

SOC 223/WMST 223-003: Women and Men in Contemporary Society
Spring 2012, MWF 12-12:50pm, Lawson 131
Instructor: Mallary Allen

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Course overview: Welcome to Women and Men in Contemporary Society! In this introductory course, we will examine the sociological concept of gender with emphasis on the ways in which gender is socially constructed, organizes and structures social life, and interacts with other social categories such as race, class, and sexual orientation to influence individuals' experiences of social opportunity and stratification. In this course, we will study such perspectives on gender as sex essentialism, social constructionism and doing gender, gender as a system, and various types of feminism. We will study primarily the gendered society of the U.S. and other parts of the Western world, but we will routinely examine the manifestations and consequences of gender in other societies throughout the world.

The primary teaching and learning methods employed in this course will be lecture, reading of textbook and supplemental material, exams, written assignments, films, partner and small-group work, in-class sharing of popular discourse, and discussions.

Course Goals: Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Deconstruct popular definitions of gender and develop a perspective of gender as socially constructed.
2. Compare and contrast doing gender, sex essentialism, and gender as a system theories.
3. Apply gender theories to explain gendered behaviors.
4. Identify and evaluate an argument based on its thesis, assumptions and supporting evidence.
5. Use evidence to construct arguments about gender.
6. Use a sociological lens to make sense of the gendered world as well as your own gendered identity and actions.
7. Improve critical reading, writing, and speaking skills.

Course and University Policies

1. **Make-up exams** will be administered after the exam date only in cases of emergency and with written notification from an appropriate source. If you know that you will be absent on an exam day for any reason, please arrange with me to take the exam ahead of time.

2. **STUDENT CONDUCT CODE:** Southern Illinois University at Carbondale is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but also to the development of ethically sensitive and responsible persons. The university seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and policies governing individual conduct that encourage independence and maturity. By accepting membership in this university, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change. All rights and responsibilities exercised within this

academic environment shall be compatible with these principles. Acts of Academic Dishonesty is a breach of the student conduct code.

Dishonesty includes:

1. Plagiarism, representing the work of another as one's own work;
2. Preparing work for another that is to be used as that person's own work;
3. Cheating by any method or means;
4. Knowingly and willfully falsifying or manufacturing scientific or educational data and representing the same to be the result of scientific or scholarly experiment or research;
5. Knowingly furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters;
6. Soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

3. Classroom behavior: Your participation in this course is essential. Please be on time and come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and to contribute to class conversations respectfully. As we will engage with a number of controversial topics, it is expected that disagreements will arise. However, disrespectful behavior such as name-calling, demeaning comments, and physical aggression will not be tolerated. Use of cell phones will not be allowed during class. (Please let me know prior to class if you are on call. Put your phone on vibrate in these cases.) Other distracting behavior such as reading newspapers, using laptops for unrelated activities, and using headphones is prohibited. Students who engage in disrespectful behavior will be asked to leave. Students who feel attacked, harassed, or otherwise disrespected are encouraged to meet with me privately to discuss their concerns.

4. Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Statement: To meet the expectations of this course, persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations are encouraged to bring this to my attention as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted during the first week of the semester along with a request for special accommodations. Contact the SIU Disability Support Services (DSS) to facilitate requests: Woody Hall B-150, Mail Code: 4705. DSSsiu@siu.edu, Ph: (618) 453-5738 Fax: (618) 453-5700 TTY: (618) 453-2293

5. Emergency Procedures: SIUC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT'S website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency. I will provide guidance and direction in the event of an emergency. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with me during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

Assignments: Grades will be comprised of the following components:

Exams (3): 15% each (150 points), 45% total

Exam Review Sheets (3): 5% each (50 points), 15% total

Children's Book: 5% (50 points)

Content Analysis: 10% (100 points)

Finding and Discussion Leading: 5% (50 points)

Position Paper: 15% (150 points)

In-class Assignments: 5% (50 points)

----- 1,000 points=100% -----

Grading Scale: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 0-60

NOTE: Federal law prohibits me from discussing your grade with anyone but you without your written consent.

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester including a final. Exams will typically contain 30 multiple choice and 10 true/false questions. Exams will not be cumulative, but some course concepts will be relevant throughout the semester. I will provide required review sheets (see below) as well as in-class review dates.

Exam Review Sheets: One week prior to each exam, I will provide an exam review sheet to complete outside of class and return on exam day. (Or you may download review sheets from Blackboard and email me your completed Word document.) Review sheets include vocabulary terms to define and short essay questions. These are required assignments worth 50 points each and will help you prepare for exams. You may work cooperatively and use course materials.

Children's Book: You will be required to write and illustrate a short children's book using one of several provided book titles to guide the plot. See handout for details.

Content Analysis: You will be assigned a piece of literary discourse and required to complete a content analysis of the gender messages contained within. See handout for details.

Findings: At the beginning of the course, you will select a date on which to bring in an example of gender discourse from your daily life and present it to the class. Also come prepared to lead the class in a discussion of your finding (i.e. have a discussion question prepared). Findings can be books, song lyrics, articles, ads, websites, video clips, etc. You will also prepare a one page summary (single-spaced) of your finding and how it relates to the week's subject matter. Summaries should be emailed to me the day before your present. See handout for details.

