

Gender & Politics (POL 267)

Professor: xx

Email: xx

Office hours: xx

Course Description

This course is designed as an introduction to the discipline of Gender. As an interdisciplinary field, students should be prepared to explore a broad range of topics from different perspectives in historical and contemporary contexts. We will examine how gender intersects with other aspects of identity, such as race, class and/or sexuality, to shape our understanding and experience of the world around us. The main aims of the course are two-fold: (1) to provide an in-depth survey of influential theoretical approaches to sex and gender and (2) to capture the significance of the different approaches by discussing them in reference to a range of historically salient and politically pertinent cases. In order to do so, we will explore a diversity of theories: theories of intersectionality, liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, Black feminism, Latina feminism, French feminism, decolonial feminism, queer theory, among others.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand gender as a central category of analysis, particularly the ways in which gender intersects with race, class, and sexuality to inform our everyday experiences, values, and choices
- Identify and problematize the diversity of theories, facts supported by data that help explain the salience of gender as a social category of analysis
- Think critically about power, privilege, inequality and difference
- Be able to interpret, gather, critically evaluate the readings and understand the variety of points of view, and also produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments by using academic evidence to support their conclusions.
- Understand contextual and comparative analysis of gender

Learning Outcomes for Pathways flexible core – Individual & Society

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of the nature of gender as an interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society.
- Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
- Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
- Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

Course Texts

All readings will be available on Blackboard, organized by week under 'Course Materials'. Most of the readings are articles and some chapters from variety of books as stated in the weekly readings list. I will ask you to bring *printed copies* of the weekly readings to class or have the readings available on your laptop/electronic notebook. It will make it easier for you to focus on the text and facilitate the references

made during the discussions and my lectures.

Assignments and tests: There will be several short critical thinking response papers spread throughout the semester (60% of your grade) and one final exams (30% each). Participation and group work count towards your grade and is highly encouraged for this course (10% of your grade). For further information about class participation, response papers and final exam, please refer below.

Reading Schedule

Week One **What is Gender Politics?**

Review syllabus and course expectations. Critical introduction to the field.

Required Readings:

- Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua, "Theory in the Flesh" (1983)
- bell hooks, "Consciousness-Raising: A Constant Change of Heart" and "Feminist Education for Critical Consciousness" (2000) Pgs. 7-12 and 19-24

Recommended Readings:

- Sara Ahmed, "Bringing Feminist Theory Home" (2017) Pgs. 1-18

Week Two **Defining Our Terms: What is...**

...Oppression?

Required Readings:

- Marilyn Frye, "Oppression" (1938) Pgs. 1-16
- bell hooks "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression" (1984) Pgs. 17- 31
- Maria Mies, "Exploitation or Oppression/Subordination ?" (1986) Pgs. 36-40

...Gender?

Required Readings:

- Teresa de Lauretis, "The Technology of Gender" (1987) Pgs. 1-26
- Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" (1988) Pgs. 519-531

Recommended Readings:

- Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" (1986) Pgs. 1053- 1075

Week Three

...Sex?

Required Readings:

- Michel Foucault, "Herculine Barbin: Introduction" (1980) Pgs. vii-xvii
- Anne Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough" (1993) Pgs. 20-24
- Christine Delphy, "Rethinking Sex and Gender" (1993) Pgs. 1-9

...Sexuality?

Required Readings:

- Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality" (1984) Pgs. 143-172

Recommended Readings:

- Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (1980) Pgs. 631-660
- Michel Foucault, "The History of Sexuality" (1984)

Week Four Women Protesting “Against Their Harsh Destiny...”

Required Readings:

- Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, “Response to Sor Filotea de la Cruz” (1691) (selections)
- Olympe de Gouges “The Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen” (1791)
- Mary Wollstonecraft “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” (selections) (1792)
- Declaration of Sentiments and Resolution, Women’s Rights Convention, Seneca Falls (1848)

Required Readings:

- Sojourner Truth “Ain’t I a Woman?” Women’s Convention, Akron, Ohio (1851)
- Sally Roesch Wagner, “The Untold Story of the Iroquois Influence on Early Feminists” (1996)
- Alexandra Kollontai, “The Woman’s Day” (1913)

Recommended Readings:

- Angela Davis, “Class and Race in the Early Women’s Rights Campaign” (1981) Pgs. 46-69
- Emma Goldman “Women Suffrage” (1911) Pgs. 195-211

Week Five But... What is (Not) a “Woman”?

