Utah State University
Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies
CMST 3160-001: Gender Research in Communication Studies
Spring 2021 Hybrid Online
Meetings will occur Thursdays 9:00-10:15am via Zoom

Instructor: Mollie Murphy, Ph.D.
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Email: mollie.murphy@usu.edu
Office Hours: Virtual and by appointment (please make appointments a few days in advance)

Course Description
Welcome to your hybrid gender communication course! In *Gender Research*, we will examine 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. In this course, we will take an intersectional approach to gender by attending to the ways in which it is *always already* shaped by factors such as racism and homophobia. Topics covered will include (but are not limited to):

- Understanding the distinctions between sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, gender roles, and sexual orientation
- Theoretical understandings of gender
- Gendered speech and nonverbal communication of gender
- Effects of the gender binary and homophobia on education
- How constructions of masculinity and femininity are constraining to non-binary individuals, men, and women
- Rhetoric in social movements/advocacy
- Gendered expectations and sexism in the workplace
- Constructions of gender in media

Specific Objectives
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand and explain gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, biological sex as well as the nuances and social implications of these various concepts in various contexts.
- Understand and explain key theories of gender, especially critical theories.
- Understand key tensions and themes in various feminist movements.
- Understand masculinity as a social construct and understand the consequences of hegemonic masculinity for people of all genders.
- Offer sophisticated analyses of gender constructs in mainstream media.

Hybrid Structure
This class involves asynchronous learning mixed with synchronous Zoom meetings once a week. In general, in the early portion of the week you will read a textbook chapter and I will post clarifying information, more detail, and/or things to consider in regards to the chapter on
the Canvas discussion board. The format of this additional information will vary; it might be a set of questions to consider, a note on areas to focus on in the chapter, or a short video lecture.

Our synchronous meetings will occur on Thursdays. On Thursdays, we will have in-depth discussions about a reading, series of readings, documentary, or a specific issue or set of issues raised in the textbook. Thursdays will also offer an opportunity for you to ask clarifying questions about the material learned asynchronously. Prior to most Thursday meetings, you will need to complete additional readings and/or watch a documentary. Also before class, you will typically need to submit a “guided response” to all of the week’s readings. See more specifics below. This structure will occasionally vary, but overall this is how our hybrid class will function.

**Required Text**

Additional readings will be uploaded to Canvas under “files.” All documentaries listed are available for streaming through the USU library.

**Grading Distribution**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided response papers</td>
<td>35% (grade partially dependent on attendance, see below)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group media analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale and Policies**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92.95-100%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>89.95-92.94%</td>
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<td>C</td>
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Grades are rounded to the nearest tenth. That means that an 89.95 is an A- and an 89.94 is a B+. This policy is non-negotiable and there will be no exceptions.

In order to uphold a fair standard for all students, I do not change or reconsider a grade unless there has been a mathematical or clerical error. All grades are considered final 48 hours after posting to Canvas. Feel free to discuss your progress with me at any time.
Description of Course Assignments

Exams
This class involves two non-cumulative exams. You will take both exams on Canvas. Exams will cover material from all readings and class discussions. Exams will predominately focus on short answer questions but may also involve matching, true/false, and multiple-choice sections. I will post study guides to Canvas prior to each exam.

An exam can only be made up if it is missed for an excusable reason for which you can provide authoritative documentation. Exams will not be given early or at a different time unless changed by the University. Mark your calendars and make your plans accordingly.

Guided Responses and Related Attendance Policy
Most weeks, you will write a response to a prompt based on the week’s readings. Prompts will be posted to Canvas by no later than 5pm on the Monday before the due date. Response papers are due at the very start of class on our synchronous meeting days (see specifics on the week-by-week calendar below). I expect responses to clearly show that you have completed and thoughtfully considered all of the readings assigned for the week. Refer to specific passages and/or points from each text (without relying excessively on direct quotations). Responses should be polished in writing and organization. The page length for responses will vary slightly but they will generally be around two double-spaced pages (I will specify page length in the prompts). Heading materials do not count towards the page limit. Follow standard formatting: Times New Roman 12 point font, double-spaced, 1” margins, and no extra white space between paragraphs. A works cited/references section is not necessary for these short papers.

