Gender 1100-002: Gender & Social Change

Fall 2015 Course Syllabus
Gender Studies Program
University of Utah
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:45-12:05
Location: JTB 120

Instructor:
Cindy O. Fierros
Email: cindy.fierros@utah.edu
Office & Mailbox: Building 44 Room 220
Office Hours: By appointment

This syllabus is tentative and open to change. Changes will be announced in class and via Canvas.

PLEASE SILENCE CELL PHONES

Course Description (3 credit hours):
Fulfills core course requirement for gender studies majors and minors. Focuses on forces affecting social change and gender roles and their changing definition in North America. The course focuses on supporting students’ skills and strategies for coping with changing gender-role expectations and their applications to individual lives. Focuses on developing a critical framework for understanding gender and its relation to other social formations such as race, class, sexuality, nation, etc. Material explores, against the background of the contemporary United States, how definitions of gender change. This course takes an intersectional approach that sees gender as always already mediated by race, class, sexuality, etc. Course objectives should be understood through the lens of intersectionality. Students will be asked to think of their gendered position in society through their gender’s relationship to many other social positions.

Note: Gender is an intensely personal topic, laden in values and life experience. Each of us is already a gender expert, but we do not always know how to articulate what we know. This course will be an opportunity to examine your gender role development and how gender, race, class, and sexuality have shaped you. I do encourage a critical lens in this course, which includes any challenges to course material.

Course Objectives:
After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of gender as a constituting and constituted force in social, political, and economic institutions.
2. Critically analyze gender and its relations to other social formations (i.e. race, sexuality, etc.).
3. Identify attitudes, values, and experiences that impact their personal understanding of gender.
4. Examine their own gender role development and how it shapes their life experience.
5. Enhance their analytical, written, and verbal skills associated with multiculturalism and diversity including the intersections of gender and race/ethnicity and sexuality.

Canvas Policy:
Please check your Canvas regularly. I will send critical updates regarding class and/or the syllabus via Canvas. Assignments will be submitted via Canvas and I will respond to your assignments via Canvas. While most of our online correspondence will be through Canvas, you are also available to contact me by email with questions about the class. However, I will also reserve time at the end of each class for
such questions. Generally, I reserve 48 hours to reply during the week and a little longer on weekends and holidays.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act:**
In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336), reasonable accommodation must be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. Students are invited to meet privately with the instructor to discuss the need for reasonable accommodation for a covered disability. This statement in no way implies that a student identifies her- or himself as having a disability; however, a request for reasonable accommodation can only be granted when a student makes her or his disability known. If you will need accommodations in this class, give notice to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), Olpin Union Building 162, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodations within the first two weeks of class. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

**Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:**
Compliance with strict standards of academic honesty is expected. Academic misconduct/plagiarism (see Student Code, Section 1, and B2) will not be tolerated and may be grounds for failure of the course, and suspension or dismissal from the University. Note that plagiarism is the failure to correctly cite/reference any words or ideas which are not your own. You should always reference the sources of your information. Plagiarism also includes the using of (or sharing with) others’ essays, quizzes, etc., and the use of pre-written, purchased, or downloaded materials. If there is ever a question, please ask me.

**Required Texts:**
There are no required texts for this course. Course readings are available on Canvas. Please familiarize yourself with Canvas as it will be a primary source for course materials.

**Productive Classroom Learning Environment:**
**Note:**
We will necessarily discuss/analyze content that may not always be comfortable and may in fact be objectionable. The course content and process is designed to stimulate emotional reactions, promote personal self-assessments, and expand emotional and academic intelligence. ‘PG’ versions of such material are simply not available. For students who are experiencing personal crisis or psychological instability, the course may be inappropriate. These students may find the emotional aspects of the course difficult to personally integrate. Please take a moment to consider your enrollment. On the other hand, some students who are in crisis during the course have found the class to be helpful to being problem solving and personal examination.

It is important also to mention that you do not have to change your core beliefs to succeed in this class; your beliefs and opinions are yours to keep and to share in class if you so choose. However, you will be expected to demonstrate a thorough and accurate understanding of course material, even if you do not agree with the course content. There will be limits as to expressing opinions. In my attempt to enforce a respectful and safe environment, I simply will not tolerate blatantly heterosexist (i.e., homophobic), misogynistic, or racist comments. Please consult with the instructor if you have questions about the appropriateness of the course for you.

