

**WGS 200-01: Introduction to Women & Gender Studies**  
**Fall 2014**  
**Lake Ontario Hall, Room 168**  
**TR 10-11:15 am**

**Instructor: Brittany Dernberger, MPA**

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**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**E-mail:** dernbebr@gvsu.edu

**Office phone:** 616.331.2748

**Office hours:** by appointment

**Office:** 1201 Kirkhof Center (Women's Center)

*\*Most Fridays: Pew Campus*

**COURSE INFORMATION:**

**Course Description:** WGS 200 examines research about gender in personal development, race/ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation through films, readings, and focused studies of the consequences of gender experience in life and learning. This course fulfills the Social and Behavioral Sciences Foundation requirement.

**Course Objectives**

**After completing this course, students will be able to:**

- Demonstrate an understanding of sexualities and the social construction of gender, with the ability to apply this knowledge to a variety of social institutions and contexts
- Explain, write, and speak effectively about key topics, concepts, and vocabulary central to the field of Women and Gender Studies
- Collect, cite, and evaluate current scholarship in Women and Gender Studies
- Utilize a systemic framework to design, explain, and evaluate strategies for solving major questions and problems with regard to gender in a specific context or institution

**Course Texts and Materials:**

Aulette, J. R., & Wittner, J. (2015). *Gendered Worlds*. (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.  
(Referred to as "GW")

D. DeMuth & J. Mason (Eds.). (2009), *UnsexinG Gender, EngenderinG Activism*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt  
(Referred to as "UG")

Additional materials may be assigned throughout the semester; these will be accessible via Blackboard.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Attendance** is crucial for your success in this class. Attendance will be taken every class period using a sign-in sheet; it is your responsibility to sign the sheet. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to check in with me after class. Since late arrivals disrupt the class, three times late = 1 absence.

There are times when absences are unavoidable; you are permitted two absences without penalty. After two absences and for every absence thereafter, your final grade will be lowered a full letter grade (i.e. A- → B-). Special cases will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If such circumstances arise, please inform me as soon as possible and provide documentation.

I suggest you find a "class buddy" and exchange contact information in order to ask for updates and notes for a missed class period. If you are absent from class, please contact a classmate first to obtain the information you missed and then contact me if you have further questions about course material.

**Engagement.** Please come to class prepared with notes, ideas, and questions to discuss. This class will largely be discussion based. Therefore, it is essential that we all complete the readings before class begins and you're prepared to share your ideas with your peers. We will use Discussion Board on Blackboard as an additional tool for the class to share relevant articles, photos, etc.

**Classroom Community.** During class discussions, we want to create a safe space in which individuals can ask questions and express ideas without fear of judgment from others. Our classroom community depends on the consistent presence and thoughtful engagement of all members. As members of this community, it is imperative that we listen empathically to one another, that we articulate our disagreements thoughtfully and respectfully, and that we remain committed to critical comprehension of all ideas and materials. An inclusive and open classroom community is the work of all of us; please do your part to address topics with sensitivity and maturity to ensure a productive discussion within this safe space. We will establish our class ground rules for our learning community during the first week of class and they will be added as an addendum to the syllabus.

### **RESOURCES AND POLICIES:**

#### **Technology and Netiquette Policy:**

- *In the classroom*, laptops are welcome for the purposes of note taking, research on topics under discussion, and/or review of course material. Please refrain from accessing personal e-mail, social media, or other non-course-related items during class time. Use of cell phones, iPads, laptops, etc. during class for non-course related purposes will negatively impact your participation grade.
- *E-mail* is the best way to contact me. During the week, I will make every effort to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours. If you e-mail me outside of Blackboard, please be sure to put "WGS 200" in the subject line as this will allow me to prioritize your e-mail. I may not respond to e-mail over the weekend. Please keep in mind that e-mail should be viewed as professional communication and should have an appropriate subject line, salutation, and signature.

I will frequently communicate with the class via GVSU e-mail and Blackboard; please be sure to check this regularly.

**Late Work Policy:** In general, late work will not be accepted. Preparation, Participation, and Engagement assignments will not be accepted late unless prior arrangements have been made. Other assignments received after the due date will be reduced a partial letter grade (i.e. B+ → B) for each day that it is late.

**Assignment Submission and Formatting:** Assignments must include a header with your name, title of the assignment, course title and number, and date. All typed assignments should be *double spaced, 12-point font, with one-inch margins all around*. Unless otherwise noted, your work will be submitted via Blackboard prior to class starting. Assignments must be submitted on Blackboard as a Microsoft Word document (not Pages or PDF). E-mail submissions will not be accepted.

