

WGST 2503-202: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

Midwestern State University
Spring 2020
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30—1:50 PM
PY 209

Dr. Linda Veazey

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Office Hours:

Monday-Friday, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Course Description and Learning Objectives:

The purpose of WGST 2503 is to give an introduction to the philosophical and practical issues that arise from the study of women in society. We will examine issues of women, gender, and sex from an interdisciplinary perspective. We could examine every aspect of our society through the study of women and this course explores what happens when women's lives and their treatment in society are the focus of investigation.

Starting from here, we may see many issues in a different light and find others that we may never have thought about before. There is no way to cover all the possible issues in one semester, so our topics in this class are not an exhaustive list. There will be key issues that connect all our topics such as the nature of ensuring equality in our society and the multiple and overlapping identities of women.

To accomplish these goals, this course will combine interdisciplinary scholarship, court cases, film, lecture, and class discussion. We will work to develop a critical eye for examining women in society and then work to apply that framework to a few issues that impact women's lives. Through the course of the semester, it is my hope that you begin to see how broad this topic is and develop a framework for considering issues of women in the future.

Women's and Gender Studies Minor:

WGST 2503 fulfills the core requirement for Cultural and Global Understanding. In addition, WGST 2503 is the required course for the **Women's and Gender Studies Minor**. An additional courses 15 hours of gender-focused courses should be taken to complete the minor. Please see me for more information about the Women's and Gender Studies minor.

Required Texts:

Melissa J. Gillis and Andrew T. Jacobs. *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, 2nd Edition. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Kate Harding. *Asking for It: The Alarming Rise of Rape Culture and What We Can Do about It*. Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2015.

Additional Readings on D2L

Grades:

Breakdown of Grades:

Grade Category	Grade Percentage
First Essay	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Reading Logs, Classwork, and Homework	15%
Book Analysis Paper	20%
Attendance and Engagement	10%
Final Exam	20%

Grading:

On each exam and for the final grade, points will be assigned according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Course Engagement Grading:

Unexcused Absences/ Course Non-Engagement	Engagement Grade
0	100
1	95
2	85

Unexcused Absences/ Course Non-Engagement	Engagement Grade
3	80
4	75
5	65
6	55
7+	0

Reading Log Grading Scale:

Reading Log Grade	Submission Type
10	Full submission
7	Good, but partial submission
4	Poor submission, missing more than 1 section
0	No submission

Course Grade Formula:

$(\text{Film Analysis} \times .15) + (\text{Midterm Exam} \times .2) + (\text{Engagement Grade} \times .1) + (\text{Reading Log Total Points Earned} / \text{Total Reading Log Points Available}) \times 1 + (\text{Book analysis} \times .2) + (\text{Final Exam} \times .20) = \text{Final Grade}$

Class Policies:

Attendance and Engagement:

Absences:

You should attend class. Students who do not attend class often have difficulty with the course and receive lower grades. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting and will be noted in Attendance and Engagement. **Students missing more than 6 course periods may be dropped from the course without notice.** The only excused absences will be those as follows: illness with a doctor's note covering the date(s) absent from class, death in the family, legal proceedings occurring during class period, university-approved absence such as travel as member of a MSU sports team, or emergency situation as determined by the instructor.

Engagement:

Engagement during class is as important as physical attendance and engagement, as well as non-engagement will be noted daily. Students are expected to Students observed using mobile phones,

reading non-class materials, or otherwise not fully engaged in class, will not receive engagement credit for that class period. Distracting behavior will also constitute non-engagement for the class period. Talking, passing notes, etc. during lecture or while other students are asking or answering questions. In other words, you are expected to behave like responsible adults in class. Behaviors such as the above will be taken as evidence of non-engagement during the class period. Students will not receive credit for engagement during the class period when behaviors such as the above are observed. This syllabus serves as the notice of the above policies; students will receive no further alert if engagement points are not earned during a class meeting.

Lateness:

I will take attendance at each class meeting. Students arriving after the role has been called will not be counted as on-time and will be marked as tardy. **Two tardies will be the equivalent to one absence.** Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to class will be counted as absent for that class meeting. Students who leave early without an excuse that meets the excused absence criteria for this course may be marked tardy or absent, depending upon how much time remains in the course meeting.

