

Utah State University
Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies
CMST 3160-001: Gender Research in Communication Studies
Fall 2018, MWF
11:30-12:20, Merrill-Cazier Library 302

Instructor: Mollie Murphy, Ph.D.
Email: mollie.murphy@usu.edu
Office: Lundberg Building 203
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 10:30-11:20 or by appointment

Course Description

This course will examine research on gender as a social construct constituted and enacted through communication. Although gender is typically taken-for-granted, it profoundly shapes our relationships, identity, self-esteem, choices, opportunities, and ways of living. Because gender precedes any individual, priority will be given to considering gender as a rhetorical (not individual) construct. Additional topics covered will include (but are not limited to):

- Understanding the distinction between sex and gender, as well as the influence of culture on constructions of gender
- Theoretical understandings of gender (e.g., critical, interpersonal, biological)
- How we “become” gendered
- Gendered verbal and nonverbal communication and its implications
- How constructions of masculinity and femininity are constraining to men, women, and individuals who are non-binary
- Rhetoric in social movements/advocacy (e.g., feminist movements, men’s movements against gender violence)
- Gender in the educational system
- Constructions of gender in the media
- Gendered expectations and sexism in the workplace

Students will apply core concepts in written work, in and out-of-class exercises, and exams that will together contribute to the course grade.

Required Text

Fixmer-Oraiz, N. F., & Wood, J. T (2017) *Gendered lives: Communication, gender, and culture*. Boston, MA: Cengage. (13th ed.)

Additional readings will be uploaded to Canvas.

Grading Distribution

Exams	55% (exam one and two 17% each, final exam 21%)
Guided reflections	30%
Preparation/engagement	15%
TOTAL =	100%

Grading Scale and Policies

Grading Scale

92.95-100%	A	72.95-76.94%	C
89.95-92.94%	A-	69.95-72.94%	C-
86.95-89.94%	B+	59.95-69.94%	D
82.95-86.94%	B	59.94% and below	F
79.95-82.94%	B-		
76.95-79.94%	C+		

*Grades are rounded to the nearest tenth. That means that an 89.95 is an A- and an 89.94 is a B+. This models the numerous courses that are out of 1,000 points, in which an 899.5 is an A- and 899.4 is a B+. This policy is non-negotiable and there will be zero exceptions.

In order to uphold a fair and ethical standard, I do not change or reconsider a grade unless there has been a mathematical or clerical error. Although I am your biggest advocate, earning your grade is your responsibility. To help you achieve your highest potential in this course, I offer detailed expectations of each assignment, make myself available to meet during office hours, and communicate via email. Other resources are available to you on campus as well (e.g., the library), so take advantage.

All grades are considered final 48 hours after posting to Canvas.

Specific Course Assignments

Exams

Exams will be given in class, and will cover material from the text and class discussion. Exams will be in short answer format. They are not cumulative. You may use a page of notes during the exam (one sided, regular 8.5 x 11 size, handwritten, and of your own making). I will post study guides to Canvas one week prior to each exam. If you arrive to take our exam after someone else has already finished, your exam will be subject to a minimum 10% deduction. Additionally, you will not receive extra time for the exam. An exam can only be made up if it is missed for an excusable reason for which you can provide authoritative documentation (see attendance section). No exam will be given early or at a different time unless changed by the University. Mark your calendars and make your travel plans accordingly.

Guided Responses

Most weeks, you will respond to a series of questions based on the week's assigned readings. Due dates and times are noted on the week-by-week calendar below. I expect responses to clearly show that you have completed and *engaged with* the reading(s). Refer to specific passages from the text(s) to illustrate your thoughts (without relying excessively on direct quotations). Responses should be thoughtful and polished. We will often discuss your responses in class. Each response is worth 3% of your grade. See my policy on late work below.

Responses should be a minimum of two double spaced pages, but no more than 2.5 (see more on formatting below). A works cited/references section is not necessary for these short papers, but please use in text citations to make it clear which reading/page you are referencing. Questions

will be posted to Canvas at least four days in advance of the due date.

Class Preparation and Engagement

Throughout the semester, there will be opportunities to earn points through in-class free writes, activities (some of which will require out-of-class preparation), and small groups discussions. You can only earn maximum points if you arrive to class on time and fully prepared (e.g., have completed the reading and/or any required preparation), attend the entire session, and fully and professionally engage in the exercise. Many of these exercises will necessitate that you demonstrate your completion of and engagement with the readings. One of these assignments will be “dropped” from your final grade so that if you need to miss a day for a reason that does not constitute an excused absence (or cannot provide documentation), your grade will not be adversely affected. These points can only be made up if an absence meets a number of criteria, which are outlined below (see attendance section).

