

Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
WGS 101
Online- Spring 2019

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An introduction to Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and to its perspectives. The course will use interdisciplinary perspectives to begin to examine the categories of gender and sexuality, grounded in Women's Studies, as they intersect with race, ethnicity, class, nationality, dis/ability and other sites of social inequality.

General Education Requirements: Satisfies the General Education Ethics, Social Contexts and Institutions, and Cultural Diversity and International Perspectives Requirements.

In this course we will explore the field of women, gender, and sexuality studies from multiple vantage points, such as the personal, interpersonal, and institutional dimensions . We will explore the ways in which race/ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference, and physical ability intersect with gender to create diverse experiences of compounded social inequality. This course serves as an introduction to the academic discipline of women's and gender studies, focusing on its theories, methods, and multidisciplinary nature.

This course will occur "on-line" through the Blackboard. The class will run on a Tues/Thurs schedule with reading assignments and journal postings on the readings for the week due on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. Some weeks there will be only one journal assignment due in which a student should respond to the readings for both days. On the days journals are due, students are also expected to respond to two other students' journal postings. This will constitute our class "discussion" of the topics.

****Please note this syllabus is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes the instructor may make through announcements that will be posted to Blackboard.**

Also, please note that this is NOT a self-paced course. It is expected that you keep up with the weekly assignments and post them on time.

Please make sure that you have high-speed Internet access and Quick Time as a large part of this class includes videos that you need to be able to watch. If you do not have Quick Time you should contact U Maine IT Center for help.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

*Students will participate in the online discussion through their Tues/Thurs journal entries and responses to each other by posting their journals on time.

*Students will complete all the assignments that are listed on this syllabus on time.

*The instructor will provide feedback for all written assignments other than the daily journal responses.

*Assignments are due on the designated date. Late journal responses, assignments, or exams will not be accepted or if an exception is made they will be marked down.

***Academic Honesty.** Plagiarism violates the University of Maine Student Conduct Code as outlined in the Student handbook. Make sure you cite all direct quotes, images, ideas, facts, and opinions that are not your own.

*All written work, including journals, should be well written with attention to grammar. Please write your own journal before reading other students' journals. If your journal is very similar to one posted before yours, you may not receive credit.

*Please review University of Maine codes for what is considered civil conduct and etiquette for the online classroom. Students must be civil and respectful in all communications with the instructor and fellow students.

Accommodation of Disabilities:

Any student who because of a disability may need arrangements or accommodations to meet the requirements of this course is encouraged to discuss these needs with me as soon as possible.

Non-sexist Language Policy: The University of Maine, as an equal opportunity educational institution, is committed to both academic freedom and the fair treatment of all individuals. It therefore discourages the use of sexist language. Language that reinforces sexism can arise from imprecise word choices that may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory, or demeaning even if they are not intended to be. Accordingly, all University communications, whether delivered orally or in writing, shall be free of sexist language.

Sexual Discrimination Reporting

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of **sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination** involving members of the campus, **your teacher is required to report** this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For *confidential resources on campus*: **Counseling Center: 207.581.1392 or Cutler Health Center: at 207.581.4000.**

For *confidential resources off campus*: **Rape Response Services: 1.800.310.0000 or Spruce Run: 1.800.863.9909.**

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For *support services on campus*: **Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention: 207.581.1406, Office of Community Standards: 207.581.1409, University of Maine Police: 207.581.4040 or 911.** Or see the [OSAVP website](#) for a complete list of services.

Class Disruption Policy:

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

Inclusivity Statement:

It is the goal in WGS 101 to create a learning environment in which all feel welcome to express their views on a wide range of subjects in a safe, nonjudgmental environment. As well, individuals of all religious, ethnic, gender identity, sexual identity, and racial backgrounds should feel safe to express who they are in the online environment. Therefore, I urge you all to communicate with each other in our online forums in respectful ways so that we may all learn from each other, especially from our differences.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *Gendered Worlds, 3rd edition* by Judy Root Aulette and Judith Wittner
2. *Egalia's Daughters* by Gerd Brantenberg (required)

All other readings for the course listed on this syllabus will be available on e-reserves or posted to the class conference folder.

