

Gender and Society
SOCI 4250
Tuesdays and Thursdays
11:00AM – 12:20PM
LIFE A419

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00pm-4:00pm

Course Description

In this course, we will discuss how gender, as a social structure, shapes knowledge, identities, interactions, and institutions in ways that produce social patterns of inequality. We will also focus on how gender intersects with other social structures, such as race, class, and sexuality.

We will use sociological readings to guide our discussion, but our analysis of gender will also be enriched by the exchange of ideas and experiences of students in the course. By applying theoretical perspective to our lived experiences, we will be able to shed new light on reasons for the inequality we observe in our daily lives. We can also draw from personal experience to build from existing theories.

The Goal of Social Inquiry

My major goal for this course is to provide you with analytic tools that will help you become more aware of gender inequality and take action to address it. This major goal has two main components that constitute the themes running throughout the course:

- 1) Understanding gender as a social construct
- 2) Identifying the social processes that create and reproduce gender inequality

In order to achieve our goals, I will emphasize throughout the course the importance of *seeing the everyday world as problematic*. This means that you will examine aspects of society, perhaps things that you’ve previously taken for granted, in order to identify how these practices contribute to inequality. This approach to knowledge is inspired by the work of Dorothy Smith.

Dorothy Smith 1987, page 134

The problematic of the everyday world organizes inquiry into the social relations in back of the everyday worlds in which people's experience is embedded. It opens up the possibility of exploring these relations as they really are, of discovering how they work and how they enter into the organization of the local historical settings of our work and experience and of our encounters with others.

The Goal of Communication

A second major goal in this course is to improve our communication of thoughts and ideas. This will occur through two mediums: Discussing our work conversationally and through writing. Throughout the course you will be asked to discuss readings, concepts, and theories with other

students. This will give you the opportunity to practice your communication skills in a group – improving both our expression of personal thoughts as well as our ability to listen, learn from, and respond to the contributions of others.

The course also includes several writing workshops aimed towards progressing students towards their final paper. In these workshops, students will form groups to discuss their papers, highlight any challenges, and solicit/receive helpful feedback. Both and I and TA will facilitate these workshops. Our goal is that by the end of the class students will have advanced in their ability to communicate their valuable thoughts through writing.

Required Text:

Lisa Wade and Myra Marx Ferree. 2015. *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions* (First Edition). New York, NY: Norton. ISBN: 978-0-393-93107-5.

Grades

Grades are an excellent example of the social construction of reality. They have no material basis, only material consequences (jobs, income, etc...). The power they have over our lives and opportunities exists only because we collectively agree that grades are important. In other words, grades are a social construct that have real implications on peoples' lives. In some ways, grades may reinforce patterns of inequality by re-affirming existing social classes with a reified system of credentialism. In other ways, however, grades may disrupt inequality by offering pathways to success for disadvantaged groups. My perspective on grades is very much informed by my sociological imagination. This allows me to be sure that the way I use grades disrupts, rather than reproduces, existing patterns of inequality.

I use a typical 100-point rubric for the course with points being distributed across assignments and attendance. Letter grades will be awarded based on the percentage of total points received (see table below).

The risk in this typical grading scheme is that students complete the assignments only to achieve a desired grade. By investing in the socially constructed structure of grades, therefore, we may be missing the bigger picture of how the content of what we study matters for our personal development and also for our impact on society. In other words, the content of this course matters much more than a grade.

Therefore, your engagement in the course is the most important part of your grade. But participation is more than just showing up. I expect you to engage with the readings, to share your reflections, and to contribute your valuable thoughts to our rich conversations.

Participation, as one of the largest parts of your grade, means that you must read every assigned piece and come prepared to discuss them. Students who do not complete all the required reading will not do well in the course. There will be comprehension checks every class to ensure students are completing the reading. Participation grades will be largely based on these checks.

On the same theme, you must engage with course material when writing your papers. Strong opinions do not equal good arguments. Papers must draw from theories and concepts as well as evidence, or empirical examples, that support and/or challenge conceptual frameworks. You absolutely must immerse yourself in the course material and think deeply about concepts and examples when writing papers. I will push you in this course to expand your perspective. I intend for this to be an enriching, if not challenging, experience.

Attendance (Attendance + Comprehension Checks)	40 points
Journal	20 points
Paper: Analysis of Gendered Social Problem	40 points
Total	100 points

Grading Rubric:
 90-100 points: A
 80-89.9 points: B
 70-79.9 points: C
 60-69.9 points: D
 59.9 or below: F

Assignments

Comprehension Checks

Each class will include some form of a comprehension check that will cover the main themes of the readings for that week and ask you to share your interpretation of the topics raised.