Our Thursday discussions are an important supplement to the guided responses. Accordingly, attendance in these meetings is required. You can miss two classes with no penalty before you will no longer earn credit for a guided response for which you miss the discussion.

Group Media Analysis
Our last two meetings are devoted to group presentations. With your peers, you will offer an analysis of an artifact from media (e.g., advertisement, television show, movie, social media page), explaining how it shapes an aspect relating to gender (e.g., masculinity, transgender identity, femininity, sexual orientation). The presentations will be roughly 12 minutes each and must draw upon scholarly research as well as Chapter 11 of the textbook. A visual aid and full sentence outline of the presentation are both required. The presentation should be carefully practiced and should have a clear, well-supported argument. Specific guidelines will be posted to Canvas. Groups are encouraged to keep in contact with me as they develop their projects.

Course Policies
Attendance
I expect students to attend the entirety of the Thursday Zoom meetings. As noted, you can miss up to two classes with no formal penalty. If you miss class on a day there is a guided response due after you already have two absences, you will not receive points for the response. These
two allotted absences are set aside in order to recognize hardships, illness, and potential WiFi issues due to the pandemic, so do not squander them.

You must attend group presentation days at the end of the semester. While you obviously need to attend the day your group presents, missing the class period in which other groups present will result in a 5% deduction of your presentation grade (the absence will affect only your grade, not your group mates’). This penalty will not be applied in the case of excusable, documentable absences.

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 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 person’s 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**

This class welcomes students with disabilities. Any student who needs accommodations for learning is invited to meet with me. Disabilities must be documented through the DRC. Formal requests for accommodations must be completed before the scheduled assignment.

**Discussion Guidelines**

In this class, we will regularly discuss issues of discrimination and injustice. Confronting this type of information can be challenging and emotional. If you find that a discussion has triggered an intensely negative emotional reaction, you are welcome to exit the class. This may result in an absence, which is why the instructor allows for two missed classes. 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 success in the course. Accordingly, I have a series of guidelines for classroom etiquette to help foster this type of environment.

- When another student or the professor is speaking, avoid interrupting.
- Do not expect individuals to speak on behalf of their gender, race, culture, class, or sexuality. It is unfair to expect someone to be a spokesperson for an entire identity group.
- If you take umbrage with an argument or point being made, feel free to express your concerns but focus on critiquing the idea (not individuals).
- Ask questions when you do not understand something, and don’t assume you know what others are thinking or what motivates them.
- Commit to learning, not debating.

**Email**

You may address me as Mollie or Dr. Murphy. 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”). 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.

**Online Learning and Zoom Etiquette**

Much of our course will involve asynchronous learning, which necessitates some extra responsibility and organization on your end. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with Canvas, where much of our course materials will be available. If you cannot locate a reading or video, notify me at least 48 hours in advance of any related assignment deadline. *Being unable to locate the reading or a video is not an excuse for submitting work late.* If for some reason you have issues submitting an assignment, you may email the assignment to me by the deadline. I will also be corresponding via USU email, and I expect that you will also be regularly checking your email linked up to your Canvas page.

I also have a few guidelines for our weekly Zoom meetings.
- Do not record any part of the meeting. If I discover that a meeting has been recorded, the student who recorded the meeting (and/or the student who shared the recording with others) will automatically fail the course.
- I would appreciate if you kept your camera on during our meetings so we can best approximate the sense of community offered in a classroom. That said, I understand that turning one’s video off might be necessary for some people and at certain times.

**Late Work**

All assignments 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% deduction. An additional 10% will be deducted for every 24 hours it is not turned in. Deductions will be waived in the case of a serious, documentable circumstance.

