

SOCI/WGST 207: Introduction to Gender & Society

Spring 2025

Tuesdays & Thursdays

8:00-9:15 HECC 110

9:35-10:50 RICH 101

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Katherine Maich (she/her/hers)

EMAIL: kmaich@tamu.edu

ZOOM OFFICE HOURS (make an appointment): Wednesday 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

TEACHING TEAM ASSISTANTS:

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“Around the globe, gender hierarchies are produced and maintained in relation to transnational circuits of labor mobilization and capital accumulation. In varied and often locally specific ways international capital relies on gendered ideologies and social relations to recruit and discipline workers, to reproduce and cheapen segmented labor forces within and across national borders.”
-Mary Beth Mills, 2003

In what ways does gender shape our lives? Our experiences growing up? Our education? Our career choices? This seminar will take a broad approach to gender by placing it into conversation with race and ethnicity, as well as other lines of difference and inequality, including class, sexuality, nation, religion, and age, as we think through the dynamics of gender from a variety of situated and comparative perspectives. Yet we will also be skeptical of gender, interrogating and contesting how it is embodied, represented and positioned through personal interactions, social institutions, and world politics, historically and in our current moment.

One of my goals for you is that you will leave this course with a fresh understanding of how gender operates in your daily life, allowing for critical sociological analysis in applied settings. We will critically examine how ideas about sex (male, female, intersex) and gender (masculinity, femininity, transgender, gender queer, gender nonconforming and other) organize our social life in important ways that we often do not even notice. In the process of understanding gender as a social category we will also examine how it intersects and interacts with other social inequalities such as race, class, sexuality, nation, age, etc. We will take an applied approach, considering ways that gender plays out in our lives and in our working environments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, students will be able to do the following:

1. Recognize how gender intersects with race, class, nationality, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation.
2. Have a robust understanding of gender as a social construct.
3. Identify the gender structures in which they live and understand how gender inequality is reproduced.

4. Recognize ways that gender is applied in the world around us, especially in our social lives and working environments.

This course meets the **Language, Philosophy, and Culture core curriculum objectives:**

1. **Critical Thinking:** creative thinking; innovation; inquiry; and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
2. **Communication:** effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
3. **Social Responsibility:** intercultural competence; knowledge of civic responsibility; and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
4. **Personal Responsibility:** ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

POINT SYSTEM FOR GRADING

The point distribution for each assignment is as follows:

Attendance & Participation in Seminar _____	15% or 30 points
Test 1 _____	20% or 40 points
Test 2 _____	20% or 40 points
Class Discussion Memos _____	10% or 20 points
“Gender Adventure” Short Paper _____	15% or 30 points
Final Project _____	20% or 40 points
TOTAL	100% or 200 points max.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Two Tests (50% of the total grade): The exams will test your grasp of the readings it will be mostly multiple-choice format. The tests are not cumulative.

[Core objectives: *Communication, Personal Responsibility*]

Discussion Posts (10%) You are required to draft **FIVE** discussion posts throughout the semester. These discussion posts should highlight main arguments of the readings, connect the readings with other course materials or a contemporary debate on gender, and pose **at least two questions** for class discussion. If a discussion post does not contain discussion questions you will receive **HALF CREDIT**. Post on CANVAS **by 5:00 pm** the day before class. For example, if you are posting on Tuesday’s readings you should have your discussion posts on canvas by 5:00 pm on Monday. **Late posts will not be graded.**

[Core objectives: *Communication, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Personal Responsibility*]

“Gender Adventure” Short Essay (15%): You will be required to write a short reflective paper (3-4 pages) about a set of objects that demonstrate how gender is commodified and consumed. Additional instructions and rubric will be provided for this assignment.

[Core objectives: *Communication, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Personal Responsibility*]

Final Project (20% of the grade): You will work in groups to work on a video or podcast or presentation to advocate on an issue related to gender at work. You will create a media file with your group and present it to the class to generate discussion. In addition, as an individual, you will submit a short paper (2-3 pages) that represents your contribution to the project. Additional instruction and rubric will be provided for this assignment.

[Core objectives: Communication, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Visual Literacy]

Attendance and Participation (15%): Quite simply put, you need to show up to class to do well in class. And your participation in class is important. Participation in class, small group discussion, and engaging with the material are all important for your participation grade. Your overall attendance and tardiness will also be accounted for while grading for participation.

IMPORTANT COURSE DATES:

Exam I	Thursday, February 20
Exam 2	Thursday, April 3
Gender Adventure	Friday, March 7
Final Project, Group Component	Wednesday, April 16
Final Project, Individual Component	Thursday, May 1st at 8 pm

LATE WORK POLICY

It is your responsibility to finish course assignments in a timely manner. Extensions on assignments will be allowed if you have a university approved excuse. See Student Rule 7 (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>).

