

SOC 220: Sociology of Gender

TTH 2-3:15 Admin 309

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Course Description

Gender is everywhere. What is the first question we ask about a baby? Is it a boy or a girl? When you fill out the census, you are given two choices: male, female. While race and income (two of the key areas of stratification in society) are viewed on a continuum, gender is often seen as a binary category in which we place people. What about a child born with ambiguous genitalia? Should his/her parents make them a boy, girl, or let them decide when he/she is older? The goal of this class is to think deeply about everyday life and society with regard to gender, as well as build critical thinking and research skills. As the author of our textbook Robyn Ryle notes, “our goal is to raise as many questions as we can about gender.”

Textbook (Available at the Campus Bookstore and Online)

Ryle, Robyn (2011) *Questioning Gender: A Sociological Exploration*, 1st Edition

Additional required readings will be provided on the Blackboard (BB) class website and are listed below in the course schedule below.

- Weekly readings will include chapters from the Ryle text and an additional article from Blackboard. The additional article will serve as an illustration of a concept noted each week and in-class discussion of each article will occur.

Course Assignments and Grading

- **Exams (50%):** Students will complete 2 take home essay exams during the semester.
- **Online Reading Questions (25%):** Students are required to go online to the class Blackboard site each week and post a thoughtful, well written question based on the readings, that works to evoke discussion no later than Wednesday of each week. These postings will be made in the Blackboard Discussion section. This is a participation activity and points will be lost only for missed weekly postings. No make-up postings are allowed. This begins Week 2.
- **Final Project (25%):** Using the Gender Exercises at the end of each chapter, students are to choose 5 activities over the course of the semester and complete a 2 page paper on it. At the end of the semester, the student will turn in the 5 two-page papers, as well as a 3-5 page assessment of his or her ongoing learning throughout the semester.

Course Objectives

- Through the use of the text, we will continually question gender and all the implications it has on our everyday lives.
- By taking a global approach, we'll be able to use the time-tested approach of Sociology and look across time and location to see the various aspects of the application of gender.
- By examining the perspectives of diverse groups of people, we are able to gain a more robust perspective on gender.
- By referring back to the theoretical perspectives throughout the text, we are able to better grasp the application of each approach to gender.

Classroom Policies

The professor reserves the right to change the syllabus and assignments. Changes may be made to accommodate the specific needs of the class.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty, including the giving or receiving of improper help on examinations or assignments, falsifying records, and plagiarism (the act of stealing and using, as one's own, the ideas or the expression of ideas of another) is not tolerated at Concord University. These behaviors can result in failure of the course or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the university academic catalog for the consequences of academic dishonesty.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Concord University is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please inform me at the beginning of the semester if you have a disability and are requesting accommodations. Students should register with CU's Disability Services Office, located in the Athens campus Jerry L. Beasley Student Center, Bottom Floor. The Disability Services Office phone number is 304-384-6036 or you can email the Director Nancy Ellison at nellison@concord.edu for assistance.

Course Readings: Readings listed for each day of class in the course schedule are to have been read **prior** to coming to that day's class. Additional reading maybe assigned and will be distributed in class or on the course Blackboard website.

Student Athletes: Student athletes are required to notify me in advance to be excused from class and are responsible for making up all missing assignments and readings.

Classroom Conduct: This course is heavily reliant on discussion, which includes difficult dialogue at times. **This is an inclusive and safe classroom.** All discussion points and questions are valued; as such students are expected to treat one another and the professor thoughtfully and with respect. Racist, sexist, homophobic or other pejorative or discriminatory language will not be tolerated and students who insist on such behavior will be asked to leave the classroom.

Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off before coming to class.

DO NOT text message or use your phone during class!

Course Schedule

Aug 16 - Introductions and Syllabus

Aug 18 - Lecture: Sex, Gender and Sexuality: An Introduction

Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 1, "What is this thing called gender and why should we care about it? Introducing gender"

Aug 23 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 2, "That's the "sociology" in the sociology of gender? Understanding sociology and gender"

Aug 25 - Read: "*Doing Gender*" (BB)

Aug 30 - Lecture: Intersections and Identity

Sept 1 - Discussion of Readings

Read: "*White Privilege: Unpacking Invisible Knapsack*" (BB)

Read: "*The End of Welfare as We Know It: An Overview of the PRWORA*" (BB)

Read: "*Center Of Masculine Reproduction Gay Athletes In Professional Sports*" (BB)

Sept 6 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 4, "How do we learn gender? Gender and socialization"

Sept 8 - Read: "*Patriarchy, The System, An It, Not a He, a Them or an Us*" (BB)

Sept 13 - Film: "Tough Guise"

Sept 15 - Discussion on Film and Readings

Read: "*Real Men Don't Cry... and Other 'Uncool' Myths*" (BB)

Sept 20-22 - Take Home Essay Exam #1

Sept 27 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 5, "How does gender matter for who we want and desire? The gender of sexuality"

Sept 29 - Read: "*Masculinity as Homophobia*" (BB)

Oct 4 - Film: "Code of Gender," Discuss on Blackboard

Oct 6 - No Class Fall Break

Oct 11 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 7, "How does gender matter for how we think about our bodies? The gender of bodies and health"

Oct 13 - Read: "*The Beauty Myth*" (BB)

Oct 18 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 8, "How does gender impact the people we our lives with? The gender of marriage and families"

Oct 20 - Read: "*Bloodmother, Othermothers, and Women-Centered Networks*" (BB)

Read: "*Dilemmas of Involved Fatherhood*" (BB)

Oct 25 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 9, "How does gender affect the type of work we do and the rewards we receive for our work?"

Oct 27 - Read: "*Nickel and Dime: On Not Getting by In America*" (BB)

Nov 1 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 10, “How is gender on the big screen, the sports field, the small screen, your magazine, your music, and your computer screen? The gender of media and popular culture”

Nov 3 - Read: “*Gender and Videogames: the political valence of Lara Croft*” (BB)

Nov 8-10 - Take Home Essay Exam #2

Nov 15 - Read: *Questioning Gender* Chapter 11, “How does gender help determine who has power and who doesn't? The gender of politics and power.”

Nov 17 - Read: “*Injury, Gender and Trouble*” (BB)

Nov 22-24 - No Class, Thanksgiving Break

Nov 29 - Film: TBA

Dec 1 - Film Discussion & Wrap up Activity

Final Paper Due Dec 6th by 5pm