**Mutual Respect.** I will show you respect by being prepared for class, providing clear directions and guidelines, listening to your thoughts and ideas, addressing your questions and concerns, valuing your
opinions, giving you honest feedback, and assigning bias-free grades. I expect the same level of respect in return. You may show me this respect by:

- Reading assigned material prior to the start of class
- Arriving to class on time
- Paying attention
- Actively participating
- Meeting deadlines

*Class Discussion.* Because of the nature of this course, it is important that we all contribute to a safe space in which open discussions can take place in a respectful atmosphere. Even though we will actively and perhaps critically engage in dialogue, we will each bear the responsibility for contributing to an environment that is mindful of difference and above all, respectful and non-judgmental. This means that we need to agree to listen (actively) to each other to try to gain an understanding of what each of us is saying and thinking about the content. This class must be a place in which we can bring out (often differing) beliefs and discuss them without being judged as “naïve” or “ignorant” or pigeon-holed into categories such as “racist” “political correct” or “sexist.” For this to occur, we will need to be respectfully tentative about others’ opinions and critically self-reflexive of our own, realizing that we all hold dear certain points of view and have unique perspectives on the world. We will not engage in “put downs” of any kind. We all have the right to learn, explore, change and disagree in a respectful space. **Ideas, not people are open to critique.** This does not mean that we should not actively engage or challenge each other on important issues, because when done respectfully, this is a powerful learning tool. Your comments should be tied to the course readings and research in gender studies.

Students at the University of Utah are encouraged to exercise personal responsibility, self-discipline and engage in the rígors of discovery and scholarship. Your ideas are very important, respected and valued. As a member of a shared community, we must take responsibility for creating a collaborative learning space where we can be open and honest in our discussions. Avoid personal insults and confrontations when you disagree with your instructors and/or classmates. Disruptive behaviors, such as short non-substantive responses to discussion, and non-discussion or participation will not be tolerated. Disrespectful behavior towards the instructors and/or any classmates will also adversely affect your grade and can lead to formal disciplinary action.

**Grading:**

**Weights of Assignments**

- 20% - Reading/Video Responses
- 20% - Midterm: Gender Journey Paper
- 5% - Library Presentation Attendance
- 15% - Reflective Journal
- 10% - Gallery Stroll
- **30%** - Social Change Project
- 100%

**Grading Scale** - Grades are assigned based on the following scale:

- 94-100 A  80-82 B-  67-69 D+
- 90-93 A-  77-79 C+  63-66 D
- 87-89 B+  73-76 C  60-62 D-
- 83-86 B  70-72 C-  Below 60 E
Assignments:
I read your assignments carefully and may adjust grades should I see that I have set inappropriately high or low standards. I want to encourage you and give you experiences that improve your self-confidence. However, once I assign a grade, I do not change it. I will not negotiate when it comes to grading. I will not respond to pleas to change grades. All assignments must be submitted on CANVAS. Late assignments will not be accepted. Your grade in this class will be comprised of the following 6 elements:

(1) Reading/Video Responses (20%, 100 points): Due Monday and Wednesday by midnight
For the first half of the semester (September 1-October 6), you will be expected to answer 2-3 questions for each set of readings/videos. Questions will be used to assess your comprehension and critical thinking of the readings/videos as well as encourage you to think about how the readings/videos relate to your own personal gendered journey. Questions should be answered using course material and may also include information from class discussion. I will post the questions every Thursday for the following week. There will be a total of 11 Reading/Video Responses, but only 10 will count towards the final grade. Each assignment is worth 10 points.

**LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

(2) Midterm: Gender Journey Paper (20%, 50 points): Due October 18 by midnight.
In describing the experience of sharing a personal story about his gender role development, the author Michael Messner (2003) wrote:

> Part of ‘normal’ academic discourse has been to hide ‘the personal’ (including the fact that the researchers are themselves people with values, feelings, and yes, biases) behind a carefully constructed façade of ‘objectivity.’ Rather than trying to hide or be ashamed of one’s subjective experience of the world, I was challenging myself to draw on my experience of the world as a resource...I hope to use my experience as an example of how those of us who are in dominant sexual/racial/gender/class categories can get a new perspective on the “constructedness” of our identities by juxtaposing our subjective experiences against the recently emerging worldview of gay men and lesbians, women, and people of color...These kinds [of analyses] point us toward imagining alternative social arrangements that are less constraining for everyone (p. 187).

