

SCHOOL OF CULTURE AND SOCIETY
Departmental/Program Cover Document

WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

WGS 235 Gender and Violence

Course Number: WGS 235

no prerequisite

Course Description

This course explores the relationship between gender and violence. It is comprised of theoretical perspectives as well as the study of specific forms of violence. Topics include: domestic and intimate partner violence; sexual violence; child abuse; socially institutionalized forms of violence against women; attitudes and reactions to violence; national and global contexts of violence, the gendered character of violence in patriarchal societies, the intersections between violence, race, class, and sexuality, men and violence.

Course learning Goals:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the interrelationships between the different manifestations of violence and the construct of gender.
- Understand the importance of examining multiple causal influences of violence (e.g., biological, psychological, and sociocultural) at multiple levels (individual, community, societal).
- Use their acquired knowledge to create a thoughtful dialogue about the causes of violence and their relationships to gender.
- Use current research and theory to study gendered violence in a transcultural and transnational context. In particular, to study the systemic character of men's violence, and of violence against women, as well forms of resistance and agency among men and women.

Program Learning Goals

Students enrolled in this course will engage in learning activities that meet the following WGS program learning goals:

- Gain an understanding of gender as a central category of analysis that compels constant inquiry into the production and legitimation of knowledge
- Understand how all fields of knowledge are partial, situated, and have a political nature
- Analyze how the media and other social institutions exert a shaping force on gender, and how, conversely, gender imperatives shape individuals, families, communities, and nations
- Apply classroom learning to personal life, the workplace, the community, and political and civil institutions, with opportunities to study and participate in

community-based learning, action-based research, political activism, and other social justice initiatives

- Analyze historical and contemporary systems of privilege and oppression, with special attention to the ways gender intersects with race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, and nationality

Liberal Learning Goals

Students completing WGS 235 will meet the following Liberal Learning goals:

Social Perspectives: students will expand their understanding of the social context within which they live, and how the social dynamics of human behavior and the structures of social institutions influence beliefs and actions; specifically, students will acquire intellectual and experiential knowledge of the state and national political structures and the role of gender in shaping political institutions and legislation.

Gender: students will be able to explain how gender and sexuality shape their daily lives and understand how gender is a central category of analysis that informs their interpretation of human experience. Students will understand that gender is socially constructed and will be able to analyze family, education, labor, religion, and government as they are shaped by gendered constructs. Further, they will be able to explain how gender intersects with other constructed patterns of privilege and oppression in society, such as race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation. Students will develop skills in the application of gender research and theory to problems in the contemporary world

COURSE LEVEL

Gender and Violence is designed as a 200 level course without prerequisites. Students will be exposed to basic concepts and analytical approaches in the discipline at the beginning of the semester. In this sense, the course will be appropriate for the novice gender-studies student. At the same time, the specificity of the topic will make the course equally appropriate for more experienced students.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT WGS 235

Student assessment is based on the student's participation and ability to critically analyze scholarly readings, conduct academic research, identify and analyze the historical and contemporary. Students will exhibit mastery of the material through assignments designed to demonstrate program and course learning goals.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/PEDAGOGY WGS 235

Participation: Class participation is very important because it reflects attention to the readings and a willingness to think about issues and share ideas, information and observations. Your questions, comments and debate are crucial to the success of the class. Evaluation of participation includes attendance, occasional pop-quizzes, and participation in class discussion.

Reading Response Papers (7)

In each of these 1-2 page papers, students will analyze and respond to a question posed on a reading or set of readings. At least 10 topics will be proposed over the course of the semester. All will be posted on socs. Students select the 7 topics that most interest them and

submit them to the dropbox on socs by the indicated due date. Evaluation of reading response papers is based on analytical precision, use of evidence, and presentation. A rubric for written work is included in the syllabus.

Group Presentation

Each group (four or five students) will choose a topic or theme covered during the semester, conduct research and deliver a 20-30 minute presentation. The group must use at least one audio/visual aid, and present a one-to-two page typed handout for the rest of the class. Each group must turn in a bibliography of works used to research project at the end of the presentation. Evaluation will be based on the form and content of the presentation, and on the quality of the research.

Mid-term exam – the mid-term exam will consist of 6 short-answer questions (one paragraph each) and 1 essay question. The essay question will be posted on socs one week before the exam so that you can reflect on the question, re-read appropriate materials, and organize your thoughts. The exam is open-book, but you may not bring or use notes during the exam.

Final Exam - The final exam will follow the format of the mid-term.

Gender and Violence

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This course explores the relationship between gender and violence. It is comprised of theoretical perspectives as well as the study of specific forms of violence. Topics include: domestic and intimate partner violence; sexual violence; child abuse; socially institutionalized forms of violence against women; attitudes and reactions to violence; national and global contexts of violence, the gendered character of violence in patriarchal societies, the intersections between violence, race, class, and sexuality, men and violence.

