

# WGST 2503-1H1: Intro to Women's & Gender Studies

Fall 2022 | Midwestern State University | Dr. Coenen

TR | 12:30-1:50 PM | DB 175

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## Contact

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**Phone:** 940-397-4058 | **Office:** BW 203

**Office Hours:** Mon-Thurs. 11 AM-Noon, M 1:30-2:30 PM, W 9-10 AM, & BY APPT.

**Email** is the best way to contact me.

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## Course Materials

### Required Texts:

- *IWGS - Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Melissa J. Gillis and Andrew T. Jacobs. Oxford UP, 2020.
- *DF - Data Feminism*. Catherine D'Ignazio & Lauren Klein. MIT Press, 2020.

### Other Resources:

- Access to D2L/Brightspace to receive info and submit assignments
  - A Gmail account (like MSUTexas account) to collaborate & access digital materials
  - Regular computer and internet access
  - Microsoft Office or Google Suite
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## Course Goals

In WGST 2503 students will achieve the following:

- Display effective communication skills.
  - Critically examine and analyze gender in contemporary society.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of ethical decision making concerning gender in a contemporary society.
  - Demonstrate a contextual understanding of one's place in the global community.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and/or thematic perspectives informing research.
  - Apply knowledge to address real-world problems.
  - Communicate analyses, interpretations and significance of research.
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## Course Overview

WGST 2503 introduces the philosophical and practical issues that arise from the study of gender in society. We'll examine issues of women, gender, and sex from an interdisciplinary perspective and explore what happens when women's lives and their treatment in society are the focus of research.

It is not possible to cover all gender 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 combines interdisciplinary scholarship, film, lecture, and class discussion. We will critically examine gender in society and then work to apply that framework to a few issues that affect lives. This semester, we will develop frameworks for understanding gender issues and the breadth of the field of gender studies.

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## WGST 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 15 hours of gender-focused courses should be taken to complete the minor. See Dr. Linda Veazey for more information about the WGST minor.

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*You cannot afford to think of being here to receive an education: you will do much better to think of being here to claim one. One of the dictionary definitions of the verb 'to claim' is: to take as the rightful owner; to assert in the face of possible contradiction. 'To receive' is to come into possession of; to act as receptacle or container for; to accept as authoritative or true. The difference is that between acting and being acted-upon."*

--Adrienne Rich

## Grades & Policies

Assignments	Points	Description
Midterm Exam	150	Cover IWGS 1-7 and other relevant material
<a href="#">Media Analysis</a>	150	Write an analysis of a film or episode of a TV series that addresses a gender issue directly. Incorporate course readings and discussion in your analysis.
<a href="#">Resource Recommendations</a>	(4x30pts) 120	Compose a brief proposal that shares a text or resource related to the topic of the week that you would like to share with the class.
<a href="#">Reading Response Paper</a>	200	Discuss how <i>Data Feminism</i> and other course materials have influenced how you think about a specific issue addressed in the text.
<a href="#">Labor Log</a>	180	Keep track of your work for class in a Labor Log, described and attached below.
Final Exam	200	Cover IWGS 8-12 and other relevant material
Total	X/1000	

### Grade Policy

According to MSU’s Undergraduate Catalogue, “letter grades have the following significance: A indicates excellent work, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates passing work, F indicates failing work” (73).

Consequently, essays that meet the basic requirements earn a C, not an A or B. If you wish to earn As and Bs, you will have to work harder to produce better than satisfactory, or average, writing.

### Grade Scheme

Letter	Numerical
A	895-100
B	795-894
C	695-794
D	595-694
F	0-594

### Submission Format and Policy

All formal assignments are to be typed and formatted, with outside sources documented, according to MLA style. Some minor assignments may be submitted on the Labor Log or as a hard copy in class. All formal papers must be uploaded into the D2L Dropbox folder. *Note:* You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved in advance.

### Attendance Policy

Punctual, engaged attendance is crucial to your success in this class and in college. More than two (2) weeks’ worth (MW/TR: 4 class sessions; MWF: 6 class sessions) of absences, excused or not, will affect your performance and overall grade. Absences will not be directly penalized, but students may miss opportunities to learn and earn points for in-class activities. Email in advance if you will not be able to make class. It is your responsibility to be present and prepared for class to maximize your learning. If you must miss multiple sessions for personal/health reasons, alert the Dean of Students office and provide information so they can verify the situation for your instructors.

### On Zoom

This course is designated as a face-to-face class, and it will be held in that format unless the University changes course modalities. Students are not able to attend class via Zoom as a regular alternative. If you will miss an extended amount of time because of illness, contact me to discuss options.

### Late Assignments

Late assignments, defined as work not submitted to the appropriate dropbox by the designated due date and time, will be accepted for full credit if the student consults with the instructor on a reasonable timeline, at the discretion of the instructor. If you need to submit something late, you may request an extension in advance. If you have difficulty submitting or are unsure if your submission was successful, email me with your work attached.

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*Academic Dishonesty*

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The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. At the very least, plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment; at worst, the consequence will be an F in the course. Offenses will be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy. Students have the right to appeal an alleged incident of Academic Dishonesty. More information about this policy and appeal procedure can be found on page 55 of the *Student Handbook* [https://msutexas.edu/student-life/\\_assets/files/handbook.pdf](https://msutexas.edu/student-life/_assets/files/handbook.pdf)

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*Accessibility & Technology*

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The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 940-397-4140.

I want to ensure that this course is accessible as possible to all students. If you have problems accessing campus sites or learning materials, talk with me about how we might improve that.

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*On Language Assessment*

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You may expect to learn “proper grammar” in this class, but linguists argue that every language and dialect has a distinctive grammar and that no one grammar is inherently better or more correct. American universities rely on “Standard (American) Academic English” (SAE) to determine “college readiness,” but this [“standard” is a false one rooted in intentional gatekeeping and discrimination](#) based on race, class, and citizenship status. In this class, your professor will assume that SAE is a false and flawed standard. Your language practices are relevant. You will not be chastised for using grammars other than SAE. If you would like to learn to use SAE more persuasively, we can work on that through independent exercises for which you may earn extra credit, but you are also welcome to use your language experience in ways that you and your peers and community members would find persuasive and trustworthy; these goals are more practical and more inclusive than striving for an arbitrary and false notion of correctness. Grammar police be warned. (See also [CCCC’s 2020 Demand for Black Linguistic Justice](#).)

## Resources & Access

*eBook Access*

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1143’s required eBook is part of MSU Texas’ Courseware Access and Affordability Program. Students are charged for the course materials on their Business Office account. If you wish to opt-out of the Program and purchase the required course materials on your own, you must do so prior to **09/02/22**. Opt-out instructions are sent to students’ official my.msutexas.edu email after the first day of class. Contact the MSU Bookstore if you have questions about opting out.

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*Access to Microsoft 365*

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All students are able to download Microsoft Office 365 free of charge using their MSU Texas student email address. To acquire Office 365, please visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office?ms.officeurl=getoffice365?ms.officeurl=getoffice365> and create an account.

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*Writing Center & Tutoring*

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Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, Writing tutors are available most weekdays. You don’t need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback

at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading. See <https://msutexas.edu/academics/tasp/on-campus.php> for more info.

### *University Computer Labs*

The University provides four open computer labs throughout the week. These four labs feature access to Microsoft Office Suite for writing and internet access for research.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Clark Student Center	24 hours (Mon-Sun)
Dillard 146	Mon-Thurs 6 AM – 7 PM
Moffett Library	Mon-Thurs 8AM – 10PM; Fri. 8AM-5PM; Sat 10AM-6PM; Sun 2PM-10PM
Legacy Hall	24 hours (Mon-Sun)

### *Assessment and Revision*

I will provide written or oral feedback on drafts prior to submission as needed, and I will inquire about your writing progress regularly. If you request the opportunity to revise, you should meet with me to make a revision plan. You may revise and resubmit any coursework within 3 weeks of receiving a grade and prior to finals week for additional feedback. Grade revisions will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

### *Conferences*

You should participate in at least three writing conferences with me or a writing center tutor this semester prior to the last week of class. You may use these meetings for any course-related discussion, but your formal and research papers will be especially useful topics.

### *Contacting Me & GroupMe*

Email is the best way to contact me. In the body of your email, indicate the course and section number you're in. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response during the week and 48 hours over the weekend. We will also have a class GroupMe which you can use to ask questions and share resources among classmates. Access it here: [https://groupme.com/join\\_group/84200285/0dJLOW0N](https://groupme.com/join_group/84200285/0dJLOW0N)

### *D2L & Google Drive*

We will use D2L to join class remotely in Zoom and to access most course materials including the syllabus, the textbook & Achieve resources, schedule updates, assignment sheets, PowerPoints, your feedback and grades, and other materials. You will also submit formal assignments and find announcements on D2L, so please check it daily, especially before our class meets. Google Drive will also be used as a collaborative space and to store class resources.

### *Writing Proficiency Requirement*

All students seeking a Bachelor's degree from Midwestern State University must satisfy a writing proficiency requirement once they have 1) completed 6 hours of Communication Core and 2) earned 60 hours. Students may meet this requirement by passing the Writing Proficiency Exam, passing two Writing Intensive courses, or passing English 2113. If you have any questions about the exam, visit the [Writing Proficiency Office website](#) or call 397-4131.

## **Safety & Our Class**

### *COVID, Safety, & Care*

We are still dealing with a public health emergency. During the pandemic, we're deeply affected by the actions others take (or don't) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Many faculty, staff, and students here are caregivers for parents, children, and loved ones who are immunocompromised, and many may be at risk themselves. As such, I ask that you make efforts to protect yourselves, our campus, your families, and mine as well as our broader community for the spread of COVID-19.

As the pandemic continues, I want to share thoughts about our collective experience:

- Some of our lives may be relatively unaffected by the pandemic, but others have experienced profound and life-altering tragedies and hardships. We cannot make assumptions about others’ experiences.
- Be compassionate with others and with ourselves. At this time, we all need more grace and care.
- Together, we can make this semester safe, thoughtful, rigorous, and insightful through our intellectual efforts and by carefully following safety protocols.

We should follow the University’s guidance regarding COVID-19 precautions, masks, & vaccinations.

*On Symptoms*

If you are sick, particularly with symptoms that resemble COVID-19, **DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IN PERSON**. I’ll work with you to ensure that you have the opportunity to learn any material you miss because of illness.

*On Masks*

As new variants spread and the reality of breakthrough cases becomes more apparent, I cannot help but think of each of our family members and co-workers who are unvaccinated or immunocompromised. Because vaccinated individuals can carry or be infected by some variants, I will wear a mask (or face shield when lecturing) in class, and I ask you to wear a mask while inside the classroom too.

**Course Community**

*Ensuring a Learning Environment*

College classes should be vibrant environments that foster creativity, discussion, and intellectual growth. You have the freedom to create the kind of intellectual community you desire. Included here are some characteristics of a thriving learning environment. Let’s discuss what this looks like in practice:

Characteristics	Students will...	Professor will...
<i>Communicative</i>		
<i>Accountable</i>		
<i>Receptive</i>		
<i>Engaged</i>		
<i>Respectful</i>		

*Learning with Equity & Generosity*

As a class community, we have diverse bodies, experiences, and needs. Our diversity is a strength, and it’s something we should strive to learn from. In order to learn in a safe environment, we must ardently reject language and behaviors that denigrate others based on identity category. In this learning space, hate speech, harassment, discrimination, & violence are not tolerated.

Committing to equity, inclusion, and accessibility requires us to do more than reject discrimination. Equity begins with acknowledging how our institutions (academic and otherwise) have oppressed, excluded, and marginalized people based on race, religion, sexual orientation, sex and gender expression, immigration status, language background, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, age, body type, and other aspects of identity. Equity work continues with seeking to understand and resist those failures by educating ourselves about oppression, fostering conversation and learning about those topics, developing practices that respond to the needs of historically marginalized communities, and holding our communities and leaders accountable for becoming more equitable, inclusive, and accessible.