Required Readings:

- Simone de Beauvoir, “The Second Sex” (1949) (Introduction and Conclusion)
- Helene Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa” (1976) Pgs. 875-893

Required Readings:

- Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which Is Not One” (1977) Pgs. 23-33
- Audre Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power” (1978) Pgs. 53-59
- Monique Wittig, “One is Not Born a Woman” (1981)

Recommended:

- John Berger, “Ways of Seeing”, Episode 2 (Watch on YouTube)

Week Six Woman and... That’s It?

Race

Required Readings:

- Combahee River Collective, “The Combahee River Collective Statement” (1977)
- Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics” (1989) Pgs. 139-167

Recommended:

- Kimberle Crenshaw, “The Urgency of Intersectionality” (Watch TedTalk)

Required Readings:

- Patricia Hill Collins, “Distinguishing Features of Black Feminist Thought” (2000) Pgs. 21-43

Week Seven

Class

Required Readings:

- Silvia Federici, "The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women: Constructing "Difference" in the Transition to Capitalism" (2004) Pgs. 61-115

Required Readings:

- Maria Mies, "Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour" (1986) (selections)

Week Eight

Required Readings:

- Alexandra Kollontai, "The Social Basis of the Women Question" (1909) and "Working Woman and Mother" (1917)

Required Readings:

- Nancy Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care" (2016) Pgs. 99-117

Week Nine

Required Readings:

- Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor" (1992) Pgs. 1-37

Recommended Readings:

- Angela Davis, "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective" (1981) Pgs. 128-139

Required Readings:

- Kathi Weeks, "Working Demands: From Wages for Housework to Basic Income" (2011) Pgs. 113-150

Recommended Readings:

- Silvia Federici, "Precarious Labour: A Feminist Viewpoint" (2006)

Week Ten

Transgenderers' Lessons

Required Readings:

- Sandy Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto" (19)

Required Readings:

- Jack Halberstam, "Making Trans* Bodies" (2018) Pgs. 22-44

Recommended Readings:

- Paisley Currah, "Gender Pluralisms under the Transgender Umbrella" (2006) Pgs. 3-25
- Judith Butler, "Undiagnosing Gender" (2006) Pgs. 274-296

Week Eleven Queerness

Required Readings:

- Gloria Anzaldúa, "To(o) Queer the Writer – Loca, Escritora y Chicana" (1990) Pgs. 163-174

Required Readings:

- Judith Butler, "Critically Queer" (1993) Pgs. 169-185

Recommended Readings:

- José Esteban Muñoz, "Desidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics" (1999) Pgs. 1-34

Week Twelve "How Can You Become What You Cannot Imagine?" Re-Thinking Masculinities

Required Readings:

- Pierre Bourdieu, "Manliness and Violence" (1998) Pgs. 49-53
- R. W. Connell and J.W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept" (2005) Pgs. 829-859
- Jack Halberstam, "An Introduction to Female Masculinity" (1998) Pgs. 1-19

Week Thirteen Technologies and Biopolitics

Required Readings:

- Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" (1985) Pgs. 149-181

Required Readings:

- Paul B. Preciado, "History of Technosexuality" (2013) Pgs. 68-83

Week Fourteen Colonialism and Coloniality

Required Readings:

- Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others" (2002) Pgs. 783-790
- Saba Mahmood, "Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject" (2004) Pgs. 153-188

Required Readings:

- Maria Lugones, "Toward a Decolonial Feminism" (2010) Pgs. 186-209

Week Fifteen Reflections on Politics and Strategies

Required Readings:

- Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" (1979) Pgs. 110-113
- Isabell Lorey, "Care Crisis and Care Strike" (2015) Pgs. 91-98
- Angela Davis, Nancy Fraser, et al., "Beyond Lean-In: For a Feminism of the 99% and a Militant International Strike on March 8" (2017)

Recommended Readings:

- Leticia Sabsay, "The Political Imaginary of Sexual Freedom" (2016)

Final discussion and wrap-up session. Final exam is next week.

