

WGSS 101: Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (with Service-Learning)

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Office Hours:
MW 4:30-5:30
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What's this course all about?

This course dives into some essential questions of identity. What is gender? In what ways is a person's gender and sexuality rewarded or punished in our society? How are our basic human rights being threatened TODAY through these basic questions of identity? How can we advocate for the communities we care about? In this course, we will use feminist and queer perspectives to evaluate how sex, gender, and sexuality are constructed in social and cultural contexts. We will also discuss the historical struggles surrounding gender and sexuality in achieving social justice, looking especially at ways these issues intersect with race, ethnicity, ability, class, and nationality.

As a powerful way to meet our learning objectives, this class also incorporates **service learning**. Service Learning promotes student learning through active participation in meaningful and planned service in the community, and this service is substantively related to our course content. You will be able to choose from one of several community

partners hand-picked for our class. Each of these partners has a need that you will help meet. Through service learning, you will get "hands-on" experience observing and reflecting on gender and sexuality issues in the real world and working toward social justice.

You will spend approximately 20 hours outside of class completing service-learning activities this semester. Through a series of reflections, you will connect your service with learning from our course. I can't wait to see what we all learn together!

Service learning is the natural extension of feminist pedagogy since both seek to blend knowledge, skills, and values the service of social change. Likewise, the feminist perspective enhances civic learning by keeping a social justice focus and teaching students to think critically about institutionalized oppression as they engage in their service-learning activities.

—Geraldine B. Stahly, CSU, San Bernardino

~ Welcome—I'm excited to
have you in my class! ~

Students are expected to spend six hours each week working on this course beyond attending the class meetings. Out-of-class work includes such things as participating in service learning, completing readings, homework exercises, and group projects.

What you'll learn along the way

Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies embraces the ideals of freedom and equality for all people. Feminist author and activist bell hooks defines feminism in this way:

"Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. This was a definition of feminism I offered in Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center more than 10 years ago. It was my hope at the time that it would become a common definition everyone would use. I liked this definition because it did not imply that men were the enemy. By naming sexism as the problem it went directly to the heart of the matter. Practically, it is a definition which implies that all sexist thinking and action is the problem, whether those who perpetuate it are female or male, child or adult. It is also broad enough to include an understanding of systemic institutionalized sexism" (hooks, Feminism is for Everybody, 2000).

By the end of the course, you should achieve the following:

- **Demonstrate** an introductory understanding of the field of gender, sexuality, and women's studies, and utilize a range of interdisciplinary tools and methods for understanding and analyzing sex, gender, and sexuality in culture.
- **Develop** a rich comprehension of both feminist and queer approaches to the social and cultural construction of gender and sexuality.
- **Construct** a critical understanding of intersectionality, including an awareness of gender and its complex intersections with other social, cultural, and biological categories, including but not limited to sex, race, ethnicity, class, nation, sexuality, ability, and age.
- **Develop** a skillset to advocate for social justice through a deepened understanding of how social, cultural, and biological categories disadvantage various communities by performing social-justice oriented service at a community organization.

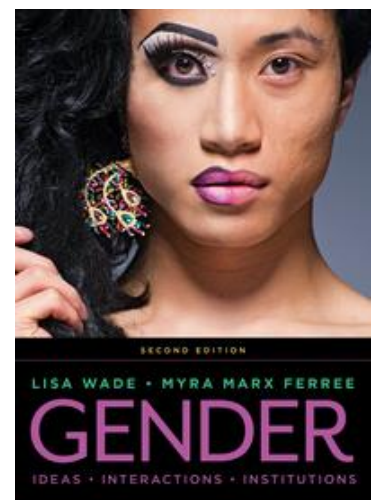


What you need for the class

***Gender: Ideas, Interactions, Institutions* (Second Edition)**
by Lisa Wade and Myra Marx Ferree, (2019)

(Additional articles and videos will be assigned and accessible on our Cougar Course.)