Course Policies

Attendance

The penalty for missing class is a loss of any points related to activities, free writes, or discussions. Exceptions will only be made in the case of participation in a University-sanctioned event, observation of a religious holiday, or another extenuating, documentable circumstance that you could not have prepared for in advance. For absences related to participation in a University-sanctioned event or observation of a religious holiday, the instructor must be informed *in writing prior to the missed class*. In the case of serious illness or some other kind of extenuating circumstance, you must notify me as soon as possible of your absence, and you must be able to provide authoritative documentation. This may include a note from a medical professional (not stating the specifics of your situation, just that you are unable to attend class), obituaries or funeral programs, notes from a tow-truck driver, or any document signed by a person in a position to make a determination as to the validity of the cause of absence claimed by the student. If appropriate documentation is not received within two class periods following the absence, it will be considered unexcused. Note that if you cannot acquire documentation, one in-class exercise is dropped.

Unacceptable excuses for missing class include (but are not limited to) family vacations, a crashed computer, traffic or parking, alarm clock issues, or other technical difficulties.

You cannot earn maximum points on in class exercises if you arrive late or leave early.

For missed classes, it is the student’s responsibility to get class notes and other materials from a classmate. **The instructor does not provide notes for missed classes.**

Plagiarism

Students must complete their own work and give credit to any outside sourced used to complete an assignment. Lack of knowledge of the academic policy is not a reasonable explanation for any form of academic misconduct. Plagiarism includes—but is not limited to—copying and pasting another person’s work, failing to give credit to information derived from another person’s work, paraphrasing another persons’ work in a way that misrepresents the original claims, having

another student complete your work, and completing another student's work. Questions related to the course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Learning Accommodations

Any student who needs special accommodations for learning or who has particular needs is invited to share these concerns or requests with me as soon as possible. Disabilities must be documented through the Disability Resource Center; it is your responsibility to contact the DRC and fill out the necessary paperwork. Formal requests for accommodations must be completed before the scheduled assignment.

Respect and Etiquette

In this class, we will regularly discuss sensitive issues relating to discrimination and injustice. Confronting this type of information for the first or even hundredth time can be challenging and emotional. If you find that a discussion has triggered an intensely negative emotional reaction, you are welcome to step out of the room. This *may* result in a loss of activity points, which is why the instructor drops one in-class activity. If you are concerned that many topics will be an emotional trigger, you may want to consider taking another course to prioritize your mental health and avoid significantly impacting your grade. Speak with me if you have questions or concerns.

A supportive environment is critical to everyone's learning and success in the course. Accordingly, I have a series of guidelines for classroom etiquette to help foster this type of environment.

- When another student is speaking, listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Do not explain things to a peer unless a question is asked of you directly. Even if you are trying to be helpful, this can come across as condescending when you are not in a position of authority.
- If you take umbrage with an argument or point being made, feel free to express your concerns if you can do so professionally and respectfully. When/if you do so, focus on critiquing the idea (not individuals), and avoid using inflammatory language.
- When speaking, do so in a way that invites others to engage the topic. Put otherwise, keep your opinions dialectical, or open to response – perhaps by taking note of your tone or using I-language.
- Ask questions when you do not understand something, and don't assume you know what others are thinking or what motivates them (everyone has different fields of experience).
- Do not expect individuals to speak on behalf of their (perhaps perceived) gender, race, culture, class status, or sexuality. It is unfair to expect someone to be a "spokesperson."
- Commit to learning, not debating.

Technology

Email: You may address me as Mollie, or as Dr. Murphy if you are more comfortable with a formal tone. If you write an email that is blatantly unprofessional and/or hostile, I will not reply. Write an email similar to how you would write a letter (include salutation: "Hello Dr. Murphy/Dear Mollie" sign your name "Regards, Nadia/Best, Miguel"). If you are providing

information that does not necessitate a reply, I may not reply. I will reply if a question is asked. I'll also reply if there is a request for me to confirm receipt of your email. I will typically respond to an email within 24 hours. If you email me in the evening, expect that I will reply the following day. There is no set turn-around time on weekends. I would ask that you, too, check and respond to email in a similar time frame.

Cellphone/Computer Use: Although technology has its place, study after study shows that students who do not use laptops or technology in class *consistently* and *significantly* outperform their peers (see Faria, Weston, & Cepeda, 2013; Fried, 2008; Reyol, 2012). If you choose to use a laptop or tablet to take notes, please sit in the back of the classroom so as not to distract those who choose to go screen-free during class.

Obviously, you should not use your cell phone during class.