Position Paper: You will be required to take a position on a gender issue and defend it in a 3-5 page paper, citing at least 3 scholarly sources (2 may be readings assigned within this syllabus). One workshop day is also scheduled. Students who do not bring a rough draft on this date will lose points. See handout for details.

In-Class Assignments: Discussion is a large part of this course, and your participation is essential. Although I will not take attendance, there will be in-class assignments from time to time (such as group work and pop quizzes) to ensure accountability.

Week 1: Introduction to the course

W 1/18: Distribution of syllabi, course overview, introductions

Children's Book assignment distributed

F 1/20

☐Blackboard: Lucal - "What It Means to Be Gendered Me"

☐Blackboard: Rich – "Claiming an Education"

Week 2: Introduction to Gender Sociology

M 1/23

☐WMS: Chapter 1: Studying Gender: An Overview

W 1/25: *Children's Book assignment due*

☐Blackboard: Collins – "Towards a New Vision: Race, Gender, and Class as Categories of Analysis and Connection"

F 1/27: Findings – presenters: _____

Week 3: Gender: Nature or Nurture?

M 1/30

☐WMS: Chapter 2: Biology, Sex, and Gender

W 2/1

☐Blackboard: Sapolsky – "The Trouble with Testosterone"

F 2/3: Findings – presenters: _____

Week 4: Gender across Cultures and Time

M 2/6: *Review Sheet 1 distributed*

☐WMS: Chapter 3: Ancestors and Neighbors

W 2/8

☐Blackboard: Nanda – "Multiple Genders among North American Indians"

☐Blackboard: Helliwell - "It's Only a Penis: Rape, Feminism, and Difference"

F 2/10 Exam 1 Review

Week 5: Socialization

M 2/13: *Exam 1; Review Sheet 1 due*

W 2/15

☐WMS: Chapter 4: Early Childhood Gender Socialization

F 2/17

☐Blackboard: Kane – "No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That!"

Week 6: Schools and Gender

M 2/20

☐WMS: Chapter 5: Schools and Gender

W 2/22

☐Blackboard: McGuffey & Rich – "Playing in the Gender Transgression Zone"

F 2/24: Findings – presenters: _____

Week 7: Gender, Language, and Media

M 2/27: *Content Analysis assignment distributed*

□WMS: Chapter 6: The Great Communicators: Gender and the Media

W 2/29

□Blackboard: Baker-Sperry & Grauerholz – “The Pervasiveness and Persistence of the Feminine Beauty Ideal in Children’s Fairy Tales”

F 3/2: Findings – presenters: _____

Week 8: Gender, Language and Media (continued)

M 3/5: In-class film: *Killing Us Softly*

□Blackboard: Kim & Chung – “Consuming Orientalism”

W 3/7: In-class film: *Killing Us Softly*

□Blackboard: Firminger – “Is He Boyfriend Material?”

F 3/9: *Content Analysis assignment due*

Spring Break – March 10-18 – No class

Week 9: Gender and Intimate Relationships

M 3/19

□WMS: Chapter 7: Gender and Intimate Relationships

□Blackboard: Anderson & Umberson – “Gendering Violence”

W 3/21

□Blackboard: Hill – “Black Intimacies”

F 3/23: *Review Sheet 2 distributed;*

Findings – presenters: _____ (plus: “Breastfeeding in Mongolia”)

Week 10: Gender and Intimate Relationships (continued)

M 3/26

□Blackboard: Dunne – “Opting into Motherhood”

□Blackboard: Shows & Gerstel – “Fathering, Class, and Gender”

W 3/28: Exam 2 Review

F 3/30: Exam 2; *Review Sheet 2 due*

Week 11: Gender, Employment, and the Economy

M 4/2: *Position Paper assignment distributed*

□WMS: Chapter 8: Gender, Employment, and the Economy

W 4/4

□Blackboard: Williams – “The Glass Escalator”

F 4/6: Findings – presenters: _____

Week 12: Politics, Government, and the Military

M 4/9

□WMS: Chapter 10: Politics, Government, and the Military

W 4/11

□Blackboard: “The Women’s War”

F 4/13: In-class workshop of rough drafts; *Position Paper Rough draft due*

Week 13: Gender, Crime, and Justice

M 4/16

□WMS: Chapter 9: Gender, Crime, and Justice

W 4/18

□Blackboard: Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney – “Sexual Assault on Campus”

□Blackboard: Newland – “Female Circumcision”

F 4/20 NO CLASS (instructor out of town); *Position Papers due via e-mail by midnight*

Week 14: Religion

M 4/23

□WMS: Chapter 11: Gender and Spirituality

W 4/25

F 4/27: *Final Review sheet distributed (DUE AT FINAL or prior)*

Findings – presenters: _____

Week 15: Gender and Health

M 4/30

□WMS: Chapter 12: Gender and Health

W 5/2

□Blackboard: Jimenez – “Gender and Psychiatry”

□Blackboard: Calasanti & King – “Firming the Floppy Penis: Age, Class, and Gender Relations in the Lives of Older Men”

F 5/4: Final Review

FINALS WEEK: 5/7 – 5/11

Final: Thursday, May 10 12:50-2:50 in Lawson 131 (Our regular classroom)

Final Review sheets due at this time