Specifically, upon completion of this course, students will have achieved competency in: Using current research and theory to study gendered violence in a transcultural and transnational context; in particular, the systemic character of men's violence, and of violence against women, as well forms of resistance and agency among men and women. Understanding the interrelationships between the different manifestations of violence and the construct of gender. Understanding the importance of examining multiple causal influences of violence (e.g., biological, psychological, and sociocultural) at multiple levels (individual, community, societal). Using their acquired knowledge to create a thoughtful dialogue about the causes of violence and their relationships to gender.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Barstow, Anne Llewellyn, ed. *War's Dirty Secret*. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2000.
Gilbert, Paula Ruth and Kimberly K. Eby. *Violence and Gender*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004.
Cormac McCarthy, *Child of God*. Vintage, 1993.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/PEDAGOGY WGS 235

Participation: Class participation is very important because it reflects attention to the readings and a willingness to think about issues and share ideas, information and observations. Your questions, comments and debate are crucial to the success of the class. Evaluation of participation includes attendance, occasional pop-quizzes, and participation in class discussion. 10% of final grade

Reading Response Papers (7)

In each of these 1-2 page papers, students will analyze and respond to a question posed on a reading or set of readings. At least 10 topics will be proposed over the course of the semester. All will be posted on socs. Students select the 7 topics that most interest them and submit them to the dropbox on socs by the indicated due date. Evaluation of reading response papers is based on analytical precision, use of evidence, and presentation. A rubric for written work is included in the syllabus. 40% of final grade

Group Presentation

Each group (four or five students) will choose a topic or theme covered during the semester, conduct research and deliver a 20-30 minute presentation. The group must use at least one audio/visual aid, and present a one-to-two page typed handout for the rest of the class. Each group must turn in a bibliography of works used to research project at the end of the presentation. Evaluation will be based on the form and content of the presentation, and on the quality of the research. 10% of final grade

Mid-term exam – the mid-term exam will consist of 6 short-answer questions (one paragraph each) and 1 essay question. The essay question will be posted on socs one week before the exam so that you can reflect on the question, re-read appropriate materials, and organize your thoughts. The exam is open-book, but you may not bring or use notes during the exam. 15% of final grade

Final Exam - The final exam will follow the format of the mid-term. 25% of final grade

GRADING POLICY:

ANY ASSIGNMENT HANDED IN LATE WILL LOSE A GRADE PER DAY.

Final Course Grades - While statistical methods will be used to determine the final grade distribution, final grades will be based on the following criteria:

A: Outstanding, Superior. Written work is presented using Standard English and demonstrates a mastery of the subject matter for the college level. Meets all course expectations promptly. Shows clear grasp of concepts and demonstrates ability to synthesize materials from both inside and outside the classroom. Participates regularly and enthusiastically in classroom.

B: Very good. Clearly above average. Written work is presented using Standard English with only a few minor flaws and demonstrates proficiency in the subject matter for the college level. Meets course expectations promptly. Shows a good grasp of concepts and demonstrates ability to relate materials from both inside and outside the classroom. Participates regularly and enthusiastically in classroom.

C: Good. Average. Directions followed. Student met expectations for the course. Written work is presented using Standard English with minor flaws. Student shows an adequate grasp of the subject matter for the college level and demonstrates a reasonable ability to process materials from both inside and outside the classroom. Participates in classroom.

D: Below expectations. Below that which one would normally expect from a student at this level of a college career. Writing is marred by major mechanical problems. Exam performance fails to demonstrate a reasonable grasp of the material for the college level. Student fails to participate appropriately in class.

F: Unacceptable. Written work consistently falls below college level. Student fails to use appropriate college resources for help when so directed by the instructor. Student is consistently late in meeting course expectations. Shows little or no grasp of concepts and is unable to process or relate materials from inside and outside the classroom. Student fails to participate appropriately in class. Alternatively, regardless of the quality of a student's work, this grade may be assigned for failure to comply with policies for the course or for failure to submit a required paper.

GRADES ON WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

The Unsatisfactory Paper.

The D or F paper either has no thesis or else it has one that is strikingly vague, broad, or uninteresting. There is little indication that the writer understands the material being presented. The paragraphs do not hold together; ideas do not develop from sentence to sentence. This paper usually repeats the same thoughts again and again, perhaps in slightly different language but often in the same words. The D or F paper is filled with mechanical faults, errors in grammar, and errors in spelling.

The C Paper.

The C paper has a thesis, but it is vague and broad, or else it is uninteresting or obvious. It does not advance an argument that anyone might care to debate. "Susan Bordo wrote an interesting article." "Anorexia is a multidimensional disease."

