

# ASB Class Syllabus – Winter 2011

## Status of Women: Road to Empowerment

### **Facilitators:**

Nisha Garg

248-802-4639, [nishagarg2012@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:nishagarg2012@u.northwestern.edu)

Sahil Mehta

585-733-3189, [sahilmehta2012@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:sahilmehta2012@u.northwestern.edu)

**Faculty Advisor:** Lindsay Chase Lansdale

### **Goal:**

The participants of this course and trip will collaborate to explore the various issues relevant to women domestically and abroad. They will analyze the causes, effects, and courses of action that could be taken to address the issues. At the conclusion of the course, students will have a strong understanding of a broad range of topics. The course will feature literary and media sources, in addition to multimedia and guest speakers to help bolster discussion and explore alternative opinions. The course will conclude with a trip to Costa Rica.

### **Course Objectives:**

#### *Pt 1: Health:*

Students will explore the health disadvantages that females in our world face. In recent decades, women's health issues have attained high international visibility. However making improvements for women has become increasingly difficult. The health of families and communities depend on the health of

women—the illness or death of a woman has sweeping consequences for the health of her children, family, and community. Students will learn about the importance of maternal and reproductive health, family planning, obstetric services, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and how improving the status of women in society can facilitate all of this.

*Pt 1: Wealth:*

Students will further learn about the economic forms of mistreatment females face. Many females face a form of economic domestic abuse, where they are not allowed to access their own paychecks and use them for essential needs. In addition, many women are held back by a variety of factors from pursuing higher education, working a job, or starting a business. Another topic that falls into this subset is women who are not given proper child support payments. This part of the course will also look into micro-finance.

*Pt 1: Happiness:*

This part of the course will deal with general freedoms, such as that of political expression, and living without the fear of sexual assault and violence. In addition, this topic will cover major global issues such as human trafficking, prostitution, and discrimination in the working world in developed countries.

## **Expectations:**

### *Trip Attendance*

Attendance on the trip over spring break is mandatory to pass the class.

### *General Attendance*

In addition, the class is necessary if one wishes to attend the trip. Since the class is only meeting one time per week, attendance at every session is mandatory.

## **Readings**

There will be a small amount of readings assigned for each class. Most classes will feature a chapter from Half the Sky by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Students should have this book in their possession by the first class. The other readings will be provided by the instructors.

## **Assignments**

There will be a 1 page reflection due every class. This can be about anything the student wants to write about. The goal is to collect reflections and reactions to the reading to help the instructors better facilitate discussion.

## **Grading**

The grade will be broken down as follows:

Participation: 40%

Weekly Reflection Assignment: 25%

Final Project: 35%

The class will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Students must get a 70% to pass the course, and they must pass the course to attend the trip.

## **Final Project**

The final project will be a paper and a presentation in which small groups of students will outline a hypothetical non-profit organization that they are starting with a mission to empower females. They will have to detail where they are starting it, why it is needed, what issue they are addressing, why the issue is important, and how they plan to address it. In addition, they should be able to discuss the positive overall impact that their organization will have on the community.

# Schedule:

*Before week 1:*

- 1) Each student will be asked to hand in a one-page assignment answering this question: "Why did you choose this ASB trip?"
- 2) Read introduction of Half the Sky, write 1 page response/reflection

Week 1: Introduction

In class: Icebreakers, meet your instructors, course contract, Girl Effect video, discuss first reading

**Homework:**

- 1) Read Ch. 4 from Half the Sky
- 2) Read: [http://www.who.int/gender/hiv\\_aids/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/gender/hiv_aids/en/index.html) and explore website
- 3) Write 1 pg response/reflection to the book and the WHO website

