



Department of Geography

GEOG 3412G: Geography of Gender

Winter 2013

Lecture: Tuesday 9:30-11:20am – SSC 3010

Tutorial: Tuesday 2:30-3:20 – P&AB 36

Draft Copy – Syllabus may be subject to change

Instructor:

James McLean

Office: SSC 2223

Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2pm; 3:30-4

Email:

Description:

This course provides an introduction to gender and geography; more specifically, to feminist geography in theory and in practice. Feminist thought has transformed the discipline of geography and our broader understanding of space and place over the last four decades. Feminist scholarship examines how the social construction of difference shapes the conditions and experiences of men, women (and others) in diverse geographic contexts. In this course we will chart the advancement of gender and geography through to contemporary feminist geography; explore the ways in which feminist methodologies have made important contributions to geography; and, explore the spatialities of gender/sexuality (public/private; home; street; identity/community; etc). Our focus will be on constructions and meanings of categories of gender/sexuality and how they intersect with other categories of difference (race or age, for example) in ways that produce, and are produced by, spaces at different scales (particular attention rests on the construction and representation of normative bodies and identities).

Skills Development-Geography:

A detailed and critical understanding of:

- how power relations and political relations are intellectually embedded
- gendered aspects to geographic studies at the undergraduate level
- geographical engagement with feminist theory

- the debates and issues surrounding the construction of sexed/gendered identity
- how sexed/gendered identities are expressed through a wide range of cultural media, such as literature, art, film, and music
- the cultural politics of men and women in relationship to debates concerning identity, place, and belonging
- current work in feminist geography, especially as a critique of normative social science as a masculinist discourse
- the relationship between gender/sex and multiple scales

Skills Development-General Academic:

An understanding of:

- the contested, contextual, and contingent notion of 'seeing', 'knowing', and understanding
- geographical concepts in different situations
- a diverse range of approaches to the generation of knowledge and understanding
- the diversity and interdependence of places at various scales
- the nature of change within society

Skills Development: Key Transferable Skills

An ability to:

- communicate ideas, principles, and theories effectively and fluently by written, oral, and visual means
- develop a sustained and reasoned argument
- identify, acquire, evaluate and synthesize information from a range of sources
- undertake independent as well as group oriented and collaborative learning
- reflect on the process of learning and evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses of self and peers

Prerequisites:

3rd or 4th year status at the University. Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Materials:

You will note two different kinds of readings on your syllabus: Core Readings and Seminar Readings. Core Readings supplement the lectures and provide far greater depth on course theories and concepts than can be achieved in an oral lecture. These readings provide a solid base from which you will draw as part of your understanding of course material, seminar discussions, and your research work over the term. You do not need to prepare reading cards for these readings. However, they are included for exam content.

Seminar readings refer to those articles for which you are to read, note, and prepare reading cards for in order to fully participate in discussions during class. These readings also form part of the material you will work on in your study groups during the class.

There is no textbook for this class - All online readings can either be accessed through the library website or via WebCT as copyright legislation allows.

**The material to cover demands significant attention to reading. Core readings must be done before the lecture. Likewise, readings assigned for seminar must be read prior to attending seminar in order to fully participate.*

Evaluation:

Participation:

Attendance	
Engagement	
Reading Cards	
Writing/Reflection	
	25%

Research Project:

Research Proposal	10	(Feb 5)
Research Discussion	5	(Mar 19)
Research Paper	<u>25</u>	(Mar 26)
	40%	

Midterm (Feb 12)

Prewritten Essay	5%
In-class Essay	<u>10%</u>
	15%

Final Exam **20%**

NOTE: Use of Electronic Devices: No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

General Evaluation Framework:

A+ (90-100) – Excellent - One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level

- Outstanding knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in use of these concepts/techniques
- Excellent demonstration of comprehension; superb oral, written and presentation skills

A (80-90) – Very Good - Superior work which is clearly above average

- Very Good knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in use of these concepts/techniques
- Strong demonstration of comprehension; strong oral, written and presentation skills

B (70-79) – Good - Meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory

- Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them
- Good demonstration of comprehension; Respectable oral, written and presentation skills

C (60-69) – Acceptable/Competent – Meets basic requirements

- Fairly Competent/Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them
- Reasonable demonstration of comprehension; average oral, written and presentation skills

D (50-59) – Marginally Passing – Minimally acceptable

- Minimum knowledge/ slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some but little ability to use them
- Poor demonstration of comprehension; oral, written and presentation skills need improving

F (0-49) – Unacceptable/Failing

- Unacceptable performance in most aspects of evaluation
- Demonstration of comprehension is unclear
- Generally misunderstands material/misinterprets instructions/demonstrates little or an uncaring effort

