

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER
SOCI 5260 / 6500 | Fall 2020
Wednesdays 6pm – 8:50pm

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Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

This course is an introduction to sociological theories of gender. It presents foundational debates in the study of gender to explore how hegemonic femininity and masculinity are not only reproduced in identity, discourse, interactions, organizations, and institutions, but also how they are resisted and reconfigured at the individual and collective levels. Although we will adopt gender as our primary analytic lens, this course takes an intersectional approach by examining gender in the context of multiple forms of inequality and domination.

Our semester will be divided into two parts. The first half of the course provides an overview of feminist theories of gender inequality. Students will become familiar with the main paradigms that have guided the sociological study of gender, understand how they have been applied in social science research, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. In the second half of the course, we will read contemporary works analyzing gender, many of which have been recognized as exemplars in the field. My goal is for students to identify their theoretical and methodological innovations and then use them to inspire their own projects.

The course is intended for graduate students and assumes a graduate-level understanding of social theory and methods.

Fall 2020 Updates

Given health, safety, and scheduling concerns related to the pandemic, our fall 2020 seminar will proceed as a synchronous online class. This means that we will meet during our scheduled class time, but that those meetings will take place via Zoom. More details will be provided on our Canvas page.

Course Requirements for SOCI 5260

Course grades will be based on participation, in-class presentations, and two take-home exams.

Participation (20%): Measured through attendance, preparation, and engagement in class. Given the virtual nature of this seminar, all students will post at least one question to the discussion board by Tuesday at 11:59pm. I will detail the expectations for these discussion posts on Canvas. Students are allowed one absence during the semester. This absence is intended to cover unexpected events such as illnesses or family emergencies. If students miss more than one class, their participation grades will be reduced accordingly.

Class Presentations (10%): Students are responsible for presenting on the readings and facilitating discussion for at least one class during the semester. These presentations will be assigned on the first day of class. Given the virtual nature of this seminar, class leaders must prepare guiding questions and distribute them electronically before our start time. All students should review the weekly discussion board to ensure we address questions and comments posed by their peers.

Take-home exams (70%): Two written exams will require students to reflect on and analyze the readings and class discussions. They do not require outside reading or original empirical data. Both exams must be approximately 3,500 words and questions will be provided by the instructor in advance. For the first (midterm) exam, which is worth 35% of the total grade, students will participate in a peer-review process (worth 10%) before submitting the exam (25%) for evaluation. The second take home exam is worth 35% of the final grade.

Course Requirements for SOCI 6500

Course grades will be based on participation, in-class presentations, a mid-term exam, and a final paper.

Participation (20%): Measured through attendance, preparation, and engagement in class. Given the virtual nature of this seminar, all students will post at least one question to the discussion board by Tuesday at 11:59pm. I will detail the expectations for these discussion posts on Canvas. Students are allowed one absence during the semester. This absence is intended to cover unexpected events such as illnesses or family emergencies. If students miss more than one class, their participation grades will be reduced accordingly.

Class Presentations (10%): Students are responsible for presenting on the readings and facilitating discussion for at least one class during the semester. These presentations will be assigned on the first day of class. Given the virtual nature of this seminar, class leaders must prepare guiding questions and distribute them electronically before our start time. All students should review the weekly discussion board to ensure we address questions and comments posed by their peers.

Mid-term exam (35%): This written exam requires students to reflect on and analyze the readings and class discussions. It does not require outside reading or original empirical data. This exam must be 3,500 words and questions will be provided by the instructor in advance. Students will participate in a peer-review process (worth 10%) before submitting the exam (25%) for evaluation.

Final paper (35%): Doctoral-level students will write a final paper of approximately 5,000 words on a topic of their choice that relates to the content of this course. Students must receive prior instructor approval for the topic of their choice.

Required Readings

This course will draw on a combination of articles and books. Please access articles through the UNT library website. I will post all other materials on Canvas.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought*. 2nd edition. Routledge. (required)

We will read six books during the second half of the semester. This is a list of options. You are welcome to bring other suggestions. We will review these collectively on the first day of class to finalize our reading list.

Andrews, Abigail. 2018. *Undocumented Politics: Place, Gender, and the Pathways of Mexican Migration*. University of California Press.

Blee, Kathleen M. 2008. *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*. University of California Press.

Britton, Dana. 2003. *At Work in the Iron Cage: The Prison as Gendered Organization*. NYU Press.

Collins, Caitlyn. 2019. *Making Motherhood Work: How Women Manage Careers and Caregiving*. Princeton University Press.

Hoang, Kimberly. 2015. *Dealing in Desire: Asian Ascendancy, Western Decline, and the Hidden Currencies of Global Sex Work*. University of California Press.