The Gender Journey Paper is designed to challenge you to make connections between your own experiences and course concepts in order to identify the process of gender socialization in your life. This paper allows you to use the course content, including readings, videos, class discussion, and assignments to better understand how it is that you have come to understand gender.

**DETAILED ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS ON CANVAS**

**LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

(3) Library Presentation Attendance (5%, Complete/Incomplete): Due October 20
Students are required to attend a library presentation on conducting research on Tuesday, October 20. Students will learn the various ways to search for research materials through the Marriott Library Research site, specifically materials related to Gender Studies. Grade will be based on attendance only.
(4) **Sentipensante (sensing/thinking) Writing Reflection- 3 entries (15%, 60 points): Due October 30, November 8, & November 22**
During the second half of the semester (October 8-November 19) you are required to pick 3 different topics and write a 1-1.5 page reflection (double-spaced, 1 in. margins). Based on what Laura Rendón calls a “Sentipensante” approach, you are to critically engage what you read, see, feel, and listen from your various intelligences (e.g. emotional, spiritual, intuitive, rational intelligences). You should comment on the readings from a sentipensante approach: What did you think and feel about the readings? Why? What did you learn that was especially significant for you? What is its significance for you? Each reflection is worth 20 points.

(5) **Gallery Stroll (10%, 30 points): December 10**
This is an opportunity to share with the class your Gender Role Journey Paper in art form. **The majority of your grade will be based on the creativity of the presentation.** The focus of the presentation is to illustrate you gender role formation, rather than simply outlining an autobiography. Everything you present in the presentation should directly relate to how you have developed your gender identity. A 5-7-sentence paragraph describing your art must be submitted on Canvas.

**I understand and respect that some students may feel uncomfortable writing and presenting their gender role journeys. If this is the case, please see me. An alternative assignment may be given.**

**DETAILED ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS ON CANVAS**

**LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

(6) **Social Change Project (30%, 100 points):**
**Due Date: Group Presentations- November 24, December 1, 3, 8**
In small groups (4-5 students) you will collectively develop a presentation on a social change event. This is an opportunity to focus on how individuals/groups attempt to change the ways gender is organized. While we have focused largely on how cultural understandings of women, men, gays, lesbians, transgendered people, women of color, etc. are limiting, constraining, violent and/or oppressive, social change events give us ways to resist these limitations or think beyond them. Social change events may occur at a moment of collision or rupture within the ‘natural’ order of things. They are interventions made by those who would disagree with the status quo, attempted disruptions to the way things have been organized. While we often think of these events as large, publicized movements (i.e. Occupy Wall Street) they may also occur in local spaces and increasingly in spaces on the Internet (cyber space). Because these events are often local and overlooked they are at times ‘non-events’. Cultural/Performance theorist Diana Taylor has described nonevents as “daily, non-eventful enactments of embodied practice...Public attention focuses on the ‘event,’ as a limit case that epitomizes the sensational and the extreme, but overlooks the crime of poverty, marginalization, and social inequality.” While you may focus on an event thought of in the traditional sense (i.e. the suffrage movement) you may also focus on social interruptions that are considered nonevents (i.e. Feministing blog). As a group, you will choose one social change event to research and present. Possible events are listed on CANVAS.

**DETAILED ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS ON CANVAS**

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**
### IMPORTANT DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Classes begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Last day to add without permission code</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>Last day to add, drop/delete, elect CR/NC or audit classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 11-18</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10</td>
<td>Classes end</td>
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### COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is a proposed course schedule of readings and assignments. It is subject to revisions, as needed, during the course of the term and students will be notified via Canvas in advance regarding any changes.