Spiral notebook.



What we'll be doing

Participation, Attendance and Lateness (15%)

Class participation is essential—it gives you a voice in the learning process, allows more than one perspective on a topic to be explored, and allows our learning and thinking to progress through ongoing dialogue and conversation. You should come to class prepared to participate so that we all benefit from informed discussions. You are allowed a maximum of **3 absences with no penalty**. Use them wisely. *I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Beginning with your fourth absence, 2 percentage points will be deducted from your final grade.* For example, if you have an 90% for the class but missed one day over the limit, your final grade will become an 88%.

Arriving late and leaving early will count as an absence (3 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). *More than 6 absences will result in a failing grade.*

Throughout the class there will be ample opportunity for participation. If you are on the quieter side or are afraid of speaking in large groups, you'll need to push yourself to speak in class. Conversely, if you enjoy speaking in class, you may need to hold back to give others an opportunity.

Service Learning On-boarding and Reflections (30%)

You will receive credit for completing your service-learning “on-boarding” by the deadline (Start early! Depending on the site, this may include background check, TB test, orientation, etc.). For the Service-Learning Reflection assignments, you will reflect on your service learning experience, and relate your observations and new understandings to course topics. The community service will grow your ability to reach across boundaries of difference and to move from theory to practice, from classroom to community.

Talk to me right away about any problems with your service-learning site!

You will complete four reflection assignments (between 2-4 pages each) examining your own assumptions about the community you serve, observing how race, class and gender have shaped the problems that these organizations address, how they are working for social change, and ultimately examining how your own perspectives change as a result of your service.

Daily Discussion Questions and Quizzes (15%)

In preparation for class discussion, you will complete the assigned readings and answer the discussion questions posted on our Cougar Course. As you read and take notes, include:

- A few key quotations (and page number). *These can be used in your service-learning reflections and your final paper.*
- A few ideas or questions you would like to discuss with your classmates.

We will have regular **reading quizzes** in class. These cannot be made up if you are late or absent; however, I will drop the 2 lowest quiz grades.

Note: *You will be able to use your notebook (but not your textbook) for the quizzes!*



#Equality #Pride #MeToo
 #TimesUp #YouKnowMe
 #Girlpower
 #TransIsBeautiful
 #Feminism #LGBT
 #ThisGirlCan #fem2
 #EverydaySexism
 #AllMenCan #HeForShe
 #LovesLove #GirlsInSTEM

Social Media Activism: Twitter (5%)
 We will use Twitter as a tool to keep updated on topics we discuss in class. To receive full credit, **post 10 activism tweets** over the course of the semester (*no more than one per week*).

Your tweets should:

- **Link** to an article (from a reliable source!) related to gender or sexuality.
- Include your own **commentary** (*a brief paragraph of at least 250 characters*) that serves to educate people in the class and in the Twitterverse about the issue. (For example, give a brief summary, relate it to another issue discussed in class, or tell a related story. Don't just respond with something like "I can't believe this!")
- Include a relevant **hashtag** connecting your comment to an ongoing online discussion (see some examples here or invent your own!).
- Also include the hashtag **#CSU101** and share your tweets via direct message to **@Ccujec** to get credit.

Grading of Tweets

4-5 points each	<i>Comments are clear and thoughtful. Comments relate well to readings/discussion. Tweet includes a relevant link to an article that relates to that week's discussion. You include a relevant hashtag, such as #Pride</i>
2-3 points each	<i>Comments less clear, show moderate thoughtfulness. Comments not as clearly related to readings/discussion. Tweets do not include a relevant link.</i>
0-1 points each	<i>Tweets missing/not submitted on time. Comments superficial, not related to readings/discussion.</i>

Final Presentation (10%)

After working all semester with your Community Partner, you will prepare a 5-10-minute presentation that integrates your learning with course concepts. You may do this presentation with one or more classmates if they worked at your same site. See Cougar Courses for assignment specifics and grading rubric.



