

## **Feminist Readings of Fashion History \_Course Outline**

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will have gained a critical awareness of how fashion has both shaped and been shaped by feminist thought and gender dynamics, with particular attention to the role of clothing in constructing and expressing gender identity. They will be able to critically recognise how the evolution of the feminist movement has influenced the fashion industry and vice versa.

### **Course Contents**

The course explores the historical and cultural relationship between fashion, feminism and gender identity from the 19th century to the present day. Beginning with the origins of feminist thought, it examines how fashion has both reflected and, at times, challenged the condition of women across different historical contexts. Key topics include the representation of women in fashion magazines, the relationship between clothing and sexuality, the lesbian chic style and the evolution of beauty standards. The course concludes with a critical examination of how today's fashion industry engages with issues of inclusion, diversity and transparency.

### **Teaching Methods**

The course will consist of theoretical lectures accompanied by active student participation through guided discussions. Key case studies will be analysed to deepen understanding of the topics covered. Roundtable discussions will also be organised to promote critical thinking and collective reflection.

### **Readings / Bibliography**

At the end of each session, students will receive teaching materials (slides) summarising the key topics discussed, along with a curated bibliography. The resources will include academic articles, reports, thematic essays and relevant online content for further exploration.

### **Teaching Tools**

PowerPoint presentations and a variety of visual materials from online sources will be used throughout the course. Students will also be offered an optional list of additional readings and resources for those interested in exploring the subjects in greater depth.

<b>LESSON 1 (2H): History of women and fashion Pt 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overview of the course structure and objectives</li> <li>- Introduction to feminist studies and the relationship between fashion and women's condition in the 19th century</li> </ul>
<b>LESSON 2 (2H): History of women and fashion Pt 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fashion and the female condition in the first half of the 20th century (1900s–1960s)</li> <li>- Focus: the image of women in art and the construction of femininity in fashion magazines in the post-war period</li> </ul>
<b>LESSON 3 (2H): History of women and fashion Pt 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fashion and feminist perspectives from the second half of the 20th century to the present (1960s–today)</li> <li>- Focus: non-conforming and marginalized bodies</li> </ul>
<b>LESSON 4 (2H): Sexuality and the construction of gender through clothing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clothes to cover, clothes to reveal: the rehabilitation of female sexuality in the 20th century</li> <li>- Focus: subversive femininity in fashion and the rise of lesbian chic style</li> </ul>
<b>LESSON 5 (2H): The current picture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The current landscape: how fashion brands address gender and feminist issues</li> <li>- The Fashion Transparency Index: a roundtable discussion on inclusion, diversity and accountability in the fashion industry</li> </ul>