

GEND 3550.001: SOCIETY AND GENDER

Catalog Description – Course will examine and interrogate competing constructions of a spectrum of gendered and sexed bodies and identities. Course will explore the various social institutions, cultural productions, and practices that shape intersecting identities and power relations to enable social justice.

Course Attributes – This upper-division course satisfies G.E. Area UD-D and the Multicultural Requirement. Upper-division G.E. courses are designed for students who have completed 60 semester units, although upper-division status is not required for enrollment.

Course Overview – This course introduces students to key sociological and interdisciplinary approaches to understanding gender and sexuality. We begin by examining how categories such as sex, gender, and sexuality are defined and how gendered expectations come to appear natural, fixed, or universal. Students then explore concepts including the gender binary, gender-normative privilege, intersectionality, masculinities, femininities, heteronormativity, and the social construction of identity. Readings and course materials draw from sociology, gender studies, ethnic studies, queer studies, and related fields, with particular attention to the ways gender is shaped by race, class, sexuality, nationality, and culture.

Throughout the semester, students use these concepts to analyze everyday life and a range of social settings, including families, workplaces, media, popular culture, and the global economy. Topics include masculinity and femininity, sexual identities, gendered labor, family and care work, cultural differences in gender and sexuality, performance, globalization, and movements for social change. The course emphasizes both the reproduction of inequality and the ways individuals and communities resist, reinterpret, and transform dominant norms. By the end of the course, students will be able to apply sociological and intersectional frameworks to contemporary issues and explain how gender and sexuality are produced, maintained, and challenged across different social contexts.

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain and compare major theoretical perspectives on sex, gender, sexuality, and identity.
2. Analyze how gender, race, class, sexuality, nationality, and other identities intersect and change across historical and cultural contexts.
3. Evaluate how institutions, cultural practices, and interlocking systems of inequality shape power, privilege, oppression, and resistance.
4. Discuss the historical and contemporary experiences of marginalized populations in the United States and transnationally.
5. Apply intersectional theories and analytical tools to representations of gender and sexuality in media and other cultural forms.
6. Identify gender-based inequalities and evaluate strategies for resistance, social change, and social justice.

Course Material – All course materials are provided free of charge through Canvas.

Class Format – This fully online, asynchronous course is conducted through Canvas and has no scheduled class meetings. Students should log in several times each week to review materials, participate in discussions, and submit assignments by the posted deadlines. Coursework may be completed within each assignment’s submission period.

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Assignment	Description	Point Value	% of Final Grade
Forums	12 discussion forums at 100 points each 2 lowest forums dropped	1000	50
Quiz	Key terms	200	10
Midterm Paper	Application of key course concepts	400	20
Final Paper	Intersectional analysis of gender and inequality	400	20
TOTAL		2000	
Extra Credit	Up to 2 assignments at 50 points each	100	5

Major Assignments

Detailed instructions and full prompts are posted on Canvas.

Forums – Post one original discussion thread and five replies to your peers’ comments in a discussion forum based on the required material for the week. Due by 11:59pm on Sundays. Forums are required most weeks.

Quizzes and Papers

1. Quiz: key terms from course text *Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies*
2. Midterm Paper: Applies key concepts from the first half of the course to a contemporary issue, social institution, or cultural representation.
3. Final Paper: Uses an intersectional framework to analyze a topic related to gender, sexuality, inequality, or social change.

Extra Credit – Complete optional short assignments based on approved course-related materials or activities listed on Canvas. Materials already required for the course are not eligible.

CLASS SCHEDULE

All material is posted on Canvas for free.

The course schedule is subject to change; students will be notified and Canvas will be updated as soon as possible. All material is required unless otherwise noted.

DG =	Reading from <i>Doing Gender Diversity</i> . The number refers to the article/chapter number
WGS =	Reading from <i>Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies</i>

Week 1

Welcome to the Class!