Week 2: Health Week 1

Sexual health and violence - HIV/AIDS

Discuss Half the Sky reading and organization websites

**Homework:**

- 1) Read from Ch. 7 from Half the Sky
- 2) Read and explore Global Health Council website: [http://www.globalhealth.org/womens\\_health/](http://www.globalhealth.org/womens_health/)
- 3) Read: [http://www.globalhealth.org/images/pdf/gho/2008\\_rh\\_understanding.pdf](http://www.globalhealth.org/images/pdf/gho/2008_rh_understanding.pdf)
- 4) Write 1 pg response/reflection to the book and the Global Health website

Week 3: Health Week 2

Reproductive and maternal health

1. Read *Maternal Health in Poor Countries: the broader context and a call for action* by **Dr Véronique Filippi PhD<sup>a</sup>**, **Carine Ronsmans MD<sup>a</sup>**, **Oona MR Campbell PhD<sup>a</sup>**, **Prof Wendy J Graham DPhil<sup>c</sup>**, **Anne Mills PhD<sup>b</sup>**, **Jo Borghi PhD<sup>b</sup>**, **Marjorie Koblinsky PhD<sup>d</sup>** and **David Osrin MRCPC<sup>e</sup>**
  - a. [http://www.amddprogram.org/conference/assets/Resources/Article%20Series/The%20Lancet's%20Maternal%20Health%20Series/Filippi%20et%20al\\_Maternal%20Health%20in%20Poor%20Countries\\_Lancet\\_2006.pdf](http://www.amddprogram.org/conference/assets/Resources/Article%20Series/The%20Lancet's%20Maternal%20Health%20Series/Filippi%20et%20al_Maternal%20Health%20in%20Poor%20Countries_Lancet_2006.pdf)

2. Read Half the Sky chapter on Reproductive and Maternal Health
3. Write a 1 page reflection on this topic: Where does Reproductive and Maternal health rank in priorities for women's issues?

#### Week 4: Wealth Week 1

Microcredit – Empowering Entrepreneurs, Uplifting Women

:

#### **Homework:**

- 1) Read Chapter 11 from Half the Sky
- 2) Explore the website of the Grameen Bank:  
<http://www.grameenfoundation.org/>

Write a 1 pg reflection based on your reaction to the book and the Grameen Bank website

#### Week 5: Wealth Week 2

The Glass Ceiling

#### **Homework:**

- 1) Read: *A Modern Manifesto for Shattering the Glass Ceiling* by Debra E. Myerson and Joyce K. Fletcher from the Harvard Business Review
  - a. <http://www.wallnetwork.ca/inequity/meyerson.pdf>
- 2) Read:  
[http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2010-04-15-column15\\_ST1\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2010-04-15-column15_ST1_N.htm)
- 3) Pick one influential woman from this website:  
<http://ceoworld.biz/ceo/2010/03/23/top-25-most-inspirational-and-influential-women-in-the-world>
- 4) Write a 1 pg reflection about her and be prepared to talk about them in class.

#### Week 6: Happiness Week 1

Women and Religion

#### **Homework:**

1. Read Chapter 9 of Half the Sky
2. Read *Religion and Women: Modernism versus Fundamentalism* by Mansoor Moaddel
  - a. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1388032>
3. Write a 1 page reflection. How does religion play a role in

the state of women's affairs in the world? How can this situation be changed? Can this situation be changed?

Week 7: Happiness Week 2

Education

**Homework:**

1. Read Chapter 10 of Half the Sky
2. Look through the Title IX Website and prepare some thoughts about it for a discussion. <http://www.titleix.info/>
3. Research one initiative in the developing world to improve girl's education. Write a 1-page reflection about it. What are they doing? What challenges do they face?

Week 8: Happiness Week 3

What is the US's role?

**Homework**

1. Read Chapter 8 of Half the Sky
2. Write a 1 Page Reflection: Does the United States government do enough to address women's issues throughout the world?
3. Pitch of final project must be done

Week 9: What Can Be Done?

**Homework:**

1. Read Chapter 13 and 14 of Half the Sky
2. Prepare for discussion on whichever non-profit organization we are visiting
3. Issue specific (to whatever site we choose)

Week 10: Final Projects – Final Reflection

1. Present Final Projects