

CRS 280: Gender, Culture, and Communication

Summer 2017

Instructor: Dr. Katharine P. Zakos

Class: Monday – Thursday, [TIME], [LOCATION]

Office Hours: [TBD]

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Course Description

The primary goal of this course is to develop an awareness of communication as gendered—that is, as shaped by relations of sex and gender, as well as by race, class, sexual orientation, and other categories of difference—and the effects of this on individuals and society. We will explore many different approaches to gender in various modes of communication. More specifically, we will: (1) examine the multiple ways communication in families, schools, media and society in general creates and perpetuates gender roles; (2) consider how we enact socially created gender differences in public and private settings, and how this affects success, satisfaction and self-esteem; and (3), perhaps most important, we will connect theory and research to our personal experiences. Your insights, questions, and ideas are a key part of this course. Throughout the term, we will consider not only what **is** in terms of gender roles, but also what **might be** and how we, as change agents, may act to improve our individual and collective lives. Ultimately, this course is designed to encourage you to think critically about communication and the media you consume, while simultaneously recognizing the ideological structures that shape our experience of gender.

Course Objectives

At the end of the term, students will be able to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to gender and communication
- How to apply course concepts and theories to explain the ideologies that reinforce gender roles and expectations
- The ability to think critically, creatively and independently; the ability to conduct research and evaluate information by appropriate methods; and the ability to write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the audiences and purposes they serve.

Classroom Policies

- Make-up exams will not be given, except in the case of a documented illness or family emergency. Late assignments will be penalized 3 points per day late. If you have extenuating personal or medical circumstances, contact me as soon as possible via e-mail. You will be required to submit valid documentation within one week.
- Be courteous and respectful at all times. Please refrain from using cell phones during class and make sure that they are set to silent for the entire period.
- Do not hesitate to ask questions; if you do not understand something, please ask. Chances are pretty good that somebody else has the exact same question.

Required Reading

Wood, Julia T. *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender and Culture*. 12th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2016.

Additional readings and other course materials may be made available in electronic format through Moodle.

Course Assignments

I. Final Exam (100 points)

There will be one take-home exam worth 100 points. More information on this assignment will be provided later in the course. This assignment will be due on the last day of class (8/3).

II. Group Project: Media Presentation (100 points)

You will sign up in small groups to research the treatment of gender in a media text. Your research should include the production contexts, issues of identity/representation, and audience reception of your chosen television program or video

game. You will work with your group to choose a sample clip to screen for the class, present your research, and initiate the class discussion of the show. The group project is worth 100 points (total) and consists of the following components:

1. **Sign Up:** We will generate a list of texts in class; each student must sign up to present one of the available texts.
2. **Assign Roles:** As a group, students will decide who will research each area of analysis (industry/production contexts, issues of representation/identity, and audience reception of the text).
3. **Pick a sample clip to screen in class:** The clip should be representative of the show in general to facilitate class discussion. Many times the first episode of a series is an excellent choice for screening in class, but please feel free to screen a clip from any episode you think works well with your presentation.
4. **Prepare a handout summarizing your research:** The handout should include the following information:
 - Production Information
 - Credits for the show or video game, including the creators, producers, and dates of production.
 - Credits for the specific episode, including title, writer, director, and date of production.
 - Economic data (budget, DVD sales, sales/availability on different platforms, production history, etc.)
 - Audience Information
 - Brief summary of professional/critical response to the text
 - Nielsen ratings/Sales of video game
 - Descriptions of major fan websites and issues discussed by these fans
 - Textual Issues
 - Does the show or game explicitly address issues of race, class, gender, etc.? And if so, which of these issues are at the forefront?
 - How does the show or game subtly address these same issues?
 - What sort of ideological processes are at work in the program itself?
5. **Oral Presentation:** Introduce the series to the class. Discuss the issues raised in your handout, as well as your research. Describe the show to the class and screen a sample clip. Finally, initiate the class discussion of the text.
6. **Peer Evaluation (Individual):** Each student will evaluate all group members. Group project points will be partially determined by your cooperation and contribution to the project as assessed by your peers. That is, each member's points earned for the group project may vary within a group. Peer evaluations are due at the beginning of the class in which the presentation is scheduled. A copy of the required form will be provided. Print out copies and fill one form out for each member of your group (including yourself).