Jones, Nikki. 2009. *Between Good and Ghetto: African American Girls and Inner-City Violence*. Rutgers University Press.

Otis, Eileen M. 2011. *Markets and Bodies: Women, Service Work, and the Making of Inequality in China*. Stanford University Press.

Rao, Aliya Hamid. 2020. *Crunch Time: How Married Couples Confront Unemployment*. University of California Press.

Schilt, Kristen. 2010. *Just One of the Guys?: Transgender Men and the Persistence of Gender Inequality*. University of Chicago Press.

Viterna, Jocelyn. 2013. *Women in War: The Micro-Processes of Mobilization in El Salvador*. Oxford University Press.

Wyrod, Robert. 2016. *AIDS and Masculinity in the African City: Privilege, Inequality, and Modern Manhood*. University of California Press.

Policy for Graded Materials

No makeup exams will be given and no late work will be accepted. The dates for take-home exams will not change. Students requiring accommodations for exams should speak with me after obtaining an accommodation form from the Office of Disability Access. You earn the grade you receive in this class. I do not curve or scale exams or final grades. If you become concerned about your grades, meet with me immediately.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

I invite suggestions and feedback on my courses. If students would like to share a suggestion or express a complaint, they should first discuss it with the instructor and then the departmental chair. Complaints must be made within six months of an incident.

Accommodations

Students with Disabilities: It is my goal to foster an inclusive learning environment in this class. If you require accommodations, please notify me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible, by presenting a letter from Office of Disability Access. If you need more information about accommodations, please review the UNT Policy 16.001 or contact Office of Disability Access at 940-565-4323 (voice) or <http://disability.unt.edu>.

Religious Holy Days: UNT policy states that you must notify the instructor to the date(s) you will be absent to observe a religious holiday with as much advanced notice as possible. If, with proper notice, you miss a class, exam, or quiz to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. For more information: <https://edo.unt.edu/religious-observances>

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UNT community have a responsibility to uphold this mission of the university and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. For more information, see the policy: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/16-005>. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, please refer to the appropriate resources: <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct>

Class Environment

Please do your part to facilitate a stimulating and rewarding learning environment. This involves being respectful of one another, having an open mind, and being willing to have your ideas challenged. Demonstrate respect by listening to others, refraining from interrupting, and giving your undivided attention. Harmful words and actions will not be tolerated: This includes racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, or ableist language.

Research suggests that students retain information better by taking notes by hand. I encourage you all to do this. Please do not let technology distract you from class. Do not use your cell phones or the Internet during class. If laptops become a major issue, I will ban them. In the event of a distraction, I have the authority to change a student's seat or request a student to exit the classroom. One-day suspensions will be reported to appropriate departmental and collegiate personnel.

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to abide by the UNT Code of Student Conduct: "As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas has established standards of conduct to foster a safe environment conducive to learning and development. Students and university student groups are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others and upholds the integrity of the university community." You are responsible for understanding UNT Policy 06.003, which can be found here:

<http://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>

All work you produce on assignments, papers, and exams must be your own work. If you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. If you are not familiar with a citation method, seek assistance from the instructor or the free University writing lab: <http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/>

Please maintain a high standard of individual honor and integrity. Collaboration of any kind on exams will result in a failing grade for the exam. Cheating of any kind of assignments (obtaining old exam copies, bringing unauthorized materials to exams, plagiarizing from sources, the web, or fellow students, etc.) will also result in a failing grade. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on an exam or assignment, and submitting a written assignment from a previous course without prior permission of both instructors. All instances of scholastic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate authorities in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Acknowledgements

This syllabus was adapted from Christine Williams' Sociology of Gender course taught at the University of Texas at Austin. I include this to acknowledge her intellectual labor and make visible the trajectories of teaching in gender and feminist theory.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

Please see Canvas for the specific reading list

Week 1: Introductions

PART I: Sociological Theories of Gender Inequality

Week 2: Doing and Undoing Gender

Week 3: Gendered Organizations

Week 4: Hegemonic Masculinity

Week 5: Black Feminist Theory & Intersectionality

Week 6: Postmodernism and Queer Theory

Week 7: Transnational Feminism

MID-TERM EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED

PART II: Contemporary Works on Gender Inequality

Week 8: No class.

MID-TERM DRAFT & PEER REVIEWS DUE

Week 9: Book 1 (selected from list above)

MID-TERM EXAM DUE

Week 10: Book 2 (selected from list above)

Week 11: Book 3 (selected from list above)

Week 12: Book 4 (selected from list above)

Week 13: Book 5 (selected from list above)

FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED

Week 14: Book 6 (selected from list above)

Week 15: Conclusions

FINAL EXAM DUE