SOC 555: GENDER AND SOCIETY  
Spring 2012

PROFESSOR:  
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Course Description
Sex and gender are pervasive principles of social organization in all known societies. This course surveys the growing body of theoretical and empirical research in the sociology of gender with the goal of providing students with a theoretical grounding for studying gender sociologically. The field of gender is vast and growing every day. In this course, you will be reading work that defines the contemporary field and is important for scholars who define gender as one of their areas of expertise. The readings for the course have been drawn from the current Gender Comprehensive Exam reading list for sociology doctoral students. Students are expected to always come to class prepared to participate in a discussion of the readings.

By semester’s end, you will have some solid theoretical and analytical tools for studying the large and growing topics in the sociology of gender. Gender is intrinsic to almost every area in sociology, and theories of gender are commonly a component of research in a wide variety of specific topics such as sexuality, media, reproduction, family, pay inequality, organizations, the state, law, deviance, and globalization. The syllabus is based on the comprehensive exam reading list, including some changes that I expect to make at the end of the semester.

Non-Sociology Graduate Students: You must have permission from the instructor to take this course.

Requirements
(1) Submit two discussion questions each week. These questions can address conceptual ambiguities in the readings, interesting similarities or differences across readings, or the relevance of readings for other research. Questions are due by email by 2pm on Tuesday (the day before class). These questions will be an important part of the agenda for each class meeting; come prepared to explain your question, why it is worth asking, and how you have begun to think of an answer. Discussion questions will be part of your class participation grade. You may also submit clarification questions with your discussion questions.

(2) Each student will lead one week’s discussion with an analysis of one of the week’s readings.

(3) Two 4-6 page conceptual papers, due in weeks 6 and 9. I will issue the questions to address in weeks 5 and 8.
(4) Final project, due during exam period. You have three choices:

1. You may write a proposal in which you design a research study that you could execute in the future, ideally as a Masters paper or dissertation proposal. After choosing a topic, you will need to find a data source or design a data collection procedure. You may find a statistical source or your question may require some type of data collection. Regardless of which methodology you use, the data should fit the question and you should describe the data or data collection thoroughly. Also be sure to explain how you will analyze the data.

2. You may use a research proposal that you have designed for another class that involves a gender-related topic, and use the semester to refine the topic, sharpen its gender focus, execute the research and write it up as an empirical paper. Students working on a gender-related MA topic may submit a draft of their MA paper as their final paper.

3. You may **substantially** revise a paper that you have written in another class in order to submit it for publication. The original paper must either involve a gender-related topic, or you may add a gender-related dimension if this will strengthen the central argument of the paper. You may also introduce empirical data analysis to a paper that was formerly only a literature review. If you choose this option, you should have a paper suitable for journal submission by the end of the semester.

Choosing one of the second two options means that you will be writing a paper that analyzes empirical data.

A 1-2 page description of your intentions for the final assignment and the data source you plan to use or how you will collect data will be due in Week 4. The final proposal or paper is due on the Wednesday of the exam period. The last two class sessions will be devoted to assisting each other with your proposals or papers.

**Grade**

- 30% Two 4-6 page conceptual papers (15% each)
- 15% Class participation (includes submitted questions)
- 5% Description of final project
- 50% Final project
Books


Sandra Harding (ed.). *Feminism & Methodology*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.


All articles and other book excerpts will be available as .pdf files on d2l.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1: Introduction**  
Jan. 11

**WEEK 2: Classic Approaches to Gender Inequality**  
Jan. 18  

**WEEK 3: Classics Approaches to Gender in Sociology**  
January 25  

**Description of final project research question and data due**

**WEEK 4: Feminist Epistemology**  
February 1  

**WEEK 5: Biology and Society, Sex and Gender**  
February 8  

**Conceptual Paper #1 Due**
WEEK 6: Gender Schemas
February 15

WEEK 7: Gender as an Accomplishment
February 22
Risman, Barbara J. 2009. “From Doing to Undoing: Gender as We Know It.” Gender & Society 23, 1 (Feb): 81-84.

WEEK 8: Masculinity
February 29

WEEK 9: Gender and Work
March 7

Conceptual Paper #2 Due

WEEK 10: Gender and Organizations
March 21

WEEK 11: Gender and Negotiation
March 28
WEEK 12: Housework and Carework
April 4

WEEK 13: Gender and Globalization
April 11

WEEK 14: Gender and the Law
April 18

WEEK 15: WORKSHOP RESEARCH PROJECTS
April 25

WEEK 16: WORKSHOP RESEARCH PROJECTS
May 2

Final Project due Wednesday, May 9 at noon.