



The Sociology of Gender

SOC 138

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Spring Semester 2022

Lecture schedule: Tuesdays & Thursdays,
4:00-5:15

Lecture location: In person, 5208 Sewell
Social Sciences Building

Professor: Chloe Hart (she/her)

Email: chloe.hart@wisc.edu

Office: 8115 Sewell Social Sciences
Building or [Zoom](#)

Office hours: Fridays, 10am-12pm:
schedule [here](#)

Section schedule: Thursday mornings
(section times vary)

Section location: In person, 1143 or 2106
Mechanical Engineering Building (location
varies by section)

Teaching Assistant: Taylor Laemmli
(she/her)

Email: laemmli@wisc.edu

Office: 2458 Sewell Social Sciences
Building or [Zoom](#)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30am-12:30pm

Course Overview

“Talking about gender for most people is the equivalent of a fish talking about water.”
Judith Lorber, 1994

People have many ideas about gender. These ideas organize our social lives in important ways and often in ways that we do not even notice. They are often so taken for granted that we simply assume they are part of the “normal” or natural way that life works.

Together in this course, we will investigate the taken-for-granted assumptions surrounding sex, gender, and sexuality to reveal how gender is built into our institutions and everyday lives. This course requires critical self-reflection examining our motives, behaviors and reactions, and how they challenge or reinforce gender norms. Furthermore, this requires connecting our experiences and those of others to broader trends in the social environment in which we live.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and apply key terms, concepts and theories that inform the study of gender and sex in U.S. society.
2. Identify both personal/observed and abstract/theoretical examples of how gender is manifested at individual, interactional and institutional levels.
3. Think critically about how norms, structures and policies are gendered.

4. Pose problems and questions that require systematic thinking about evidence, argument, and uncertainty, in relationship to gender in society.
5. Create your own viewpoint on gender issues, with the capability to support your arguments.
6. Be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
7. Write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.

How to Succeed in This Course

Preparation:

- Do the required reading each day before you attend class

Participation:

- Regularly attend and participate in group discussion and activities in lecture
- Post your reading reactions on Canvas each week

Communication and collaboration:

- Respect each other in class discussion, activities, and group work.
- Tell us *when* a problem arises, not when grades are due.

Reading materials

Readings for the course are posted on Canvas under Files. There is no required textbook for this course.

Evaluation and grading

Letter grades and the total points

A	AB	B	BC	C	D	F
93-100	88-92.99	83-87.99	78-82.99	70-77.99	60-69.99	Below 60

I do not grade on a curve. Students will be graded according to the following scheme:

Task	Percent of grade
Media posts	6%
Reading reactions	13%
Participation	15%
Op-ed project	26%
Exams	40%



Media posts – 6% of your final grade

You will post some form of media – a picture, video, gif, meme, etc. – of something out in the world that reminds you of our course content **three** times this semester, using the discussion board on Canvas. You will include a short caption that provides any context necessary to help us understand your picture/video and briefly describes what thoughts this item prompted for you as it relates to course content. Each post is worth 2% of your grade. You can post whenever you like, but make sure that you post on **three separate weeks**. If you post all three posts in one week, you will only get credit for one post.

Extra credit opportunity: You may post one additional media post on the discussion board (4 posts total, in 4 separate weeks) for one point of extra credit on your final grade.



Reading reactions – 13% of your final grade

Starting the second week of this course, you will post one discussion question or reaction about the course readings to the class discussion board **every week**. These reactions can be short (2-3 sentences) and should be designed to generate discussions in your sections. They are due at 2:00pm each Wednesday, and can be in response to either reading due on a given week. Each reading reaction is worth 1% of your final grade. We do not accept late reading reaction posts.



Participation – 15% of your final grade

We expect that students will actively engage with the material in this course and come to class and discussion section prepared to participate and ask questions. Attendance is required and expected for discussion sections, and failure to attend will negatively impact your grade.



Op-Ed project – 26% of your final grade

You will write a newspaper-style op-ed article about a topic of your choosing related to gender. Your op-ed will advance a persuasive argument or opinion. It may either be a deep dive into a topic that we covered in class, or a topic related to gender that we have not covered in the class. The op-ed will be 4.5-5.5 pages long (double spaced), plus a bibliography, and will draw on at least 7 sources, including at least 4 academic studies not discussed in class. The op-ed will be submitted on Canvas, and is due on Sunday, April 10th at 11:59pm. You will give a 4-5 minute presentation of your op-ed in section in the final weeks of the semester.