COURSE MATERIALS

All the course readings are posted on Canvas or in the Lisa Wade/Myra Marx Ferree book, *Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions*. Each module on Canvas is organized under weekly readings and assignments.

GRADING SCALE & POLICY

A: 100-90, B: 89-80, C: 79-70, D: 69-60, F: 59-0

Grades will be determined and distributed as follows, with the total possible points equaling 200:

Exam I	Exam II	Gender Adventure	Final Project	Class Attendance + Participation	Discussion Posts	TOTAL
20%	20%	15%	20%	15%	10%	100%
40pts	40ts	30ts	40ts	30pts	20pts	200pts

- Absences & Late assignments are generally not accepted without a timely, university-approved excuse.
- If you want to appeal a grade review carefully all responses to your paper; wait at least 24 hours after assignment grade receipt. **I do not discuss grades through email, if you want to discuss your grade you have to make an appointment with me/the TA to meet in person or zoom.** Additionally, please be aware that your grade may be raised or lowered when making such an appeal.

ATTENDANCE & LATE WORK POLICY

I also expect you to come prepared to class and participate in the class discussions. You are also responsible for inquiring about any activities and/or material that you missed. It is your responsibility to finish course assignments in a timely manner. Extensions on assignments will be allowed if you have a university approved excuse. Please reach out to our TA Teaching Team if you are late or have an attendance issue. See Student Rule 7 (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>).

EXTRA CREDIT

You can earn extra credit by submitting a media artefact (such as tiktok videos, a music video, visual images) that you think would help understand a concept or a topic that we are discussing in the class. You should be prepared to present to the class why the particular media artefact you choose is important to discuss. If you submit the media artefact and make a short presentation on the artefact you will earn **TWO points** which will be added to your final grade. ***Additionally, from time to time I will offer extra credit for relevant university events throughout the semester.***

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to come to class prepared to engage thoroughly with the readings. Your consistent participation in class is crucial for individual as well as collective learning and is therefore key to fostering an enriching and mutually supportive environment throughout the semester. I will often ask for participation in class. The material presented in this class can be sensitive and controversial. You may disagree with a viewpoint presented by the readings, by me, or your peer. I encourage healthy and thoughtful disagreement in class. Some ways to foster dialogue in the classroom are:

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views. (Don't just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating.
- Comment in order to share information, not to persuade.
- Avoid blame and inflammatory language.
- Allow everyone a chance to speak.

The Student Conduct Code Rule 21 regarding appropriate classroom behavior will also be strictly enforced (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule21/>). If a student is being disruptive or disrespectful (rude, inappropriate, unprofessional, and/or harmful to others) either in the classroom or during class-related communications outside of lecture (online or in-person), the instructor or teaching assistant will address this behavior following the department and university disciplinary guidelines. See (<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/home-page/civility/>) for a more detailed discussion of these principles and the rules of conduct.

EMAIL POLICY

I will do my best respond to your email within **two business days** (48 hours, except weekends and holidays). Don't expect me to respond immediately to your emails. Please do not email me with last minute request regarding deadlines and exams. Read the syllabus carefully before asking a general question about the course. That being said, please reach out if something it is going on so that we can address it before too much time passes. Please don't disappear!

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. You are also committing plagiarism if you present another's work as your own (for example by close paraphrasing) if you do not give clear attribution (for example by using quotation marks or otherwise indicating that the idea came from someone else, even if you include the person in your bibliography). If in doubt, give attribution. Failure to do so may result in serious sanctions. If you have questions about plagiarism, consult the website for Texas A&M University Student Rules. <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/part1.htm>.

AGGIE HONOR CODE

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.” For further information on academic integrity see: <http://compliance.tamu.edu/CodeConduct.aspx>

ACCOMMODATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

TITLE IX AND STATEMENT ON LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts are committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws provide guidance for achieving such an environment. Although class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to student record policies and laws, University employees — including instructors — cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues that jeopardize the health and safety of our community. As the instructor, I must report (per Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01) the following information to other University offices if you share it with me, even if you do not want the disclosed information to be shared:

Allegations of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment when they involve TAMU students, faculty, or staff, or third parties visiting campus. These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In many cases, it will be your decision whether or not you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Service (<https://scs.tamu.edu/>).

Students and faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

IMPORTANT TAMU RESOURCES

GLBT Resource Center: <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbtl/>

Student Counseling Service: <https://scs.tamu.edu/>

University Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/>

Women's Resource Center: <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/wrc>