Core Learning Objectives for WGS 101

***Students will learn how to describe the workings of sex, gender, and sexuality** using a variety of disciplinary and theoretical approaches.

***Students will learn basic terms** related to gender theory.

***Students will be able to identify and describe social institutions, organizations, and practices** using feminist, gender, and queer theories.

***Students will learn about the history of women's oppression as well as women's contributions and struggles for gender equality** in a transnational and historical context.

***Students will be able to identify the ways in which gender and sexuality intersect with other sites of social inequality**, such as race, ethnicity, class, nationality, and dis/ability.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation/ Journal Responses:

WGS 101 is designed to be a discussion course and not a lecture course. Therefore, student participation is critical. Grading for participation will be based first and foremost on the quality and timeliness of your journal assignments. The course centers on our readings and it crucial that you do all the readings for the course. Each student will be expected to do a daily journal posting on Tuesday and Thursday of each week of the semester to the Blackboard conference folder with a summary and discussion of the readings for the day, including any questions about the readings and personal reactions to it. **This journal response should be one-to-two pages long.** Students will also be expected to read other students' daily journal postings and are encouraged to respond to each other as appropriate (for example agreeing or disagreeing –respectfully- with another student's opinions about the readings). Each student will be expected to respond to two other students' journal postings per day (by midnight of the day journals are due) in order to facilitate “discussion” about the readings. This activity is designed to provide a forum for online discussion, to help students keep up with the reading, and as a way to learn about how other students feel about the subject. The postings themselves will not be graded, but if you miss two or more daily journal postings, do not respond to other students, or if your journals are not of high quality, the grade for this component will be lowered. In these journals, I

would like you to first summarize and give the main points in the reading and then also offer your personal reactions to them. **Please note that journal postings are always due by 9:00 am on the day they are due- so plan ahead and do them the night before if you need to. Again, please note that your participation will be graded on the quality of your journals as well. Students who do not join the class on time and keep up with the expected postings each week should expect to receive a poor grade. It is not an option to make up the work for this class at the end as all students are expected to move through the material together. There will be no credit granted for late journals. Please also make sure that you write your own journal before reading other students' journals. If your journal is very similar to one posted prior to yours, you may not receive credit for it.**

Please also note that you are expected to read all your fellow classmates' comments that are posted each day as well as instructor's comments to the material. This constitutes our "course discussion" of the material and students will have a better understanding of the material by reading everyone's comments on it.

2. Gender Analysis Scrapbook:

The Gender Analysis Scrapbook is a folder that the instructor will post to the class conference. This Scrapbook will be a place for students to post anything related to the topic of Women's Studies, sexism, and gender roles during the course of the semester. Some examples of good things to post would be an article that discusses gender issues, a description of a movie, television show or article that illustrates some of the points we have discussed in class, or an analysis of a situation you have witnessed personally that exemplifies sexism/ gender inequality/ rigid gender roles, etc. Each student will be expected to do three postings to this folder over the course of the semester, one of which will be a "Gender Observation" (described below). Once during the semester each student must also do an "observation" in a public place in which you analyze gender roles and notice aspects of sexism at work. This observation should be one to two pages long and in it you should describe first where you were, second what you saw, and finally an analysis of what you saw. Examples of places that would be suitable for an observation are: your place of work, the mall, the student union, a bar, a church, or almost anyplace you can think of where men and women interact. Some things to look at in your observation are: Who has power? Who does not? What does body language suggest about power relations? What are the gender expectations about how each sex is supposed to behave in this environment? Who is trying to please whom and in which ways? What role does dress play? What role does language play? Your first posting to the Scrapbook must be done before Fall Break. The last two postings are due before the last week of class, and I encourage you to not save these for the last minute.

3. Event Report:

Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to find an event to attend in the community (a lecture, panel discussion, film, or performance) that relates to women's/gender issues and submit a two-page report on the event to post to the class folder. These reports should include the basic facts about the event, a discussion of how the issues presented relate to class readings and discussions, and your reaction to the presentation. Students will also be expected to read the postings of the other students and respond to at least two. The instructor will provide students with examples of the types of events that would be appropriate and post many of the events that are happening on the Orono campus this fall.

