

Introduction to Gender and Sexuality

This course will focus on theories of gender and sexuality in philosophy as well as other related academic disciplines. We will explore theories from feminist philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, bell hooks, Monique Wittig, and others. This will include discussions of philosophical issues related to both gender and sexuality, including queer and trans identities and experiences. We will also discuss the intersections of other identities with both gender and sexuality, including race, Indigeneity, and disability, and their critical and historical context today. Finally, we will use the philosophical theories that we consider in the course to help us understand popular social and political issues involving gender and sexuality today and we will endeavour to apply these theories to those issues in both class discussion and written assignments. Overall, we will discover how various philosophical theories of gender and sexuality help us better understand our own genders, sexualities, identities, and experiences and those of others.

Course Texts

All readings will be made available online.

Course Requirements

Reflection Assignment (10%)

There are two parts to this assignment. First, students are expected to write and submit a reflection on how they think about gender and sexuality early in the term. Second, students are expected to critically respond to this with another reflection at the end of the term and detail how their thinking about gender and sexuality has changed over time. The first part of this assignment should be approximately 300 words and the second part of this assignment should be approximately 450 words. The reflection assignment is worth 10% and it should be submitted online by midnight on each of the due dates for the two parts. This reflection will help students understand how they initially thought about gender and sexuality and how their thinking changed after learning about various theories.

Digital Literacy Assignment (10%)

Students are expected to find and critically analyze digital media that focuses on an issue related to gender and/or sexuality. This can include popular news articles, YouTube videos, TV shows clips, blog posts, popular songs, movie clips, etc. Students are expected to share the links to these sources and provide a critical analysis of how theories of gender and sexuality connect to the issue or how the source even highlights aspects of these theories. This assignment should be approximately 750 words. The digital literacy assignment is worth 10% and it should be submitted online by midnight

of the due date. This digital literacy will help demonstrate the importance of theories of gender and sexuality and philosophy in general. Students might be asked to share their sources with the class, especially if the sources help clarify the theories, principles, concepts or issues that we are investigating.

Participation (10%)

The participation requirement reinforces a commitment to all the other requirements of this course for the students.

Essay Outline (10%)

Students are expected to submit an essay outline that identifies their thesis, outlines their argument, explains who or what they are drawing on for support and gestures towards the kind of conclusions they hope to draw and why they think these conclusions are significant. Students are expected to submit their essay outlines online by midnight of the due date. This submission should include a thesis and a numbered argument outline as well as a bibliography. Students will be provided with detailed guidelines for the essay outline in advance of the due date. Essay outlines must be approved in order to be used as the basis for the essay.

Essay (20%)

Students are expected to submit an essay, which is to be submitted online by midnight on the due date. The final essay should be approximately 2000-4000 words. The essay will expand on the approved essay outlines. Students will be provided with detailed guidelines for the essay in advance of the due date.

Exam (40%)

Students are expected to write a final exam, which will be scheduled during the exam period. The exam will include short answer questions, definition questions, and essay questions about the theories and cases we investigated in the course. Students will be provided with examples of questions and answers in advance of the exam date.

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction (Sexuality & Gender)

Week 2 - Gender 1

De Beauvoir, Simone, "Introduction" & "Conclusion", *The Second Sex*; Butler, Judith, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire", *Gender Trouble: Feminism & the Subversion of Identity*

Reflection Assignment (Part 1) Due

Week 3 - Gender 2

Wittig, Monique, "The Category of Sex" & "One Is Not Born A Woman", *The Straight Mind*; Hale, Jacob, "Are Lesbians Women?", *Hypatia*

Week 4 - Gender 3

Irigaray, Luce, "The Looking Glass from the Other Side" & "This Sex Which Is Not One", *This Sex Which Is Not One*; Frye, Marilyn, "Oppression", *Feminist Theory: A Philosophical Anthology*

Week 5 - Sexuality 1

Foucault, Michel. "Part I: We "Other Victorians" & Part II: The Repressive Hypothesis" *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*

Digital Literacy Assignment Due

Week 6 - Sexuality 2

Foucault, Michel, "Part III: Scientia Sexualis" & " Part IV: The Deployment of Sexuality", *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*

Reading Week - No Class

Week 7 - Queer Issues

Rich, Adrienne, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence", *Signs*; Kimmel, Michael, "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity", *Journal of Homosexuality*

Essay Outline Due

Week 8 - Trans Issues 1

Bettcher, Talia, "Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; Bettcher, Talia, "Trans Women and the Meaning of Woman", *The Philosophy of Sex*

Week 9 - Trans Issues 2

Clune-Taylor, Catherine " Is Sex Socially Constructed?", *The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Philosophy of Science*; Fausto-Sterling, Anne, "Should There be Only Two Sexes?", *Sexing the Body*

Week 10 - Intersectionality 1

Haslanger, Sally, "Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?", *Nous*; Robinson, Margaret, "Two-Spirit Identity in a Time of Gender Fluidity", *Journal of Homosexuality*

Week 11 - Intersectionality 2

hooks, bell, "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory", *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*; Shotwell, Alexis, "Open Normativities: Gender, Disability, and Collective Political Change", *Signs*

Essay Due

Week 12 - Theory Applications

Selected readings from recent news, media, art, etc.

Reflection Assignment (Part 2) Due

Exam