SYD 3800: Sociology of Sex and Gender  
Department of Sociology  
Florida State University  

SPRING 2020

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 10:00-11:30

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Overview
This course will examine what it means to be a woman, man, boy, or girl in everyday life. We’ll explore how and why society prescribes different (gendered) positions to females and males and how our identities are formed and contested. In addition, we will discuss how gendered beliefs affect the expectations, experiences, and opportunities of persons of different genders. Throughout the course, we also will examine how issues of race, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and other dimensions of inequality influence gender. The course readings will reflect a number of different perspectives, including several feminist perspectives. By taking this course, you should become more aware of the gender assumptions and inequalities embedded in our culture and social institutions.

Goals
The course is designed not only to provide knowledge about how gender – as one of the major dimensions of inequality – shapes individuals’ lives but also to cultivate skills that are useful beyond the classroom. At the completion of the course, students will be able to do the following:

• Describe ways that gender shapes the experiences and opportunities of boys and girls and women and men
• Apply various perspectives on gender to the explanation of social phenomena, providing assessments of their relative utility
• Critically examine, interpret, and explain how political, cultural, economic, and social structures shape the current configurations and experiences of gender
• Critically evaluate empirical social research published in academic outlets or reported in the popular press
• Gather and analyze data using social research methods to evaluate causal arguments, assertions, assumptions, and explanatory evidence
• Develop clear, well-supported arguments expressed in writing

Liberal Studies: Social Sciences and Diversity in Western Cultures
This course has been approved as meeting the Liberal Studies requirements and is designed to help you become a critical appraiser of the theories of the social sciences and the facts that support them. The Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical
engagement with the world in which they live and work. Liberal Studies offers a transformative experience.

This course meets the **Liberal Studies Social Sciences competencies**, stating that at the course’s end, students will demonstrate the ability to do the following:

- critically examine, interpret, and explain how personal, political, cultural, economic, and social experiences and/or structures shape the past and/or the present.
- gather and analyze data using social science and/or historical methodologies to evaluate casual arguments and analyze assertions, assumptions, and explanatory evidence.
- evaluate and employ appropriate methods and technology in the collection and analysis of data.

This course also meets the **Liberal Studies Diversity in Western Culture competencies**, stating that at the course’s end, students will demonstrate the ability to do the following:

- recognize and analyze differences between individuals and groups of people and identify and explain the potential benefits and/or conflicts arising from human differences within the current national and/or international landscape.
- investigate the diversity of human experience within Western culture, considering, for example, age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class, and appreciate the contributions of different social groups.

**Readings**

We have one required textbook: *Thinking about Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender (11th ed.)*, by Margaret Anderson. This is the latest edition of this book. Earlier editions will include the main themes as the latest edition, but will have less up-to-date statistics, legislation, and examples so I wouldn’t recommend them. To give you time to purchase the book, I’ll make the first three chapters available in pdf format on the course site. All other required readings will be posted on our course site.

**Technology requirements**

Course content is accessible through Canvas. Students will need to be able to view videos, write and upload assignments, post to discussion boards, and take assessments. Students should have access to high-speed internet and updated software. Mobile devices may be used to view course content, upload assignments, and take assessments. For more information on Canvas, visit the [FSU Canvas support site](#).

**Class Format**

Although this class will not meet face-to-face, there are several ways that you will be connecting with the instructor, mentors, and each other over the semester. First, we’ll have regular interaction via the discussion boards. The first few days of class, we’ll post online biosketches in order to get to know one another. Every other week, we’ll have a discussion that focuses on the topics of our current readings. You’ll have these discussions within assigned groups of approximately 25-30 students each. The course material to be discussed on these boards will vary over the weeks. For example, sometimes our discussion questions will focus on the textbook, while other weeks’ discussions will incorporate external websites or films that have been made available to you via the course website. These discussion boards will remain open for
a minimum of 48 hours each week, during which they are monitored by the instructor and/or mentors.

In addition to our bi-weekly discussions, we’ll have a discussion board for more general questions and concerns that will remain open for the duration of the semester. This is the place where you can ask questions about the material you’re reading and have them answered by the instructor and/or mentors. This is also where we’ll bring course-related observations to share and discuss with one another, like current events.

