 5 Contribution of your choice (15%).** In the last part of the semester, students will conduct an activity of their choice, either a short research piece, or data collection/analysis, or a critically assessment of a specific methodology. The purpose is to apply concepts, ideas and methods learned in the course according to personal interests, but could also include participation in one of the ongoing research projects undertaken at the University of Florida.

CLASS TIME SCHEDULE AT GLANCE

▪ **The instructors reserve the right to make changes to this schedule during the semester.**

Week	Date	Topic
Unit 1: Key concepts in the literature		
1	1/12	Introduction + first discussion about GAD myths
2	1/19	Intra-HH relations
3	1/26	Intersectionality and men's roles
		1/29: Essay due
Unit 2: Contested issues and practices		
4	2/2	Women's empowerment under scrutiny
5	2/9	Critiques of development practice
6	2/16	Organizations and Policies
		2/19: Interview assignment due
Unit 3: Applied research tools and measurement		
7	2/23	Intra-HH disparities in income and wealth
8	3/2	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
9	3/9	WEAI methods more in depth and project applications: GAAP1
		3/12: WEAI assignment due
Unit 4: Challenges of Measuring and Monitoring & Evaluation		
10	3/16	The challenges of measuring
11	3/23	M&E for WE interventions
12	3/30	More on Methods and Tools for Evaluations
		4/02: M&E assignment
Unit 5. Lessons from class projects and sharing		
13	4/6	Lessons from projects for ME and men's engagement
14	4/13	Peer review - presentations
15	4/20	Final presentations/ Conclusions
		4/23: Final Project due

Final grades will be assigned following the scale below:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Tot %	94-100	90-93	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

More information on grading policies can be found at:

UF Graduate Catalog
Grades and Grading Policies

Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with University policies. Excuses for missing a class test or a deadline for assignments will only be accepted if appropriately documented and due to illness, serious family circumstances, religious holidays, and other reasons approved by the University. You should give me prior notice whenever possible.

Students Requiring Accommodations
Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation
Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.

University Honesty Policy
UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use
All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against

University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy
There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the [Notification to Students of FERPA Rights](#).

Campus Resources:
Health and Wellness

> **U Matter, We Care:**
> If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
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> **Counseling and Wellness Center:** [counseling.ufl.edu/cwc,](#) and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
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> **Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)**
> Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
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> **University Police Department** at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or [police.ufl.edu](#).

Academic Resources

> [**E-learning technical support**](#), 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.
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> [**Career Resource Center**](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.
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> [**Library Support**](#), Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
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> [**Teaching Center**](#), Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
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> [**Writing Studio**](#), 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
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> [**Student Complaints Campus**](#)
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> [**On-Line Students Complaints**](#)