**Disabilities Support Resources & Special Circumstances.** If you have any special needs or require an accommodation in order to participate fully and successfully in this course, please contact me as soon as possible. This includes students who work with Disability Support Resources, students who have specific reasons for not being able to participate fully in any class activities, discussions or projects, and students whose financial circumstances might limit access to course materials.

Any student who requires accommodation because of a physical or learning disability must contact Disability Support Resources ([www.gvsu.edu/dss](http://www.gvsu.edu/dss)) at 616-331-2490 as soon as possible. After you have documented your disability, please make an appointment or see me to discuss your specific needs.

**Non-Discrimination and Harassment (from the GVSU Student Code)**

Every aspect of University life should be free from discrimination because of age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status, or weight. Student housing, organizations, athletics, classes and University community facilities should be open to all who desire to participate.

GVSU is committed to an inclusive environment, and this will be taken seriously in our classroom as we engage with one another and create a learning environment that is safe for everyone.

**Gender Expression and Identity:** If, for purposes of gender identity and expression, your official name (in Banner) does not match your preferred name, your name can be updated in Blackboard. Please contact Christy Mayo in the Registrar's Office. She will take your request and contact the Blackboard Administrator to make the change. She also contacts professors to inform them that your name in Banner will not match the name in Blackboard.

**Your Lived Experience:** As participants in the course, we come from a wide spectrum of sexual and gender identities: some members of the course are likely straight or cisgender; some are possibly lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or transgender or transsexual; others may prefer not to place a label or marker on themselves; still others may be changing their ideas about their own identity. Who you are does not make you a more or less important contributor to this course, nor does it indicate a greater or lesser degree of familiarity with course materials.

Studying sex and gender involves exposure to ideas and topics that are generally considered private and that some may find upsetting. Some materials in this course are sexually explicit; other materials represent violence and may be disturbing. If you are concerned about engaging intellectually with sexually explicit and/or violent materials, please familiarize yourself with the course content and let me know in advance via email or by discussing your concerns with me. Please also seek support by accessing available resources on campus:

- University Counseling Center: <https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/>
- LGBT Resource Center: <http://www.gvsu.edu/lgbtrc/>
- Women's Center: [http://gvsu.edu/women\\_cen/](http://gvsu.edu/women_cen/)
- Office of Multicultural Affairs: <http://gvsu.edu/oma/>
- Office of Inclusion and Equity: <http://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/>
- Veterans Network: <http://www.gvsu.edu/veterans/>
- Report a Bias Incident: [http://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/bias\\_incidents.htm](http://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/bias_incidents.htm)

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty (from the GVSU Student Code)**

The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned without unauthorized aid of any kind. Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with and understand the policies pertaining to academic integrity. **For more information, see the GVSU Student Code, sections 223.00 and 223.01.**

**Free Tutoring** is available for this course (and most 100 and 200 level courses) through the Student Academic Success Center (SASC). You can sign-up for tutoring in person in the Student Services Building, Suite 200 or online at [www.gvsu.edu/tc](http://www.gvsu.edu/tc). Call the SASC at 616.331.3451 with questions or to get more information.

**Weather related closings** are announced on the GVSU homepage. While unlikely, if class is cancelled you will receive an e-mail from me through Blackboard.

**METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

**Preparation, Participation and Engagement (15%).** It is your responsibility and one of your assignments to prepare for class, attend, and actively engage during our class time. This includes small homework assignments that allow us to apply the reading and course material. Some homework and in-class assignments will be collected and others will not. Inappropriate use of technology or electronic devices, being disrespectful to your peers, and other disruptive behaviors will negatively affect your participation grade.

- The A level student is **consistently** prepared and knowledgeable. They have their materials handy and are able to refer to specifics in their materials during class. They contribute to the ongoing discussion by responding thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful group understanding. They are active leaders and listeners in small group discussion. They abide by the attendance policy. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussion would diminish.
- B level participants **mostly** meet the above criteria
- C level participants **occasionally** meet the above criteria
- D level participants **rarely** meet the above criteria
- F level participants **fail** to meet the above criteria

**Exams (40%; 2 exams, each worth 20%).** There will be two in-class exams during the semester over course readings, lectures, videos, class discussions, and activities. Please see the Course Schedule for specific exam dates.

**Quizzes (15%).** Throughout the semester, there will be in-class quizzes. Some will be announced and some will be unannounced. *Quizzes cannot be made-up unless prior arrangements are made.*

**Civic Engagement Project (10%).** As a discipline, Women and Gender Studies emphasizes both theory and practice. To apply the concepts we discuss in class to our campus and community, you will engage in at least 6 hours of civic engagement related to gender and then reflect on these experiences. See separate instruction sheet regarding the details of this project and the Course Schedule for due dates.

