Sociology 200: Gender in Contemporary Society

Henzlik Hall 53  Fall 2015  Dr. Helen Moore  8:30 – 9:15 M-W-F  hmoore1@unl.edu
Office hours:  Mon: 9:30 – 10:30; Weds: 11 – 12:30  715 Oldfather Hall

1) Course Goals: (ACE 9)[ES][IS] SOCI 200. Women in Contemporary Society (3 cr)

This course provides you opportunity to learn about theories, research and social policy with a focus on gender and key social institutions: work, education, family, religion, health and law/policy. Our goal is to develop a range of frameworks (prisms) for understanding the material conditions of women across intersections of race, class, sexual orientation, etc., primarily in the United States, but globally-situated as well.

You will be able to explore topics from other arenas of the sociology of women, gender and masculinities (criminology, sports, health care, family/relationship violence) by approaching it from the lens of key social institutions. Why distinguish between sex and gender in looking at social institutions? What do social distinctions between men and women have to do with families, economies, political processes and social change? How does gender shape major social institutions? In this class, students gain tools for asking and answering questions like these through close reading of influential gender/feminist theorists/researchers and by examining empirical research that applies a “gender lens” and feminist theoretical frameworks. We will inspire each other to think broadly and creatively about how gender is embedded in social processes and shapes individuals, families, organizations, and institutions.

The class will require engagement and work on the part of all class members to enhance all of our learning, and enable you to widen your understanding of the diversity of gendered contributions to micro-, meso- and macro-level patterns in our society.


Additional REQUIRED readings are noted below and available on Blackboard

All students review one set (two chapters) from the following three sets of book chapters (your choice and sign up to review):


2) Course requirements:
Critical Thinking

This course gives special attention to the impact of gender on diverse groups of women, introducing students to the position of women in a variety of institutional settings. Critical thinking is achieved through: course readings that introduce new ways of thinking about gender, lectures that expand and synthesize these readings, images, speakers, videos that exemplify diverse experiences, and student discussion. Critical thinking is also reinforced through semester-long emphasis on the impact of gender on diverse groups of women. The course emphasizes gendered inequalities that women share and those that are unique to certain groups of women. Students first learn how to conceptualize and articulate the social construction of gender (and how this might differ among different groups of women). They also explore the intersectionality of gender and other ascribed statuses, and what concrete actions diverse groups of women have taken to ameliorate these inequalities.

To accomplish this: ALL ELECTRONICS ARE TO BE PUT AWAY (zipped in your backpack, etc.) DURING CLASS, UNLESS THE ASSIGNMENT REQUIRES IT. These devices are designed to be distracting — to grab, get, and keep our attention on them and away from everything else. If it is a competition between this class and your iPhone...* (*Sana, Weston and Cepeda. 2013. “Electronic multitasking hinders learning....” Computers and Education).

You may use your laptop during small group discussion of an article/chapter, but not during lecture, films, panels, exams, etc. If you need a copy of an assigned reading (article or chapter) during these latter class activities, bring a paper/text copy.

Course Grading:
Exams: We have two mid terms and one *final exam (20% each). Exams are a mix of objective questions and essays (you will have a set of essay questions a week in advance, and then choose among these to write on one short essay in class).

*The Final Exam may be replaced by completing and presenting the Policy Project.

Discussion leadership: You will sign up for 2 separate days in which you lead small group discussion during the semester and provide a printed page of text quotes and your own questions (provide 7 copies for small group discussion):

1) one chapter from a set of book chapters (2) from Blackboard (15%)
2) one of the assigned articles from Valentine and Spade (10%)

Cultural Marker: Each week, one or more students will bring a cultural marker* to present to our class. (See sign-up sheet and description) (15%)


4. Students with Special Needs. Any student who needs a reasonable accommodation based on a qualified disability is required to register with the SSD office for assistance.  http://www.unl.edu/ssd/home
5. **Academic Integrity**: I expect honest academic behavior. Plagiarism is academic theft, and will result in severe penalties. Refer to UNLs Student Code of Conduct: [stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code](http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code). Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, submitting unoriginal work in whole or part, fabrication or falsification, abuse of academic materials, complicity in academic dishonesty, and falsifying grade reports.

