Dear,

Congratulations on beginning your first semester at John Jay College! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and to welcome you to the GEN 140 First Year Seminar class, “Gender, Activism and Social Change.” This course will not only introduce you to the study of gender, but it will also highlight the intersection of gender with race, class, and sexuality. As the title suggests, we will be focusing on gender-based activism. We will analyze real-life moments of activism and the role of activist efforts in shaping and reshaping cultural norms and social policies related to gender. Most of all, this course will help you develop the tools to think critically about and interpret your own observations and experiences of gender.

The best part about this course is that we are going to have a lot of fun. We can’t learn about gender or activism by spending all of our time in the classroom, so we will go on field trips, conduct research, and attend various events. Because the course will be highly interactive, it is important that you complete the readings and assignments so that we can have thoughtful, meaningful discussions and debates. Although many of the concepts and themes may be unfamiliar to you at first, I expect you to have an open mind, to be curious, and to ask questions. I may ask you to challenge your own way of thinking about gender, but I also want you to feel empowered to offer perspectives different from those of your classmates or even from me as your professor. Since activism is often central to issues of justice, as the new generation of John Jay students, it is up to you to be informed, to think critically about society, and to advocate for a more just world.

Your first semester of college is an exciting step in your academic journey. With this in mind, we also will spend some time exploring the experience of being a new college student, including the various resources available to help you be the best student you can be. Your success is extremely important to me. So I encourage you to email (rgermana@jjay.cuny.edu) me to introduce yourself before the start of the semester. I would be happy to give you more details about the class or to answer any questions or concerns you might have.

I’m looking forward to meeting you.

Best,

Dr. Rachelle Germana