

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, Huntsman Hall 122

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Office: Lundberg Building 203  
Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-1:30 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)
- 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)
- Gender in the educational system
- Constructions of gender in 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. (13<sup>th</sup> ed.)

Additional readings will be uploaded to Canvas.

**Grading Distribution**

Exams	55% (exam one and two 17% each, final exam 21%)
Guided responses	35%
In class	10%
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 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. 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 (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 primarily in short answer format, but may also include matching, true/false, and multiple choice questions. They are not cumulative. 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.

Nine of your ten 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.

**Extended response:** One of your ten responses must be an extended response of at least five double-spaced pages. It is up to you to choose which guided response you would like to make your extended response. For the extended response, you are expected to engage the questions in the prompt but also go beyond them, bringing in new thoughts and insights that shed further light on the issues at hand. To help you do so, you must cite at least one additional source besides your textbook in your extended response. It should be a scholarly (peer-reviewed) book or journal article, and it should focus on gender and communication. The topic of the source should be very relevant to the readings assigned for the week. You must also bring forth a concrete case study example not mentioned in the reading(s) to help illustrate your points. This can come from personal experience or media.

\*The extended response *does* require a works cited/references page

*Your extended response is worth 5% of your grade; together, the other nine responses are worth 30% of your grade (~3.3% each)*

### **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.
- 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.

*Technology 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, nor should you wear headphones or read magazines/newspapers or surf the web.

## **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
Jan 7	Course intro	
Jan 9	What is gender?	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Introduction
Jan 11	Understanding gender as rhetorical	
<b>Week 2</b>		
Jan 14	Sex, gender, and culture	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 1 and Chapter 7 pages 144-153
Jan 16	Sex, gender, and culture	Watch Butler, “Your Behavior Creates Your Gender” *Bring a short paraphrasing of Butler’s argument to class! <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo7o2LYATDc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo7o2LYATDc</a>
Jan 18	Sex, gender, and culture ACTIVITY: Polarizing Language	<b>GR1 due by 11:30am</b>
<b>Week 3</b>		
Jan 21	MLKJ Day, no class	
Jan 23	Theories of gender	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 2
Jan 25	Theories of gender	Excerpts from <u>Anzaldúa</u> , <i>Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza</i> <b>GR2 due by 11:30am</b>
<b>Week 4</b>		
Jan 28	Theories of gender	<u>Muñoz</u> , <i>Cruising Utopia</i> , Introduction *Bring one paragraph summary of the introduction to class!
Jan 30	Theories of gender	
Feb 1	Gender and verbal comm.	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 5
<b>Week 5</b>		
Feb 4	Gender and verbal	
Feb 6	Gender and verbal	<u>Hayden</u> , “Michelle Obama, Mom-in-Chief” <b>GR3 due by 11:30am</b>
Feb 8	Gender and nonverbal comm.	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 6
<b>Week 6</b>		
Feb 11	Gender and nonverbal	<u>Wolf</u> , “Young Women, Give Up the Vocal Fry and Reclaim Your Strong Female Voice”

		Riley, "Naomi Wolf Misses the Point About Vocal Fry" <b>GR4 due by 11:30am</b>
Feb 13	Gender and nonverbal	Clothing activity (instructions on Canvas)
Feb 15	<b>EXAM 1</b>	
<b>Week 7</b>		
Feb 18	President's Day, no class	
Feb 20	Feminist movements	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 3
Feb 22	Feminist movements	<u>Friedan</u> , "The Problem that Has No Name" *Bring one paragraph summary of the chapter to class!
<b>Week 8</b>		
Feb 25	Feminist movements	Four excerpts from <i>This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color</i> <b>GR5 due by 11:30am</b>
Feb 27	Feminist movements	
Mar 1	Masculinity and men's movements	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 4
<b>Week 9</b>		
Mar 4	Masculinity and men's movements	<u>Katz</u> , <i>The Macho Paradox</i> , Chapter 1 and 2 <u>Kimmel</u> , <i>Manhood in America</i> , Introduction <b>GR6 due by 11:30am</b>
Mar 6	<i>Tough Guise 2</i>	
Mar 8	<i>Tough Guise 2</i>	
<b>Week 10</b>		
Mar 11-15	SPRING BREAK	
<b>Week 11</b>		
Mar 18	Gender and education	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 8, pp. 155-171
Mar 20	Gender and education; <i>Raising Cain</i>	
Mar 22	Gender and education	<u>Bosnan</u> , "As Transgender Students Make Gains, Schools Hesitate at Bathrooms" <b>GR7 due by 11:30am</b>
<b>Week 12</b>		
Mar 25	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
Mar 27	Gender and close relationships	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 9, pp. 181-192
Mar 29	Gender and close relationships	<u>Shulman</u> , "A Marriage Agreement" <u>Adams</u> , "Study Finds that 'Happy Wife, Happy Life' is Pretty Dead On" <b>GR 8 due by 11:30am</b>

<b>Week 13</b>		
Apr 1	Gender and media	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 11
Apr 3	Gender and media	<u>Dow</u> , “The Rhetoric of Television, Criticism, and Theory” *Bring one paragraph summary of Dow’s chapter to class!
Apr 5	Gender and media; <i>Miss Representation</i>	
<b>Week 14</b>		
Apr 8	Gender and media; <i>Miss Representation</i> , discussion	
Apr 10	Gender and media; <i>Killing Us Softly 4</i>	
Apr 12	Gender and media; television	<u>Westerfelhaus &amp; Lacroix</u> , “Seeing ‘Straight’ through <i>Queer Eye</i> : Exposing the Strategic Rhetoric of Heteronormativity in a Mediated Ritual of Gay Rebellion” <b>GR9 due by 11:30am</b>
<b>Week 15</b>		
Apr 15	Gender and media; television	
Apr 17	Gender and organizations	<i>Gendered Lives</i> , Chapter 10
Apr 19	Gender and organizations	<u>Babcock</u> , <i>Women Don’t Ask</i> , Introduction and Chapter 1 <b>**two separate files on Canvas</b> <b>GR10 due 11:30am</b>
Apr 22	Study day, no class	
Apr 29 (Monday) 11:30 AM	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> *The final will not be given at an earlier or different time unless changed by the university	