Also included as part of the attendance/comprehension check grade is participation. Each class will include several activities. Active participation is expected and included as part of the attendance/comprehension check grade.

Gender Journal

Throughout the semester, I will provide several journal prompts that ask you to reflect on the content of the course and how it relates to varying aspects of your life. These journal prompts will be linked to course readings, but I do not expect journals to be in the style of an academic paper (although they should still have proper grammar, complete sentences, and correct spelling). I encourage you to be creative in your journals and to be thoughtful about the prompt. These should be outlets for you to freely consider the ideas and theories we discuss in class through responding to the guiding journal prompts. These are low-stress assignments intended to provide a venue for creative writing and free engagement with course topics.

Journal prompts will be given at the end of a class session and should be completed before the next class. Journal entries may range from a half to one page. Feel free to use more space if you would like to share extended thoughts. **Please be sure to provide a date and title for each journal.**

Journals are worth 20 points. I will perform a journal check periodically to be sure that you are completing journal prompts within a few days after I have assigned them. Points will be deducted for each journal that has been assigned but is not yet completed. I will collect journals on the following dates to check for ongoing completion: September 19 and October 15 (5 points each). The entire journal is due on November 26 (10 points).

See the handout for more information on the gender journal assignment.

Analysis of a Gender Problem (Paper, 8-12 pages double-spaced)

For the major paper of this course, you will choose a “gender problem” – a specific area of gender inequality – and analyze the individual-, interactional-, and macro-level processes that contribute to its existence. You should cite at least 4 pieces of literature from the course.

The paper is designed to be written in five phases throughout the course of the semester, each with a separate deadline and corresponding points. By the time the full paper is due during finals week, students will have already completed nearly all sections for the paper and will focus on revising and writing a conclusion.

The following deadlines will be used for each phase of the paper. Note that there are points corresponding to each deadline:

Deadline	September 12	October 3	October 24	November 14	December 10
Points	5	5	5	5	20
Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Final Submission
Sections of Paper Due	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
		Individual-Level Social Processes	Individual-Level Social Processes	Individual-Level Social Processes	Individual-Level Social Processes
			Interactional-Level Social Processes	Interactional-Level Social Processes	Interactional-Level Social Processes
				Macro-Level Social Processes	Macro-Level Social Processes
					Conclusion

Each deadline corresponds to a writing workshop we will be having in class. In these workshops, students will be divided into small groups where they help improve each other’s papers. Students will share their papers and discuss some of the challenges/successes they experienced while writing. They will provide feedback on their peers’ work and also receive feedback on their own papers. The instructor and TA will facilitate these workshops to ensure that feedback is based on the criteria for the papers and on the practice of good writing more generally. **GRADES FOR PHASES 1-4 OF THE FINAL PAPER WILL BE BASED ON STUDENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN THE WRITING WORKSHOPS.** Following the workshop, students will be given a rubric to grade each other – not on the quality of their papers (which will be

evaluated at the end of the semester by the professor and TA), but on the participation of group members in the workshops. The criteria for evaluation will include: Preparedness (did students have a full draft complete), respect for others, helpfulness in supporting the writing of peers in the group, and receptiveness of receiving feedback on their own work. Students who are absent during the writing workshops and have not been excused from class by the professor will not receive points for their assignment due that day.

Assignment and Grade Policies

Late Assignments

Students who miss the writing workshops will not be awarded points for the corresponding paper assignment due that day. Students who miss quizzes or in-class assignments will not be provided make-up assignments. All other assignments will be marked down by a full letter grade for each day they are late.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades may only be assigned when the student is making satisfactory progress until the request for an incomplete is made. Incompletes will only be offered with medical documentation or other documentation that a highly unusual circumstance beyond the student's control (e.g. the death of a loved one) has made finishing the semester impossible. All requests for incompletes must be made prior to the final examination.

Make-ups

Other than documented medical emergencies and religious observations, no make-ups will be given for any of the exams or in-class assignments.

Re-grading

If you disagree with the evaluation of an assignment, you will first need to make an appointment with your TA to discuss your grade (this must be done within a week after you receive a grade for an assignment, but also no sooner than 24 hours after you've received your grade). Only after the TA has met with you will I speak to you about it.

