

Department of Sociology
Sociology 301-B1: The Sociology of Gender (Summer 2018)
Monday/Wednesday 9:00AM – 11:50AM
Location: Tory 1-90

Instructor: Randi Nixon
Email: rlnixon@ualberta.ca
Office: Tory 4-7
Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisite: SOC 100 or consent of instructor.

Course Description and Objectives:

The sociology of gender takes ‘gender’ as its primary object of analysis in examining the complexities of power in any given society. This course examines gender as an organizing force in the shaping of individuals and structuring of societies from a variety of theoretical critical perspectives (phenomenological, poststructural, Marxist, feminist, queer, antiracist). In this class there will be an emphasis on exploring gender as it intersects with other categories of difference (e.g. race, class, ability, sexual orientation), and how these intersections complicate dominant understandings of gendered embodiment, politics, and personhood.

This class will examine questions such as: what role does gender play in either maintaining or challenging the status quo; to what extent is gender wrapped up in (historically specific) understandings about what is ‘natural’ and ‘normal’; how are our ideas of gender materialized through our bodily practices and processes; what are the implications of these practices and processes on our personal, intellectual, and political horizons? In other words, we will examine a plethora of questions about the relationship between gender and power.

The aim of this course is to give students the critical tools to examine the complexity of gendered social relations of power. Students should complete the course with a firm grasp on both the limits and possibilities of analyzing ‘gender’ as it intersects and interlocks with multiple facets of subjectivity.

Required Materials

Rae Spoon and Ivan Coyote. *Gender Failure* (2014) ISBN-13: 978-1551525365
(available at the University Bookstore)

All other required readings are available either through eClass, the University of Alberta Library System, or online.

Evaluation

Class Participation Assignments = 20% (10 X 2)

Midterm = 25%

Group Zine Project = 20%

Final Exam = 35%

Access to Instructor

Email will be answered during normal business hours of the University. While an effort will be made to respond in a timely manner, please allow 1-2 days for a reply. I will be available by appointment, which can be set up either via email or in person before or after class.

Classroom Environment

A healthy and productive classroom environment depends on everyone participating in creating a space where we can speak and hear one another without fear of hostility or judgment. The issues we will be discussing in this class are of a personal matter (i.e. we all have and do gender in our own way) and as a result may ignite lively and heated discussion. I expect everyone, including myself, to do their best to ensure that, in spite of personal opinions and clashes, we will stay focused on the content of the material as it relates to the social world in a sensitive and humble manner. There will be **zero tolerance** for discriminatory or abusive language of any sort.

Class Participation Assignments (20%)

Each class there will be a participation assignment (e.g. free write exercise, pop quiz, group discussion) that will be worth 2% of your final grade. Some of these assignments will be given full marks based on completion (2/2), while others will be graded out of two (1/2). There are 11 classes this term, so it is possible to miss one class or opt out of one participation assignment and still receive full marks on this course component. Class participation assignments must be completed in class, and will not be accepted before or after class, or via email. If you do not attend class there is no way to make up these assignments.

Midterm Exam (25%) – July 25th

The content and format of the midterm exam will be discussed with the class prior to the exam date. Examples of past or representative exam material will be made available on Eclass.

Zine Project (20%) – Due in class August 15th

Each group will produce a 10-12 page 'zine' (handmade informational booklet) on a topic of their choosing relevant to the course. Additional instructional and assessment details will be discussed in class and/or posted on eClass. Groups will be assigned the second week of class.

Final Exam (35%)

At the end of term there will be a cumulative final exam. Examples of past or representative exam material will be made available on Eclass.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or personal issues, it is your responsibility to find out what material and discussion you missed. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult/see the Attendance Section of the University Calendar.

Penalties for Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day, for up to six days. Late assignments may be submitted via email to be time stamped, however, a hard copy must be submitted the following class. *Assignments will not be accepted by email without permission. Emailed assignments will not be graded.*

Policy on MISSED exams:

Neither absence from class nor travel plans will be accepted as legitimate reasons for failure to attend an exam. An unexcused absence will result in a grade of zero for that exam. Should a student miss a mid-term, they must contact the Instructor via e-mail within two working days of the originally scheduled exam, or as soon as the student is able, having regard to the circumstances underlying the absence. Please note that depending upon the circumstances, appropriate documentation may be required (e.g., “Medical Declaration Form for Students,” “Statutory Declaration,” police report, death notice, court documents). Students with an excused absence must write the missed exam rather than shift the weight of that exam to other course requirements. Should a student miss a final exam, they must apply for a deferred exam at their own Faculty Undergraduate Student Services office within two days of the missed exam, or as soon as able, in regards to the circumstance.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [“Evaluation Procedures and Grading System”](#) section of the University Calendar.”

Learning and working environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Plagiarism and Cheating:

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of

consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty.

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general. If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Academic Integrity:

“I didn’t know” is not an excuse! It is your job to learn what plagiarism is.