Take Action Project (and checkpoint assignments) (25%)

For your final project, you will conduct research on a topic that impacts the lives of the community you have been working with and propose some ways to take action. Your final project will include:

- A detailed description of your issue (including research from at least 4 academic-quality sources) and quotations from stakeholders whom you have interviewed
- A brief video clip on your issue
- Concrete ways for your audience to take action

See assignment specifics and rubrics in Cougar Courses.



Extra Credit (up to +3%)

You may attend up to two campus or community activist events related to issues of gender, sexuality, class, and/or race for extra credit (let me know in advance). These must be outside the realm of your service learning. You must write a response to the event (250 words min.), reflecting on the event's goals, whether or not it met the goals, content/structure of the event, and describe to the class how it shaped your thinking about activism. You can earn 1.5% added to your final grade for each event.

How I'll determine your grade

ASSIGNMENTS	%
Participation	15%
In-class Reading Quizzes	15%
Service Learning Onboarding and Reflections	30%
Take-Action Project (and checkpoint assignments)	25%
Activism Tweets	5%
Final Presentation	10%
Total 100%	

Final grades are assigned as follows:

A 93% and above	B- 80 – 82%	D+ 68 – 69%
A- 90 – 92%	C+ 78 – 79%	D 63 – 67%
B+ 88 – 89%	C 73 – 77%	D- 60 – 62%
B 83 – 87%	C- 70 – 72%	F 59% and below

Course Calendar

See our Cougar Course for specific assignment details and due dates.

Week 1: Introduction to the Class and to Service Learning

How is Service-Learning different from volunteering?

How am I going to change the world this semester?

Week 2: Introduction to course concepts

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 1 (pdf will be posted in Cougar Courses to give you time to obtain the textbook)

Week 3: Where do we learn gender?

- Service Learning On-boarding Deadline
- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 2

Week 4: Gender and difference

- Service Learning Reflection 1 Due
- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 3

Week 5: The “rules” of gender

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 4

Week 6: Gender’s intersection with other identities

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 5

Week 7: Men and masculinities

- Service Learning Reflection 2 Due
- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 6

Week 8: Women and femininities

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 7
- Prepare questions and schedule an interview with your site supervisor

Week 9: Institutions and inequality

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 8

- **Find an article** about the community or neighborhood of your service learning site that relates to the challenges discussed with your supervisor.

Week 10: Evolving institutions

- **Service Learning Reflection 3 Due (worth double points)**
- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 9

Week 11: Gender and sexualities

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 10
- **Take Action Project: Choose Topic and list sources**

Week 12: Gender and families

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 11

Week 13: Gender and work

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 12
- **Take Action Project: Annotated Bibliography and Outline**

Week 14: Gender and politics

- **Service Learning Reflection 4 Due**
- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 13

Week 15: Agency and Resistance

- Readings:
 - *Gender*, Chapter 14
- In-class Presentations

Week 16: Wrapping Up

- **Take Action Project: Due Online**

A few course policies

Due dates are firm. All assignments are due when listed on Cougar Courses. Late assignments are accepted with a deduction of 5% per day. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due by class time. If you cannot make it to class the day an assignment is due, you can ask a friend to submit it for you. Familiarize yourself with the printing stations on campus. *You should not email your homework to professors, which they need to print out.*

When sending emails, be professional. Always use your CSUSM e-mail account, include an informative subject, and a salutation that includes your name and my class you are attending.



Academic honesty is expected of all students. As outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy, all written work and oral presentation assignments must be original work. All ideas/material that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate citations and references to the original sources. Incidents of Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students.

