



## Graduate Studies – Course Syllabus

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**DIGF 5B90 Dialogues in Feminism and Technology**    **Number of credits: 3**  
**Tuesdays 8:30-11:30**  
**205 Richmond Rm 7514 (fifth floor)**

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**Professor: Dr. Maria Belén Ordóñez**  
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### **GRADUATE COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:**

*“Dialogues in Feminism and Technology” offers the opportunity to engage with key feminist theoretical and methodological research in science, technology and media that, despite its formative role in scholarship, is rarely considered as a coherent collection. Uniquely, the course offers recently created dialogues of key feminist scholars in conversation on key topics in the areas of science, media and technology study, including difference, identity, race, sexuality, archives, labour, and more. As one of 15 course sections being taught internationally, this course invites students to participate in an international learning community of others studying the same content during the term”*

### **EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

“Dialogues in Feminism and Technology” stems from a feminist collaborative and networked initiative (FemTechNet) that aims to create physical, virtual, and situated spaces of engagement with science, technology and media. This is to be accomplished through an open and networked learning experiment called the DOCC: Distributed Open Collaborative Course. The narrative of the course traces the contributions of feminist epistemologies, practices and methodologies for (new) conceptualizations of the body, difference, sex, race, objectivity, machines, dispossession, queer animation and becomings. In tracking connections, students are encouraged to create virtual publics; to rupture singular knowledge claims and to disperse shared knowledges. Dialogues provide a framework for productive feminist interventions that are polyvocal and partial, thus inspiring the capacity to be in relation with difference. This course challenges global capitalist and liberal discourses of science and technology that appropriate “dialogue” for the purpose of maximizing profits while simultaneously creating precarious situations for those who fail to embrace a corporate logic. Contrarily, the commitment to dialogues in this course is critical of a market driven logic or of “resolutions” that

silence and expel difference. True dialogues are contingent upon who speaks and who risks speaking, therefore, dialogues are ongoing and without fixed destinations, always connecting and recombining (deliberately and accidentally). The aim is not to garnish “results” but rather to keep moving, experimenting and (re)searching in and through networks. Feminist dialogues insist on imagining something other than what we think we know--inspiring potentials, concepts, new methods and practices. We start by paying attention to the potential of relationships that may be based on reaching towards and across difference, and we end the course with assemblages that intersect politics, poetics and practices of embodiment in science, media, and technology.

### **ABOUT MARIA-BELÉN ORDÓÑEZ:**

Through unofficial channels of public pleasure, desire, affect and corporeal politics, Maria Belén Ordóñez' research broadly explores alternative sexual citizenships, the destabilization of (hetero)normativity and the formation of publics in mediascapes. Her ethnographic research has been based in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver where she engages with the affective impacts of events in disparate locations such as media headlines; queer identified spaces of pleasure and activism, and the contested zones of censorship and regulation. Her research has included the investigation and tracking of affect in Canadian legislative challenges dealing with sex, sexuality and morality. Specifically, the cases of R v. Sharpe (child pornography), R v. Bedford (bawdy house laws), the police raid of the Taboo gay strip club (homophobic targeting of young gay strippers) in Montreal and Canadian legislation that raised the age of consent from 14 to 16 years of age. Ordóñez uses feminist methodologies and multi-sited ethnography to think and write about the emergence and undoing of public events. Her most recent research is forthcoming in an edited volume, *Reworking Postcolonialism: Globalization, Labour and Rights* (2015). Belén Ordóñez' chapter is on media circuits of power, desire and labour as a rhizomatic event in a globalized context, vis-a-vis the political undoing of the former director of the International Monetary Fund, Dominique Strauss-Khan.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:**

In conversation with a larger community of FemTechNet scholars, artists, students and activists, this course supports student's interest in feminist analysis for critical engagements with science and technology. Through close readings of texts; critical writing and exploration; discussions of articles; (video) dialogues; blog design and creative content/posts, students will:

- Build and contribute to feminist knowledges and perspectives
- Develop embodied narratives that are situated in local experience
- Consider and apply feminist theories to science, technology and art practice
- Explore dialogical and digital forums as methodologies for articulating feminist theoretical terms and ideas
- Acquire critical feminist perspectives that facilitate nuanced understandings of the operations of (global) power
- Build feminist digital archives through work with online feminist networks

### **COURSE WEBSITES:**

FemTechNet Commons: FemTechNet.org

Twitter: #FemTechNet #DOCC14

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FemTechNet/> and Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/FemTechNet>

Canvas: <https://canvas.ocadu.ca/>

Student Blogs

Facebook Closed Group (Media Container):

*DOCC 2014\_ OCAD and Penn State Dialogues and Difference*

## **TEACHING METHODS AND DELIVERY:**

This graduate seminar is based on a collaborative model of learning which entails active class participation and preparation of weekly readings and blog entries. Students will need to browse (follow) the blogs of class peers and consider blog content for class discussions. The professor, Maria Belén, will browse and read student blogs; facilitate and structure class discussions and provide a weekly framework based on the readings.