Your op-ed project will be graded as follows:

- Written op-ed (16%)
- Op-ed presentation (10%)

Note that if you submit your written op-ed late, 5 percentage points will be deducted for each day that it is late (e.g., an assignment that would have been graded as a 94 would be awarded a 84 if it was turned in 2 days late). If you miss

your scheduled presentation time, you may record a makeup presentation to earn up to 75% credit for your op-ed presentation (i.e., up to 7.5 out of 10 points).



Midterms and final exam –40% of your final grade

We will have three multiple choice exams – two midterms and a final – that assess your comprehension of the course. Your two exams with the best scores will be worth 16% each. Your lowest-scoring exam will be worth 8% of your grade. The midterms will be held in class on February 22nd and April 5th, and the final will be held at the end of the semester on May 13th.

The first midterm will test you on what we learn in weeks 1-4, the second midterm will test you on what we learn in weeks 5-9, and the final will test you on what we learn in weeks 10-14. Exams may include questions about aspects of the readings that are not discussed in class, or questions about class discussions and activities that were not directly related to the readings. You may not use books or notes, or consult with other students during the exams.

If you are feeling unwell and cannot take the exam in person, you may take the exam remotely using the online proctoring service Honorlock. All exams must be taken at the scheduled exam time.

Course policies

Academic Integrity Statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Statement

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

Diversity & Inclusion Statement

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Mask policy

Per the [UW-Madison policy](#), masks are required at all times in the classroom. If you attend either lecture or section without wearing a mask over your nose and mouth, you will be asked to leave, and this will be counted as an unexcused absence. Students who repeatedly fail to comply may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and may be subject to disciplinary action under the [non-academic misconduct policy](#).

Academic Calendar & Religious Observances

See [this calendar](#) for information about the current academic calendar, along with the university's religious observance policy.

Trigger and Content Warnings

We will cover a lot of material in this course that is related to race, sexuality, gender, family, and more. If you suspect that specific material will be emotionally challenging for you, your TA and I would be happy to discuss any concerns beforehand. If any assignment or lecture topic makes you uncomfortable, please talk to me about an alternative at least 48 hours in advance.

Privacy of Student Records & the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Students' Rules, Rights & Responsibilities

See [this link](#) for information about university students' privacy rights (FERPA).

Mandatory reporting

As your instructors, one of the responsibilities of me and the TA is to help create a safe learning environment. We want you to feel comfortable in this class and to feel like you can share

information related to your life experiences in your written work and in our one-on-one meetings. We will keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, we also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to our roles as faculty and teaching assistants. That means that we are required to share information regarding child abuse or neglect and sexual assaults that our students have experienced or witnessed with the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Title IX office. If you would like to speak to *someone who can maintain confidentiality* on those issues, you can receive free, confidential victim advocacy and survivor support, including information about your options and emotionally supportive counseling, at 608-265-5600.

Cell Phones and Computers in Class

Unless you have a good reason to leave your cell phone on, please turn your phone off when you come to class. If you must leave it on due to family or medical reasons, please put the phone on silent so it does not disturb your classmates. Students may use their computers for note-taking and class-related activities only. If computers prove distracting, I reserve the right to ask students to stop using them during class time.

Discussion Sessions

Your TA will share Discussion Session policies with you in your individual sections.

Available Support Resources: Where can you go to find support?

To be a successful student it is important to seek support from others when you need it. Our university has many services that can help you improve your ability to meet your goals. You also are welcome to contact me about any of these issues.

Need Support?	Check out these resources:
Need assistance with enrollment or transcripts?	Office of the Registrar
Want help writing course papers?	The Writing Center
Looking for books, videos, media for outside research?	Library Research Support
Need accessibility support in the classroom?	Accessibility at UW-Madison
In need of financial support for basic needs?	Office of Student Financial Aid
Searching for support with mental health and well-being?	University Health Services – Mental Health
Feeling sick or unwell?	University Health Services – Medical Services
Struggling to decide on a major?	Undergraduate Advising
Seeking support as an international student?	International Student Services
Is there an incident of hate and bias you would like to report?	Dean of Students Office

General course information

Credit hours

This is a 4-credit class that meets for two lecture periods and one section period each week over the spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, studying, etc) for about 3 hours for every class period. See elsewhere in the syllabus for more information about expectations for student work.