How to contribute to a positive classroom environment



Our readings and discussions will focus on challenging, mature and sensitive topics that may trigger strong emotions. Disagreements will occur, and open discussion is welcome. However, we will treat each other with respect, following these guidelines:

- Use classmates' **preferred name and pronouns**.
- Whenever possible, try to **begin your comments with common ground or positives**. For example, "I like what Maria said about..." or "I agree that..., but..."
- **Focus your comments on academic issues and ideas** discussed in our readings, not on people.
- **Use "I" language** to rather than "you" language and avoid sweeping generalizations. For example, instead of saying "You don't know what you're talking about," you could say "I disagree with the idea that..."
- **Refrain from using potentially offensive language** that doesn't respect another person or a group of people (sexist, racist, heterosexist, homophobic, ablelist, ageist, etc.).
- **Only use personal stories if they are relevant** to course topics and you feel comfortable sharing them. Keep in mind that your personal examples do not disprove research and statistics.
- **Respect the confidentiality of student discussions**. It takes courage to share our perspectives and experiences. Please do not repeat personal information about classmates outside of class.
- **Keep a cool head**. If a classmate has said something that seems offensive, ask the person to clarify so that we avoid possible misunderstandings.
- **Talk to me** if there is conflict or discomfort with one of your classmates, and we will strive to resolve it.

I check my e-mail regularly and will try to respond within 24 hours on the weekdays (M-Th), and 48 hours over the weekend (F-Su). If you have not heard from me by that time, resend your e-mail, or, better yet, come talk to me during office hours.

Where can I get help?

I am committed to helping you succeed in this course! Everyone experiences challenges, and you deserve to get the help you need to be successful in this class and at CSUSM. Please let me know if you are struggling with course material, Service-Learning logistics, or challenges outside of class. I am happy to meet with you and/or connect you with campus resources, such as those listed below.

The **Academic Success Center** supports students throughout their learning. They collaborate with faculty and staff across campus to innovate academic programming for all students within the University. Not only do they have study spaces, but they also offer tutoring, workshops, programs, and events to enhance your academic experience. Phone: (760) 750-3278; Website: www.csusm.edu/asc/ Location: Extended Learning Building (ELB) 286; Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:30pm

The **Writing Center** offers one-on-one feedback on writing assignments for any class at all stages of the writing process. All students are encouraged to get feedback on writing assignments in order to clarify thoughts, structure and expression. You will get a better grade too! FREE drop-in and by-appointment tutoring is available at the Writing Center by certified student consultants. Click here to schedule an appointment with a tutor: <https://appointments.csusm.edu/> Phone: (760) 750-4192; Website: www.csusm.edu/writingcenter; Location: Extended Learning Building (ELB) 273; Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00am-6:00pm, Friday 9:00am-2:00pm

CSUSM Title IX Coordinator Bridget Blanshan is the campus administrator responsible for assisting students with issues related to sexual assault, harassment and/or discrimination. Dr. Blanshan can be reached by email at bblansha@csusm.edu or by calling (760) 750-4056.

Student Outreach and Referral (SOAR) is a centralized service for all members of the University community seeking to assist students in finding answers to questions, resolving concerns or identifying opportunities to maximize their success. SOAR provides individual attention to students and facilitates personalized referral to University resources. To contact SOAR, e-mail soar@csusm.edu or call 760-750-SOAR (7627) during operating hours, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) is available to confidentially assist you with mental health issues (depression, anxiety, relationship and family conflict, etc.). They also help sexual assault victims understand their medical and reporting options. Students may contact the University's new Sexual Violence Advocate and Educator Christa Wenzel to confidentially discuss rights and reporting options at CSUSM and with law enforcement. For appointments,

call 760-750-4915 or walk in to the Center during operating hours. Website:
<https://www.csusm.edu/shcs/hoursofservice/index.html>

Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS). If you are a student that needs an accommodation to learn, great; let's touch base so we can determine the best way to support you. If you haven't already done so, you will also need approval for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300 and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, TDD (760) 750-4909 or by email at: dss@csusm.edu Feel free to meet with me during my office hours or in another private setting to ensure your confidentiality.