

Philosophy 202: Gender Issues
Fall 2008, Wed. 7-9:50 p.m., AL 208

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Course website: is on UW ACE
(<https://uwangel.uwaterloo.ca/>)

T.A.: TBA
T.A.'s email: TBA

T.A.'s office: TBA
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Course Description:

This course considers a number of challenges and defences of traditional sex/gender divisions. What, if anything, is the difference between sex and gender? Is one category more fluid than the other? Are either or both of the two categories historically/culturally-contingent? How much of a role do facts about biology play in our ideas about sex and gender? Conversely, how much of a role do our ideas about sex and gender play in the way we do biology? Is sex a natural kind (like gold or iron)? Just how many sexes are there? It turns out that the answers to these questions are anything but obvious. This course teaches students to think critically about these issues, and to challenge their own preconceptions, through a survey of historical and contemporary texts from philosophy, theology, psychology and the life sciences, and through a viewing and analysis of some surprising films (and one tv show).

Expected course outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following things:

Course content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → name some key thinkers in the history of gender studies and accurately restate some of their core arguments; → explain key concepts such as gender attribution, ethnomethodology, essentialism, penis envy, autoeroticism, totality, dualism, stewardship, teleology, etiology, biodeterminism and social constructivism;
Applying your knowledge:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → apply theoretical approaches in gender studies to individual cases in films, television and the news; → critically evaluate arguments, texts and preconceptions about gender issues;
Reading and writing in the discipline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → read and accurately exposit primary source texts and secondary literature from a variety of disciplines and periods; → write careful, focused, well-organized philosophical prose about individual texts and issues.

Warning:

This course contains material of a sexually explicit nature. (Perhaps more frighteningly, it also involves a considerable amount of sometimes difficult reading. Seriously.)

Text:

Phil 202 (Gender Issues) Coursepack, available at the Campus Bookstore.

Some notes on the coursepack: (1) The works anthologized in this coursepack are entire articles/chapters. For some of these, only a range of pages within that selection will be mandatory reading. These page ranges will always be posted at least a week in advance on UW ACE. If no range is specified, the entire selection is mandatory reading.

(2) This coursepack is radically unlike the one used for the DE version of this course; so take care not to purchase the latter. (3) However, this coursepack is only slightly different from the one used in the Winter 2008 on-campus version of this course; so you might try to save some money by getting your hands on a copy. (4) As well, all readings for this course will be available on one hour reserve at Dana Porter Library.

Work required:

Attendance	5%
The weekly question	10%
Short response paper (3 pages)	15%
Mid-term test (in-class)	15%
Term paper (5 pages)	25%
Final exam	30%
Participation bonus marks	5%

The fine print:

Attendance: To do well in this course, it is important to attend class regularly and stay on top of the material. To encourage students to do this, I shall award you .5% of your final grade **for each regularly scheduled class you attend**, to a maximum of 5%.

(Notice that this means you can miss three weeks and still get the full 5%. If you have to miss more than three weeks due to illness or similar, be sure to come and see me early with the appropriate documentation so that you're not unfairly penalized for this absence. If you're not sure what counts as appropriate documentation, just ask me.)

The Weekly Question: Every week from week 2 to week 12, there will be a 5 minute exercise in which students answer a single question on material from the previous week's reading/lecture. Each question is worth 1% of the final grade. Only your top ten grades on The Weekly Question count toward your final mark (That is – you get one “get out of jail free” card.) There are no make-up opportunities available for the weekly question.

Papers: Papers must be submitted by the beginning of the lecture on the day they are due. Any assignment submitted once the lecture has commenced will be considered one day late. Late essays are subject to a penalty of 5% per business day.

Final Exam: The final examination will occur during the scheduled December examination period at a date/time/location to be announced. Note: Student travel plans

are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (see <http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/finalexams.html>).