**OOOH - online open office hours**, will begin the week of Sept. 22 with a 10-week run on the FemTechNet.org website. Office hours will facilitate interaction with students and faculty across FemTechNet. This forum will serve as an online space to discuss DOCC course video dialogue themes.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. **Dialogue Blogs:** create, develop and maintain a course blog with a partner (weekly submissions).

The blog documents feminist engagement by actively observing everyday life in Toronto. Themes should interweave situated, feminist and queer understandings of difference, combined with the materiality and lived experience of technology and science. The situated context of Toronto serves as a framework in identifying local productions of feminist knowledge, through lived and imagined observations regarding everyday art and cultural practices. Your blog will also illustrate thought process with and alongside your partner; elaborating upon the understanding of concepts and possible applications. You may be asked to post other class assignments to your blogs. You will need to work with your partner to develop blog content and conversations through a dialogical approach discussed and elaborated upon in-class.

### **Blog entries must address the following:**

- Weekly readings and/or femtechnet video dialogues
- Themes, topics and questions that were discussed in class. Summaries are not necessary, but rather, reflections on what was discussed and where your mind travelled, in conversation and individually, each week.
- Themes/topic/discussion that inspired you when you were out and about. What did you find interesting each week and how might you analyse these points of interest using feminist perspectives? You can observe and write about the same sites and cultural practices, or, you can choose to observe different sites in relation to what your partner shares on the blog.

### **Optional Blog Additions**

You are encouraged to insert any and all forms of expression that you deem relevant and useful to your blog discussions- this includes but is not limited to: public images, graffiti, doodles, videos, photography, animations, text, multiple text, nonsensical text, poems, stories, reflexive journal style entries, links, reviews of all kinds: an exhibit you saw, a film you watched, a (sensational) media story etc. Blog content and conversations can also spill over into the classroom as feminist resources to draw and learn from therefore, you are responsible for browsing your peer's blogs before class. Note that your blog will also be made available to other institutions offering this course and/or in the Femtechnet circuit, unless you indicate otherwise.

### **Constructing your blog**

By the second class, students should have their blogs set up and must provide the rest of the class with their blog url. Preferred blog sites, tips, tools and interfaces may be discussed via Canvas.

Students should write a minimum of 300 Words in their weekly blog.

### **2. Class Facilitations of Course Readings and Written report**

**You will sign up to facilitate two readings** and initiate and facilitate two discussions based on key questions. A 500-word report will be submitted based on the question/discussion of one of the facilitations (readings) and posted/submitted in the following class. The facilitator should outline the question/s and the critical observations made about the reading.

### **3. Video Creation**

**Students will video record a 12-15 minute conversation about a selected course reading with a peer.** The dialogue must address course themes and integrate questions/comments/critiques. The conversation can revolve around a pre-determined question/s in order to stay within the time limit. The video must be uploaded to Vimeo and/or blog and it must be titled with a key word.

### **4. Cross-Class Assignments**

As part of an ongoing effort to connect simultaneous nodal courses, the class will develop a dialogue with Pennsylvania State University (Women's Studies, School of Visual Arts) DOCC course, Professor Karen Keifer-Boyd's class, "Including Difference") in "meet and connect exercises".

#### **Introductions-In-Relation**

This exercise will record and share student "introductions". This entails communicating a selected moment/event in a student's life and considering it in light of, (and through) Erin Manning's reading, "Engenderings: Gender, Politics, Individuation". Introductions will serve to exchange and situate student's life experiences in ongoing online engagements. We will also receive student "introductions" from Penn State via recorded (blog) uploads which will be prepared in connection to a different reading.

#### **Video Dialogue Responses**

Another exercise will entail recording and uploading a short 15-20 min. class conversation in response to the FemTechNet "Difference" Video Dialogue, and then sharing with Penn State University's DOCC course. Video dialogue responses will be exchanged and both classes will be required to comment on each other's responses via blogs.