The thesis in the C paper often hangs on some personal opinion. If the writer is a recognized authority, such an expression of personal taste may be noteworthy, but writers gain authority not merely by expressing their tastes but by justifying them. Personal opinion is often the engine that drives an argument, but opinion by itself is never sufficient. It must be defended.

The C paper rarely uses evidence well; sometimes it does not use evidence at all. Even if it has a clear and interesting thesis, a paper with insufficient supporting evidence is a C paper.

The C paper often has mechanical faults, errors in grammar and spelling, but please note: a paper without such flaws may still be a C paper.

The B Paper.

The reader of a B paper knows exactly what the author wants to say. It is well organized, it presents a worthwhile and interesting idea, and the idea is supported by sound evidence presented in a neat and orderly way. Some of the sentences may not be elegant, but they are clear, and in them thought follows naturally on thought. The paragraphs may be unwieldy now and then, but they are organized around one main idea. The reader does not have to read a paragraph two or three times to get the thought that the writer is trying to convey.

The B paper is always mechanically correct. The spelling is good, and the punctuation is accurate. Above all, the paper makes sense throughout. It has a thesis that is limited and worth arguing. It does not contain unexpected digressions, and it ends by keeping the promise to argue and inform that the writer makes in the beginning.

The A Paper.

The A paper has all the good qualities of the B paper, but in addition it is lively, well paced, interesting, even exciting. The paper has style. Everything in it seems to fit the thesis exactly. It may have a proofreading error or two, or even a misspelled word, but the reader feels that these errors are the consequence of the normal accidents all good writers encounter. Reading the paper, we can feel a mind at work. We are convinced that the writer cares for his or her ideas, and about the language that carries them.

The sure mark of an A paper is that you will find yourself telling someone else about it.

PARTICIPATION GRADES

Participation grades will be based on the following criteria and will account for 25% of the final grade:

A: Prompt and regular attendance; contributes to group and class dynamics by eliciting feedback from others and helping to keep group on task; participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens respectfully when others talk, both in groups and in class; participates actively and regularly in class discussion; current on all assigned readings and other coursework.

B: Prompt and regular attendance; participates actively and regularly in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens when others talk, both in groups and in class; participate actively and regularly in class discussion, but either not at quite the same level as the “A” students and/or comments are not always as insightful; somewhat current on assigned readings and other coursework.

C: Regular attendance; rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; listens when others talk, both in groups and in class; participates irregularly in class discussion; inconsistent in preparation of assigned readings.

D: Irregular in attendance and shows a pattern of (unexcused) tardiness; rarely participates in group work by offering ideas and asking questions; does not listen when others talk, both in groups and in class; does not participate in class discussion; is not prepared with assigned readings.

F: Rarely attends class; only offers a comment when directly asked by fellow group members or instructor; does not participate in group and/or in class; does not participate in class discussion; is not prepared with assigned readings.

Pluses and minuses will be used for finer tuning—especially if student better fits between categories.

Too many unexcused absences can cause participation grade to go down by some part of a letter grade, a whole letter grade, or more than one letter grade, depending on individual circumstances and on the severity of the problem.

DISABILITIES

If you have a learning disability, or physical or psychological disability, we will accommodate your needs to the best of our ability and according to college policy. For college policy please see <http://www.tcnj.edu/~wellness/disability/> . Please be advised that individuals with disabilities are responsible for reporting and supplying support [documentation](#) regarding their disability. Requests for accommodations must be initiated through the Office of

Differing Abilities.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to do their own work. Please read the definitions of, and rules regarding, the college's academic integrity policy at <http://www.tcnj.edu/~studlife/judaff/academic.html>

COURSE READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1 Conceptualizing Violence

Day 1

Introduction and organization

Definition of terms

Reading Assignment: Walter Wink, "The Myth of the Domination System and "The Origin of the Domination System" from *Engaging the Power* (on socs)

Day 2

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert and Ely

1. James Gilligan, "How to Think About Violence"
2. Myriam, Medzian, "Boys will be Boys"

Week 2 Conceptualizing Violence

Day 1

Reading Assignment: Michael Kimmell, "The Gender of Violence" from *The Gendered Society* (on socs)

Social Construction of Masculinities, Feminities and 'the other'

Day 2

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert and Ely

1. Judith Lorber, "'Night to his Day': The Social Construction of Gender"
2. Carol Tavris, "Speaking of Gender: The Darkened Eye Restored"

Week 3 Social Construction of Masculinities, Feminities and 'the other'

Day 1

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert and Ely

1. James William Gibson, "Who is the Enemy and What does he Want?"
2. Jeffrey Goldstein, "Why we Watch"

Film: in class we will view *Rambo: First Blood*

Violence against women

Day 2: Guest lecture on violence against women from a representative of Womanspace, Inc. and Director of Office of Anti-Violence Initiative (Jackie Deitch-Stackhouse)
Q&A with guest lecturers
Reading Assignment: from Gilbert & Eby:
Goodman, Koss and Russo “Violence Against Women: Physical and Mental Health Effects”

Week 4 Violence against women

Day 1

1-2 page comparative review of definitions of - and statistics on - 3 forms of violence against women (e.g. rape, domestic abuse, incest, sexual harassment, etc). Use sources such as

1. National Sexual Violence Resource Center <http://www.nsvrc.org>
2. World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/gender/violence/en/>
3. United States Department of Justice Crime Statistics
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict_c.htm

This counts as a Reading Response Assignment.