### Reading Assignments and Course Outline

**August 24 – 26 – 28 ~ Gender and Inequality:** V&S Intro and Chapt. 1 Readings: 1, 2, 3, 4  
Theories of difference and dominance. Chapt. 2: **10**. Sign-ups on Weds – Aug. 26th

**August 31 – Sept 2 – 4 ~ Social Construction of Gender:** V&S Chapt. 1: 6; Chapt. 2: 7, 8, 9; Chapt. 4: **19**; Chapt. 6: **26**.

**September 7 ~ Labor Day Holiday**

Sept. 9 – 11 ~ Gender, culture and media: V&S Chapt. 4: **20**; Chapt. 5: **21, 23, 24, 25**


Sept. 21 – 23 ~ Sexuality and Intimacy – Gendered Relations: V&S Chapt. 5: **22**; Chapt. 6: **29**; Chapt. 8: **39**.

**First Midterm Exam – September 25th**

Sept 28 – 30 Oct. 2 ~ Gender and Families: V&S Chapt. 3: **14**; Chapt. 8: **37, 40, 41**

**Monday – Oct. 19 – Fall Semester Break**

Oct 21 – 23 ~ Gendered Crime: V&S: Chapt. 3: **11, 14**

**Potter Chapters (Oct. 23rd)**

Oct 26 – 28 ~ Violence: V&S Chapt. 6: **27**; Chapt. 9: **42, 44, 45**

**Second Mid-term Exam – October 30th**

Nov 2 – 4 – 6 ~ Women, Education and Science: V&S Chapter 4: **16, 17, 18**
Nov 9 – 11 -13 ~ Women, the Law and Political Power: V&S Chapt. 8: 41; Chapt. 10: 49

Nov 16 – 18 – 20 ~ Social Movements: V&S Chapt. 6: 28; Chapt. 10: 46, 47, 48;

Monday - Nov 23 - Review/Consult on Policy Projects assignment -

Weds & Fri – Nov 25-27   UNL Holiday

Nov 30 – Dec 2 – 4   Gendered Futures: Chapt. 10: 50

Ehrenreich and Hochschild Chapters (Dec. 4th)

Dec 7 – 9   Assignment Reports -

Dec 11 –   Last Day of Classes

Final Exam:  7:30 to 9:30 a.m.   Wednesday, December 16

Course Grades: Exams – (20% each)

Discussion Leadership grades are assigned based on how effectively you lead class discussion for your assigned class meetings. In the first week of class we will decide which day(s) each student will be the “discussion leader” for a book chapter from Blackboard (15%) and one article from Spade and Valentine (10%). While you are our discussion leader, you are responsible (1) to briefly summarizing the reading; (2) to analyze the reading with regard to theory, method, conclusions, etc.; and importantly (3) to lead/stimulate/mediate discussion regarding the readings. Students must provide a 1 page typed précis that will be . The handout should very briefly summarize the main points of the reading, identify important questions generated for you, and connect it to one or more of our other readings. Grading will be based on how well the student leads class discussion. Remember, the goal of class discussion is to allow each and every student to participate (no monopolizing the discussion), with particular emphasis on drawing out analyses, conclusions, evaluation, and critique from all of us.

*Cultural Marker:   (15%) Each student individually brings a symbolic element of their own or another culture to present to class. This could be as simple as a magazine picture, a pay check, or a gendered “product” (men’s deodorant) or as complex as a video (very short - 2 -3 minutes). You must identify a theory (or theories) that you attach to this cultural icon and identify why this “fits” or “challenges” this icon, and bring 2 – 4 typed questions that you will ask our class (include your name on this single sheet of questions and the title you give to your marker/icon).

* Policy Project:   If you choose to replace the Final Exam with a Policy Project, see the assignment (circulated later in class) and attend the Monday, Nov. 23rd class session on completing and reporting your assignment to small groups. This project requires access to the Internet.