- Read the course syllabus
- Familiarize yourself with our Canvas Homepage; Read all course policies.
- Read: 5 common forms of plagiarism ¹

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 1: Welcome to the Class!](#)

Week 2

Unit 1. Introduction

- Kimmel Introduction (from *The Gendered Society*)
- Hontalas A Note About Gender Normative Privilege
- DG 43 What is Gender Normative Privilege?

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 2: Introduction – Patriarchy and Gender Normative Privilege](#)

Week 3

Unit 2. Key Terms

The pages are required reading from WGS and contain the terms you will need to know for the Quiz.

- Identity Terms 26-29
- Conceptualizing Structures of Power 31-33
- Gender and Sex: Transgender and Intersex 51-53
- Sexualities / Race / Class 54-55 / 57-60 / 61-63
- Institutions, Cultures, and Structures 68-73

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Quiz: Key Terms](#)

¹ These are just *some* examples of common forms of plagiarism that you should refresh yourself on. It is not an exhaustive list of expectations for academic honesty. It is your responsibility to know what cheating/plagiarism is and to adhere to all course/University guidelines at all times. If you are unsure of what is expected regarding academic honesty, please contact the instructor ASAP.

Week 4**Unit 3. Intersectionality**

- Hopkins What is Intersectionality?
- WGS Intersectionality: Pages 20 and 38-43
- Hawk Intersectional Feminism
- DG 3 Collins: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 3: Intersectionality](#)

Week 5**Unit 4. Gender Diversity • The Gender Binary**

- WGS Introduction to Binary Systems Pages 48-50
The Sex/Gender/Sexuality System
Essentialism; Biological Determinism Page 36
Alternatives to Binary Systems Page 64
- DG 9 Fuller: What Difference Does Difference Make?
- PDF Genderbread Person
- Choose an item from a list about the gender binary and sports

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 4: Gender Diversity and the Gender Binary](#)

Week 6**Unit 5. The Social Construction of Gender**

- WGS Social Constructionism Page 35
- DG 1 West and Zimmerman: Doing Gender
- DG 2 Lorber: The Social Construction of Gender
- Hontalas Doing Gender and Social Construction

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Midterm Paper](#)

Week 7**Unit 6. Masculinities & Femininities**

- WGS Multiple Masculinities Female Masculinity Page 56
Hegemonic Masculinity Emphasized Femininity Page 78
- DG 12 Jensen: Masculine, Feminine or Human?
- Queer 101 What is Toxic Masculinity?
- DG Choose one article from a list of options from DG that are posted on Canvas

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 5: Masculinities and Femininities](#)

Week 8**Unit 7. Sexualities**

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- Katz: The Invention of Heterosexuality (from Anderson and Collins)
 - WGS Inset: The Social Construction of Heterosexuality Page 35-36
Heteronormative Page 36
 - DG 44 Heasley: But You're So Queer for a Straight Guy!
 - Vance: Problems in the History of Sexuality (from Grewal and Kaplan)

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 6: Sexualities](#)

Week 9**Unit 8. Cultural Variances in Gender & Sexuality**

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- DG 41 Worth: Bad-Assed Honeys with a Difference: South Auckland
 - *Injunuity*: Two-Spirits (clip)
 - Dakin: Hearing Two-Spirits
 - Film *Two Spirits*²

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 7: Cultural Variances in Gender and Sexuality](#)

Week 10**Unit 9. Doing Gender: Family**

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- WGS The Family (Pages 74-77)
 - hooks: Ch 13 Feminist Parenting
 - Choose 1: DG 30 Berkowitz: Can a Gay Man be a Housewife? (excerpt)
DG 31 Hill: Doing Gender in African American Families (excerpt)

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 8: Doing Gender – Family](#)

Week 11**No Class – Spring Break**

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- No new course material, forum, or assignments

Week 12**Unit 10. Doing Gender: Work**

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- WGS Gender and Work in the U.S. Pages 99-102
 - hooks: Ch 7. Rethinking the Nature of Work
 - Romero: Bonds of Sisterhood, Bonds of Oppression
 - Romero: “Maid in the USA” (excerpt)

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- [Forum 9: Doing Gender – Work](#)

² **Content warning:** this film discusses a violent LGBT hate crime and includes graphic details. It also includes discussion of sexual abuse. Please contact me if you have any concerns. You may request an alternative assignment.

