Fall 9-1-2020

WGSS 263S.50: Social and Political Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality (Online)

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Instructor Information:
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Office Hours: virtual meetings by appointment
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Required Texts:
   ISBN 9780190266066
2) Additional readings available on Moodle.
3) Access to Netflix or Kanopy (free through Missoula Public Library) suggested (you will be watching
   assigned documentaries to supplement the readings and PowerPoints)

Course Description:
The course is designed to introduce students to the broad fields of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies
through an overview of a number of the theoretical and experiential perspectives of WGSS from a social
science perspective. Students will analyze the history of feminism, women’s studies, gender studies, and the
growing field of queer studies; biological and psychological theories of gender; the social construction of
gender as a product of history and culture; the relationship between gender and other categories of difference
(race, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity); family and work; gender-based violence; the relationship between
politics, economics, and gender; the representation of gender in popular culture; health and reproduction;
and activism.

This course is one of the core requirements for the Major and Minor in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality
Studies. If you enjoy this course and would like to know more about the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality
Studies Program, please contact me or drop by the Women’s Studies Office, LA 138A-B, or visit the Women’s,

Methods:
This class is not a lecture course. It is a reading and discussion course. I will present certain background
information to provide you with a context for your readings, discussions, and writings. I will propose my own
interpretations of the texts we read and the topics we discuss, but you are not expected to accept these
interpretations blindly. Each reader brings their own experiences to a literary text. If you disagree with my
reading of a text, you should feel free to say so. Your active participation is essential and counts as part of
your grade.

You will hear many different opinions and ideas during this course, some of which you may disagree with. I
expect each student to respect the opinions and beliefs of their classmates and for the level of discourse to
remain civil and academic. A failure to respect your classmates and/or the professor will have an adverse
impact on your grade.
**Classroom Etiquette:** Although we will not be meeting in a physical classroom, you should treat the Moodle discussion forums as a virtual classroom and maintain respect for your classmates. See Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity for more details on what behavior is expected of you.

**Content Warning:** This course deals with several difficult topics, including gender-based violence and sexual assault. We have one week dedicated to gender based violence, during which there will be alternative assignments if you are unable to read about or discuss this topic. There are other topics in this class that may also trigger difficult memories for you. You should feel free to talk to me about any issues you have with the topics we are discussing and ask for excused absences. I am also willing to assign alternative readings for any assigned readings that may be triggering to you. You do not need to supply details of why it is triggering.

**Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity:** This virtual classroom is a hate-free zone, and is part of WGSS’s commitment to addressing and redressing racism, Islamophobia, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Blackness, and all systems of privilege and oppression in our classes, in our academic units, and in higher education. If you violate this expectation of conduct in class, it may have a negative effect on your participation grade. If your written assignments or Moodle discussion posts violate this expectation of conduct, your posts may be removed and/or receive no credit.

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<th>WGSS 263S Learning Outcomes:</th>
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<td>1) Students will learn about the history and theory of feminist, gender, and queer studies in the United States and around the world.</td>
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<td>2) Students will gain an understanding of how privilege and oppression work in our society through an analysis of categories of difference such as gender, race, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, etc.</td>
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| 3) a) Students will learn how to analyze media representations of gendered bodies and sexualities.  
  b) Students will analyze the construction of sexuality and the body in our society. |
| 4) a) Students will learn and construct inclusive definitions of home, parenthood, family, work, and marriage.  
  b) Students will analyze how institutions such as family, culture, work, and religion can be both empowering and oppressive to people of all genders. |
| 5) a) Students will learn how gender and other identity positions impact how people interface with the criminal justice system, the military, and the government.  
  b) Students will learn how gendered and sexualized violence operates in our society and world. |
| 6) Students will learn how to put theory and class work into action to make positive changes in their worlds. |

**Assessment:**
- Participation (includes minor assignments and preparation) 5%
- Moodle Discussions 20% (2% each)
- Quizzes 20% (5% each)
- Media Literacy Presentation 7.5%
- McIntosh Article Assignment 7.5%
- Creative Project/Research Paper 20%
- Final Exam 20%
Preparation and Participation: You will be expected to read the assigned PowerPoints and readings every week, as well as watching any documentaries or videos assigned in the weekly PowerPoints. I recommend having access to Netflix, Kanopy (free with a Missoula Public Library card), and/or another video resource as we will be watching a number of relevant documentaries. The PowerPoints likely differ from what you are used to; they are intended to be interactive, meaning that you should explore linked websites and articles and follow along with any thinking/writing activities presented within the PowerPoint. You are also expected to research any terms presented in the PowerPoint if you are unfamiliar with them (the textbook is a good first resource for researching terms).

Reading discussion forums: By Friday at midnight, you must post 1 question or issue raised by the readings for that week to your Moodle discussion group. By Sunday at midnight, you must also reply to 2 postings by your discussion group members. Your Friday post must directly reference the textbook. You can also discuss the PowerPoint or videos, but you must at least connect it to the textbook reading. Failure to include the readings in your posts will impact your grade negatively. A reading is available on Moodle with information on how to write a good posting. Inappropriate or offensive postings may be deleted from Moodle and not counted towards your required post number. See Moodle for a reading on how to make appropriate and educationally valuable postings. Postings that violate the Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity may receive no credit.

Media Analysis Project: One of the topics we will explore this semester is media literacy. You will be required to independently analyze either a single selection of print/tv advertising OR a single movie/tv show/comic book/etc. You will write a two-page analysis which you will present to the class (this is an informal presentation on a dedicated Moodle discussion forum). Your analysis should focus on how your selection either upholds or subverts dominant discourses of gender, class, race, sexual orientation, etc. A more detailed handout will be provided.

McIntosh Assignment: This course asks you to question your own privileges in our society. You will read an important article by the feminist scholar Peggy McIntosh (Reading 9 in Textbook). This assignment asks you to think about your own privilege and oppression and write a short reflection. A more detailed handout will be provided.

Creative Project: In place of a midterm exam, you will instead complete a creative project. This may take the form of an art project of some sort (I have received paintings, videos, sculptures, poetry, photography, etc. as students’ creative projects in the past) with a brief written reflection or your project may take the form of a research paper. A more detailed handout will be provided.

Exam: The Final Exam will be a take-home (offline, untimed) exam comprised of a combination of short term identifications and a short essay. The identification terms will be drawn from the PowerPoints and the textbook, but your definitions must be written in your own words and provide a real-world example. Exams are not timed and are open-book, open-note, and open-PowerPoint. You may work alone or with classmates, but your answers must be written in your own words. A more detailed handout will be provided.

Reading Quizzes: There will be 4 quizzes (7-10 multiple choice questions each) spaced throughout the semester. These quizzes are specific to the content from the textbook readings. You may complete the quizzes open-book and open-note, and they are not timed.

Extra Credit: Each chapter features suggestions of Activism and Civic Engagement, Engaged Learning Activities,
and Transnational Connections. Any activity not completed in class is eligible for extra credit (each extra credit opportunity is worth 1% of your final grade if it meets assignment requirements). You should submit a 1-page essay describing your experience. Your reflection should state what the extra credit opportunity was, connect the activity/documentary to the content of the course, and share your personal reflections on it. No more than 5 extra credit essays may be submitted. Other opportunities for extra credit will be announced throughout the semester (these include both virtual events and documentaries).

Disability Accommodations: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification. All accommodations will remain confidential.