Leaving Class/Disruptions:

Students are expected to be present for the entire class period. Excessively leaving the classroom during the class period is defined in this syllabus as more than 2 times during one class period or leaving 1 time for more than 10 minutes in one class period. **Excessive trips outside of the classroom during a class period will be the equivalent to 1 absence.** This is a form of disruptive behavior. If a student requires an accommodation to this rule (e.g. due to illness or medical condition), this matter must be approved by the professor in advance.

Disruptive Behavior:

Furthermore, disruptive behavior, including but not limited to raising one's voice to the instructor or classmates, threatening the instructor or classmates, excessive noise or behavior that disrupts the class will not be tolerated. This syllabus serves as the warning that disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students committing disruptive behavior will be removed from the class.

Classwork and Homework:

Classwork and Notes:

If you do miss class, you are responsible for all material missed. Students are responsible for obtaining notes from a classmate for any missed material. In-class activities may be graded. **Classwork cannot be made up.**

Reading Logs:

Reading logs are due at the start of the class period. Reading logs will not be accepted late. If a student is absent for any reason, reading logs are expected to be submitted by the due date. Reading logs may be submitted early.

Homework and Late Work:

Homework assignments other than reading logs will have a due date and points deducted for late work for each day the homework is late. The count begins immediately after assignments are collected. No work will be accepted more than **one week** past the original due date. No work may be submitted after the last class period of the course.

Communication and Grades:

Discussion of Grades:

If you have questions about your grades, please make an appointment to discuss it with me. Discussion of grades is a matter between the instructor and the student. If the grading concern is in regard to a fellow student receiving more points for an answer, both students must be present at the grade discussion appointment.

Communication:

The best way to reach me outside of class is to contact me via email or in person during my office hours. My email address and office number are listed on the first page of the syllabus.

Quizzes and Exams:

Quizzes:

From time to time, there may be a quiz given in class covering recent lecture and textbook material. These help make sure people are keeping up with reading and lecture material. If you are absent for a quiz and do not provide a course-approved excuse, you will be given a ZERO on the quiz. Students arriving late to class without a course-approved excuse will not be given extra time on the quiz. No cell phones or electronic devices may be used during quizzes or exams. Students observed looking at mobile phones or other similar electronic devices during quizzes or exams will receive an automatic zero on that exam or quiz.

Make-up Exams:

Students are expected to be present for all exams on the dates which the class will take them. A make-up exam will only be given if the following criteria are met: If a student has a course-approved excuse and the instructor is notified **in writing, prior** to the examination, and the instructor approves the excuse and make up exam, arrangements for a make-up exam will be made. If a student fails to notify the instructor, the student will receive a zero for the exam. **Unless arrangements have already been made in accordance with this policy, no exam may be administered after the graded exam is returned to the class.**

Missing the Final Exam:

If the final exam is missed and arrangements for a make-up exam have not been made in advance, the final exam cannot be made up.

Taking Exams Early:

Only under extraordinary circumstances can a student take an exam early. Only university-approved excuses, death in the family, or illness with a doctor's note be considered for taking an exam early. The request for an early exam must be made **in writing**. For any reason, no request will be approved to schedule the final exam earlier than one week before its scheduled date.

Arriving Late to Exams:

Students arriving late to an exam, including the final exam, will not be allowed to take the exam if any student in the course has already completed the exam.

Leaving During Exams:

Students are expected to be present for the entire exam. Once a student has received the exam, the student may not leave the classroom until the exam has been submitted. If a student requires an accommodation to this rule (e.g. due to illness or medical condition), this matter must be approved by the professor in advance of the exam.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty on exams, quizzes and assignments will result in a ZERO on the quiz, assignment, or exam and the student or students in question may receive an F in the course and/or be turned over to the University for sanction.

Accommodations:

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from the University's Disability Support Services (DSS) during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from DSS has been provided.

Safe Zones Statement:

This class is a place where everyone will be treated with respect, regardless of gender, race ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, political beliefs, age, ability, or other aspects of identity. Diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided people can agree to disagree. All students should consider the classroom a safe environment.

MSU Campus Carry Statement:

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <http://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>

Class Outline:

The following is a tentative outline of the semester. Students will be notified of any changes.

Introduction to Course and Women's and Gender Studies

Tuesday, January 21:
Introduction to Course

Thursday, January 23:
Chapter 1: Sex, Gender and Social Construction, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 1-26.

Learning and Practicing Gender in Communication

Tuesday, January 28:
Chapter 2: Language and Communication, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 27-52

Thursday, January 30:
Meredith Broussard. "When Binary Code Won't Accommodate Nonbinary People." *Slate*. October 23, 2019.