****READINGS MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO CLASS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC &amp; READINGS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, August 25: Welcome!</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Thursday, August 27: Critical Theory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sensoy &amp; DiAngelo. (2012). How to engage constructively in courses that take a critical social justice approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sensoy &amp; DiAngelo. (2012). Critical thinking and critical theory.</td>
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<td>• Keating (2010). Listening with Raw Openness.</td>
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<td><strong>WEEK 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, September 1: Women’s Movement &amp; Gender Studies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reed. (2008). Racing the Feminist Agenda: Exploring the intersections between race, ethnicity and gender. (pgs. 91-98 &amp; Conclusion (pgs. 103-105))</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Video: PBS Makers, women who make America- Part one: Awakening.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, September 3: Feminist Theory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Anzaldúa. (1987). La Conciencia de la Mestiza/Mestiza Consciousness</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK 3</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, September 8: Gender Learned</strong></td>
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### Thursday, September 10: Gender Constructed
- Lucal. (2011). What is means to be gendered me: Life on the boundaries of a dichotomous gender system.

### WEEK 4

#### Tuesday, September 15: Privilege and Oppression
- Feinberg. (2013). We are all works in progress.

#### Thursday, September 17: Masculinity & Patriarchy
- Johnson. (2009). Patriarchy, They system: An it, not a He, a Them, not an Us.

### WEEK 5

#### Tuesday, September 22: Becoming a Gendered Body

#### Thursday, September 24: Altered Bodies

### WEEK 6

#### Tuesday, September 29: Sexuality
- [List of LGBTQ+ Terms and Definitions](#)

#### Thursday, October 1: Sexual Fluidity
- Diamond. (2008). Will the real lesbians please stand up & How does fluidity work?

### WEEK 7

#### Tuesday, October 6: Translives Matter
- Stryker. (2008). Chapters 1 & 2 from Transgender History (Marriott Library online access)
- Film: Treasure: From Tragedy to Trans justice Mapping a Detroit Story.

#### Thursday, October 8: Gender and Violence in Media
- Film: Tough Guise 2: Violence, Manhood, & American Culture
- Thicke & Williams. (2013). Blurred lines (song lyrics)

### WEEK 8: FALL BREAK

#### Tuesday, October 13
- NO CLASS

#### Thursday, October 15
- NO CLASS

### WEEK 9

Due Oct. 18: Midterm Paper
**Tuesday, October 20:** Library Presentation with Librarian Adriana Parker  
- Location: TBA

**Thursday, October 22:** Feminism & Sexuality in Music & Advertising  
- Rose. (2011). “There are bitches and hoes”  
- Maya and Sesali. (2013). Feminism is totally cool with Beyonce posing in her underwear.

### WEEK 10

**Tuesday, October 27:** Youth  
- Film: Growing up Trans

**Thursday, October 29:** Schooling  
- Barres. (2009). Does gender matter?  

### WEEK 11

**Tuesday, November 3:** Families  
- Mezey. (2013). The privilege of coming out: Race class and lesbians’ mothering decisions.  

**Thursday, November 5:** Work  

### WEEK 12

**Tuesday, November 10:** Sports  
- Messner. (2007). Part II. Masculinities: Class, Race, and Sexualities (read chapters 3, 4, & 5) (Marriott Library online access)

**Thursday, November 12:** Group Project Work Day  
- Meet in groups

### WEEK 13

**Tuesday, November 17:** Student Choice Day  
What would you like to read? This day is an opportunity for students to make suggest readings and/or topics they are interested in. Suggestions can be peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, or blogs that discuss gender through a feminist lens.

**Thursday, November 19:** Feminism and Gender Studies in Action  

### WEEK 14: SOCIAL CHANGE PRESENTATIONS

**Tuesday, November 24**

Presentation 1: 

Presentation 2: 

**Thursday, November 26: FALL HARVEST NO CLASS**

### WEEK 15: SOCIAL CHANGE PRESENTATIONS

**Tuesday, December 1**

Presentation 1: 

Presentation 2: 

**Thursday, December 3**

Presentation 1: 

Presentation 2: 

### WEEK 16: SOCIAL CHANGE PRESENTATIONS

**Tuesday, December 8**

Presentation 1: 

Presentation 2: 

**Due Dec. 10: Collaboration Rubric**

**Thursday, December 10: Gallery Stroll**