Disability Services
Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.

Women and Work
Women’s Studies 524
Winter Quarter 2012
Derby Hall 0048 (basement)
TR 9:30am-11:18pm

Professor M. Thomas
1124 Derby Hall
614-247-8222
thomas.1672@osu.edu
Winter office hours: Tuesdays 2:30-3:30pm and by appointment

Course overview
"Women’s work." The phrase harkens images of mop buckets, dirty diapers, and cooking. On the other hand, it also relates to the ‘caring’ occupations like nursing, secretarial support staff, domestic laborers, teachers and day care workers. This course, Women and Work, will ask how these various representations of feminine labor impact the ways that real women participate in formal and informal work. We will cover topics like reproductive labor, the pink glass ceiling, the racialization of skill, immigration and ethnicity, the gendered and sexualized workplace, sex work, welfare to workfare, and many other topics. We will also labor to connect contextualized women’s work to the global economic scale by examining how globalization and neoliberalization have affected women’s opportunities for work and their work-based identities in different locales. This focus will allow us to explore women’s migration; their work in sweatshops and other low pay, high turnover sectors; the managerial styles that govern women’s bodies at work; and the gendered global, regional, and national forces that also contribute to many women’s continuing poverty.

Academic Misconduct
Plagiarism is the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own. You must acknowledge others’ work when you quote them or paraphrase their ideas and words. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). If you have
questions about this or other rules of conduct for students, see the student affairs webpage concerning code of conduct at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp.

This course fulfills the General Education Curriculum (GEC) requirements for 1. Diversity: International Issues, and 2. Social Science, Section A: Individuals and Groups.

1. Diversity: International Issues

Goals/Rationale:
Diversity: International Issues courses help students become educated, productive, and principled citizens of their nation and the world.

In this class, you will gain an understanding of how different contexts of work, economic, and culture affect women’s abilities to make a fair and safe livelihood. Understanding women’s struggles against sexism, economic restructuring, racism/ethnocentrism, and barriers to education and advancement will help you to make informed decisions about both local and global events. Examples through which the course aims to encourage this understanding include detailed analysis of global economic change over the past 50 years, migration debates and policies for international migrants working as maids, and maquiladora and Chinese sweatshop factory labor. Understanding these processes and contexts help you understand your own role in the global economy and how women’s work provides the goods and services you consume. How can you affect women’s work through your own consumption and political practice? Answering this question also requires an integrated approach, that encourages you to see how the US’s economy and working context is intimately connected to other countries.

Learning Objectives:
1. Students exhibit an understanding of political, economic, cultural, physical, and social differences among the nations of the world, including a specific examination of non-Western culture.

A majority of class material draws on examples and lessons from non-Western places, which will require you to analyze experiences that you will find different and perhaps difficult to contextualize at first. However, by the end of the quarter you will be able to understand the ways that economic, political, cultural, and social contexts shape the lives and decisions of workers in disparate places, from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, China, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Middle East, to Canada, the US, and Taiwan. For example, one focus of the class is on the global migration driven by wealthy economies (like Saudi Arabia) and how this causes a ‘care drain’ in developing world countries (like Sri Lanka).

2. Social Science, Section A: Individuals and Groups

Goals/Rationale:
Courses in social science help students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions.

Women and Work aids in this project through its focus on gendered labor market conditions, expectations, and evaluations. In particular, the course will investigate how individual women, and women of particular professions, races,
locations, sexual orientations, and classes, are affected by these. We will also ask, how are women’s work identities formed in particular workplaces? How do the reproductive labors of women impact their formal working lives? How does the global flow of labor and capital impact women’s work worldwide and in the US?

Learning Objectives:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. In this course we will explicitly study the methodology of studying work: how different theories try to make sense of women’s working lives, behaviors, and identities. We will also relate the non-wage labor of women’s work to the ability of women to participate in formal, waged labor. Finally, we will study both informal and formal waged labor and ask how informal work impacts women’s labor organizing, safety, and wages, in different places and contexts.

2. Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts. Race, sexuality, age, location, (dis)ability, and class all impact women’s work experiences and how women are evaluated in and through their work/places. In Women and Work we will study the geographic disparities of women’s political strength in affecting their workplace environments, and how location matters for the types, qualities, and experiences of work. We will also consider how work impacts women’s identities, from identities including ‘professional’ or ‘housekeeper’ to social identifications like race, sexuality, and class. Finally, the course always frames women’s work within a space of economic globalization and neoliberal national economies.