### **5. FemTechNet/Online Presence**

Students are required to register on the FemTechNet site (the commons):

FemTechNet.org

As the site develops, student efforts to connect and collaborate in discussions with other students enrolled in DOCC 2014 courses will be included in the evaluation criteria of the course.

There is a Facebook FemTechNet page and group to join/ "like" as well as a cross-class FB group that OCADU and Penn State classes will share; it will be used to track/post relevant feminist and/or feminist related media pertaining to course themes.

## **\*EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCHEDULE**

	<b>% of Grade</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>
<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>	
is based on: classroom discussions and online presence; timely and appropriate submission of blog posts and assignments; and appreciable endeavours to develop academic learning and collaborative skills.		
<b>Cross-Class Assignments</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Sep. 30/Oct. 7</b>
There are two cross-class assignments and each one is worth 10%. Students will be evaluated on their level of engagement with the DOCC class at Penn State University ( <a href="http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/difference/">http://cyberhouse.arted.psu.edu/difference/</a> ) via video/audiorecordings, as well as blog responses. Emphasis will be placed on student's ability to communicate ideas and on the depth and focused scope of the dialogues that transpire in recordings. The written component of "Introductions" (1100 Words) will be evaluated based on student's ability to clearly outline and elaborate on a concept and/or idea in Erin Manning's reading and on the ability to connect and integrate these ideas and concepts with a personal life moment/event. How well students integrate these two components (personal/analytical) will determine the final grade. The second assignment pays attention to students ability to engage in a class conversation that responds to the ideas discussed in a Video Dialogue. Recorded conversations will be exchanged with Penn State University's class and students will be expected to post a 500 Word written response about Penn State University's Video Dialogue conversation. The written response should outline any new critical perspectives and questions that were observed. Students will also consider the underlying themes and links between the FTN Video Dialogue and Penn State University's class discussion. The recorded conversation must focus primarily on readings by Shildrick, M'charek and Sandoval.		
<b>Video Dialogue</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Nov. 4</b>
Evaluation will depend on how the dialogue is framed and organized. Students will need to determine the selection of articles and the possible links between them. Moreover, students will work in pairs and communicate ideas that they determine to be important and relevant to their own research interests/questions. The dialogue will be framed and organized before the video recording so as to create the best possible staging for the conversation. Students can choose how they will communicate their ideas (i.e interview form, casual conversation, thematic staging for effect, etc.).		
<b>Weekly Collaborative Blogs</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>Dec. 2</b>
The blog submissions are part of an ongoing class response to the material but also to what the course material inspires. This is an opportunity to highlight and develop the potential connections between course content and student's everyday life in Toronto. Students will be evaluated based on the curation of their blogs and also on how the overall course themes are engaged, thus students are encouraged to include diverse digital forms (i.e images, sound, video, etc.) that best illustrate their overall questions and observations. The point is not to summarize course material but rather to develop a voice and a style alongside the course readings.		

**Class facilitation of two articles and written report of one facilitation (500 Word Blog post) \_\_\_\_\_ (sign up) 15%**

Student led class facilitations aim to generate discussion through well-considered and prepared questions. Students will critically focus on one aspect of the readings being facilitated and offer selected key observations tied to proposed key questions; the 500 Word written report will highlight key observations and questions. Students will also need to construct a discussion framework (i.e. propose working in pairs to answer a question, an activity that stresses some aspect of the article) that is deemed most suitable for generating discussion and class engagement.

**FemTechNet Online Presence 5%**

In addition to maintaining a weekly blog, students are expected to navigate and engage the FemTechNet web site. There will be a number of invitations to participate and students are encouraged to contribute to online discussions. This also includes sharing, tracking and observing media with Penn State University's DOCC class, via posts to the FaceBook group: "DOCC 2014\_OCAD and Penn State Dialogues and Difference".

\*Further details regarding all assignments are posted on Canvas (please see "Assignments").

**GRADING SCHEME:**

The following grades are used at the graduate level:

A+	95-100
A	85-94
A -	80-84
B+	75-79
B	70-74
C	60-69
F	0-59
P	Pass (Summer Off-Campus Only)*
I	Incomplete**
W	Withdrawn without Academic Penalty

\*A grade of P is not used in grade point average (GPA) calculations.

\*\*Incomplete work must be completed no later than the end of the following term.

Please note that as per Section 5.3 of the Graduate Studies General Policies, students in graduate programs are required to maintain a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 75% (B+).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

All articles will be available through **Course Reserves** on Canvas.

