

Gendered Lives & Societies

Winter Session 2015

WGS 1800

3 Credits

COURSE SYLLABUS

December 22, 2014 – January 11, 2015

COURSE NUMBER: WGS 1800
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REQUIRED TEXT: Estelle Disch
Reconstructing Gender: A Multicultural Anthology. 5th Edition.
Publisher: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Students must have access to a Pentium class personal computer running Windows 95 or above (or the Power Macintosh equivalent) with 32 MB of RAM (64MB recommended), and a 33.3 modem or higher for Internet access. You can use your own Internet Service Provider (ISP) or William Paterson for Internet access. You should understand how to operate a computer using a Windows 95-like interface (with keyboard and mouse), navigate the Internet, and know how to use e-mail, send attachments, and work with a word processor like Microsoft Word.

COURSE PREREQUISITES: none.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to understanding how societies, identities and social relations are shaped by sex, gender and sexuality. It will explore how gender is a socially constructed concept that affects men and women in different ways and shapes social relations, how gender is related to "race", class, age and disability, and how social institutions reproduce gender inequality.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In this course, students will explore how gender and gender identities are constructed in society; analyze the construct of patriarchy using feminist theory; explore how gender oppression is linked to other forms of oppression like racism, class and disability; develop critical ways of reading media representation (images, cultural values, populations); examine how institutions such as the economy, media, healthcare, law and education affect ideas of gender; and understand the history of social movements that challenge patriarchy and heterosexism.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Through online discussion, journal entries and essays, students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key theoretical approaches to social constructionism, identity and role formation, as well as critique the ethical dimensions of patriarchy, sexism and heterosexism as forms of inequality. Students will also be able to integrate knowledge and ideas by demonstrating an understanding of how particular social institutions reproduce and transform gendered inequalities, and discuss individual modes of engagement and collective strategies for resisting patriarchy, sexism and heterosexism.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Journals – 20%

Students will keep journals of their academic responses to the readings and any other assigned work. The journal is not a personal diary, but an extension of the course work. Journals must be submitted weekly. A journal entry should include a very brief summary of each reading assignment. You may write an informal reader response log/journal in which you can move between the text and your ideas, feelings, life experiences and observations. You must submit your journal on time to receive credit.

Discussion Board – 20%

Students will participate in graded online discussions of the texts and interpretive questions provided by the teacher. Your grade for class participation depends on two things. First, you will be graded on the content of your commentary, which should show a thoughtful grasp of the discussion topic as well as reflection on other students' responses. You should post with respect when it comes to differences of personal experience, and differences of opinion on sensitive issues such as reproductive choice, sexual orientation, health issues, violence and the criminal justice system, and other questions. Second, you must post at least once to each of the forums in the week they are active.

Essays – 20% each

Students will write two essays, based on a combination of research and critique of women's images in movies, literary works, music, and other media. One of the required essays will rely upon a personal interview that the student will conduct.

Writing assignments must emphasize sound principles of English. Assignments are due by midnight of the due date. **Without exception**, late essays will be downgraded 10 points for each late day.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students caught or suspected of dishonest academic conduct such as cheating on a test or plagiarism (copying) on the research paper will receive a grade of zero (O) for that assignment. In the event of a second offense, the student will fail the course and the matter will be brought to the attention of the Department Chair.

GRADING:

There is no grade curve or "extra credit."

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Essays..... (2 papers, 30% each)	60%
Discussion board participation.....	20%
Journal.....	20%
	100%

COURSE OUTLINE: December 26, 2012 – January 11, 2013

Week 1 – December 22-26, 2014: Introductions, syllabus review, definitions, Parts I and II

Part I: It's Not Just About Gender; Part II: Gender Socialization

Readings: pp. 1-155

Journal Entry 1 due: December 26, 2014

Essay 1 Due: Monday, December 29

Go to the Assignments tab and click on the Essay 1 link for the essay assignment.

Week 2 – December 29 – January 2: Part VI: Families; Part VII: Education

Readings: pp. 156- 220; pp. 297-352; pp. 353-412 (combine all of the readings into one journal entry)

Journal Entry 2 due: January 2

Essay 2 Due: Monday, January 5

Go to Assignments and click on the Essay 2 link for the essay assignment.

Week 3 – January 5 – 9: Part VIII: Paid Work and Unemployment

Readings: pp. 413-495

Journal Entry 3 due: January 9

Course summation: January 10-11 Part IX: A World that is Truly Human - Comments, Questions, and Opinions

Readings: pp. 628-667

There is no final exam in this course. A final discussion question will be posted.