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Additional Resources:

- *Counseling & Clinical Services:* 2-600 Students’ Union Building (780-492-5205)
- *Peer Support Centre:* 2-707 SUB (780-492-HELP)
- *University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre:* 2-705 SUB (780-492-7991)
- *Aboriginal Student Services:* 2-400 SUB (780-492-5667)
- *The Landing:* 0-68A Lower Level SUB (780-492-4949)
- *The Centre 4 Writers:* 1-42 Assiniboia Hall (780-492-2639)

Grading Scheme

Percentage	Letter Grade	Description	Grade Point Value
94-100	A+	Excellent	4.0
88-93	A	Excellent	4.0
82-87	A-	Excellent	3.7
78-81	B+	Good	3.3
74-77	B	Good	3.0
70-73	B-	Good	2.7
66-69	C+	Satisfactory	2.3
62-65	C	Satisfactory	2.0
58-61	C-	Satisfactory	1.7
54-57	D+	Poor	1.3
50-53	D	Minimal Pass	1.0
0-49	F	Failure	0.0

READING SCHEDULE

Introductory Concepts

Monday, July 9th

- Introduction & Key Concepts
- “The Combahee River Collective Statement”
https://www.sfu.ca/iirp/documents/Combahee_1979.pdf
- Peggy McIntosh. “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack”
<http://code.ucsd.edu/pcosman/Backpack.pdf>
- Marilyn Frye. “Oppression”
http://www.filosoficas.unam.mx/docs/327/files/Marilyn_Frye,_Oppression.pdf

Biology as Ideology

Wednesday, July 11th

- Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 1993. “The five sexes: Why male and female are not enough”. *The Sciences* March/April.
- Martin, Emily. 1991. “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles”. *Signs* 16(3): 485-501.
- Lorber, Judith. 1993. “Believing is seeing: Biology as ideology”. *Gender & Society* 7: 568-581.

Hegemonic & Non-Hegemonic Masculinities & Femininities

Monday, July 16th

- Kaufman, Michael. 1987. “The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence”. Available on eClass.
- Pascoe, C.J. 2005. “‘Dude, You’re a Fag’: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse” *Sexualities* 8(3): 329-346.
- Strate, Lance. 1992. “Beer Commercials: A Manual on Masculinity”. In *Men, Masculinity and the Media*, edited by Craig Steve: 78-92. Available as an eBook through the UofA Library.

Wednesday, July 18th

- Heasley, Robert. 2005. "Queer Masculinities of Straight Men: A Typology." *Men and Masculinities* 7(3): 310-320.
- Innes, Robert Alexander and Kim Anderson. 2005. "Introduction: Who's Walking With Our Brothers" in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities: Legacies, Identities, Regeneration*, edited by Robert Alexander Innes & Kim Anderson. University of Manitoba Press: 3-17. Available online through the UofA Library.
- Angela Davis "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective."
<https://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/davis-angela/housework.htm>

Monday, July 23th

- Brodie, Janine. 2008. "We are all Equal Now: Contemporary Gender Politics in Canada." *Feminist Theory* 9: 145.
- Bartky, Sandra. "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power". Available on eClass.

Midterm Review

Wednesday, July 25th

Midterm Exam

- Presentation by the University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre

Non-Binary & Trans Identities

Monday, July 30st

- *Gender Failure* discussion
- Moore, L. J. & Currah, P. 2015. "Legally Sexed: Birth Certificates and Transgender Citizens." In *Feminist Surveillance Studies*. Available on eClass.

From Gender to Sexuality

Wednesday, August 1nd

- "Introduction: Acting in Concert" and "Beside Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy" of Judith Butler's *Undoing Gender* (2004). Routledge. Available as an eBook through UofA Library.

- “We, Other Victorians” and “Method” from Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction* (1978). Trans. Robert Hurley. Vintage Books. Available on eClass.

Rape Culture and Sexual Violence

Wednesday, August 8th

- Gotell, Lise. 2010. “Canadian Sexual Assault Law: Neoliberalism and the Erosion of Feminist inspired Law Reform”. In *Rethinking Rape Law*, in Clare McGlynn and Vanessa Munro, eds, (London: Routledge, UK, 2010), 209-223. Available as an eBook through the UofA library.
- Review of the University of Alberta’s Response to Sexual Assault. Available on Eclass.
- Report of the Task Force on Respect and Equality: Ending Sexual Violence at the University of Ottawa:
<http://www.uottawa.ca/president/sites/www.uottawa.ca.president/files/report-of-the-task-force-on-respect-and-equality.pdf>
- Film Screening: *The Hunting Ground*

Race and Colonial Violence

Monday, August 13th

- Razack, Sherene. 2000. “Gendered Racial Violence and Spacialized Justice: The Murderr of Pamela George. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 15(2): 91-130.
- Lawrence, Bonita. 2003. "Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview." *Hypatia* 18 (2): 3-31.
- Film Screening: *Finding Dawn*

Gendered Affect & Emotion

Wednesday, August 15th

Zines Due

- Lorde, Audre. 1997. “The Uses of Anger”. *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 25 (1/2): 278 - 285.

- Selections from Sara Ahmed's "'Killing Joy' Feminism and the History of Happiness" *New Formations*. Available on eClass.

Final Exam Review