**REQUIRED RESOURCES:**

It is recommended that students bring laptops to class. Ongoing access to the internet is required.

**Advance preparation: Students must research blog platforms and select one for the course. Students must also be prepared to start blogging in the second week of class.**

**Some Suggestions:**

"Five Best Blogging Platforms": <http://lifesacker.com/5568092/five-best-blogging-platforms>

“Top Ten Free Online Blogging Platforms”: <http://sixrevisions.com/tools/top-free-online-blogging>

## WEEKLY READINGS/SCHEDULE:

### Week 1

Sept. 9: Introductions  
Overview of course and FemTechNet  
Discussion: MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) vs. DOCC (Distributed Open Collaborative Course)

Juhasz, A. & Balsamo, A. “An Idea Whose Time is Here: FemTechNet – A Distributed Online Collaborative Course (DOCC). *Ada: a Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, No. 1. 2012

### Week 2

Sept. 16: Manning, Erin “Engenderings: Gender, Politics, Individuation” in Politics of Touch: Sense, Movement, Sovereignty. pp. 84-109. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

Online guest facilitator/discussant, Professor Karen Keifer-Boyd (<http://www.personal.psu.edu/ktk2/>) of Art Education and Women’s Studies, School of Visual Arts, at Penn State University will join the last hour of class and discuss her forthcoming co-authored chapter “*STEAM Embodied Curricula: Creativity Through Translate-ability, Sense-ability, and Response-ability*” in In F. Bastos & E. Zimmerman, Connecting Creativity Research and Practice in Art Education: Foundations, Pedagogies, and Contemporary Issues. Reston, VA: The National Art Education Association. Forthcoming 2014.

Article will be made available through Canvas and students are expected to read before the class.

\* *In-class time to work on “Introductions” for Karen Keifer-Boyd’s Penn State University DOCC class*

### Week 3

#### Corporeal Figurations

Sept. 23: Shohat, Ella “ ‘Lasers for Ladies’: Endo Discourse and the Inscription of Science” in Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices. pp. 139-165. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006.

Latour, Bruno “How to Talk about the Body? The Normative Dimensions of Science Studies” in *Body and Society* 10(2-3): 205-229. 2004.

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Body \(Skawennati and Heather Cassils moderated by T.L. Cowan\)](#)

## **Week 4** **Differences**

Sept. 30: Shildrick, Margrit "The Body Which is Not One: Dealing with Differences" in *Body & Society* 5: 77. 1999.

M'charek "Fragile Differences, Relational effects: Stories about the Materiality of Race and Sex" in *European Journal of Women's Studies* 17(4) 307-322. 2010.

**Record in-class "introductions" for Karen Keifer-Boyd's class at Penn State University. Written "introductions" must be posted to Blog by 4pm.**

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Differences](#), (Kim Sawchuk and Shu Lea Cheang)

## **Week 5** **Race: Feminist Methodologies and Disruptions**

Oct. 7: Sandoval, Chela "U.S. Third World Feminism- Differential Social Movement I" in *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Theory out of Bounds Volume 18. 2000. Pp. 40-63.

**Record response to "Difference" Video Dialogue using Shildrick, M'charek and Sandoval. Post to blog and share with Karen Keifer-Boyd's class at Penn State.**

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Race](#), (Maria Fernandez and Lisa Nakamura)

**October 13-17: Study Break**

## **Week 6** **Sex and the (Techno)Politics and Poetics of Reproduction**

Oct. 21: Martin, Emily The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles in *Signs* (April 1991), 16 (3), pg. 485-501.

Haraway, Donna "Fetus: The Virtual Speculum in the New World Order" in Modest Witness@Second Millennium. FemaleMan@Meets OncoMouse™: Feminsim and Technoscience. pp. 173-212. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.



SubRosa “Common Knowledge and Political Love” in Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism and Technoscience. pp. 221-242. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008.

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Sexuality, \(Faith Wilding and Julie Levin Russo\)](#)

### **Week 7** **Feminist Labour in the Virtual**

Oct. 28: Ong, Aiwa “Neoliberalism as a Mobile Technology” in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series, Vol. 32, No. 1. Jan.,2007. pp. 3-8

Terranova, Tiziana “Free labour: Producing culture for the digital economy” in *Social Text*, 18(2):33-58. 2000.

### **Week 8** **Feminist Epistemologies, Practices, and the Expansion of “Objectivity”**

Nov. 4: Harding, Sandra “After Absolute Neutrality: Expanding ‘Science’” in Feminist Science Studies: A New Generation pp. 291-320. Eds. Maralee Mayberry, Banu Subramaniam, Lisa H. Weasel. New York: Routledge, 2001.