The instructor and mentors also will be available to you via email. Each week, you’ll receive emails from the instructor and your mentor that provides details about the week’s assignments. When you contact us, you should reasonably expect a response to your emails within a 48-hour period (excluding weekends and holidays). The instructor and mentors have each designated a block of time for online office hours; if emailing during these times, you can expect rapid responses. You can also expect throughout the semester to receive emails from your instructor or mentor with course-related current events (e.g., links to *New York Times* articles).

In lieu of lectures, we’ll provide Powerpoints to accompany the assigned readings. For some topics covered in our weekly discussions, we’ll also provide you with links to external websites that you’ll be expected to visit to gain further insights into the issues. On a few occasions, we’ll also provide access via the course website to videos that relate to the week’s discussion.

**Grading**

Final grades will be based on performance on the following assignments.

1. **FSU Honor Policy assignment (1%)** – To make sure that you’re familiar with FSU’s policies on academic honesty, you’re required to read this material at the following link: [http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy](http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy). From this link, you’ll need to click onto the Academic Honor Policy pdf file. You’ll then go to “Assignments” and take the one-item survey indicating that you’ve read and agree to abide by FSU’s policies. *This assignment will count as your first-day attendance.*

2. **Online bio (1%)** – So that we can get to know a bit about one another, you’re asked to create a short bio to post on the website.

3. **Gender interview project (27% total -- 2% for 1-page summary; 25% for final paper)** -- For this assignment, you will contact two “key informants” – any two adults of the same gender identity but different ages (at least a decade separating them). Because you’ll interview people of different ages, your data should give you peek into historical shifts in constructions and experiences of gender. You are likely to find both differences and similarities. The project involves identifying some of these similarities and differences and then developing explanations for them, drawing on course readings and other materials. I’ll provide more details about the project several weeks before the paper will be due.

4. **Final exam (11.5%)** – The final will cover material from the entire textbook and other required course readings and other materials.
5. **Quizzes (13 quizzes; 19.5%; 1.5% each)** -- The short, weekly quizzes will cover material from the chapter and other required readings or materials (e.g., videos) assigned for the week.

6. **Discussions (8 discussions; 40% total; 5% each)** -- We'll have 8 online, asynchronous discussions over the course of the semester. Your posting should be about 1-2 paragraphs long and include the creative and relevant use of sociological concepts. It should also use good grammar. In addition to the original comment, each student must make a reasoned reply or reaction to at least one posting during each class discussion. Our class will be divided into several groups for the discussions (approximately 25-30 students each). Each discussion board will be open for a period of 48 hours for you to make your post and reply.

Each assignment (e.g., quiz, discussion board, exam) will be available over a two-day period – from 9am EST on the day assigned until midnight EST on the following day. The window is usually Thursday and Friday. The final exam and quizzes will not be proctored. See course calendar for the due dates for each assignment.

*Please note that you are responsible for checking the course website at least once a week. We'll regularly post changes or updates under "Announcements."

**Grading Scale:**
- A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-62; F = below 60

**A Word of Caution**
The sociological study of “Sex & Gender,” as presented in this class, concerns gender inequality. Feminism is a central part of this class. You will be asked to think critically about our society and your role in systems of gender privilege and oppression. If you are not prepared to critically examine society and yourself, this class may not be for you.

**University Attendance Policy**
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

If you have an excused absence that you know about in advance, please let me know as soon as you find out that you’ll miss an assignment (e.g., discussion or quiz). If you have a sudden, but excused, absence, please let me know within a reasonable timeframe. In many of these situations, it should be possible to let me know within about 24 hours the reason for your absence and when you’ll be able to provide documentation.