4. Women's/ Gender Issue/ Activism Paper:

By the fourth week of class, students will be asked to identify a particular global women's/ gender issue to research. In a 7-8 page paper due at the end of the semester students will identify an issue that affects women, research, and describe the issue. In the paper students will also identify and describe any organizations or agencies that already exist to address/ combat the issue. Examples of possible issues are the status of women in Muslim nations or in a particular nation of your choice (China, Japan, Russia, etc), sex trafficking and slavery, honor killings, female genital mutilation, bride burning, acid throwing, the mail order bride industry, etc. In the third part of your paper, you are asked to think up/design your own activism project that could help raise awareness about the issue. An example of an activism project will be offered to help with this. The final written paper should consist of an introduction, a conclusion, citations, and a bibliography. Students will also post their papers to the Blackboard folder and will be expected to read and respond to the papers of two other students.

5. Final Exam:

There will be an open-book Final Exam that will be posted to the course conference during the last week of the course and will be due by Tues. Dec. 18th at 9:00 am (at the latest). The exam will consist of defining some terms, and some short answer and essay questions. Students will be expected to email their completed exams directly to the professor and need to be cut and paste directly into the body of the email (instead of as an attachment).

COURSE EVALUATION

Participation (Weekly Journal Posts)	40%
Event Report	10%
Gender Scrapbook	10%
Women's Issue/ Activism Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale:

93-100 %	A
90-92 %	B
87-89 %	B+
83-86 %	B
80-82 %	B-
77-79 %	C+
73-76 %	C
70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+
63-66 %	D
60-62%	D-
Below 60	F

Please note: Minimal to no course participation through the weekly journal entries will be

graded as an F for the course. At mid-semester you will receive an estimate from the professor on your participation grade. Final grades will be calculated at the end of the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan 22 *Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Syllabus*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, p. 1-17

Review Timeline of Women's Rights

Read instructor's **Introduction to the Course**

Watch the Quick Time movie posted to the class folder under videos: *Seneca Reflections*.

Please also review the syllabus to make sure you understand it and familiarize yourself with the Blackboard system. **In your first journal posting due today by 9:00 am, please summarize the readings and the video and also "introduce" yourself to the class, covering such things as what your major is, where you are in your studies, any exposure you have had to Women's/ Gender and Sexuality Studies, and what you hope to get out of the class.**

Jan 24 *Framework, Feminism*

Reading: Kirk et al, pp 3-17 (posted to the course folder) "**Introduction**" from **Women, Images and Realities**, pp. 8-15, and "**Men and Women's Studies: Premises, Perils, and Promise**" by Michael Kimmel, pp. 24-28 (articles available on e-reserves).

Journal due by 9:00 am: In your journal posting for today, please summarize some of the main points in the reading for today. Please also define the following terms in your own words: sexism, gender, and feminism. For feminism, please do not use a dictionary to define it, but please explore your own personal definition of what you think feminism is and please also include a statement about whether or not you consider yourself to be a feminist and why or why not.

Jan 29 *Bodies and Gender*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 18-54

No journal due.

Jan 31 *Social Hierarchy and Social Location*

Reading: "**Patriarchy, the System**" by Allan Johnson, "**A Black Feminist Statement**" by the Combahee River Collective, "**Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack**" by Peggy McIntosh and "**The Male Privilege Checklist**" (articles on e-reserves or posted to class folder under course content).

Journal response due at 9:00 am with reactions to all the readings for Jan 29 and Jan 31.

Feb 5 *Feminist Theory*

Reading: Kirk, pp. 52-63, "**The Social Construction of Gender**" by Judith Lorber

No journal due.

Feb. 7 *Socialization and the Social Construction of Gender*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 58-90

Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of and your personal reactions to all the reading in the chapter. **Journal response due by 9:00 am** with reflections on all the readings for Feb 5 and Feb 7. In your journal posting for today, please summarize the chapter and discuss your own identity or "social location," including some advantages or disadvantages you

may face due to your particular social location. Please also reflect upon the concepts of social hierarchy, and power and privilege based upon race, class, and gender.