**Gender Studies Project (20%).** The Gender Studies Project provides the opportunity to research a gender-related issue you want to learn more about, create an annotated bibliography, and then work with others to develop an activist solution to this issue. See separate instruction sheet regarding the details of this project and the Course Schedule for due dates.

**Grade Distribution:**

|                |                 |                 |                 |               |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| A = 100-94%    | B+ = 89.9-87%   | C+ = 79.9 - 77% | D+ = 69.9 - 67% | F = 59.0 - 0% |
| A = 93.9 - 90% | B = 86.9 - 84%  | C = 76.9 - 74%  | D = 66.9 - 64%  |               |
|                | B- = 83.9 - 80% | C- = 73.9 - 70% | D- = 63.9 - 60% |               |

**Grading Standards:**

An "A" denotes work that is of exceptional quality. Exceptional Quality is represented by evidence of engagement with information and ideas in the course materials and lectures, and from other sources, thoroughness, careful thinking, integration of materials across topics, logical reasoning, and precise and artful writing.

A "B" denotes work that is above average vis-à-vis your peers' work and the expectation of the assignment.

A "C" denotes work that fulfills the course requirements in every way, but only adequately.

A "D" denotes work that does not adequately fulfill requirements, but still deserving of credit.

An "F" denotes work that is not deserving of credit.

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (*this schedule is subject to change*):**LEARNING MODULE 1: SOCIALIZATION & THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER****Week 1: Introduction**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| August 26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the course and to one another</li> <li>• Review syllabus and course structure</li> <li>• Establish ground rules for discussion</li> </ul> |
| August 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Rich, "Claiming an Education," p. 169</li> <li>• GW: Chapter 1 (Introduction)</li> </ul>  |

Friday, August 29 at 5 pm: 100% Tuition Refund Deadline

**Week 2: Introduction Cont.**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| September 2 | <i>*No Class: Labor Day Recess</i>  |
| September 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Meet in <b>Women's Center</b> (1201 Kirkhof Center) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour of Women's Center and LGBT Resource Center</li> <li>• Review Experiential Learning Project guidelines</li> <li>• <b>Due: Photo/Quote related to class (Submit on Blackboard)</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

**Week 3: Bodies and Genders**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| September 9  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 2 (pp. 18-37)</li> <li>• UG: Gould, "X: A Fabulous Child's Story," p. 3</li> <li>• UG: Gilbert, "My Life as a Man," p. 11</li> <li>• <b>Due: Observation Assignment</b></li> <li>• Visit a department store, grocery store, or the campus bookstore and take notes on what you observe. What sections are for men? For women? For children? What is unique about those sections? What do they sell? What is most striking about the differences between these sections (look at clothing, toys, personal products, etc.)? <i>Type your observations in paragraph form and submit on Blackboard.</i></li> </ul> |
| September 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 2 (pp. 37-57)</li> <li>• UG: Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes, Revisited," p. 93</li> <li>• UG: Serano, "Boygasm and Girlgasm," p. 99</li> <li>• <b>Due: Take notes on the reading</b> (see note-taking models posted on Blackboard), including key definitions.</li> <li>• <b>Due: Civic Engagement Plan</b></li> </ul>   |

**Week 4: Socialization and the Social Construction of Gender**

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|--------------|--|
| September 16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Feinberg, "We are all Works in Progress," p. 19</li> <li>• UG: Fausto-Sterling, "The Problem with Sex/Gender &amp; Nature/Nurture," p. 141</li> </ul> |
| September 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUIZ 1</b></li> <li>• GW: Chapter 3</li> <li>• UG: Mernissi, "Size 6: the Western Woman's Harem," p. 125</li> </ul>                                    |

September 19: 75% Tuition Refund Deadline

**Week 5: Socialization and the Social Construction of Gender Cont.**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| September 23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," p. 25</li> <li>• UG: Staples, "Just Walk on By," p. 31</li> <li>• UG: Gerschick, "Toward a Theory of Disability and Gender," p. 53</li> </ul> |
| September 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Hill Collins, "Toward a New Vision," p. 39</li> <li>• UG: Helliwell, "It's Only a Penis," p. 105</li> </ul>  |

**LEARNING MODULE 2: SEXUALITIES****Week 6: Sexualities**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| September 30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 4</li> </ul>   |
| October 2    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Fairyington, "Bisexuality and the Case against Dualism," p. 131</li> <li>• UG: Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia," p. 135</li> <li>• UG: Pharr, "Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism," p. 361</li> <li>• <b>Before class: Choose topic from GW Chapters 5-14</b></li> <li>• *Class vote on topics for Learning Module 3</li> </ul> |