*****To be clear: you must achieve a minimum 50% or better final course grade in order to pass this course.**

Assignments:

Sustained & Engaged Seminar Participation (25)

The course will include a combination of lectures, readings, seminars, films, and in-class exercises. Students are expected to engage with the readings, the instructor, the Teaching Assistants, and the other students in order to foster a community of learners. Each student is expected to contribute to the class from their unique background of experiences while also considering a wide array of perspectives, theory, and research approaches. Your **seminar grading** reflects several levels of active participation throughout the course:

- **Attendance** – you must attend all seminars if expecting a high participation grade
- **Preparation** – come to seminar having read and noted all required material and having prepared all additional requested materials (discussion questions, arguments, supplemental material)
- For those seminars that include a reading discussion you are to prepare a **Reading Card** (4x6 in size) for each separate reading to bring to and use in seminar. I may request to see your card(s) at any time. Each reading card **must** contain the following:
 - A summary statement of the articles' thesis, central question, or main argument
 - What you consider to be three supporting arguments/statements about how the thesis is argued/supported/demonstrated – be specific
 - An extension: how has this article made you think about other arguments or examples; in what ways does this article/argument connect to other aspects of the course or course concepts?
- **Active participation** – take advantage of the seminar to both soak in what others say and make your own contribution – It is definitely not how much you say or how loud you say it; an extraordinary contribution can be made by communicating your focus, attention and comprehension to your seminar leader in non verbal ways
- By **sustained participation** I expect you to be consistently engaged throughout the term
- **Laptops will not be permitted during tutorials or seminar discussions.**

Research Project (40%)

Your term research project consists of three components: a Research Proposal (10%), a Research Discussion (5%) and a Research paper (25%).

Research Proposal (10%):

The proposal is the first step in writing your term paper. Identifying a suitable topic is part of the learning process, and you should not expect to be assigned a research topic. The course outline will provide you with some broader themes within geographies of gender to explore. In selecting a topic, it is not enough to merely identify a general subject area. You need to identify a problem that is focused enough for you to research. You must get my approval of your research topic before you hand in your proposal. Please do this in office hours.

Your proposal for research must be at least 750 words in length; text must be double-spaced and in 12 point Times New Roman font; your document must have 1 inch margins. Please include the following in your proposal:

- A short introduction indicating why your topic is important and how it is geographical.
- A clear research thesis; possible supporting arguments.

- A preliminary reference list including at least 5 fully and properly cited scholarly, academic sources (APA style: this must appear on a separate sheet of paper entitled Works Cited and does not count toward the word count). This is a geography course, and therefore, your sources should primarily originate in geographic publications. It should be evidently clear how these sources connect to your thesis/arguments.
- A brief discussion of the articles reviewed thus far (Do not include quotations or in-text references at this point).
- You will only get full marks for following these guidelines and clearly indicating the geographical nature of the topic you plan to research.
- No late proposals will be graded—if late you forfeit the 10%. However, you are still required to have a proposal reviewed before you write your paper.

Research Discussion (5%):

You will prepare a clear and concise summary of your research project to present to the class. Presentations will be approximately 10 minutes in length and include opportunities for questions. Your audience will not have read your research paper so it is imperative that your presentation communicates the context of your research more generally as well as the central argument that you make. Powerpoint may be used (1-2 slides max.) but it is not necessary. This will include peer-evaluation.

Research Paper (25%):

Take this opportunity to explore in greater detail a topic of your choice within the themes of the course. Further details will be available when the term begins.

Midterm Exam (15%)

Your midterm consists of both a pre-prepared essay submission (5%) as well as an in-class essay (10%).

The midterm reflects our focus on feminist research methodologies--as Moss (2002) states, "Taking on, Thinking about, and Doing Feminist Research in Geography." As with our seminar discussions, you will be expected to have read with care all readings leading up to the midterm and prepared yourself for writing and essay style response to the in-class midterm.

In addition, there is a pre-written assignment that can be completed anytime before the midterm which you will hand in for grading on the day of the midterm exam.

Pre-Midterm Assignment (5%):

Your task is to prepare a short report on each of three articles (listed below and identified in the weekly schedule). Each report should be 1 page only, (400-500 words), single-spaced, 12 pt font, and New Times Roman. You will be required to insert the word count at

the end of each report. Only one of these papers will be handed in (my choice) at the midterm for grading worth 5% of your midterm grade.

If your paper is not handed in on the day of the midterm, it will not be accepted and you will forfeit 5% of your midterm grade.

Your report should include the following:

- A brief introduction leading to the identification of the articles' thesis, question, or main argument.
- An executive summary of the article (no longer than 250 words); concise and succinct.
- A brief discussion of one aspect you found to be convincing/interesting/thought-provoking about the article and why.
- A brief discussion of one argument/statement/perspective which you found difficult to understand/believe and why.