3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making. We will question how women’s work has come to be defined via caring and reproductive labors like child rearing or household work, and how these are sexualized, racialized and classed. A gendered and anti-racist perspective reorients discussions of how policy can affect the ability of women to participate equally in informal and formal labor markets. Individual women’s lives and identities are shaped by complicated political, social, and economic structures. The course will help you understand how change is possible, despite the structural impacts on everyday life.
Readings
You should purchase one text: *Global Women*, listed below and available from bookstores. The other readings listed on the syllabus are available as PDFs or as web files on our course web site via Carmen (http://telr.osu.edu/carmen/).


Class requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>% of final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exam 1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exam 2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Research paper</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note:

- This is an upper division course, and it will require upper division levels of work.
- You must attend class regularly. Remember, your participation grade is worth 15% of your final grade, and includes being prepared, having completed readings, participating in discussion, and attending class. If you miss more than two classes, it will be impossible for you to get an “A” level participation grade regardless of discussion and preparation for the days you attend. If you miss more than 3 classes, you will receive below a “C” participation grade. However, just attending class will not ensure a good participation grade! You must engage the course material and be an active presence in class.
- **There will be no make-up exams given**, unless you have a medical emergency. Such emergencies require a written letter from your physician.
- Please arrive promptly, complete readings before class, participate actively in class discussions, and provide thoughtful engagement with lectures, readings, films, and other class materials in your exams.
- The course will be divided into two sections for exams. The second exam is not cumulative.
- Instructions for the research paper will be distributed in class and posted separately from the syllabus on Carmen. Papers are due at the beginning of class on March 6, and should be 9-10 pages long.
Course schedule and outline

Week One

**Tuesday, January 3:** Introduction to the course.  

**Thursday, January 5:** Understanding work and workers  

Week Two

**Tuesday, January 10:** Feminized work.  

**Thursday, January 12:** Reproductive and caring labor  

Week Three

**Tuesday, January 17:** Reproductive labor and the formal structures of work  

**Thursday, January 19:** Gendered sweatshop laborers I: how global capital works  

Week Four

**Tuesday, January 24:** Gendered sweatshop laborers II: agency  

In class video: *Maquilapolis: City of Factories*

**Thursday, January 26:** Sweatshops III: Transnational protest movements  

Week Five

**Tuesday, January 31:** Sweatshops IV  
In class video: *China Blue*

**Thursday, February 2:** [Exam one in class.](#)

Week Six

**Tuesday, February 7:** Scaling circuits of women’s labor.  

**Thursday, February 9:** Global trade in domestic labor.  
Week Seven

**Tuesday, February 14:** Importing reproductive care to the home: domestics and nannies.  

**Thursday, February 16:** Informal labor market participation: the case of sex work  

*Global Women:* “Because she looks like a child” *(Bales)*, p. 207-229

Week Eight

**Tuesday, February 21:** Sex work II.  


**Thursday, February 23:** Poor women in the US: welfare to workfare  

Week Nine

**Tuesday, February 28:** NO CLASS. Finish those term papers!

**Thursday, March 1:** Poor women in the US: II.  

*In class video:* Take it from me

Week Ten

**Tuesday, March 6:** Neoliberalism’s attack on women: the case of microcredit.  

**Papers due today!**

**Thursday, March 8:** *Exam 2 in class*
GEC Assessment Survey, to be filled in and turned in on the final day of class

Please help your instructor know how well the course met its GEC goals. Mark each question according to the following key:

- Strongly disagree 1
- Somewhat disagree 2
- Neutral (neither agree or disagree) 3
- Somewhat agree 4
- Strongly agree 5

This course helped me to understand the diversity of women’s work throughout the world.
1 2 3 4 5

This course explained why the differences evident in women’s lives across the world impact their abilities to make a living.
1 2 3 4 5

This course helped me to reconsider my opinions about offering labor market and/or state protection to women working in private spaces like households (e.g., as maids).
1 2 3 4 5

This course detailed how economic globalization has impacted women’s individual identities of work in different places.
1 2 3 4 5

This course provided me with examples of how employment and work has changed through the political, social, and economic activities of women.
1 2 3 4 5