Learning and Practicing Gender and Inequality

Tuesday, February 4:
Chapter 3: Gender and In/Equality, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 53-84.

Thursday, February 6:
Michael Kimmel. "The Gendered Classroom." *The Gendered Society*. Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 150-158.

Rachel Feltman, "Gender Gap: Women Welcome in 'Hardworking Fields,' But 'Genius' Fields Are Male-Dominated, Study Finds." *The Washington Post*: January 15, 2015.

Rose Eleventh. "Group Projects and the Secretary Effect." *The Atlantic*: January 7, 2015.

Tuesday, February 11:
Michael Kimmel. "The Three Cultures of Guyland." *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men: Understanding the Critical Years Between 16 and 26*. New York: Harper, pp. 57-64

Gloria Steinem, "If Men Could Menstruate," pp. 209-210

Sexuality and Gender Identities

Thursday, February 13:

Chapter 4: LGBTQIA Identities and Challenges, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 85-119.

Tuesday, February 18:

Genny Beemyn and Susan R. Rankin. "Creating a Gender-Inclusive Campus." *Trans Studies: The Challenge to Hetero/Homo Normativities*. Yoland Martínex-San Miguel and Sarah Tobias. Eds. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2016, pp. 21-32.

Systems of Privilege and Oppression

Thursday, February 20:

Chapter 6: Beyond the Mythical Norm: Considering Race, Class, and Gender, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 153-188.

Essay 1 Due

Tuesday, February 25:

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies." Working Paper 189, Wellesley Centers for Women. Wellesley, Massachusetts, 1988.

Evin Taylor, "Cisgender Privilege," Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Eds). *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Sixth Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2015, 93-95.

Thursday, February 27:

Excerpt from Roxane Gay. *Hunger: A Memoir of My Body*. New York: Harper, 2017, pp. 209-212.

Jennifer Malia. "My Daughter and I Were Diagnosed with Autism on the Same Day." *The New York Times*, October 15, 2019.

Tuesday, March 3: Midterm Exam

Gender, Beauty, and the Body

Thursday, March 5:

Chapter 7: Embodiment, Beauty, and The Viewer, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 189-224.

Tuesday, March 10:

Film: *Killing Us Softly 4*

Excerpt from Roxane Gay. *Hunger: A Memoir of My Body*. New York: Harper, 2017, pp. 178-182, 208.

Gender and Work-Life Balance

Thursday, March 12:

Chapter 8: Work, Inequality, and Neoliberalism, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp. 225-256.

Tuesday, March 24:

Film: "Women in Business" *Makers: Women Who Make America*. Season 2. PBS: 28 October 2014.

Martha Burk, "Six Ways the Male Corporate Elite Keeps Women Out," *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Sixth Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2015 pp. 525-528

Thursday, March 26:

"Salary Calculator." AAUW

Jodi Kantor. "Working Anything But 9 to 5." *The New York Times*: August 13, 2014

Gender-Based Violence and #MeToo

Tuesday, March 31:

Chapter 9: Gender-Based Violence, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, 257-291.

Thursday, April 2:

Christian Miller and Ken Armstrong. "An Unbelievable Story of Rape." *ProPublica*: 16 December 2016.

Clip: "Consent and Tea"

Gender-Based Violence and Rape Culture

Tuesday, April 7:

Asking for It, Part I

Thursday, April 9:

Asking for It, Part II

Tuesday, April 14:

Asking for It, Part III

Thursday, April 16:

Continue discussion of *Asking for It*

Tuesday, April 21:

Vanessa Grigoriadis. "How the Women of the US Gymnastics Team Found Their Voice." *Vanity Fair*. Summer 2018.

"Weinstein." *Frontline*. PBS. March 2, 2018.

Gender and Global Human Rights

Thursday, April 23:

Chapter 10: Human Rights and Global Activism, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, pp.293-328

Tuesday, April 28:

Chapter 10 discussion continued.

Feminist Theories and Wrapping Up

Thursday, April 30:

Current women's human rights issue from Amnesty International

Tuesday, May 5:

Chapter 12: Feminisms: Theories and Practices, *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies*, 367-405.

***Asking for It* Paper Due**

Thursday, May 7:

Wrapping Up: Reflections on Gender

Final Exam

Thursday, May 14, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM