

GSWS 0100 (31241): Introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies

Professor Rachael Goss
Office: 402C
Office Hours: 5:00 – 6:00 pm (Tues) or by appointment
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Spring 2017
Class Meeting: T 6:00- 8:30 p.m.
Location: 330 CL

CLASSMATE NAME & NUMBER _____

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Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to offer students an overview of the field of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies. As this field is interdisciplinary, this course will introduce students to the range of scholarship from various departments and epistemological perspectives that are engaged in promoting the discipline. This course will serve as a foundation for future coursework in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh and as a result, will encourage students to engage in activities and events promoted by the Program. Through the readings, activities and assignments in this course, students will develop tools to critically analyze the ways in which social and cultural forces shape us as gendered individuals in the context of the world in which we live. We will analyze a range of perspectives and consider how the intersections of gender, sex, biology, race, class, nationality, power, politics, and social movements influence our understanding of gender and culture. In fulfillment of a University Writing Requirement, this writing intensive course will provide students with opportunities to write, revise, and hone their academic writing skills. Course prerequisites: none.

Objectives:

At the end of the course, you should achieve the following:

- **Demonstrate** an introductory understanding of the field of gender, sexuality, and women’s studies, and utilize a range of interdisciplinary tools and methods for understanding and analyzing sex, gender, and sexuality in culture.
- **Develop** a rich comprehension of both feminist and queer approaches to the social and cultural construction of gender and sexuality.
- **Construct** and **enhance** a critical understanding of intersectionality, including an awareness of gender and its complex intersections with other social, cultural, and biological categories, including but not limited to sex, race, ethnicity, class, nation, sexuality, ability, and age.
- **Cultivate** a language framework for thoughtfully articulating the critical vocabulary in the field of gender, sexuality and women’s studies.
- **Improve** reading and writing skills through effective synthesis of written material, and subsequently, the ability to convey course concepts in a concise and clear manner both verbally and in writing.
- **Develop** a skillset to think critically and thoughtfully about the self and others through a deepened understanding of how social, cultural, and biological categories shape our lives, and our understandings of the world.

Class Format

The emphasis in the class is on *how* to think, not *what*, to think. This will not be a traditional course where I lecture and you simply take notes! My hope for you is that you will begin to question what you think you know – not to abandon your beliefs and values but to critically explore them. This course also seeks to integrate theoretical knowledge with lived experience. Thus, it is imperative that everyone

actively participates in class discussions and regularly attends class. We will create a collaborative classroom where everyone’s experience is respected, where each member feels open enough to explore difficult parts of themselves, and where each member shares his/her/their expertise. We want to create an environment that is simultaneously respectful and challenging so that we might re-imagine our social world.

Electronic Policy

All electronic devices (including but not limited to cell phones, laptops, iPads) are to be set in silent mode and kept out of sight during class. Laptop computers WILL NOT be necessary for class participation in this course, and should only be used with special permission. I would like us to be present in the room with whatever emerges. To do so, it is important to minimize distractions.

Required Texts

- Shaw, Susan and Janet Lee. (2015). *Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings, 6th Edition*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill. Available in the bookstore and online.
- Additional readings, films, blogs, etc. will be required and distributed in class.

Requirements and Grading

Your final grade for this course will consist of four quizzes, one discussion leader presentation, a journal, two papers, a peer review, and participation points. Your grade is calculated as a percentage of 100 possible earned points in the class.

Quizzes: Throughout the semester, you will complete four in-class quizzes on the readings assigned for that day. Each quiz is worth up to 5 points. You must be present to earn points; I do not give “make-up” quizzes.

Discussion Leader Presentation: Each member of the class will sign up to lead discussion for one class session. This requires you to prepare 2 discussion questions for two of the assigned reading that day (we will coordinate). Please avoid asking closed-ended questions (yes or no) or vague questions (“what do you think about ...?”). You are encouraged to coordinate your questions with other classmates, in order to minimize overlap. In addition to facilitating that day’s discussion, you will also be required to create a 1-page handout highlighting your research about that day’s topic. This should include key vocabulary, staggering statistics, key themes and concepts to help your classmates gain depth and insight. You will be asked to cite a **minimum** of **3 ACADEMIC sources**, using APA format. This assignment cannot be made up and is worth 15 points.

Paper #1: First, research and describe a gendered inequality issue in society today. For example, you could focus on the wage gap, sexual violence on college campuses, or societal double standards when it comes to school dress codes, expectations about sexual behavior, or media stereotypes. Consider questions such as: How did this inequality come to be? What are its effects on a population? What obstacles is the affected group facing? What are the statistics? Next, drawing from chapters 1-3 in our textbook, class lectures, and discussions, choose a concept we have been discussing (privilege, intersectionality, social construction, freedom versus justice, etc.). Apply the concept/s to the chosen inequality to reveal how power is operating. Be sure to clearly explain (and cite) the class readings and

concepts that you will be using to construct your argument. This paper will be 4-5 pages in length, and is worth up to 10 points. This paper will be docked 2 points for each day that it is late.

Paper #2: This paper is a revision and extension of Paper #1. You will begin by incorporating my feedback to strengthen your paper. Next, you will identify an institution, campaign, or social movement working to address your chosen inequality. Research and describe the effort. Then evaluate it. Consider questions such as: Is this effort improving the circumstances of the affected group? If so, how and why? If not, who is left out or what more can be done? This paper will be 7-8 pages in length and is worth up to 10 points. You must bring a hard copy of this paper to class. This paper will be docked 2 points for each day that it is late and you will be unable to participate in the peer review process.

****Both papers should be typed and double-spaced in Times New Roman 12pt. font with 1 inch margins.****

Peer Review: We will have an in-class peer-review session. You will bring a hard copy of Paper #2 to class and work with another classmate to improve your paper. You will generate a 2-page review (worth up to 10 points) of suggestions and constructive criticism. I will distribute helpful guidelines on the day of the peer review. This review must be attached to the final draft of your paper, due at the end of the semester. I will also be available for consultation.

Journal: As this is a writing-intensive section, several times throughout the semester you will spend class time journaling on discussion questions related to the material for that day. You may also be asked to complete a writing assignment outside of class. One entry will require you to attend a GSWS event outside of class and reflect on/analyze what you learned. It might be useful to find your event early in the term and plan ahead on your calendar. Please designate a single folder to collect all essays for this on-going assignment and bring it with you to each class. The journal will consist of 10-15 (1 page) entries, totally roughly 10 pages and is worth up to 25 points. This will be turned in at the end of the term.

Participation: Your active participation is important to the success of the course for both you and your classmates. Class sessions will consist of lectures, presentations, discussions, in-class writing, and small group exercises. Please be prepared to engage in all of the following *in every class session*: be present, alert; ask questions; be on time; contribute to discussions in thoughtful, relevant, and respectful ways; refrain from using your phone; and refrain from using any electronic devices for anything besides coursework. Attendance matters, but it does not make up the sole measure of participation. **Being prepared means that you read the assigned material *closely* before class and come ready to discuss it, ask questions, and generate ideas.**

I strongly suggest that you prepare notes each day based on these reading guide questions and bring your notes to class to use as a basis for discussion.

- What are the main questions the author/s is/are posing?
- What is the methodology? (data, method, qualitative, quantitative)
- What are the main conclusions?
- What is one strength of the article?
- In what ways is this work unsatisfying, inconsistent, incomplete?
- What additional questions does this work raise?

You earn participation points by the quality of insights and questions you offer, thoughtfulness, discussion leadership, and professionalism. **More than two absences throughout the semester will significantly lower your participation grade and six or more absences results in a fail of the course.**

Grading Breakdown:		<i>My scores</i>
Quizzes (4 quizzes at 5 pts each)	20	_____
Discussion Leader Presentation	15	_____
Paper #1	10	_____
Peer Review	10	_____
Paper #2	10	_____
Journal	25	_____
Participation	10	_____
Total points	100	_____

Grade	% Limits
A+	98-100%
A	93-97%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	Below 60%

Writing Intensive Requirement:

“W-COURSE,” WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE

http://www.wid.pitt.edu/writing_intensive_courses/teachingexistingcourses.php

The particular shape and trajectory of any writing-intensive course will be partly determined by its relation to the discipline, its position in the major, and its instructor’s pedagogical convictions. Across the Arts and Sciences, however, writing-intensive courses should enact these common practices:

1. Students in W courses should write regularly, from the beginning of the term onward. Students writing in the last month of class should be able to work from what they have learned by writing in the first month. By the end of the term, students should have written a minimum of 20-25 pages, and this writing should determine a significant portion of the final grade.
2. This semester-long sequence of writing assignments—both formal and informal—should engage students actively in the intellectual work of the course. Instructors should help students understand the purpose of each assignment and its relation to the rest of their course work. Students should also be made aware of how each assignment will be evaluated.
3. During the semester, students should revise at least one piece of writing substantially. Course schedules should allow enough time between drafts and revisions for teachers to provide instructive (rather than merely corrective) responses, and for students to revise their thinking as well as their prose.
4. Although students typically do most of their formal writing outside the classroom, in a W-course they should also spend time in class learning to write. Instructors should direct the students’ attention to relevant issues of thinking and writing (whether specific to the discipline or more general), and use class time helping students address those issues.

Policies

Gender-Inclusive/Non-Sexist Language Statement: Aspiring to create a learning environment in which people of all identities are encouraged to contribute their perspectives to academic discourse, the University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program provides guidelines and

resources (<http://gsws.pitt.edu/node/1432>) regarding gender-inclusive/non-sexist language. Following these guidelines fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment, strengthens academic writing, enriches discussion, and reflects best professional practices.

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

Academic Integrity Policy: The fundamentals of Academic Integrity are valued within the University of Pittsburgh community of scholars. All students are expected to understand and adhere to the standards of Academic Integrity as stated in the Pitt Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found on the Pitt website at www.pitt.edu/academicintegrity. Any student who violates the Academic Integrity Policy is subject to judicial proceedings, which may result in sanctions as outlined in the Policy. Depending upon the severity of the violation, sanctions may range from receiving a zero on an assignment to being dismissed from the university. If you have any questions about the policy, please consult your course instructor.

Students should be aware that all violations, including minor infractions, will be reported to the University of Pittsburgh Academic Integrity Committee.

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism, taking someone else's words or ideas and representing them as your own, is expressly prohibited by the University of Pittsburgh. Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Student academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

- Copying the work on another during an examination or turning in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Copying from books, magazines, or other sources, including Internet or other electronic databases like ProQuest and InfoTrac, or paraphrasing ideas from such sources without acknowledging them;
- Submitting an essay for one course to a second course without having sought prior permission from your instructor;
- Giving a speech and using information from books, magazines, or other sources or paraphrasing ideas from sources without acknowledging them;
- Knowingly assisting others in the dishonest use of course materials such as papers, lab data, reports and/or electronic files to be used by another student as that student's own work.

PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Attendance: Students who miss 6 or more classes will not pass the course.

Classroom Recording: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Disability Resources: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890/412-383-7355 (TTY), as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Electronic copies of assignments are not accepted. Do not send assignments via email.

Email Policy: Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address.

Late policy: In-class activities cannot be made up. No exceptions. Papers will be reduced by 2 points for each day late (this includes after class).

Non-Discrimination: As an educational institution and as an employer, Pitt values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. Visit <http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-01-03.html> for more information.

Mature Content Warning and Classroom Climate: Our course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. As with any course in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program, course topics are often political and personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach your instructor ahead of time if you'd like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with your instructor and/or seek help from the counseling center.

Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX:

The University is committed to combatting sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University's Title IX office so that the victim may be

provided appropriate resources and support options. What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware.

There are two important exceptions to this requirement about which you should be aware:

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here:

<http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report/confidentiality>

An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University's Title IX office.

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

- Title IX Office: 412-648-7860
- SHARE @ the University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 (8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)

If you have a safety concern, please contact the University of Pittsburgh Police, 412-624-2121.

Other reporting information is available here: <http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report-0>

[This statement was developed by Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator, in conjunction with GSWS instructors.]

Weekly Schedule

Introduction to GSWS

- 1/10 Welcome, Introductions, and Course Requirements
- 1/17 *Women's & Gender Studies: Perspectives and Practices*
- Chapter 1. Introduction (pp 1 – 19)
 - Reading # 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, & 8

Key Concepts and Perspectives

- 1/24 *Privilege and Inequality*
- Chapter 2. Introduction (pp 49 – 67)
 - Reading #10, 13, 14, & 19
 - Discussion Leader 1
- 1/31 *Learning Gender*
- Chapter 3. Introduction (pp. 116-134)
 - Reading #20, 21, 22, 23, 26
 - Discussion Leader 2
- 2/7 *Inscribing Gender on the Body*
- Chapter 4 Introduction (pp 181-202)
 - Reading #29, 30, 33, 35, & 36
 - Discussion Leader 3
- 2/14 *Media and Culture*
- Chapter 5 (pp. 250-271)
 - Reading #42, 43, 44, 46
 - Discussion Leader 4
- Miss Representation – In Class Film**
- 2/21 *Sex, Power, & Intimacy*
- Chapter 6 Introductions (pp 313 – 327)
 - Reading #49, 52, 53, 54 & 55
 - Discussion Leader 5
- 2/28 *Health & Reproductive Justice*
- Chapter 7 Introductions (pp 362 – 373)
 - Reading # 56, 57, 60 & 61
 - Discussion Leader 6
 - **Paper#1 Due**
- 3/7 ****SPRING BREAK****

- 3/14 *Family Systems, Family Lives*
- Chapter 8 Introductions (pp 433- 451)
 - Reading #62, 63, 65, & 68
 - Discussion Leader 7
- 3/21 *Work Inside and Outside the Home*
- Chapter 9 Introduction (pp 470 – 490)
 - Reading # 69, 70, 72, 75, & 77
 - Discussion Leader 8
- 3/28 *Resisting Gender Violence*
- Chapter 10 Introduction (pp. 537 – 564)
 - Reading # 78, 80, 82, & 84
 - Discussion Leader 9
 - Peer Revision Day: **Paper#2 Due**
- 4/4 *State, Law, and Social Policy*
- Chapter 11 Introduction (pp. 582-600)
 - Reading # 86, 87, 88, 91, & 92
 - Discussion Leader 10
- 4/11 *Religion & Spirituality*
- Chapter 12 Introduction (pp. 635-643)
 - Reading #93, 95, 97, 100, 101, & 102
 - Discussion Leader 11
- 4/18 *Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures*
- Chapter 12 Introduction (pp. 692-707)
 - Reading #103, 104, 107, 108, & 109
 - Discussion Leader 12
 - **Journal Due**
- 4/24 – **Final Exam Week: Paper#2 Revised & Peer Review Due**
4/29

**** THIS IS A TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE COME TO CLASS TO STAY AWARE OF ANY CHANGES TO THE SCHEDULE. ****