Gender and Culture

This is an introductory course on the anthropology of gender. Some questions we start with include: What is gender? How does gender matter in our everyday life? Do our bodies define our sexual preferences? What role does biology play in what we perceive to be “typically” male and female behavior and what role does cultural learning play? What room is there for ambiguity in gender and the social expression of sexualities? Are there different ways of being masculine and feminine? How can one account for differences in status between women and men? Do the development of technology, changing political and economic structures affect our gender? We will cover how anthropological cross-cultural studies have contributed to our understand of gender. We will also reflect upon how gender became a category of analysis for anthropologists. In the first half of this course, Gender as a Cultural Construct, we will read more theoretical materials to engage related literature. Then, in the second half of the semester, The Production of Difference, we will use ethnographic research to address following topics: Family, kinship and work; the role of the state; masculinity and global capitalism; “alternative” sexualities, race and gender; consumption and performance and migration.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon completing this course, students will be able to:
• examine how gender becomes an analytical category for anthropology;
• understand gender and sexual diversities in different cultures;
• analyze how gender intersects with other forms of differences and understand hierarchies in our societies;
• cultivate critical reflections about gender stereotypes and choose your own standpoint;
• and do independent research on a gender related topic.

Readings:
All required materials will be available on Blackboard.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:
This seminar course is discussion intensive. Students are expected to finish all required readings beforehand and participate actively in class discussion.

Class participation 20%
Seminar facilitation 30%
Mid-term review paper 20%
Final essay 30%
Participation: based on your performance in lectures. You will not be evaluated by the quality of your comments but whether you have prepared for the class (done the reading) and actively engaged in the discussion.

Seminar Facilitation: From week 3, students will take turns to be the seminar facilitators. Facilitators are in charge of 1) preparing a no more than one-page outline (keywords, points or questions) before class and 2) facilitating seminar discussion. Facilitation is a best way to help you develop a thorough understanding of a topic and quickly learned how to actively participate in a seminar. The instructor will give the facilitators full support and will wrap up the class in the last 30 mins.

Midterm review paper: Students are expected to choose a topic for your final paper earlier on and submit a review paper in week 7 that synthetically reviews at least 3 articles/works (including but not limited to required course materials) related to your topic. This assignment help you to start contextualize and think carefully about your final essay earlier and give you time to seek for the class’ input and to further develop your idea. Length for reference: 1200-1800 words in English or 2400 - 3600 words in Chinese. Due: 17 October.

Final Essay: An analytical essay that elaborates the gender-related topic of your choice (No more than 2500 words in English; 5000 words in Chinese). You are required to use materials from this course to develop your argument. However, you can certainly use extra materials too. This essay gives you a chance to synthetically review what you’ve learned in classes and use them to develop a deeper and critical understanding of the topic you are interested in. Due: 7 December.

*Formats and other requirements: 1) Please use double-space setting, font size 12 or larger, and standard margins.
*Extra reminder about essay writing: A good essay is a concise one with a clear thesis or argument. It shows your curiosity and your efforts in organizing your thoughts and your creativity to answer your question. As long as it is succinct, the length of it is not a top concern at all.

Lecture Outline:

Section I: Gender as a Cultural Construct

WK 1 (Sep. 5): Introduction
Syllabus and course overview

Wk 2 (Sep. 12) Gender in Cross-cultural Perspective
Lewin, Ellen
Rosaldo, Michelle  
Vance, Carole  

Recommended:  
Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black  
Bonvillain, Nancy  
Ko, Dorothy  


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBjWYDTs  
Film/Video: Oppressed Majority (Majorité Opprimée)  
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4UWxIVvT1A ) (by Eleonore Pourriat, 2014, 11 mins)  

WK 3 (Sep 19): Division of Labor and Inequality  
Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black  
Brown, Judith K.  
Crehan, Kate  

Recommended:  
Lamphere, Louise  

WK 4 (Sep 26): Universal Binary, Hierarchy and Intersexual  
Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black
Ortner, Sherry
Fausto-Sterling, Anne

Recommended:

Film/Video 1: Me, My Sex and I. BBC One. (2011, 50 mins)  
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87XvVdlw2LK)

WK 5 (Oct. 3): Discourse, Body and Sexuality
Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black
Martin, Emily
Butler, Judith
Vance, Carole

Recommended:
Martin, Emily

WK 6 (Oct. 10): Reading Week and Midterm Review

Recommended:
Rubin, Gayle

Section II: The Production of Difference

*Midterm review paper due on 17 October in class.
WK 7 (Oct. 17): Family and Work

Wolf, Margery

Yan, Yunxiang

Nakano, Lynne Y

Recommended:

Townsend, Nicholas W.

Film/Video: Asante Market Women (1991, 53min.)

WK 8 (Oct. 24): Modern State and Gender

Rapp, Rayna

Yang, M. M.-H.

Heng, Geraldine & Janadas Devan

Recommended:

Allison, Anne

Hershatter, Gail

Film/Video: Through Chinese Women’s Eyes (1997, 52 mins)
WK 9 (Oct. 31): Manhood and Neoliberalism
Bourgois, Philippe
Gutmann, Mathew

Recommended:

WK 10 (Nov. 7): “Alternative” Sexualities
Valentine, David
Whitehead, Harriet

Recommended:
Sommer, Mathew H.
Pelez, Michael
D’Emilio, John
Gayatri, Reddy & Serena Nanda

WK 11 (Nov. 14): Gendered Race, Racial Gender
Stoler, Ann Laura
Schein, Louisa
Recommended:
de La Cadena, Marisol

Somerville, Siobhan

WK 12 (Nov. 21): Consumption, Performance and Gender
Hanser, Amy

Gillette, Maris Boyd

Recommended:
Freeman, Carla

Bordo, Susan


Film/Video: Killing Us Softly 4. (2010, 45 mins)
Film/Video: Dove — the Evolution of a Model [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hibyAJOSW8U)
Film/Video: Barbie – You Can Be Anything [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1vnsqbnAkk)

WK 13 (Nov. 28): Migration and Gender Diversity
Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild

Lan, Pei-Chia

Constable, Nicole

*Final essay due on 7 December at NAH407.*

**Policies**

Late Submission: Late submission will suffer a fraction of a grade per day. For example, an A will become an A-.

Academic Honesty: You are required to cite properly (guidelines: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/tstyle.doc) and please refer to the university website (http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/index.htm and http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english/resource/referencing_avoidingplagiarism1.pdf) to avoid plagiarism.

Laptop Policy: This course discourages students from using mobile phones, tablets, or laptops in class.