Visit the UNT Learning Center

The UNT Learning Center provides a variety of free academic support programs from tutoring and supplemental-instruction services to academic skills workshops and coaching. **Contact Information:** Phone: 940-369-7006 | Email: Learning.Center@unt.edu | In-person: Monday through Friday, from 8a - 5p, Sage Hall, Room 170. For more information about the services provided, visit the LC online: learningcenter.unt.edu.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive a zero in the assignment and potentially a zero in the course and administrative action from the university.

ADA Accommodation Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648.

Religious Holidays

If you wish to observe a religious holidays, notify me by the tenth day of the semester of the date when you will be absent unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the semester. In such cases, you should notify me at least five days in advance of the date when you will be absent. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize you for missing the class, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, I will give you an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed by those students in attendance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings are subject to change. All changes will be announced in class and through e-mail with advanced notice.

I. INTRODUCTION TO GENDER INEQUALITY

Tuesday, August 27: Introduction to Course and Each Other

**no readings

Thursday, August 29: Review of Gender Inequality

- Lorber, Judith. 1994. "Chapter 1: Night to his day." in *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press. New Haven: CT. (pgs 13-35, 22 pages)
- Review of the State of Gender Inequality:
 - The Gender Pay Gap: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/03/gender-pay-gap-facts/>
 - Women's representation in top jobs (graph): <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>
 - Global Support for Gender Equality: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/03/08/strong-global-support-for-gender-equality-especially-among-women/>
 - Gender Inequality in the Family: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/03/14/modern-parenthood-roles-of-moms-and-dads-converge-as-they-balance-work-and-family/7/>
 - Sexual Assault on College Campuses: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-college-sex-assault-survey-20160609-story.html>

Tuesday, September 3: Boundary Making and Categories

- Wade and Ferree: "Chapter 2: Ideas" Pages 11-33. 22pages
- Taylor, Verta and Leila J. Rupp. 2006. "Learning from Drag Queens." *Contexts* 5(3): 12-17.

Thursday, September 5

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. "Preface" and "Chapter 2: Movimientos de rebeldia y las culturas que traicionan." *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute. Pgs 15-23 + preface, (10 pages)
- Brubaker, Rogers. 2016. "Introduction" pp. 1-14 in *Trans: Gender and Race in an Age of Unsettled Identities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 14 pages

Tuesday, September 10: Introduction to Gender as a Social Structure

- Risman, Barbara. 2004. "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism," *Gender & Society* 18(4): 429-451.

Thursday, September 12: WRITING WORKSHOP 1

Phase 1 of final paper is due in-class. Students should write the introduction of their paper, stating the aspect of gender inequality they intend to write about and why it is important.

Students should cite 2-5 outside sources specific to their topic. See in-class handout for details. STUDENTS SHOULD BRING 5 PRINTED COPIES OF PAPER TO CLASS.

II. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Tuesday, September 17: Bodies and Biology

- One of the Following:
 - Wade and Ferree “Bodies” Page 34-49. 15 pages
 - Eliot, Lise. 2009. “Introduction.” Pgs. 1-18 in *Pink Brain, Blue Brain: How Small Differences Grow into Troublesome Gaps – and What We Can Do About It*. 17 pages

Thursday, September 19: Embodiment

JOURNAL COMPLETION CHECK

- Martin, Karin A. 1998. "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools." *American Sociological Review* 63(4): 494-511. 17 pages

Tuesday, September 24: Socialization

- Kane, Emily. “Chapter 1: Wanting a Girl, Wanting a Boy: Conceptual Building Blocks” in *Gender Trap: Parents and the Pitfalls of Raising Boys and Girls*. 27-52.

Thursday, September 26: Gender Attitudes

- Gerson, Kathleen. 2010. “Chapter 1: The Shaping of a New Generation.” In *The Unfinished Revolution: How a New Generation is Reshaping Family, Work and Gender in America*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pages 1-12.

Tuesday, October 1: Cultural Humility

- Workshop by Learning Center: Cultural Humility: Seeing Ourselves to See Others

Thursday, October 3: WRITING WORKSHOP

Phase 2 of final paper is due in-class. Paper will include revised introduction (integrating feedback from peers during last writing workshop) and new section discussing the individual-level social processes contributing to their chosen aspect of gender inequality. See in-class handout for details. STUDENTS SHOULD BRING 5 PRINTED COPIES OF PAPER TO CLASS.

III. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE INTERACTIONAL LEVEL

Tuesday, October 8: Interactional Processes

- Wade and Ferree, “Chapter 4: Performances” Pages 60 to 81

Thursday, October 10: Doing Masculinity

- Pascoe, CJ. 2007. "Compulsive Heterosexuality: Masculinity and Dominance," Pp 84-114 in *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 26 pages

Tuesday, October 15: The Mask of Masculinity

****JOURNAL COMPLETION CHECK****

- The Mask We Live In

Thursday, October 17: Cognitive Frames

- Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2011. "Chapter 2: A Primary Frame for Organizing Social Relations." Pgs 32- 55 in *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. New York: Oxford University Press. 23 pages

Tuesday, October 22: Stereotypes

- Choose ONE of the following:
 - Heilman, Madeline E. 2001. "Description and Prescription: How Gender Stereotypes Prevent Women's Ascent Up the Organizational Ladder." *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 57: 657-674.
 - Pyke, Karen D. and Denise L. Johnson. 2003. "Asian American Women and Racialized Femininities: 'Doing' Gender across Cultural Worlds." *Gender & Society* 17(1): 33-53. 20 pages

Thursday, October 24: WRITING WORKSHOP

Phase 3 of final paper is due in-class. Paper will include revised introduction + section on individual level processes (integrating feedback from peers during last two writing workshops) and new section discussing the interactional-level social processes contributing to their chosen aspect of gender inequality. See in-class handout for details. **STUDENTS SHOULD BRING 5 PRINTED COPIES OF PAPER TO CLASS.**

IV. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE MACRO LEVEL

Tuesday, October 29: Macro Level – Institutions and Organizations. Gender and Work

- Wade and Ferree, "Institutions" Pages 163-187. 24 Pages

Thursday, October 31: Gendered Performances in the Media

- Misrepresentation

Tuesday, November 5: Macro Level Policies

- Dodson and Luttrell. "Families Facing Untenable Choices" *Contexts*.
- 2 short articles on parental leave policies
 - <https://gendersociety.wordpress.com/2014/06/05/do-maternity-leave-policies-hurt-mothers/>
 - <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/26/u-s-lacks-mandated-paid-parental-leave/>

Thursday, November 7: Macro Level – Nations

- Wade and Ferree Chapter 13: Politics, Pages 315-343.

Tuesday, November 12: The State and Violence

- Richie, Beth. 2012. "Chapter 4: Black Women, Male Violence, and the Buildup of a Prison Nation." Pages 99 to 124 in *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*. New York: NYU Press. 25 Pages

Thursday, November 14: WRITING WORKSHOP

Phase 4 of final paper is due in-class. Paper will include revised introduction + section on individual level processes + section on interactional level processes (integrating feedback from peers during last two writing workshops) and new section discussing the macro-level social processes contributing to their chosen aspect of gender inequality. See in-class handout for details. STUDENTS SHOULD BRING 5 PRINTED COPIES OF PAPER TO CLASS.

V. COMPREHENSIVE THEORIES OF GENDER INEQUALITY

Tuesday, November 19: Comprehensive Theories of Gender Inequality

- Risman, Barbara and Georgiann Davis. 2013 "From Sex Roles to Gender Structure" *Current Sociology* 61(5-6): 733-755.

Thursday, November 21: Applications of Gender Structure Theory

- Armstrong, Elizabeth A., Laura Hamilton, and Brian Sweeney. "Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape." 2006. *Social Problems* 53(4) pp. 483-499.

Tuesday, November 26: Intersecting Systems of Inequality

****JOURNALS DUE****

- Collins, Patria Hill. and Sirma Bilge. 2016. "Chapter 1: What is Intersectionality?" Pages 1-30 in *Intersectionality*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Choose ONE of the following:
 - Jones, Nikki. 2010. "Introduction" Pages 1-19 in *Between Good and Ghetto: African-American Girls and Inner-City Violence*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
 - Garcia, Lorena. 2009. "'Now Why do you Want to Know about That?': Heteronormativity, Sexism, and Racism in the Sexual (Mis)education of Latina Youth." *Gender & Society* 23: 520-541.

Thursday, November 28: Holiday

No class in observance of national holiday

VI. GENDER CHANGE

Tuesday, December 3: New ways of thinking about gender

- Anzaldua, Gloria. 1987. "Chapter 7: La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness." *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute. Pgs 77-91 (14 pages)

Thursday, December 5: Onward

- Wade and Ferree Chapter 14 "Onward"
- Students come prepared to discuss their final paper

FINAL WEEK

Tuesday, December 10: Final paper is due by end of official examination time, 12:30pm.