*****Note on Group Projects:** *Any student whose efforts and contributions to the group project are considered "unsatisfactory" or "unmet" by his/her group may be removed by the instructor.* Once removed, he/she has to carry out an entire project by him/herself without any adjustment (in terms of requirements). The group should (1) give the person in question some warning of his/her responsibility as a group member and (2) report the problem to the instructor before any action is taken. If the student remains a member of the group but does not contribute equally, this will be reflected in her/his grade. Each student is responsible for contributing to the group's efforts.

III. Attendance and Participation (100 points)

Your classroom attendance is vital to your success in this course, and thus, is a requirement. You will need to be in class to complete some assignments and to know when future assignments are due. If you are not present for in-class assignments, you cannot get credit for the work done by others during class time. You are responsible for all material covered in class. **If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from another student.** Due to the heavy workload that this fast-paced course requires, you should plan on attending **EVERY** class session. Please be advised that **20 points will be subtracted from your participation grade for every absence.**

IV. Response Papers (100 points)

Throughout the course, students will be asked to write a total of **FIVE** response papers addressing the assigned readings each week. One goal of this course is to think critically about gender and the role it plays in our society, our own lives, and across cultures. You should incorporate concepts and terms you have learned in class, but may also include personal opinion and analysis. Responses must be at least 350 words long and must be submitted by the beginning of the next class.

V. Final Paper (100 points)

Students will submit a 4-5 page paper that addresses some aspect of gender and communication, drawing on readings, research, and relevant class discussions.

1. **Proposal – DUE 7/13:** The proposal should be approximately one page (single-spaced), and will simply include which topic you would like to examine with this research paper and your rationale (why you chose that topic).

2. **Final Paper – DUE 7/31:** The final paper should be approximately 9-12 pages long, typed, double-spaced, using twelve point font, and should adhere to a relevant citation style (MLA, APA, or Chicago).

Grading

Assignment	Point Value
Final Exam	100 points
Group Project: Media Presentation	100 points (total)
Handout	60 pts
Presentation	30 pts
Peer Evaluation	10 pts
In-class Exercises & Participation	100 pts
Response Papers	100 pts
Final Paper	100 points (total)
Proposal	10 pts
Final Paper	90 pts
TOTAL	500 POINTS

Points Earned	Letter Grade
465-500	A
450-464	A-
435-449	B+
415-434	B
400-414	B-
385-399	C+
365-384	C
350-364	C-
300-349	D
299 and lower	F

OU Policies

Withdrawals and Incomplete Grades

Standard university policies on withdrawals/incompletes as outlined in the most current edition of the Bulletin apply to this course.

Disability Services

If you are a student with a disability or a disability-related issue and feel that you may need a reasonable accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of the course as listed in the syllabus, you are encouraged to contact Disability Services in the Academic Success Center by phone (404-364-8869) or via email (disabilityservices@oglethorpe.edu).

Academic Honesty: Persons who come to Oglethorpe University for work and study join a community that is committed to high standards of academic honesty. The honor code contains the responsibilities we accept by becoming members of the community and the procedures we will follow should our commitment to honesty be questioned. The students, faculty and staff of Oglethorpe University expect each other to act with integrity in the academic endeavor they share. Members of the faculty expect that students complete work honestly and act toward them in ways consistent with that expectation. Students are expected to behave honorably in their academic work and are expected to insist on honest behavior from their peers. Oglethorpe welcomes all who accept our principles of honest behavior. We believe that this code will enrich our years at the University and allow us to practice living in earnest the honorable, self-governed lives required of society's respected leaders. Our honor code is an academic one. The code proscribes cheating in general terms and also in any of its several specialized sub-forms (including but not limited to plagiarism, lying, stealing and interacting fraudulently or disingenuously with the honor council). The Code defines cheating as "the umbrella under which all academic malfeasance falls. Cheating is any willful activity involving the use of deceit or fraud in order to attempt to secure an unfair academic advantage for oneself or others or to attempt to cause an unfair academic disadvantage to others. Cheating deprives persons of the opportunity for a fair and reasonable assessment of their own work and/or a fair comparative assessment between and among the work produced by members of a group. More broadly, cheating undermines our community's confidence in the honorable state to which we aspire." The honor code applies to all behavior related to the academic enterprise. Thus, it extends beyond the boundaries of particular courses and classrooms *per se*, and yet it does not extend out of the academic realm into the purely social one.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

