

Bergen Community College
Division of Humanities
Women's & Gender Studies

Syllabus

WGS-110 Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies

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Date of Most Recent Syllabus Revision:

Course Typically Offered: Fall ___ Spring ___ Summer ___ Every Semester ___x___ Other _____

Syllabus last reviewed by: BCC General Education Committee Date: _____

(Most courses need review Ad Hoc Committee on Learning Assessment ___ Date: _____

by only one of the following) Curriculum Committee: Date: _____

Semester and Year:
Course and Section Number: WGS-110
Meeting Times and Locations: TBD

Instructor:
Office Location
Phone:
Departmental/Division Secretary:
Office Hours:
Email Address:

Course Description

WGS-110 is an interdisciplinary introduction to historical and contemporary constructions of gender. Using discipline-specific theories and methods, students will explore the historical and contemporary understandings of sex and gender, and how concepts of gender have changed over time. Students will analyze representation of women, men, trans, and non-binary people using history, literature, philosophy, visual studies, popular culture, and mass media. The ways gender intersects with race, class, sexuality, and disability will be examined.

Credits: 3 (lecture)

Prerequisites: None
Co-requisites: None
General Education Course
Diversity Course

Student Learning Objectives & Means of Assessment

Objectives: Upon successful completion, the student will be able to:	Means of Assessment: This outcome will be measured by one or more of the following:
1) Identify, evaluate, and explain terms, concepts, and theories central to Women's and Gender Studies.	Objective tests, essay questions, oral presentations, class discussions, and writing assignments
2) Analyze historical and contemporary constructions of gender and sexuality, drawing upon both primary and secondary sources.	Research projects, writing assignments, and oral presentations that build on interdisciplinary theories and methodological approaches to various source materials
3) Apply concepts, philosophies, and theories of Women's & Gender Studies to life experiences and historical events and processes	Reflective writing assignments; thematic projects and assignments that ask students to make links between past and present, the personal and the political
4) Interpret and analyze arguments and data concisely, coherently, and logically to deepen critical thinking skills.	Assignments or projects that require students to gather, interpret, and synthesize data from various sources and communicate their findings either in writing, orally, or both
5) Express both orally and in writing the history, concepts, and issues central to Women's and Gender Studies.	Oral presentations (individually or as part of a group), small group discussions, various writing assignments and examinations

Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials

<p>Recommended Textbooks:</p> <p>L. Ayu Saraswati, Barbara L. Shaw, and Heather Rellihan, <i>Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Interdisciplinary and Intersectional Approaches</i> (Second Edition). Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780190084875</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Gillis and Jacobs, <i>Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach</i> (Second Edition). Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780190064235</p> <p><i>Supplemental materials including but not limited to readings, films, print or online sources to be determined at the discretion of the instructor.</i></p>

Course Content

The recommended sequence of theme and topics outlined below represents a general guideline. Instructors should feel free to modify this to suit their pedagogical approach and academic expertise.

- 1) Introduction to Women's & Gender Studies
 - a) General concepts and terminology
 - b) Interdisciplinarity
- 2) Current status of the field
 - a) Historical Perspectives: theories & methods
 - b) Intersectionality, before and after
 - c) Origins and development of concepts of sex and gender
- 3) Social Structure and Culture
 - a) Evolution of patriarchy and other structures of privilege and power
 - b) Cultural representations of gender past and present
 - c) Popular culture and media
- 4) Experiences of Gender: Historic & Contemporary
 - a) Embodiment
 - b) Science; history of medicine
 - c) Gendered violence
 - d) Reproduction and reproductive justice
- 5) Lived Experiences
 - a) Kinship and families
 - b) Work and labor
 - c) Digital worlds
 - d) Activism

Research, Thinking, Writing, and/or Examination Requirement(s)

Writing Activity:

Students in this course will be assigned a variety of writing assignments that include but are not limited to reading and learning reflections, short- and long-format essays and analyses, essay examinations, and oral histories. Writing assignments will draw from assigned course material, lecture, and, where applicable, outside research.

Critical Thinking:

Building upon introduced theories, philosophies, and methodologies used in the discipline(s) students will analyze historical understandings and representations of gender and examine how these have been shaped by structures of power; explore the interplay between science/technology and constructions of gender and sexuality; and evaluate the uses of gender in contemporary culture and politics.

Student Evaluation:

Student grades will be based on a variety of different assessment measures such as writing assignments, objective tests and quizzes, and larger projects or research papers. The incorporation of at least one oral presentation is encouraged.

Attendance Policy

BCC Attendance Policy:

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

Attendance Policy in this Course:

Attendance policies are to be determined by the instructor.

Student and Faculty Support Services

Students: Portal Access & Moodle		https://bergen.edu/portalhelp/access-moodle/ or email citl@bergen.edu or helpdesk@bergen.edu
IT Help Desk		201-879-7109
Cerullo Learning Assistance Center Writing Center Tutoring Center	Room L-125	201-447-7489 https://bergen.edu/tutoring/tutoring-center/ https://bergen.edu/tutoring/writing-center/
The Sidney Silverman Library	Room L-226	201-447-7436 (Reference Desk) 201-879-7970 (Service Desk) https://bergen.edu/library/

Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements

Accommodations for Disabilities:

Bergen Community College aims to create inclusive learning environments where all students have maximum opportunities for success. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Specialized Services at 201-612-5269 or via email at ossinfo@bergen.edu for assistance.

Statement on Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. Bergen Community College has licensed Personal Counselors available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the confidential mental health services available on campus via the Health and Wellness Center at www.bergen.edu/personalcounseling

Sample Course Outline (using Saraswati et. al.; subject to change at instructor's discretion)

Wk	Topics & Readings	Assignments
1	<p>Course Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Learning & Unlearning Gender & Sexuality” (pp. 5-8); and “Interdisciplinarity” (p. 20) “Feminist Politics: Where We Stand” bell hooks (pp. 23-25) 	
2	<p>Historical Perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Historical Perspectives in WGS” (pp. 87-123) “Introduction” & “Terms & Methodology” Shannon Dea, Ch. 1-2 	<p>Learning Reflection</p> <p>Lecture Quiz</p>
3	<p>Intersectionality: History & Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Before Intersectionality” (p. 81) “Queer/Africanness”; “The Woman Identified Woman”; “A Black Feminist Statement”; “La Conciencia De La Mestiza/Towards A New Consciousness”; “It’s Time to End the Long History of Feminism Failing Trans Women”; “Reckoning with the Silences of #MeToo” 	<p>Thematic Assignment 1</p>
4	<p>History of the Sex & Gender Binary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Aristo. & Judeo-Christian Ideas of Sex & Gender” Dea, Ch. 3 “Beyond the Gender Binary” (pp. 9-13) “No Way Out of the Binary: A Critical History of the Scientific Production of Sex” Veronica Sanz, in <i>Signs</i> (2017) “Navigating Transness in the US” (pp. 459-465) 	<p>Lecture Quiz</p>
5	<p>Structures of Privilege, Power, Oppression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The Second Sex” Dea, Ch. 4 “Oppression, Privilege, and Intersectionality” (pp. 14-19); “Patriarchy, the System...” (pp. 26-34) “Sex Panic, Psychiatry, & Expansion of Carceral State” Kunzel (in Canaday, et. al.) 	<p>Thematic Assignment 2</p>
6	<p>Cultural Representation & Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Popular Culture & Media Representations” (pp. 210-212); “The Bechdel Test” (p. 580) “Christine Jorgensen and the Story of How Sex Changed” Meyerowitz (in Kerber, et. al.) Films (choose one): <i>Miss Representation</i> or <i>Disclosure</i> 	<p>Lecture Quiz</p>
7	<p>Popular Visual Cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “A Quick History of TV’s...Quest for Black Lesbians” and “Women’s Friendships, Pop. Culture, & Gender Theories” (pp. 322-328) “Knee-Jerk Biphobia: What Responses to Miley Cyrus’s Breakup Say About Queer Erasure” (pp. 334-336) 	<p>Film/TV Analysis</p>
8	<p>The Gendered Experience – Bodies & Embodiment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Epistemology of Bodies” (pp. 337-338); “Knowing and Experiencing Bodies” (pp. 341-342) “An Indentured Servant Identifies as ‘Both Man and Woeman’” Norton (in Kerber, et. al.) “Being an Oriental, I Could Never Be Completely A Man” (pp. 375-384); “Too Latina to be Black, Too Black to be Latina” (392-393); “Can We Stop Talking about the Hijab?” (401-406); “Big Yoga Student” (pp. 421-422) 	<p>Thematic Assignment 3</p> <p>Lecture Quiz</p>

