



# CULTURE, POLITICS & WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE FRANCOPHONE WORLD

**APA Program:** Online Francophone Summer

**Language of instruction:** English

**US semester credits:** 4.0

**Term:** Summer (6 weeks)

**Distance learning:** Class meets online for one hour and fifteen minutes, four times a week

**Disciplines:** Political science, anthropology and history

**Instructor:** Dr. Aurelie Perrier

APA Development Director; Paris, France

## Course Description

This course explores conflict over women's rights and sexual rights through a series of contemporary controversies prevalent in France, Morocco and Senegal. The objective is to introduce students to the notion of competing human rights claims, to debate the merits and limitations of relativist versus universalist conceptions of human rights, female emancipation and sexual rights. In addition to learning about the condition of women and sexual rights in these countries, students will study the history of women's rights as a concept and survey the key international legal documents regulating women's rights as well as assess policy considerations of women's rights. The course will feature guest speakers, either academics or women's rights activists from North Africa and Senegal.

Using a comparative lens, the course will encourage students to think critically and reflexively about the politics of women's rights in the francophone world, notably by considering the politics of intervention surrounding the "saving of brown women". After introducing Western feminist theory and its critique by Third World women, students will engage with the following questions: what happens when feminist debates travel from one context to another and how do racial and class hierarchies intersect with women's right? How does globalization affect women differentially and impact the local strategies put in place by women to fight for their rights? Is a transnational feminism possible, and what would it look like? The course will enable students to think critically about the policy implications of these debates. Case studies include the headscarf debate, Gay marriage rights, the rape marriage law and its amendment in Morocco, and Female Genital Mutilation in Senegal.

## Learning Objectives

- Analyze and examine global women's right issues
- Understand the role of culture and of local context in mediating the application of human rights
- Assess policy approaches to women's rights issues and provide policy recommendations
- Construct and conduct an independent research project on a global women's rights issue of your choice

## Assessment

- Class Participation: 20%
- Oral presentation: 20%
- Midterm Exam: 30%
- Final paper (8 pages): 30%

## Select Bibliography

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