**Video Dialogue Due (uploaded to blog and/or Vimeo’s FemTechNet channel)**

### **Week 9** **Feminist Machines**

Nov. 11: Haraway, Donna “A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the 1980s” in Linda Nicholson (ed.) Feminism/Postmodernism. pp.190-233. New York and London: Routledge, 1990.

Cooper, Melinda “Preempting Emergence: The Biological Turn in the War on Terror” in Melinda Cooper, Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era. pp. 74-100 Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008.

Halberstam, Judith “Automating gender: postmodern feminism in the age of the intelligent machine” in *Feminist Studies*, 3, 439-60. 1991

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Machine \(Wendy Chun and Kelly Dobson\)](#)

**Week 10**  
**Dispossession: Situating Feminist Practices**

Nov. 18: Judith Bultler and Athena Athanasiou “Transborder Affective foreclosures and State Racism” in Dispossession: The Performative in the Political. 2013

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Place-live stream: \(Radhika Gajjala and Sharon Irish\)](#)

**Week 11**  
**Animating Sexuality: Queer Potentials**

Nov. 25: Halberstam, Judith. Animal sociality beyond the hetero/homo binary in *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*. Vol. 20, No. 3, November 2010, 321–331.

Halberstam, Judith. J. “Animating Revolt and Revolting Animation” in Halberstam, J. The Queer Art of Failure. pp.87-121. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 2011.

Barad, Karen. “Nature’s Queer Performativity” in *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 19(2):121-158, Spring/Summer 2011.

**Week 12**  
**Becomings**

Dec. 2: Beatriz DaCosta “Reaching the limit: When Art becomes Science” in Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism and Technoscience. Beatriz da Costa and Kavita Philip (eds.). pp. 365-382. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008.

Haraway, Donna “Sowing Worlds: A Seed Bag for Terraforming with Earth Others” in Margaret Grebowicz and Helen Merrick Beyond the Cyborg: Adventures with Donna Haraway. pp. 137-146. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013

Myers, Natasha “Sensing Botanical Sensoria: A Kriya for Cultivating Your Inner Plant” In Centre for Imaginative Ethnography (digital). 2014.

FemTechNet [Video Dialogue: Transformation \(Catherine Lord, Donna Haraway about the legacy of Beatriz DaCosta\)](#)

**Blogs Due by 4 p.m.**

**LATE WORK**

This is a graduate level course and it is anticipated that all presentations, projects, and papers should be presented and handed in, in a timely manner, as per the course schedule. If for any reason this is not possible, please anticipate and discuss the matter with your instructor. Medical cases which present problems with deadlines require confirmation in writing from a health care professional. Late work is normally subject to a 10% penalty per week, and will be accepted solely by arrangement, and with the discretion of the instructor.

**INCOMPLETE GRADES**

An incomplete grade is considered when students encounter unexpected difficulty completing course work within the semester. Students must discuss their situation with their instructor and request an incomplete grade prior to the end of the semester. Incomplete grades are filed at the discretion of the teaching faculty. Students with incomplete grades must complete all course work no later than the end of the following term.

**ATTENDANCE**

The university requires that students attend classes on a regular basis and that they participate fully in them.

**RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION**

A student who foresees a conflict between a religious obligation and any scheduled class assignments, including the final examination or critique, must notify his/her instructor in writing and in the case of final examinations and critiques must make a written request to the Office of Graduate Studies within three weeks of the first class.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students may not re-submit previously graded work without permission, or submit work produced for other courses for evaluation. Plagiarism, misrepresenting personal performance or status and/or any conduct which damages the integrity of scholarly and artistic activity is unacceptable. Academic penalties will result. See the OCAD U Academic Calendar for details.

Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offences.

**RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

Graduate students who conduct research that involves human participants may require the approval of the OCAD Research Ethics Board prior to the initiation of any such research. For more information on research involving human participants, please visit the OCAD U website at: [www.ocad.ca/research/research\\_ethics\\_board.htm](http://www.ocad.ca/research/research_ethics_board.htm)

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**DISCLAIMER STATEMENT**

The syllabus, schedule, and course outline may be amended, altered, or changed as the course proceeds. The weekly schedule is open and will be developed in response to the ongoing concerns of the participants. Guest speakers and student presentations will be organized as the term progresses. The class will be notified and when possible, consulted about developments and changes.