Feb. 12 *Sexualities*

Readings: Gendered Worlds, pp. 93-134, “**The Gender Unicorn and Glossary**”

No journal response due.

****One-page proposal due on your Final Women’s Issue paper by 9:00 am.**

In this proposal, please discuss what topic you have chosen, why it is an important global gender issue, and how you plan to go about researching it. Please email this proposal directly to the instructor cut and paste into email message and not as an attachment. Instructor will provide feedback on your proposal.

Feb. 14 *Bodies and Health*

Reading, "**Breaking the Model**" by Graciela Rodriguez and "**Double Life**" by Lisa Latham, pp. 133-138, "**The Medical Construction of Gender**" by Suzanne Kessler, pp. 49-59, and "**Transgender Feminism**" by Susan Stryker, pp. 63-68 (articles on e-reserves).

Journal response due by 9:00 am with reactions to all the readings for Feb 12 and Feb 14.

Feb 19 *Education*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 141-172

No journal response due.

Feb 21 *Gender and the Global Economy*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 178-216

Watch video *China Blue*, posted to folder

Journal response due by 9:00 am with reactions to all the material for Feb 19 and Feb 21.

Feb 26 *Families*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 222-263

No journal due.

Feb 28 *Women and Work*

Reading: "Women and Work," pp. 175-211 and “**The Mommy Tax**” (available on e-reserves).

Watch video *Motherhood*.

Journal response due with summary of and reactions to all readings and video for Feb 26 and Feb 28 by 9:00 am.

Mar 5 *Violence*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 270-314

Watch this Ted Talk by Jackson Katz:

https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue

No journal response due today.

Mar 7 *Violence, II*

Reading: “**Rape, War and the Socialization of Masculinity**” by Zurbriggen.

Please watch the documentary *The Hunting Ground*.

Journal response due by 9:00 am with a response to all the reading and videos for Mar 5

and Mar 7. Please also research an organization that is working to combat domestic violence and post a brief description of the work they do.

Mar 12 *Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity*

Reading: "Introduction" (pp. ix- xvii) from *Men's Lives*, and "Night to his Day" by Judith Lorber (on e-reserves). Please also watch :

The Bro Code: How Contemporary Culture Creates Sexist Men

<http://130.111.228.123/manage/5/5A770D0B675DBA829E9F264A192E0B9D/viewProgram.html?sbauth=11D45B4FC8128A63&distLoc=dn>

No journal response due.

Mar 14 *Social Construction of Gender and Masculinity*

Reading: "Television Cartoons: Do Children Notice it's a Boy's World?", "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence" by Michael Kaufman, "The Fraternal Bond as a Joking Relationship" by Peter Lyman (articles on e-reserves or posted to the class folder), and this short article:

<http://www.peace.ca/crisismasculinity.htm>

Please also watch the video Tough Guise posted under course videos.

Journal response due by 9:00 am with summary of and reactions to all the readings for Mar 12 and Mar 14 and the videos.

Spring Break!

Mar 26 *Gender and Race Based Illnesses*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 319-365

Please also research the "abortion debate" and write a short summary of that in your journal for today. Please also include definitions of the following terms: reproductive rights and reproductive justice. Journal due at 9:00 am.

Mar 28 *Politics, Prison, and the Military*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 371-405

Please also watch the short video clips on women in the military posted under videos and the trailer for *The Invisible War*.

Journal response due by 9:00 am.

Apr 2 *Women and the Environment*

Reading: Kirk, pp. 503-523

Watch video: *The Shape of Water*.

Journal response to readings due by 9:00 am. Please also answer these questions in your response: How has the connection between women and the environment been theorized? What parallels do you see between the treatment of women and the environment? What are some of the main arguments of the chapter and do you agree or disagree with them?

Apr 4 *Popular Culture and Media*

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 411-437

Please also watch the film **Miss Representation**.

No journal due.