Week 13 **Unit 11. Doing Gender: Abroad**

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- WGS Developed/Undeveloped; Global North/South and related terms Pg. 29-30
- Levels of Analysis; Inset about *Maquiladoras* Pg. 24-25
- Transnational Production and Globalization Pg. 105-108
- Racialized, Gendered, and Sexualized Labor in the Global Economy Pg. 109-110
- DG 32 Acker: Gender, Capitalism and Globalization
- Fuentes and Ehrenreich: South of the Border, Down Mexico Way
- Film *The Global Assembly Line*

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- Forum 10: Doing Gender – Abroad

Week 14

Unit 12. Gender and Performance

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- WGS Media (pages 78-81)
- *Vanity Fair*: 100 Years of Drag Slang
- Watch one episode of *RuPaul's Drag Race* (a list of episodes to choose from will be provided)
- *The Conversation*: "RuPaul's Drag Race is still figuring out how to handle gender and race"
- Choose two pop culture articles from a list provided on Canvas

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- Forum 11: Gender and Performance

Week 15 **Unit 13. Social Change • What's Next?**

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- DG 45 Risman: Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism
- Kimmel: A Degendered Society (from *The Gendered Society*)
- Additional instructor-selected reading

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- Forum 12: Reflection – Social Change and What's Next?

Week 16 **Final Exam Period**

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No new readings or course material. The final paper and any optional extra-credit assignments are due by the posted deadline.

Due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas

- Final Paper
- Extra Credit Assignments (up to 2; both are optional)

COURSE POLICIES & GRADING

See Canvas for additional information and links

Syllabus – You are required to read this entire syllabus thoroughly and are responsible for all information in it. This includes all material on Canvas referenced in this syllabus.

Canvas – You are required to thoroughly review all policies on Canvas and are responsible for all information posted.

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions – Please see Canvas for answers to frequently asked questions including requests for extensions, late work policy, how to submit extra credit, and more.

Grading Policy - All scores will be entered into Canvas throughout the term as I complete grading for each assignment. Your grade will be calculated as a percentage of points earned out of points total. Your final grade will be based on the following breakdown:

A 93% - 100%	A- 90% - 92.99%	B+ 87% - 89.99%
B 83% - 86.99%	B- 80% - 82.99%	C+ 77% - 79.99%
C 73% - 76.99%	C- 70% - 72.99%	D+ 67% - 69.99%
D 63% - 66.99%	D- 60% - 62.99%	F 0% - 59.99%

Late and Missing Work Policy – All late work will be marked down by 1 full grade (10%) every day that it is late, starting the minute that it is late. For example, if it is due Sunday at 11:59pm and you submit it 30 minutes late (Monday morning at 12:29am), you will be marked down 10%. Work that is more than 10 days late will receive a “0” and be considered “missing.” See Canvas for full policies.

Incompletes - Per University policies, you must complete at least 70% of the course work with a score of at least 70% to be eligible for an Incomplete.

Grading Turnaround Time - During the regular sixteen-week semester approximately: two weeks for minor assignments (e.g., forums); 3 to 4 weeks for major assignments (e.g., midterm, final).

Assignment Policies, Student Conduct, and Academic Honesty

Unless otherwise noted, assignments must be completed independently using only approved course materials. Students must properly cite all ideas, language, and information that are not common knowledge and may not engage in plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or other forms of academic dishonesty. Generative artificial intelligence may not be used to produce, rewrite, summarize, or substantially edit submitted work unless explicitly permitted. Students must also follow the University Student Code of Conduct and all related course and university policies.