

COM 280: Gender, Culture, and Communication

Summer 2019

Instructor: Dr. Katharine P. Zakos

Class Time: Monday–Thursday, 8:30am–10:30 am

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Location: Classroom #2

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

- **Attendance and Participation:** 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 extremely condensed nature of the course, there is a ZERO ABSENCE policy in this class. For each absence, 20 points will be subtracted from your participation grade.
- **Make-up Exams and Late Work:** Make-up exams will not be given except in the case of a documented illness or family emergency. 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. Furthermore, late assignments will be penalized 3 points per day late.
- **Technology:** The use of cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices is prohibited unless explicitly required by the instructor in order to complete class-related work. All cell phones will be collected at the beginning of every class period, so please make sure that they are turned off or set to vibrate. Failure to follow these policies will result in a ZERO for that day's participation grade (which is the equivalent of being counted absent and will be recorded as such).
- **Etiquette:** Please remember to be courteous and respectful at all times. If you do not understand something, please ask. (Chances are pretty good that somebody else has the exact same question.)

Required Reading

Fixmer-Oraiz, N., & Wood, J. T. (2018). *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender and Culture* (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.

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

Course Assignments

Exams (100 points each; 200 points total): There will be **TWO** take-home exams throughout the course of the semester—a midterm exam and a final exam. Each exam is worth 100 points. More information on these assignment will be provided in class. Exams **MUST BE UPLOADED TO MOODLE BY MIDNIGHT ON THE DUE DATE**.

Reading Responses (100 points): Throughout the course, students will be asked to write a total of **FIVE** response papers addressing the assigned readings each week. You should incorporate concepts and terms you have learned in class, as well as specific references to the content of the reading for that week. Responses will be evaluated based on the depth and understanding you display of course concepts/themes, so be sure to include analysis of the topics, not just a description. Depth of engagement is key. Responses **MUST BE AT LEAST 350 WORDS LONG** and **MUST BE UPLOADED TO MOODLE BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DUE DATE**. (Refer to the Course Calendar for response essay due dates.)

Reflective Journal (100 points): One goal of this course is to think critically about gender and the role it plays in society, our own lives, and across cultures. In keeping with this theme, students will keep a journal in which they reflect on their own experiences with gender in their day-to-day lives. As many of these issues are highly personal, consider the types of responses you are willing to share with me. I can assure you that I consider your journals confidential material and will not share your responses with anyone else. At the same time, I do not want to force you to share experiences you would rather not disclose, so please feel free to proceed accordingly. Don't be afraid to carefully examine what you believe and why you believe what you believe. Most importantly, remember the journals are really for your benefit, not mine, so use them to meet your needs. You will write one journal entry per week (for a total of **FOUR**), and each journal entry should be at least 500 words long. Journal entries are **DUE EVERY SUNDAY** and **MUST BE UPLOADED TO MOODLE BY MIDNIGHT**.

Attendance and Participation (100 points): Attendance and participation are vital to your success in this course; furthermore, participation increases the likelihood that you will do well on the exams and course assignments, so it is in your best interest to participate (and you may even enjoy it!). Students are expected (and required) to participate in class discussions/activities every class; the goal is to dialogue about course topics and actively engage with ideas. As stated above, due to the extremely condensed nature of the course, there is a ZERO ABSENCE policy in this class. For each absence, 20 points will be subtracted from your participation grade. **If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from another student.**

Grading

Assignment	Point Value
Midterm Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Reading Responses	100 points
Reflective Journal	100 points
Attendance & Participation	100 points
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.

The full Honor Code is Section 11 of the current University Bulletin.

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 2019

Wk	Dates	Topic(s)	Readings	Assignments
1	7/1 7/2 7/3 7/4	GO Program Orientation (No Class) Course Introduction Studying Communication, Gender, & Culture Theoretical Approaches to Gender Development	Intro. & Ch. 1 Ch. 2	DUE WED. 7/3: Response Essay #1
2	7/8 7/9 7/10 7/11	<i>Activity & Group Discussion</i> Rhetorical Shaping of Gender: Images of Women Rhetorical Shaping of Gender: Images of Men Gendered Media	Ch. 3 Ch. 4 Ch. 11	DUE SUN. 7/7: Journal Entry #1 DUE TUES. 7/9: Response Essay #2
3	7/15 7/16 7/17 7/18	<i>Activity & Group Discussion</i> Gendered Verbal Communication Gendered Nonverbal Communication MIDTERM EXAM	Ch. 5 Ch. 6	DUE SUN. 7/14: Journal Entry #2 DUE TUES. 7/16: Response Essay #3 DUE THURS. 7/18: Midterm Exam
4	7/22 7/23 7/24 7/25	<i>Activity & Group Discussion</i> Becoming Gendered: The Early Years Gendered Education: Comm. in Schools Gendered Close Relationships	Ch. 7 Ch. 8 Ch. 9	DUE SUN. 7/21: Journal Entry #3 DUE TUES. 7/23: Response Essay #4
5	7/29 7/30 7/31 8/1 8/2	<i>Activity & Group Discussion</i> Gendered Organizational Communication Gendered Power & Violence <i>Course Wrap-Up/Final Discussion</i> FINAL EXAM	Ch. 10 Ch. 12 Epilogue	DUE SUN. 7/28: Journal Entry #4 DUE TUES. 7/30: Response Essay #5 DUE FRI. 8/2: Final Exam