Participation bonus marks: Phil 202 students can earn up to 5% in bonus marks based on their contributions to class discussion. I will award “Philbucks” to students who participate in group discussions – whether by simply asking a question, stating a view, or arguing for a position. At the end of the term, these Philbucks can be redeemed for up to 5% in bonus marks (.5% for each Philbuck earned/maximum of one Philbuck per class). Note: This bonus mark cannot push any student’s grade higher than 100%. As well, questions about course “housekeeping” – i.e., office hours, test details, etc. do not count as contributions to discussion. To earn Philbucks, you must participate in philosophical discussions about the readings, films, and/or lecture material. But don’t be scared – you don’t need to be “deep” or to say the “right thing.” You just need to weigh in.

UW ACE Site and Email:

I will post details concerning tests, review sessions and assignments on the course UW ACE site. It is the individual student’s responsibility to check this on a regular basis. From time to time, I will send students important emails regarding (for instance) readings, assignments, review sessions and tests (or -- if they should arise -- last minute emergencies that affect a scheduled lecture). If you would rather receive these emails at your home account (e.g., hotmail, gmail, rogers...), then you must enter that email address on your UWDir entry. To log on to UWDir and update your entry, follow this link: <https://ego.uwaterloo.ca/~uwdir/Update>. It is your responsibility to stay current with course news by regularly checking whichever email account is listed on your UWDir entry.

Schedule

Final lecture subjects and readings are subject to fine tuning, with notice. Students are responsible for doing the assigned readings before the corresponding lectures. Lectures are intended to supplement, problematize and clarify the readings, not to replace them. Any material from course readings could be covered on the examinations, whether it has been specifically discussed in the lectures or not.

University dates	Week	Topic	Date	Readings/ Assignments/ Tests
Sept. 8 – lectures begin	1	Introduction.	Sept. 10	No reading.
Sept. 19 – on-campus open class registration ends	2	Methodological considerations.	Sept. 17	Foucault, Overall, Kessler and McKenna
Sept. 26 – last day to drop a course with 100% refund and no penalty	3	Are human beings fundamentally sexed?	Sept. 24	Aristotle, Deslauriers, Genesis, Augustine, Aquinas

	4	The "second sex."	Oct. 1	Beauvoir, Freud, Irigaray
	5	Border troubles. Film: <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i>	Oct. 8	Plato, Groneberg
	6	Border troubles, cont'd. Film: <i>The Aggressives</i>	Oct. 15	D'Anglure, Mastroeni Mid-term test
Oct. 24 – last day for 50% tuition refund	7	Medical issues on the border.	Oct. 22	Fausto-Sterling, Kessler, Teresi and McAuliffe Reply paper due
Oct.31 – drop period 1 ends. Last day to drop with a grade of WD	8	Determinisms.	Oct. 29	Darwin, Clark
	9	Indeterminisms.	Nov. 5	Laqueur
	10	Are the sexes inherently unequal? TV Episode: "I Was Made to Love You" from <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>	Nov. 12	Rousseau, Wollstonecraft
	11	Sex as a social construction.	Nov. 19	Hacking, Bordo
	12	Catch-up, conclusion, review	Nov. 26	No reading Term paper due
Dec. 1 – lectures end; Dec. 4 – last day to drop without a petition; Dec. 5-19 – final examination period.	13	Happy holidays!		

Staying safe:

Walking home alone after class? Consider taking advantage of the following campus resources to help you stay safe:

Walksafe Patrol: <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infopol/safe.htm>

Safety Van: <http://www.housing.uwaterloo.ca/residences/safety.html>

Personal Safety Guide:

http://www.safetyoffice.uwaterloo.ca/hse/personal_safety/personalguide.html

More fine print:

Avoidance of academic offences:

All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (section 1; on the Web at www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infousec/Policies/policy71.htm). If you need help in learning what constitutes an academic offence; how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission; how to follow appropriate rules with respect to “group work” and collaboration; or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your TA and/or your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean. You may also wish to consult the Arts Faculty Web page, “Avoiding Academic Offences” at http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html.

Students’ right to grieve:

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>.

Students with disabilities:

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.