Regular and Substantive Student-Instructor Interaction

This course meets the regular and substantive student-instructor interaction requirement by providing learning and assessment through direct instruction, providing feedback on student work, providing information about course content, and facilitating discussion of course content

Digital Course Evaluation (AEFIS)

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool called [AEFIS](#). For this course, you will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID. Evaluations are anonymous. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

Course schedule (subject to change)

Week 1	Jan 25	<i>Introduction to the course</i>
	Read before class:	None
	Jan 27	<i>Gender terms and concepts</i>
	Read before class:	Ainsworth, "Sex Redefined"
Week 2	Feb 1	<i>How do ideas about gender vary across cultures?</i>
	Read before class:	Bearak, "Why terms like 'transgender' don't work for India's 'third-gender' communities"
	Feb 3	<i>How have ideas about gender varied over time?</i>
	Read before class:	Maglaty, "When Did Girls Start Wearing Pink?"
Week 3	Feb 8	<i>To what extent are women and men different?</i>
	Read before class:	Zell et al., "Evaluating Gender Similarities and Differences Using Metasynthesis"
	Feb 10	<i>How is gender taught and learned?</i>
	Read before class:	Martin, "Becoming a Gendered Body," abstract and pp.496-510
Week 4	Feb 15	<i>How is gender performed?</i>
	Watch before class:	"How Do We and The Sims Perform Gender?" (until 8:38)
	Feb 17	<i>How is gender policed?</i>
	Read before class:	Barbee and Schrock, "Un/gendering Social Selves," abstract and pp.576-591
Week 5	Feb 22	<i>In-class midterm 1</i>
	Read before class:	None
	Feb 24	<i>How does gender bias work?</i>
	Listen before class:	The Experiment Podcast: Justice, Interrupted
Week 6	March 1	<i>What are the levels on which gender operates?</i>
	Read before class:	Risman, "Gender as Structure"
	March 3	<i>How do institutions shape ideas about gender, and how does gender shape institutions?</i>
	Read before class:	Belkin, "A Generation of American Men Give Up on College"

Week 7	March 8 Read and watch before class:	<i>How does gender shape the healthcare that people receive?</i> shuster, “Doctors treating trans youth grapple with uncertainty, lack of training”
	March 10 Readings due:	<i>Library session: How do you identify scholarly sources?</i> None
<i>Spring break</i>	<i>March 15 & 17</i>	--
Week 8	March 22 Read before class:	<i>How do other identities work together with gender to shape people’s experiences?</i> Wingfield, “About Those 79 Cents”
	March 24 Listen before class:	<i>How do perceptions of identities like gender, race, and social class shape one another?</i> “ Study: Stereotypes Drive Perceptions of Race ”
Week 9	March 29 Read before class:	<i>How do gender and sexual orientation relate to one another?</i> Mishel and Caudillo, “Google searches show more worry over gay men and boys than gay women and girls”
	March 31 Read before class:	<i>How does gender shape perceptions of sexual behavior?</i> Miller, “How You Bully a Girl,” abstract and pp.726-741
Week 10	April 5 Read before class:	<i>In-class midterm 2</i> None
	April 7 Read before class: Assignment:	<i>How are beauty practices gendered?</i> Mears, <i>Very Important People</i> , Preface and Chapter 1 <i>Your written op-ed assignment is due on Canvas by Sunday, April 10, at 11:59pm</i>
Week 11	April 12 Read before class:	<i>How does gender shape the division of housework and childcare in families?</i> Fielding-Singh, <i>How the Other Half Eats</i> , Preface pp. xi-xviii and Chapter 11: Mom’s Job
	April 14 Read before class:	<i>How do institutions influence families’ experiences?</i> Collins, <i>Making Motherhood Work</i> , Chapter 2: Sweden
Week 12	April 19 Read before class:	<i>What is occupational gender segregation, and why does it matter?</i> Miller, “As Women Take Over a Male-Dominated Field, the Pay Drops”

	April 21	<i>How do gender biases play out in the workplace?</i>
	Read before class:	Schilt, <i>Just One of the Guys</i> , Chapter 3: Becoming Men at Work
Week 13	April 26	<i>Guest lecture: Taylor Laemmli</i>
	Read before class:	TBD
	April 28	<i>Why is sexual violence so widespread?</i>
	Read before class:	Hirsch and Khan, <i>Sexual Citizens</i> , Chapter 1: Sexual Assaults
Week 14	May 3	<i>How is anticipating sexual harassment gendered, and how does it impact people's career trajectories?</i>
	Read before class:	None
	May 5	<i>Gender, politics, and social movements: MeToo as a case study</i>
	Read before class:	Burke, <i>Unbound</i> , prologue
Finals week	May 13	<i>Final exam</i>