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert & Eby:

1. bell hooks, “Violence in Intimate Relationships”
2. Paula Kamen, “Acquaintance Rape: Revolution and Reaction”

Day 2

Historical and Legal Perspectives on sexual assault and domestic violence

Assignment: Sex crimes in New Jersey fall under Chapter 2C of the Criminal Code:

[Definitions](#)

[Bills introduced in NJ 211th session](#)

Jeffrey Fagan, “The Criminalization of Domestic Violence: Promises and Limits” at

<http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/crimdon.txt>

[History of domestic violence movement in the US](#)

Go to: <http://www.ncadv.org>, click on links VAWA 2005 Advocates Action

Kaethe Morris Hoffer, [“The Gender Violence Act: Towards the Eradication of Rape”](#)

Compare VAWA 1994, 2000 and 2005.

Week 5 Violence against women in times of war: International perspectives

Day 1

Reading Assignment: from Barstow, Anne Llewellyn, *War's Dirty Secret*.

1. Part I. “Sexual Slavery:” – 3 readings on “comfort women” in Korea and Taiwan

Day 2

Reading Assignment: from Barstow, Anne Llewellyn, *War's Dirty Secret*.

1. Part II. “Rape as a Weapon of Armed Conflict” – 3 readings on Yugoslavia, China and Rwanda

Week 6 Homophobia and Violence

Day 1

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert & Eby

1. Michael Scarce, "Preface: An Assault on Sexual Identity" and
2. Michael Kimmel, "Masculinity and Homophobia" on socs

Day 2

Reading Assignment:

1. Ann Ferguson, "Making a Name for Yourself: Transgressive Acts and Gender Performance" on socs
2. Read about hate-crimes against gays at <http://www.hatecrime.org/index.html>. Pay particular attention to the Matthew Shephard case, and the Brandon Teena case.

Week 7

Day 1

Film: in class we will view *Boys Don't Cry*
receive essay question for mid-term

Day 2 mid-term exam

Week 8 Masculinity and Violence

Day 1

Reading Assignment:

1. Michael Kimmell, "Clarence, William, Iron Mike, Tailhook, Senator Packwood, Magic...and Us" (on socs)
2. Michael Kaufman, "The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence (on socs)

Day 2

Film: view *Tough Guise* in class

Reading Assignment: first 60 pages of Child of God

Week 9

Day 1

Reading Assignment: Child of God to p. 135

Day 2

Reading Assignment: finish Child of God

Week 10 Gender and Violence in Global Perspective

Day 1

1. Read a glossary of forms of violence against women around the world at <http://www.vday.org/contents/violence/glossary>
[Violence against women-Global Facts and UNIFEM, "Not a Minute More: Ending Violence Against Women"](#)
2. Eve Ensler, "My Vagina Was My Village" from *The Vagina Monologues* (on socs)

Day 2

Reading Assignment:

1. R. W. Connell "Masculinities and Globalization" (on socs)
2. "Accountability or Justice? Rape as a War Crime," Mary Ann Tetreault, in *Feminist Frontiers* (on socs)
3. Arundhati Roy, "Come September" from *War Talk* on socs

Week 11

Day 1 Presentations

Day 2 Presentations

Week 12

Day 1 Presentations

Preventing Violence and Revisioning the Future

Day 2:

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert and Ely

1. Joy Dryfus, "What Works, and Why?"
2. James Gilligan, "How to Create Less Violent Societies"

Week 13 Preventing Violence and Revisioning the Future

Day 1

Reading Assignment: from Gilbert and Ely

1. Terry Kupers, "Conclusion: Redefining Power" and
2. "War, Peace, and Reconciliation" at:
<http://www.ipacademy.org/Publications/Reports/War,Peace,andReconciliationinAfricaAfrica/PublRepoAfrIDakarPrint.htm>

Day 2

Reading Assignment

1. Arundhati Roy, "War Talk" on socs
2. James William Gibson, "Waking Up from Warrior Dreams" from Warrior Dreams on socs

Week 14

Day 1 Class evaluations and review for final exam

Day 2 Conclusions