This course encourages the discussion and consideration of uncomfortable topics. We can work through discomfort and create a brave space for learning and exploration by showing respect and consideration of perspectives that differ from our own. There is a lot we don't know about each other, and our word choice in discussing social & political issues matters a great deal. Ignorance is not an excuse for cruelty or dismissiveness, but we all make mistakes as we learn, so we should be willing to forgive & learn from these situations.

*This Course as a Contract*

This course uses a labor-based grading contract adapted from that of composition scholar Asao Inoue. [Here is his original contract example](#). If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked (the terms of this are laid out throughout this document), then you'll earn a B in the course. This should foster a collaborative, supportive environment and relieve some writing anxiety. You'll get feedback from me and your colleagues which you can use to improve your work and to take risks, but you won't get traditional grades on major assignments. Instead they will be marked on a Satisfactory(S)/Unsatisfactory(U) basis. If you meet the basic expectations laid out in the assignment, you'll earn full credit for it, but if you receive a "U," you may revise with additional feedback or retain a portion of the points (50 or 75%) available for that task. You should use your colleagues' and instructor's feedback and revision advice and build strategies of self-assessment.

While the default grade for the course is a B, you can improve upon your grade by doing more than is required. The primary options for doing so are outlined in the Labor Log description (p. 7) and the grade distribution chart (p. 2). If you don't earn all of the points for a major assignment, you may revise and make up for it in the labor log. If you have missed or incomplete work or work that does not meet the expectations for revision, editing, or originality, and you choose not to make that up with timely revision or additional labor, you will forfeit the default B for a lower grade, depending on the amount and quality of missing or incomplete work.

By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it. I (Dr. Coenen) also agree to abide by the contract, and administer it fairly and equitably.

*Labor Log & Reflection*

This class works better, is more fun, and generates more learning when everyone participates. The Labor Log allows you to track and earn credit for your participation. Record all labor related to the class in your log with the type & number, date, time spent, and a brief description. Word & Google Docs versions of the template are on D2L. See the main types below:

Type (Abr.)	Goal	Pts/	Description
Meaningful Contribution (MC)	20	3	MCs represent the everyday ways that you engage in class work, and they can take many forms: comments or questions in class or via email, relevant chat on GroupMe, excellent group work, in-class volunteer, DB responses, and others.
Homework & Tasks (HT)	15	5	HTs will be indicated when they are assigned and may include homework, activities on D2L, brainstorming, reflections, research, and other engagement activities as announced (like attending relevant events). There will be many opportunities to complete homework or tasks, and you should strive to do all of them. About one per week will keep you on track.
Writing Collab (WC)	3	15	WCs include peer review & meetings with HC or TASP about your writing. These sessions should be recorded in your log and documented well in notes (and photos if at TASP). WC entries should summarize the plans for revision that you gave and/or received from the session.

**Class Schedule Fall 2022**

This version of the schedule is a projection. Some items will change throughout the semester, and they will be updated on [this Google Doc version of the schedule](#). Changes will also be discussed in class and posted to D2L. D2L also houses PDFs of readings and details for tasks and assignments not listed here.