Apr 9 ***Women and the Media***

Reading: Kirk: "The More You Subtract the More You Add" by Jean Kilbourne, pp. 231-238, "Bitches and Morons and Skanks, Oh My!" by Jennifer Plozner, pp. 96-100, "Teen Mags" by Anastasia Higginbotham, pp. 88- 92, and "Gender in the Media" by Marielena Zuniga, pp. 92-96 (on e-reserves).

Please also watch the video: *Killing us Softly* (link posted to the class folder)

Journal response due by 9:00 am with reactions to all the readings and the two videos for Apr 4 and Apr 9 . Please also find an advertisement (in a magazine, online, on tv, etc) that exemplifies the points that Jean Kilbourne made and post it to the appropriate folder describing how it exemplifies her points about the portrayal of women in the media.

Apr 11 ***Sports***

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 442-461

Journal due at 9:00 am.

Apr 16 ***Religion***

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 464-496

Journal due at 9:00 am.

Apr 18 ***Organizing for Change, Activism***

Reading: Gendered Worlds, pp. 500-518, *Creating Change* by Kirk, pp. 561-574

Watch video: *Women, Power and Politics*

<http://130.111.228.123/manage/5/1EDF20FD512340FEDD1E83827642FF8B/viewProgram.html?sbauth=88395F7F621E3649&distLoc=dn>

Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of and reactions to all the readings and the Women, Power, and Politics film. In your journal, please summarize the entire chapter and answer the following questions: Why do you think the Kirk book ends on the note of creating change? How do the authors suggest that change comes about? Can you think of any forms of social activism that you have participated in?

Also: Please read the Introduction and Glossary Handout on *Egalia's Daughters* posted to the folder.

Instructor will post Final Take-Home Exam to the class folder.

Apr 23 ***Egalia's Daughters***, pp. 9-149

Watch the film *Taking the Heat*

No journal response due.

****Event Report Due by 9:00 am. Please post to the appropriate class folder and respond to at least two other students' reports.**

Apr 25 ***Egalia's Daughters***, pp. 153-202

Please also watch the documentary *Codes of Gender*:

http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/the_codes_of_gender_2009/

Journal response due by 9:00 am with a summary of the main themes, characters, and plot as well as your personal reactions to the book so far (pp. 9-202.) Please also discuss the videos **Taking the Heat** and **Codes of Gender** in your

journal.

Apr 30 *Egalia's Daughters*, pp. 203-243

No journal response due.

Final Women's Issue/ Activism Paper due by 9:00 am. Please post it to the appropriate folder. Please attach it and also cut and paste it directly into the email message. Please also read and respond to two other students' papers.

May 2 **Last class: *Finish Egalia's Daughters***, pp. 244-270

Final journal due by 9:00 am: Please post final your comments/ analysis of the book.

In your journal response, please also include your final comments or questions on the course as a whole, including what you feel you learned or got out of the class.

******The Final Exam will be due by Tuesday May 7 at 9:00 am (to be emailed directly to the instructor and cut and paste directly into email as well as as an attachment, please). Late exams will not be accepted. You will receive your corrected exam within one week.**

Have a great summer!

Setting expectations helps your students better navigate your online course. Check out this roadmap for creating clear and effective course expectations. In online courses, there are few cues from the environment to tell students what they're supposed to do. So it's especially important to make your expectations clear and explicit. In this article, we'll discuss (a) the kinds of expectations you should make explicit and (b) where and how to communicate these expectations.

Types of Expectations to Set

Are you meeting student expectations in your online course? We talked to online course students to figure out what they REALLY wanted from online courses. Are you meeting your students' expectations in your online course? We talked to online course students all over the country to figure out what they REALLY wanted from online courses today – and their expectations are high. You'll never know what your students expect from you unless you ask them – and that's exactly what we did.

The Syllabus: Course Policies / Expectations

Policies concerning attendance, participation, tardiness, academic integrity, missing homework, missed exams, recording classroom activities, food in class, laptop use, etc. Describe your expectations for student behavior (e.g., respectful consideration of one another's perspectives, open-mindedness, creative risk-taking). Let students know what they can expect from you (e.g., your availability for meetings or e-mail communication).