**Week 7: Mid-Term Exam**

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|-----------|--|
| October 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EXAM 1</b></li> <li>• Self-Assessment of Participation</li> </ul>  |
| October 9 | <p><b>*Meet in the Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Studies Project preparation</li> <li>• Session with WGS Librarian Mary O'Kelly</li> </ul> |

**LEARNING MODULE 3: GENDER WITHIN INSTITUTIONS****Week 8: Topic TBD by Class**

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|------------|--|
| October 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings TBA</li> </ul> |
| October 16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings TBA</li> </ul> |

**Week 9: Gender and the Global Economy**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| October 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 6</li> </ul>   |
| October 23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Albelda, "Welfare-to-Work, Farewell to Families?" p. 233</li> <li>• Livingston, "Growing Number of Dads Home with the Kids" (6/5/2014): <a href="http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/06/05/growing-number-of-dads-home-with-the-kids/">http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/06/05/growing-number-of-dads-home-with-the-kids/</a></li> <li>• Cohn, "The Hell of American Day Care" (4/15/13): <a href="http://www.newrepublic.com/article/112892/hell-american-day-care">http://www.newrepublic.com/article/112892/hell-american-day-care</a></li> </ul> |

October 24: Drop Deadline for W grade

**Week 10: Families**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| October 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUIZ 2</b></li> <li>• GW: Chapter 7</li> </ul>   |
| October 30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Wolf, "Radical Heterosexuality..." p. 203</li> <li>• UG: LaSala, "Too Many Eggs in the Wrong Basket," p. 229</li> </ul> |

**Week 11: Politics, Prison & the Military**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| November 4 | <p>Politics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 10 (pp. 371-387)</li> <li>• <b>Due: Gender Studies Project Step 2 Draft: Annotated Bibliography</b></li> <li>• <b>*Peer Review Workshop - Submit online &amp; bring a hard copy to class</b></li> </ul>  |
| November 6 | <p>Prison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barkmeier et al., "Gender Responsiveness Must Account for Gender: Incorporating Gender Nonconforming Individuals Into Prison Rape Prevention" (posted on BB)</li> <li>• GW: Chapter 10 (pp.387-394)</li> <li>• Guest Speaker: <i>Jamie Riehle</i>,<br/><i>New Beginnings Mentor Program Coordinator, Women's Resource Center</i></li> <li>• <b>Due (Optional): Revised Annotated Bibliography</b></li> </ul> |

**Week 12: Politics, Prison & the Military Cont: Sexual Violence**

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|-------------|---|
| November 11 | Military <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 10 (pp. 394-410)</li> <li>• Film: <i>Invisible War</i></li> <li>• <b>Due: Gender Studies Project Step 2: Annotated Bibliography</b></li> </ul>  |
| November 13 | Sexual Violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GW: Chapter 8 (pp. 280-288)</li> <li>• UG: Abrams, "Asking for Consent is Sexy" p. 287</li> <li>• UG: Pfister, "Swept Awake! Negotiating Passion on Campus," p. 295</li> <li>• Guest Speaker: <i>Theresa Rowland</i><br/><i>Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Director, GVSU Women's Center</i></li> </ul> |

**LEARNING MODULE 4: FEMINISM & SOCIAL CHANGE****Week 13: Feminism & Social Change**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| November 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUIZ 3</b></li> <li>• UG: Cady Stanton, "The Declaration of Sentiments," p. 307</li> <li>• UG: Walker, "Womanist," p. 309</li> <li>• UG: Richards and Baumgardner, "Excerpt from Manifesta," p. 311</li> <li>• UG: hooks, "Excerpt from 'Feminism A Movement to End Sexist...'" p. 337</li> </ul> |
| November 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Katz, "More Than a Few Good Men," p. 343</li> <li>• UG: Neal, "New Black Man," p. 355</li> <li>• <b>Due: Civic Engagement Reflection</b></li> </ul>  |

**Week 14: Gender Studies Project & Integrating Theories**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| November 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 2</b></li> <li>• Self-Assessment of Participation</li> </ul> |
| November 27 | <b>*No Class: Thanksgiving</b>  |

**Week 15: Gender Studies Project & Integrating Theories**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| December 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UG: Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic," p. 273</li> </ul>   |
| December 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Studies Project Work Groups</li> <li>• <b>Due Monday, December 8 by 5 pm: Gender Studies Project Information Handout</b></li> </ul> |

**Week 16: Final Exam Period**

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| Wednesday,<br>December 10<br>8-9:50 am | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Due: Gender Studies Project Step 3: Group Project Presentations</b></li> <li>• <b>Due: Self and Peer Reflection of Group Contribution</b></li> </ul> |
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**ADDENDUM 1: CLASSROOM COMMUNITY GUIDELINES**

These guidelines were determined by our class collectively on the first day of the course:

- 1.