

## **SEX, GENDER, AND SOCIETY I SOCY/WMST 1016 SPRING 2015**

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**You are responsible for everything in this syllabus, the text, additional articles, the registration handbook, and material covered in lecture.**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course investigates sex, gender, and sexuality using a constructionist framework to critically engage with essentialistic and biologically determinist perspectives, dominant in Western society. Contemporary sex, gender, and sexual identities, will be viewed as outcomes and techniques of social control. We will explore the construction of male, female, femininity, masculinity, heterosexuality, and homosexuality as they inform and limit our cultural and individual understandings of gender. An individual's sex and gender cannot be isolated from their class and race, so readings will explore sex and gender within these systems of social organizations, as well. Since gender is a "moving target," I will spend considerable time discussing the shifting definitions of sex and gender. Throughout the course we will be examining and analyzing our own and others' experiences and identities in a sociological perspective of larger trends and social influences. We will also discuss the consequences of the sex, gender, and sexual stratification systems in place in this society with an emphasis on identifying inequality, injustice, and oppression.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

#### Honor Code

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid that constitutes academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening or intimidating behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council and those students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member involved and non-academic sanctions given by the Honor Code Council (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Please refer to [www.colorado.edu/honorcode](http://www.colorado.edu/honorcode) to view the specific guidelines. If you have any questions related to this policy, contact the Honor Code Council at [honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu). **Honor code violations will result in a 0 for the assignment at a minimum and may also result in failing this course, probation, or expulsion.**

#### Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to

disciplinary measures. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion, and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, nationalities, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, and gender variance (a major part of this class).

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>

**I DO NOT ALLOW COMPUTERS IN CLASS (IPADS OR LAPTOPS).**

### Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001).<sup>1</sup> CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes, or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy,<sup>2</sup> age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression,<sup>3</sup> or veteran status. See full details at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination-and-harassment-policy-and-procedures>

### Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, you should notify me at least two weeks ahead of time to request special accommodation if you have a conflict. See full details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html).

### Students with Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)).

## **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

### **Your participation**

Your participation in class discussion is encouraged. You are welcome to ask questions at any time or even take us a bit off-track in discussion. If something is interesting and important to the class, I do not mind exploring it further. In this class, we will most assuredly express strong opinions and argue over some points. ***We critique ideas not people.***

You respect other students by listening attentively when they are speaking, not rudely interrupting anyone speaking and by not making hurtful insults and/or comments that may

silence other people in the class by declaring whole groups of people wrong/criminal/sinful/sick because of sex, gender, ethnicity, religion, politics, gender, ability, age, appearance, and consensual sexual choices. We will be discussing how those attitudes and the enforcement of those attitudes have operated to deny some people opportunities and resources that many expect *and* demand. You are encouraged to say whatever is there for you to say, being responsible for the effect your words will have on others. As a theme in this class we will also be discussing how words are social actions themselves with the power to enforce power relations and are reflective of existing power and privilege inequities.

### **My participation (teaching style and language)**

The constructionist perspective is founded on the principle that language creates our reality and experience of the world in which we live. This class is about sex, gender, and sexuality as it is experienced in the everyday world in addition to the world of experts and doctors. Because of this, I consciously use language to uncover the implicit meanings about sex, gender, and sexuality and how words are used to create our common understanding of sex, gender, and sexuality. This is a difficult class at multiple levels (level of comprehension and integration of material required for tests as well as dealing with strong emotional reactions to course content and presentation styles). In my opinion, it demonstrates a high level of maturity to recognize your limits of comfort and what you are willing to take on this semester and act appropriately as quickly as possible.

### **REQUIRED READINGS**

Articles will be added as the semester progresses on D2L. I will add additional readings not listed on the syllabus to D2L as deemed necessary.

Readings for the day need to be completed *before* the class meeting. Class activities and discussions will primarily draw from the assigned readings.

### **EVALUATION COMPONENTS**

**Two Exams:** Two 50-question multiple-choice exams will be given during the semester. Each exam is worth 50 points. Rescheduling an exam will incur a 10% deduction.

**Final Exam:** A 50-question multiple-choice exams will be given during the semester. Each exam is worth 50 points. Rescheduling an exam will incur a 10% deduction.

**In-class writing assignments:** There will be five unannounced in-class writing assignments. These will be regarding the topic or assigned readings. You must be in class that day to receive points. Each in-class assignment is worth five points.

**Total Course Points = 175**

**Save all graded work for this course. If you do not have the original graded copy of your work, challenging your grade will not be considered.**

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1

T 1/13 Course Introduction  
Th 1/15 Topic – Basic Sociological Concepts and Social Control  
Read – “Kramer Introduction”

### WEEK 2

T 1/20 Topic – Sociological Concepts  
Read – “Hetero Non-Trans Privilege” & “White Privilege, Male Privilege”  
Th 1/22 Topic – Assumptions of Essentialism  
Read – “Dualing Dualisms” & “In the Beginning”

### WEEK 3

T 1/27 Topic – Assumptions of Essentialism  
Th 1/29 Topic – Assumptions of Constructionism  
Read – “Muddying the Water” & “Doing Gender”

### WEEK 4

T 2/3 Topic – Assumptions of Constructionism  
Th 2/5 Readings/Review

### WEEK 5

T 2/10 **Exam One**  
Th 2/12 Topic – Hegemonic Gender/Sexual Scripts  
Read – “Egg and Sperm” & “Rock Hudson’s Body”

### WEEK 6

T 2/17 Topic – Hegemonic Gender/Sexual Scripts  
Read – “Egg and Sperm” & “Rock Hudson’s Body”  
Th 2/19 Topic – Feminist Frameworks

### WEEK 7

T 2/24 Topic – Feminist Frameworks  
Th 2/26 Gender & Race  
View – *Ethnic Notions*  
Read – “Hottentot 2000”

### WEEK 8

T 3/3 Topic – Gender & Race  
Read – “Climbing the Hierarchy of Masculinity”  
TH 3/5 Topic – Expanding Feminism: Transgender Theorizing  
Read – “O Au No Keia” and “Transgender History”

WEEK 9		
T 3/10	Topic – Medical Constructions of Gender & Sexuality	
	Read – “Obsessed” & “Function of the Orgasm”	
	View - <i>Diagnosing Difference</i>	
Th 3/12	View - <i>Diagnosing Difference</i>	
WEEK 10		
T 3/17	Readings/Review	
Th 3/19	<b>Exam Two</b>	
WEEK 12		
T 3/31	Topic – Gender & Violence	
	Read – “Doing Gender Inappropriately”	
Th 4/2	View – <i>The Brandon Teena Story</i>	
WEEK 13		
Th 4/7	View – <i>The Brandon Teena Story</i>	
Th 4/9	Topic – Sexual Assault	
	Reading - TBA	
WEEK 14		
T 4/14	Topic – Consequences of Rape Culture	
Th 4/16	Topic – Gender & Family	
	Read – “Lesbigay Division of Labor”	
WEEK 15		
T 4/21	Topic – Gender & Family	
	Read – “Lesbigay Division of Labor”	
T 4/28	Topic – Gender & Work	
	Read – “Glass Escalator” & “America’s Dirty Work”	
Th 4/30	Readings/Review	
FINALS	Su 5/3	4:30 – 7 PM.