

Gender and Society
SOCI 4250-900
352 Chemistry Building
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30pm to 1:50pm

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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 perspectives 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 through group discussions, group-activities, and written papers. Throughout the course you will be asked to discuss readings,

concepts, and theories in small groups with other students in the completion of group assignments. 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. 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:

There are no required texts for purchase for this class. All readings will be uploaded onto Canvas.

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 three categories: 1) Group-assignments, 2) Weekly quizzes, and 3) the final paper. 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. Therefore, participation in group assignments make up a large share of your grade.

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.

Weekly Group Assignments	30% of Grade
Weekly Quizzes	30% of Grade
Paper: Analysis of Gendered Social Problem	40% of Grade
Total	100%

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

Weekly Group Assignments

Each class’s lesson will include a group assignment. Students will be assigned to groups at the beginning of the semester. I intend for these groups to be the same throughout the semester so students may build collaborative communities with each other. This may change, however based on enrollment and student feedback. Each week will have an assignment to be completed and submitted as a group. The assignment will have various components that students can each contribute to. Group assignments will be graded and account for 30% of students’ overall grade.

Weekly Quizzes

Each week will include at least one quiz covering content from the readings and lecture. Quizzes are not group work – they are assigned for individual students. Quizzes may only be taken once. Weekly quizzes account for 30% of students’ overall grade.

Analysis of a Gender Problem (Paper, 5-8 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:

Workshop	September 15	October 6	November 3	December 1	December 12
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. In these workshops, students will share their papers with others in their assigned group 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.

Assignment and Grade Policies

Late Assignments

To incorporate flexibility into the syllabus, I will drop students' three lowest quiz grades. Beyond these exceptions, late assignments will be penalized 20% for every day that they are late, starting the minute after the deadline (e.g., if assignment is due at 11:59pm and submitted as 12:00am, it will be penalized 20%).

If there are extenuating circumstances preventing submission of assignments, please let the professor know. I will make every effort to accommodate students.

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 has made finishing the semester impossible. All requests for incompletes must be made prior to the final examination or final paper due date.

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.

UNT RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Diversity and Global Issues Requirement for the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

This course fulfills the CLASS requirement for Diversity and Global Issues. At the end of this course, students should be able to do at least three of the following: 1. Identify the origins, influences, and limits of one's own cultural heritage. 2. Demonstrate the ability to learn from and empathize with perspectives and experiences different from one's own. 3. Show an understanding of the interrelationships of the self, local society, and global environments. 4. Describe the impacts of complex, worldwide systems. 5. Explain the reasoning for one's ethical responsibilities within worldwide systems.

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 that conflicts with the completion of a course module, notify me by the tenth day of the semester of the relevant module 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. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize you for missing material, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, I will give you an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed in the module.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Detailed Reading Schedule

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

I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1, August 30:

Introduction to the Course and Each Other

Week 1, September 1:

Social Structures

- Nordell, Jessica. 2022. "This is How Everyday Sexism Could Stop you from Getting That Promotion." *New York Times*.
- Grose, Jessica. 2020. "'They Go to Mommy First' How the pandemic is disproportionately disrupting mothers' careers." *New York Times*.
- Altman, Mara. 2021. "The Costly, Painful, Lonely Burden of Care." *New York Times*.

Week 2, September 6: Gender as a Social Structure

Week 2, September 8:

Gender as a Social Structure

- Scarborough, William J. and Barbara J. Risman. 2017. "Changes in the Gender Structure: Inequality at the Individual, Interactional, and Macro Dimensions." *Sociology Compass* 11(10).

Week 3, September 13: Gender as a Social Structure

Week 3, September 15:

- *Writing Workshop 1*. Students will write the first section of the paper and workshop it in their groups.

II. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Week 4, September 20: Bodies and Physical Selves

- Wade, Lisa and Myra Marx Ferree "Bodies" Pages 34-49 in *Gender: Ideas, interactions, Institutions*. New York: Norton.
- 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*.

Week 4, September 22: Bodies and Physical Selves

Week 5, September 27: Embodiment

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

Week 5, September 29: Embodiment

- Davis, Georgiann and Erin L Murphy. 2013. "Intersex Bodies as State of Exception: An Empirical Explanation for Unnecessary Surgical Modification." *Feminist Formations* 25 (2), pp 129-152.

Week 6, October 4: Socialization

- Kane, Emily. "Chapter 1: Wanting a Girl, Wanting a Boy: Conceptual Building Blocks" Pgs 27-52 in *Gender Trap: Parents and the Pitfalls of Raising Boys and Girls*. New York: New York University Press.

Week 6, October 6: Writing Workshop 2

- *Writing Workshop 2*. Students will add the second section to their paper and will workshop it in their small groups.

III. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE INTERACTIONAL LEVEL

Week 7, October 11: Performativity and 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.

Week 7, October 13: Performativity and Masculinity

Week 8, October 18: Performing Gender and Femininity

- Hamilton, Laura T., Elizabeth A. Armstrong, J. Lotus Seeley, and Elizabeth M. Armstrong. 2019. "Hegemonic Femininities and Intersectional Domination." *Sociological Theory*. 37(4): 315-341.

Week 8, October 20: Performing Gender and Femininity

Week 9, October 25: Stereotypes

- 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.

Week 9, October 27: Stereotypes

Week 10, November 1: Cognitive Frames

- Chavez, Koji and Adia Harvey Wingfield. 2018. "Racializing Gendered Interactions." Pgs. 185-197 in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Gender*, edited by Barbara Risman, Carissa Froyum, and William J. Scarborough.

Week 10, November 3: Writing Workshop 3

- *Writing Workshop 3*. Students will add the third section to their paper and will workshop it in their small groups.

IV. GENDERED PROCESSES AT THE MACRO LEVEL

Week 11, November 8: Institutions and Organizations

- 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(4): 520-541.
- Dobbin, Frank and Alexandra Kalev. 2016. "Why Diversity Programs Fail." *Harvard Business Review*.

Week 11, November 10: Institutions and Organizations

Week 12, November 15: Public Policy

- Collins, Caitlyn. 2019. Chapter 1 "SOS." Pgs 1-26 in *Making Motherhood Work: How Women Manage Careers and Caregiving*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- 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.

Week 12, November 17: Public Policy

Week 13, November 22: Public Policy

Week 13, November 24: No Class for holiday.

Week 14, November 29: Macro-Level Cultural Ideologies

- Chatillon, Anna, Maria Charles, and Karen Bradley. "Gender Ideologies." Pgs 217-224 in *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender*.
- Cooky, Cheryl, Michael A. Messner, and Robin H. Hextrum. 2013. "Women Play Sport, But Not on TV: A Longitudinal Study of Televised New Media." *Communication & Sport* 1(3): 203-230.

Week 14, December 1: Writing Workshop 4

- *Writing Workshop 4*. Students will add the fourth section to their paper and will workshop it in their small groups.

V. APPLICATIONS OF GENDER THEORY

Week 15, December 6: Applying Gender Theory to Analyze Inequality on College Campuses

- 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.

Week 15, December 8: Change & Conclusions

- Wade, Lisa and Myra Marx Ferree. 2015. Chapter 14 "Onward." Pages 344-352 in *Gender: Ideas, interactions, Institutions*. New York: Norton.

FINAL WEEK

Final paper is due by 11:59pm on Monday, December 12, 2022.