**IWGS** – *Introduction to Women’s & Gender Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Gillis & Jacobs, 2020.

**DF** - *Data Feminism*, Catherine D’Ignazio & Lauren Klein. MIT Press, 2020.

**RR** = Resource Recommendation | **DB** = Discussion Board on D2L

Wk	Date	Do This Before Class	In Class & Due Dates
1	T 8/23	<a href="#">Complete Survey</a> , Join <a href="#">GroupMe</a>	Introductions, Syllabus, Expectations, <a href="#">R. Gay’s TED Talk</a>
	R 8/25	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 1: Sex, Gender and Social Construction</a>	<a href="#">Discuss reading</a> ; <a href="#">Resource Recommendation</a>
2	T 8/30	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 2: Language &amp; Communication</a>	<a href="#">Discuss reading</a>
	R 9/1	Read: <a href="#">Kapitan, "The Radical Copyeditor's Style Guide for Writing about Transgender People"</a> & <a href="#">SafeZone Curriculum</a>	Discuss Reading; <a href="#">Discuss Media Analysis</a> ; <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
3	T 9/6	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 3: Gender and In/Equality</a>	<a href="#">Discuss readings</a> ; <b>RR 1 Due at 8 PM</b>
	R 9/8	Current Cases in Gender In/Equality: Readings TBD	Discuss RRs; <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
4	T 9/13	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 4: LGBTQQIAA Identities and Challenges</a> ; <a href="#">Broussard, "When Binary Code Can't..."</a> ; Taylor, <a href="#">"Cisgender Privilege"</a>	<a href="#">Discuss readings</a>
	R 9/15	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 5: Constructions of Homosexualities</a> ;	<a href="#">Discuss readings</a> ; <a href="#">Before Stonewall Clip</a> ; <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
5	T 9/20	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 6: Beyond the Mythical Norm: Considering Race, Class, and Gender</a>	<a href="#">Discuss readings</a> ; Review Media Analysis; <b>RP 2 Due at 8 PM</b>
	R 9/22	Read: <a href="#">Gay, "The Solace of Preparing Fried Foods"</a> ; <a href="#">McIntosh "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"</a>	Identity Wheel; <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
6	T 9/27	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 7: Embodiment, Beauty, and The Viewer</a>	<a href="#">Discuss Film/Readings</a> , Exam Review
	R 9/29	Watch <a href="#">The Illusionists</a>	Exam Review; <b>Complete Exam by Mon. 10/3 @ 5PM</b>
7	T 10/4	<a href="#">Media Analysis (View Example)</a> <b>Write:</b> Media Analysis Draft	<a href="#">Media Analysis Workshop</a> ; <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
	R 10/6	Complete Media Analysis Draft	<a href="#">Media Analysis Peer Review</a> ; <b>Media Analysis Due M 10/10 @8PM</b>
8	T 10/11	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 8: Work, Inequality, and Neoliberalism</a> ; <a href="#">Kantor "Working Anything But 9 to 5"</a> ; <a href="#">Payne "Black Hair has Always been Professional"</a>	<a href="#">Discuss Readings</a> <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
	R 10/13	Read: <a href="#">IWGS Ch 9: Gender-Based Violence</a> ; <a href="#">Noble "Google Has a Striking History of Bias..."</a> ; <a href="#">MSU Student Code of Conduct, Title IX</a>	<a href="#">Discuss reading</a>

9	T 10/18	<b>Read:</b> IWGS Ch 10: Human Rights & Global Activism	<a href="#">Discuss Readings</a> ; <a href="#">UDHR</a> & <a href="#">Summary/Basics</a> ; <b>RR 3 Due @8PM</b>
	R 10/20	<b>Read:</b> RP Posts & DF Intro (1-19)	Discuss RRs, Reading, & <a href="#">DF Response Essay</a>
10	T 10/25	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Ch 1: The Power Chapter (21-47)</a>	Discuss Reading
	R 10/27	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Ch 2: Collect, Analyze, Imagine, Teach</a>	Discuss Reading
11	T 11/1	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Ch 3 &amp; 4</a>	Discuss Reading; <b>RR 4 Due @8PM</b>
	R 11/3	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Ch 5</a>	Discuss Reading & RRs
12	T 11/8	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Ch 6 &amp; 7</a>	Discuss Reading & <b>Paper ideas</b>
	R 11/10	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">DF Conclusion</a>	<b>Essay Workshop</b>
13	T 11/15	<b>Complete Essay Draft</b>	<b>Peer Review Workshop</b>
	R 11/17	<b>Read:</b> IWGS Ch 11: History of Women’s Activism in the US	<a href="#">Discuss Readings</a> <b>DF Response Essay due F 11/18 @8PM</b>
14	T 11/22	<b>Read:</b> IWGS Ch 12: Feminisms: Theories & Practices	<a href="#">Discuss Readings</a> & <a href="#">Labor Log/Reflection</a>
	R 11/24	<b>Holiday Break</b>	
15	T 11/29	Review for Exam; Extra Credit RP Presentations	<a href="#">Discuss Review</a> ; Informal Presentations
	R 12/1	Draft Labor Log Reflection	Final Exam Prep; <b>LLR Due @8PM</b>
Finals Wk		<b>FINAL EXAM On D2L</b>	