- 1.1 The unauthorized possession or use of notes, texts, electronic devices (including, for example, computers and mobile phones), online materials or other such unauthorized materials/devices in fulfillment of course requirements.
- 1.2 Copying another person's work or participation in such an effort.
- 1.3 An attempt or participation in an attempt to fulfill the requirements of a course with work other than one's original work for that course.
- 1.4 Forging or deliberately misrepresenting data or results.
- 1.5 Obtaining or offering either for profit or free of charge materials one might submit (or has submitted) for academic credit. This includes uploading course materials to online sites devoted, in whole or in part, to aiding and abetting cheating under the guise of providing "study aids." There is no prohibition concerning uploading exemplars of one's work to one's personal website or to departmental, divisional, University or professional society websites for purposes of publicity, praise, examination or review by potential employers, graduate school admissions committees, etc.

- 1.6 Violating the specific directions concerning the operation of the honor code in relation to a particular assignment.
- 1.7 Making unauthorized copies of graded work for future distribution.
- 1.8 Claiming credit for a group project to which one did not contribute.
- 1.9 Plagiarism, which includes representing someone else's words, ideas, data or original research as one's own and in general failing to footnote or otherwise acknowledge the source of such work. One has the responsibility of avoiding plagiarism by taking adequate notes on reference materials (including material taken off the internet or other electronic sources) used in the preparation of reports, papers and other coursework.
- 1.10 Lying, such as: Lying about the reason for an absence to avoid a punitive attendance penalty or to receive an extension on an exam or on a paper's due date; fraudulently obtaining Petrel Points by leaving an event soon after registering one's attendance and without offering to surrender the associated Petrel Point, or by claiming fictitious attendance for oneself or another; forging or willfully being untruthful on documents related to the academic enterprise, such as on an application for an independent study or on a registration form.
- 1.11 Stealing, such as: Stealing another's work so that he/she may not submit it or so that work can be illicitly shared; stealing reserve or other materials from the library; stealing devices and materials (such as computers, calculators, textbooks, notebooks and software) used in whole or in part to support the academic enterprise.
- 1.12 Fraudulent interaction on the part of students with the honor council, such as: Willfully refusing to testify after having been duly summoned; failing to appear to testify (barring a *bona fide* last-minute emergency) after having been duly summoned; testifying untruthfully.

Students pledge that they have completed assignments honestly by attaching the following statement to each piece of work submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a course taken for academic credit:

"I pledge that I have acted honorably." (Followed by the student's signature)

The honor code is in force for every student who is enrolled (either full- or part-time) in any of the academic programs of Oglethorpe University at any given time. All cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the provisions established in this code. The honor council has sole jurisdiction in matters of suspected academic dishonesty. Alternative ways of dealing with cases of suspected academic fraud are prohibited. In cases of alleged academic dishonesty on the part of students, the honor council is the final arbiter.

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Calendar Summer 2017

Wk	Dates	Topic(s)	Readings	Activities/Assignments
1	7/3 7/4 7/5 7/6	Course Introduction Studying Communication, Gender, & Culture Theoretical Approaches to Gender Development Group Discussion	Intro. Ch. 1 Ch. 2	
2	7/10 7/11 7/12 7/13	Rhetorical Shaping of Gender: Images of Women Rhetorical Shaping of Gender: Images of Men Gendered Media <i>Writing Workshop</i>	Ch. 3 Ch. 4 Ch. 11	DUE: Paper Proposal (Thurs. 7/13)
3	7/17 7/18 7/19 7/20	Gendered Verbal Communication Gendered Nonverbal Communication Presentations Presentations	Ch. 5 Ch. 6	DUE: Group Projects (Wed. 7/19 & Thurs. 7/20)
4	7/24 7/25 7/26 7/27	Becoming Gendered: The Early Years Gendered Education: Communication in Schools Gendered Close Relationships <i>Writing Workshop</i>	Ch. 7 Ch. 8 Ch. 9	
5	7/31 8/1 8/2 8/3	Gendered Organizational Communication Gendered Power & Violence Final Paper Presentations/Discussion FINAL EXAM	Ch. 10 Ch. 12 Epilogue	DUE: Final Paper (Mon. 7/31) DUE: Final Exam (Thurs. 8/3)