Wk	Topics & Readings	Assignments
9	Gender, Science, and the History of Medicine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Biodeterminism” & “One-Sex Model” Dea, Chps. 9-10 • “Beyond Realness: Deconstructing Essentialism” (pp. 339-340) • “Medicalization of Bodies” (pp. 343-344); “Choice, Control, & Commodity: Understanding Bodies in a Neoliberal Age” (pp. 345-352) • “The Comstock Apparatus” Escoffier et. al. (in Canaday, et. al.) • “Fasting Girls” Brumberg (in Kerber et. al.) 	Final Project Topic Approval
10	Gendered Violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gendered Violence” (pp. 204-208) • “A Queer #MeToo Story” (pp. 302-307) • “Memo to Media: Manhood, Not Guns or Mental Illness Should be Central in Newton Shooting” (pp. 168-170) 	Lecture Quiz
11	Reproductive Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Reproductive Politics,” “Reproductive Choice,” and “Reproductive Justice” (pp. 199-203); “Birth Control” (pp. 275-278) • “The Color of Choice: White Supremacy and Reproductive Justice” (pp. 280-291) • “Abortion & the State after <i>Roe</i>” Johanna Schoen (in Canaday, et. al) • Film: “No Más Bébes” 	Music Video Analysis
12	Kinship & Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Rethinking the Family” (pp. 185-190) • “Constraints and Freedom in Conservative Christian Women’s Lives,” “Love, Labor, and Lorde: The Tools My Grandmother Gave Me,” “Broken Hearts, Broken Families: The Political Use of Families in the Fight Against Deportation,” and “Propaganda: Queering Family Values” (pp. 216-239) 	Lecture Quiz
13	Work & Labor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gender & Sexuality in the Labor Market,” “The Gender Pay Gap,” and “Sex Work as Labor” (pp. 191-198) • “The Personal is Political: Housework & Reprod. Choice” (p. 101) • “Policies to End the Gender Wage Gap” (pp. 240-244) • “Compliance Is Gendered: Struggling for Gendered Self-Determination in a Hostile Economy” (pp. 245-247) 	Thematic Assignment 4
14	Activism and Digital Worlds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Difference & Equality” and “Sex/Gender as Social Construction” Dea. Chps. 11 and 12 • “Activist Frontiers: Agency & Resistance” (pp. 505-530) • “Sex, Sexuality, & the Internet” and “Cyberfeminisms” (pp. 441-444) • “Technology Isn’t Neutral...: (pp. 480-490) 	Learning Reflection Lecture Quiz
15		Final Project Due

Sample Course Requirements & Assignment Descriptions

Lecture Quizzes	10%
Learning Reflections	10%
Thematic Assignments	20%
Film or TV Show Analysis	15%
Music Video Analysis	15%
Final Project	20%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Lecture Quizzes – 10%

Short lecture-based quizzes will be given bi-weekly and will consist of 5-10 multiple choice questions. Quizzes will be made available on Moodle and must be completed by 11:59 p.m. Friday of that week. Quizzes will be automatically graded.

Learning Reflections – 10%

Students will write two learning reflection statements – one at the beginning of the course, the other at the end of the semester. Each statement counts for 5% of the grade. These will be graded on completion rather than content.

Thematic Assignments – 20%

There will be four relatively short (2-4 pages) but highly focused writing assignments related to four themes in the course: historical or theoretical approaches to gender, cultural representations of gender, science/technology and gender, and embodied experiences of gender. Students are responsible for two (2) of these assignments but may submit more with higher grades replacing lower ones. No late submissions will be accepted.

Film / Television Show Analysis – 15%

This is a 3–4-page paper that analyses the use of gender in a movie or television show from the list provided (“Possible Movies & TV Shows”) by the professor, or other approved media. Due Week 7

Music Video Analysis – 15%

Choose one music video of any genre to analyze. Create a video report (3–4-minute captioned video) that includes the following: summary and or narrative of major themes; explain how course concepts/theories are relevant to the video; select one scene or screenshot for a close-reading of how that concept is applied/demonstrated. Due Week 11.

Final Project – 20%

Final project is entirely up to the student with the approval of the instructor. The project may be multimedia, a paper, video, academic poster, presentation, and so on. However, the project must analyze the use of gender in contemporary culture. Topic approval by or before Week 9 / Project due at last class meeting.