Grading Rubrics

The following guidelines will assist you in understanding how I grade your assignments and participation in this course. Please speak with me if you have any questions about the grading rubrics.

Class Participation

A	Excellent. Prompt and regular attendance; contributes to group and class dynamics by eliciting feedback from others and helping to keep group on task; participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens respectfully when others talk, both in groups and in class; participates actively and regularly in class discussion; current on all assigned readings and other coursework.
B	Good. Prompt and regular attendance; participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens when others talk, both in groups and in class; participate less actively and regularly in class discussion, somewhat current on assigned readings and other coursework.
C	Satisfactory. Regular attendance; rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens when others talk, both in groups and in class; participates irregularly in class discussion; inconsistent in preparation of assigned readings.
D	Passing. Irregular in attendance and shows a pattern of (unexcused) tardiness; rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; does not listen when others talk, both in groups and in class; does not participate in class discussion; is not prepared with assigned readings.
F	Failing. Rarely attends class; only offers a comment when directly asked by fellow group members or instructor; does not participate in group and/or in class; does not participate in class discussion; is not prepared with assigned readings.

Responses and Final exam (in short and long essay formats)

A	Excellent. Writing or presentation builds on the requirements of the assignment but does more by showing an intellectual or imaginative engagement that transforms the questions/ project in an unusual way. It avoids the obvious and presents illuminating insights or critique. Ideas are flexibly developed, but with control and purpose. The student has taken the time to find the right words, to avoid clichés and unsupported generalizations, and to communicate ideas with precision. These projects often focus on a very specific aspect of a big issue, and while they may not claim to come up with “the” answer, they reach toward new questions and new perspectives on a problem. Ideas are fully supported by well-chosen evidence; ideas are linked with other ideas, and sources with other sources. An “A” essay has a richly developed central idea, shows a detailed understanding of sources, has sound organization, and few if any grammatical or mechanical errors. A lively, original voice speaks and has something special to say – the assignment conveys this voice well and supports the argument fully. Citation format is excellent without error.
B	Good. Writing effectively fulfills the requirements of the assignment, showing independent thought and active engagement with the topic. The project has a clear sense of order, which shows conscious planning and crafting. Ideas are well thought out, reasonably interpreted in their context, well demonstrated from sources and supported by appropriate examples. Only minor technical or stylistic errors are present. From overall organization to word choice, the writer has invested in the project with purpose, direction, and strategy. Citation format is good with minor errors.
C	Satisfactory. Writing shows an effort to present ideas, but the effort has not been effective. This project may be padded with unconnected materials or it may say the same thing over and over. Instead of analysis, the project relies on clichés, self-evident statements, or unsupported generalizations. The project may show incomprehension or confusion about what the sources have to say, or sources may simply be quoted or paraphrased rather than analyzed. Supporting examples are few, and those included may not clearly support the writer’s central point. Organization is either mechanical, or it falls apart. Some words and concepts are misused. Citation format is not used appropriately and contains several errors.
D	Passing. Writing wanders around without any point and lacks substance. Missing thesis statement and proper direction. It may resemble a “C” project but may be significantly shorter in length. Ideas are few, shallow, or lack support and order. Missing citations or improper use of citation format.
F	Failing. Writing is a no-show, a project that shows minimal effort, or a project that violates intellectual integrity. This includes projects that show a pattern of inappropriate paraphrase or un-cited copying from other sources, as well as essays written for other courses and resubmitted.

Grading System Values

Letter Grade	Description	Points Value
A	Excellent	95% - 100%
A-	Excellent	94% - 90%
B+	Very Good	87% - 89%
B	Good	86% - 84%
B-	Good	83% - 80%
C+	Satisfactory	76% - 79%
C	Satisfactory	75% - 70%
C-	Passing	68% - 69%
D+	Passing	65% - 67%
D	Passing	64% - 60%
F	Failing	0% - 59%