Written Assignment Guidelines and Late Work

All written assignments must adhere to either MLA or APA style guide. Works Cited or References pages do not count as part of your paper's page limit, nor do heading material or title pages (if relevant). Additionally, all written assignments must:

- Be in Times New Roman, 12 point font
- Have standard margins (1" top, bottom, and sides).
- Have no extra white space between paragraphs (if you have trouble with this, check your format settings)
- Devote minimal space to heading material (no more than 3 single-spaced lines)

All papers are due to Canvas at the beginning of the class for which they are assigned. Work submitted after a ten-minute grace period will receive a 10% point deduction. An additional 10% will be deducted for every 24 hours it is not turned in. Deductions will only be waived in the case of a serious, documentable circumstance (outlined in the attendance section above).

Course Schedule

Note: This is a *general plan* for the course. Deviations may be necessary, and will be announced either in class or via email.

Day	Topic	Reading (done by this day)/ Major Assignment Info
Aug 27	Course intro	
Aug 29	What is gender? What is the relationship between gender and communication?	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Introduction
Aug 31	Sex, gender, and culture	
Week 2		
Sept 3	Labor Day, no class	
Sept 5	Sex, gender, and culture	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 1

Sept 7	Sex, gender, and culture	Fairyington, "Two Decades After Brandon Teena's Murder, a Look Back at Falls City" Watch Katie Couric interview with Carmen Carrera https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u774QpimXS4 GR1 due by 11:30am
Week 3		
Sept 10	Theories of gender	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 2
Sept 12	Theories of gender	Brooks, "Human Nature Today" (Canvas) Begley, "Why Do We Rape, Kill, and Sleep Around?" (Canvas) GR2 due by 11:30am
Sept 14	Theories of gender	
Week 4		
Sept 17	Becoming gendered	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 7
Sept 19	Becoming gendered	Padawer, "What's So Bad About a Boy Who Wants to Wear a Dress?" (Canvas) Orenstein, "Does Stripping Gender from Toys Really Make Sense?" (Canvas) GR3 due by 11:30am
Sept 21	Becoming gendered	
Week 5		
Sept 24	Becoming gendered activity	Prep for clothing activity (instructions on Canvas) and watch Butler, "Your Behavior Creates Your Gender" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo7o2LYATDc
Sept 26	Becoming gendered wrap up	
Sept 28	Feminist movements	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 3
Week 6		
Oct 1	Feminist movements	Friedan, "The Problem that Has No Name" (Canvas)
Oct 3	Feminist movements	Four excerpts from <i>This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color</i> (Canvas) GR4 due by 11:30am
Oct 5	Feminist movements	
Week 7		
Oct 8	EXAM 1	

Oct 10	Masculinity and men's movements	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 4
Oct 12	Masculinity and men's movements	Katz, <i>The Macho Paradox</i> , Chapter 1 and 2 (Canvas) Visit and review www.walkamileinershoes.org
Week 8		
Oct 15	Masculinity and men's movements; <i>Tough Guise 2</i>	GR5 due by 11:30am
Oct 17	<i>Tough Guise 2</i>	
Oct 19	Fall break, no class	
Week 9		
Oct 22	Gender and verbal communication	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 5
Oct 24	Gender and verbal	Hayden, "Michelle Obama, Mom-in-Chief" (Canvas) GR6 due by 11:30am
Oct 26	Gender and verbal	
Week 10		
Oct 29	Gender and nonverbal communication	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 6
Oct 31	Gender and nonverbal	Wolf, "Young Women, Give Up the Vocal Fry and Reclaim Your Strong Female Voice" (Canvas) Riley, "Naomi Wolf Misses the Point About Vocal Fry" (Canvas) GR7 due by 11:30am
Nov 2	Gender and nonverbal	
Week 11		
Nov 5	Gender and education	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 8, pp. 155-171
Nov 7	Gender and edu: <i>Raising Cain</i>	
Nov 9	No class (National Communication Association in Salt Lake City)	
Week 12		
Nov 12	Gender and edu: <i>Raising Cain</i>	
Nov 14	Gender and edu: <i>Raising Cain</i> , wrap up	
Nov 16	EXAM 2	
Week 13		
Nov 19	Gender and close relationships	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 9, pp. 181-192 Shulman, "A Marriage Agreement" (Canvas) GR8 due by 11:30am
Nov 21	Thanksgiving break, no class	
Nov 23	Thanksgiving break, no class	

Week 14		
Nov 26	Gender and media	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 11
Nov 28	Gender and media	Battles and Hilton-Morrow, "Gay Characters in Conventional Spaces: <i>Will and Grace</i> and the Situation Comedy Genre" GR9 due by 11:30am
Nov 30	Gender and media; <i>Killing Us Softly 4</i>	
Week 15		
Dec 1	Gender and organizations	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 10
Dec 5	Gender and organizations	Babcock, <i>Women Don't Ask</i> , Introduction and Chapter 1 **two separate files on Canvas GR10 due 11:30am
Dec 7	Gender and organizations	
Dec 10 (Monday) 11:30AM	FINAL EXAM *The final will not be given at an earlier or different time unless changed by the university	