**Course Schedule**

*Notes*
- To help you keep a schedule, I have listed Monday as an asynchronous workday. I recommend having the readings listed for Monday completed by that day so that, when you check the discussion board for clarifying information or elaborations on the material, you have a good sense of the material already. Obviously, you can complete the reading another day; Monday is merely a suggestion to help keep you on track.
- We meet synchronously on Thursdays 9:00-10:15am. I will provide a Zoom link on Canvas under the Zoom tab.
Week 1: Course Intro and Learning Basic Terms
Thursday, January 21
Before class: Read the entire syllabus carefully (we won’t review it as a class!)
Read *Gendered Lives*, Intro and Chapter 1

Week 2: Understanding Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation
Complete by Monday, January 25
- Read *Gendered Lives*, pages 144-153 of Chapter 7
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5 pm on Monday)

Thursday, January 28
Before class: Read Englen, “Why We Need to Stop Telling Little Girls How Pretty They Are”
Read Kilgore, “The Key to Letting Boys Actually Be Boys?: See Them as the Emotional Beings They Are”
Watch *I’m Just Anneke* (stream through USU library)
Submit GR1

Week 3: Interpersonal and Biological Theories of Gender
Complete by Monday, February 1
- Read *Gendered Lives*, pages 34-46 of Chapter 2
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, February 4
Before class: Submit GR2 (no readings this day)

Week 4: Critical Theories of Gender
Complete by Monday, February 8
- Read *Gendered Lives*, pages 46-52 of Chapter 2
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, February 11
Before class: Read Muñoz, excerpt from *Cruising Utopia*
Watch TedTalk, “A Queer Vision of Love and Marriage,” google or try this link
https://www.ted.com/talks/tiq_milan_and_kim_katrin_milan_a_queer_vision_of_love_and_marriage?language=en
Submit GR3

Week 5: Media Analysis Group Project
Complete by Monday, February 15
- Read media analysis prompt on Canvas
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 11
Thursday, February 18
- We will discuss the media analysis in class
- **Send my your group project availability/preferences before midnight** – I will offer instructions for this

**Week 6: Feminist Movements**
Complete by Monday, February 22
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 3
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, February 25
Before class:
- Read Friedan, “The Problem that Has No Name”
- Read four excerpts from *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*

Submit GR4

**Week 7: Exam Week**
Spend the early part of the week studying for the exam
**Thursday, March 4: take Exam 1 on Canvas between 8 and 11 am**

**Week 8: Understanding Masculinity**
Complete by Monday, March 8
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 4
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, March 11
Before class:
- Read Kimmel, Introduction to *Manhood in America*
- Watch documentary, *The Mask You Live In* (stream through USU library)

Submit GR5

**Week 9: Gendered Verbal Communication**
Complete by Monday, March 15
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 5
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, March 18
Before class: **Submit GR6** (no readings this day)
- Send me your group’s artifact selection for the media analysis if you haven’t already

**Week 10: Gendered Nonverbal Communication**
Complete by Monday, March 22
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 6
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)
Thursday, March 25
Before class: Watch *Killing Us Softly 4* (stream through USU library)
Submit GR7

**Week 11: Gender and Education**
Complete Monday, March 29
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 8
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm on Monday)

Thursday, April 1
Before class: Read Bronski, Introduction to *A Queer History of the United States*
Submit GR8

**Week 12: Media Analysis Check In**
Complete by Monday, April 5
- Check Canvas discussion board about structure and delivery of the media analysis (posted by 5pm)

Thursday, April 8: **Friday class schedule, no class meeting 😊**

**Week 13: Gendered and Organizations; Presentations Begin**
Complete by Monday, April 12
- Read all of *Gendered Lives*, Chapter 10
- Check Canvas discussion board for clarifying information (posted by 5pm)

Thursday, April 15
**Group media analysis presentations begin**
All groups must turn in their full sentence outlines and visual aids by the start of class

**Week 14: Gender and Organizations; Group Presentations**
Complete by Monday, April 19
- Read Babcock, Introduction and Chapter 1 of *Women Don’t Ask*
- No GR due for our org. comm discussion, but the information from Chapter 10 and *Women Don’t Ask* will appear on the exam

Thursday, April 22
**Group media analysis presentations continue**

**Week 15: Exam Week**
Thursday, April 29: Take Exam 2 on Canvas between 9am – 12 pm