**Academic Honor Policy**
The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to
their pledge to “… be honest and truthful and … [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/content/download/21140/136629/file/AHPFinal2014.pdf

Americans with Disabilities Act
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should do the following:
1. register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2. bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

*These steps should be taken during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center, 874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167; (850) 644-9566 (voice); (850) 644-8504 (TDD); sdrc@admin.fsu.edu; http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

Mandatory Reporting Related to Title IX Policy
As a recipient of Federal financial assistance for education activities, FSU is required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments to ensure that all of its education programs and activities are free from discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual discrimination includes sexual misconduct (i.e., sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence, and gender/sexuality-based animosity). If you have questions or wish to file a complaint, visit this website, https://knowmore.fsu.edu/title-ix/title-ix-signed-statement/, or call the office of the Title IX Director, 850-644-6271.

The Victim Advocate Program at FSU has a confidential advocate on-call 24 hours a day to respond to FSU students, faculty, and staff who are victimized while on or off campus, or any other person who is victimized on our campus or by an FSU student. Phone: 850-644-7161. Ask to speak to the on-call advocate. If you are unable to reach an advocate at that number, call FSUPD at (850) 644-1234 and they will have an advocate call you back.

*Please note that as Responsible Employees, all instructors, teaching assistants, and academic advisors are required to report any known or suspected incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office. This requirement applies to any such instances, regardless or when or where they occurred and whether they are mentioned in discussion forums, in written work, or during one-on-one meetings.

Syllabus Change Policy
Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>THINGS TO READ</th>
<th>THINGS TO DO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 6-10</td>
<td>Studying Women: Feminist Perspectives</td>
<td>Chapter 1 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>January 13-17</td>
<td>Studying Women: Feminist Perspectives</td>
<td>“Introduction” in <em>Pink Brain Blue Brain</em> by Lise Eliot</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>January 21-24</td>
<td>The Social Construction of Gender</td>
<td>Chapter 2 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
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<td>January 27-31</td>
<td>Gender, Culture, and the Media</td>
<td>Chapter 3 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>February 3-7</td>
<td>Sexuality and Intimate Relationships</td>
<td>Chapter 4 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>February 10-14</td>
<td>Gender, Work, and the Economy</td>
<td>Chapter 5 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Chapter(s) &amp; Powerpoint</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
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| 7 February 17-21 | Gender and Families | Chapter 6 & Powerpoint | Quiz #6  
Discussion 4: Gendered Carework  
*Both are open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |
| 8 February 24-28 | Women, Health, and Reproduction | Chapter 7 & Powerpoint | Quiz #7  
Discussion 5: Sexual Health Artifacts  
*Both are open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |
| 9 March 2-6 | Women and Religion | Chapter 8 & Powerpoint | Quiz #8  
*Open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |
| 10 March 9-13 | Women, Crime, and Deviance | Chapter 9 & Powerpoint | Quiz #9  
Discussion 6: Gendered Crime in the News  
*Both are open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |
| March 16-20 | *Have a safe, fun spring break* | | |
| 11 March 23-27 | Gender, Education, and Science | Chapter 10 & Powerpoint | Quiz #10  
*Open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |
| 12 March 30-April 3 | Women, Power, and Politics | Chapter 11 & Powerpoint | Quiz #11  
Discussion 7: Gender (In)visibility in Congress  
*Both are open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight |

*One-page summary of gender interview project plans is due by Friday at midnight
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter &amp; Powerpoint</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 6-10</td>
<td>Liberal Feminism and Social Reform</td>
<td>Chapter 12 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
<td>Quiz #12</td>
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<td>April 13-17</td>
<td>Contemporary Frameworks in Feminist Theory</td>
<td>Chapter 13 &amp; Powerpoint</td>
<td>Discussion 8: Gender in Photos</td>
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<td>*Open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight</td>
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<td>April 20-24</td>
<td>Contemporary Frameworks in Feminist Theory</td>
<td>Penny (2013) “Feminism is the one F-word that makes eyes widen in polite company”</td>
<td>Quiz #13 – on Chapter 13 &amp; Penny article</td>
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<td>*Open from Thursday at 9am until Friday at midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXAM WEEK</td>
<td>Exam and final paper</td>
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<td>Gender interview paper due on MONDAY, April 27 by at midnight</td>
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<td>April 27-May 1</td>
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<td>EXAM available from TUESDAY, April 28 (9am) to WEDNESDAY, April 29 (midnight)</td>
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