Core Readings:

These will be provided when the term begins.

Final Exam (20%)

Your final exam will be comprehensive and cumulative – covering the entire course. It will include short questions and essays.

Policies:

General

Respect is an essential ingredient to a good university experience, and one that is missing in a lot of cases. You can't respect someone who doesn't respect you, and you definitely can't respect his or her opinion. Since all of us are in this experience together, we ought to make it easier on each other. Someone will appreciate your thoughtfulness, and it won't be long before you're appreciating the thoughtfulness of someone else.

Attending university should be stimulating, informative and sometimes even fun, but only when the environment is conducive to learning. While instructors have varying levels of tolerance for various classroom behaviors, you make your own experience enjoyable by showing courtesy and respect toward your classmates and instructors alike.

The general rule for university courses is that students should expect to devote about 2 hours of preparation outside of class for every credit hour earned. For this class, that means about 4 hours per week (for weekly work; this does not include research and

completing assignments). Most importantly, you should read, listen, and view actively, not passively. Think about what you're reading, listening to, and viewing. Take notes.

I am happy for you to address me by my first name: James.

Coming and Going

If you arrive first to class, don't sit on the aisle seat just because you want to be one of the first to leave when class does inevitably end. Move to the middle of the row, and don't make people climb over you, your purse, your skateboard and your laptop to find a seat.

Be on time: notify the instructor in advance if you may need to arrive late or leave early. If your schedule just won't allow you to get to this class on time, drop it and take one that is convenient for you. If you do arrive late to class, don't make a big production out of it. Please sit down quietly near the entrance where you entered the room.

Leaving early from class communicates a lack of respect; don't schedule your job, other appointments or activities during your class hour. If you have to leave early, please sit near the exit so that your departure does not disturb the class.

Do not cut the instructor off at the end of class. The instructor has the right to finish his or her thought at the end of the class period and conclude the class in an orderly manner without people standing up and walking out. Other people are still trying to listen, and your exit is distracting to them as well as me. The class will end eventually-you're in no danger of dying of dehydration or hunger by staying a few extra minutes. (There is a separate list of rules for instructors. On that list is a rule that says "Do not routinely keep students more than a minute or two after the official end of the period." I'll do my best!)

Do not ask the instructor to go over again material you missed because you skipped a class. Please ensure you have at least one other person in the class you can turn to for missed notes, handouts, or other critical information. Neither the Course Instructor nor TA has the responsibility to re-teach missed classes or alert absentees of important dates or information.

Classroom Conduct

Turn off your cell phone/log off Facebook: talking, reading, texting and instant messaging are inappropriate activities during class time. If you insist on engaging in these, you will be asked to leave the class. If you forget, and a phone goes off I will expect you to turn it off instantly and apologize to me and also directly to your classmates.

The use of laptops during lecture is a privilege not a right; abuse the privilege and risk losing it.

Chatting during lectures and class discussions or while fellow students are giving oral reports is unacceptable. Most instructors, myself included, don't mind if you whisper to

your neighbor for clarification of something being discussed. However, during lecture or when the group is focused on a topic, individual conversations between students, even about that topic, are disruptive and rude and will be dealt with firmly.

Be patient and courteous to other students when they ask a question or make a statement, even when the subject may be obvious to you. The most important place for respect and courtesy to be present is when you are conversing with others. Discussion, and in some cases arguments, are a big part of the learning experience. But it seems that a lot of us never learned the proper rules for arguing in the first place. It's not the person who shouts the loudest, talks the most or gets in the final word that wins. Just because someone disagrees with you on a certain issue does not make him or her a bad person. No argument can be settled with a blanket comment like, "You're intolerant," "You're Anti-American," "You don't know what you're talking about," or "It's all just a part of a right- or left-wing agenda." Finally, insults have no place in a proper academic discussion. Just because you might be mad enough to say something uncalled-for it doesn't give you the right to.

If you are going to eat and drink in class, do so quietly and neatly; clean up after yourself. Remember, the reality is that you and your fellow classmates must endure the spots, stains and odors all semester (and in coming semesters!)

Electronic Communications and Office Hours

There are some general guidelines for good practice when communicating with your instructor or teaching assistant through email:

- You **MUST** communicate using your Western account **ONLY**.
- Please ensure that you include the course name and number in the subject line.
- Please include your name in your email – your email address does not always indicate your name.
- Email communications must only be used for simple questions that can be addressed quickly. For more complex concerns you must attend office hours.
- Allow **48 hours** for responses via email – including setting up appointments if you are not able to attend office hours. **Do not expect responses over the weekend.** You need to plan ahead.
- We **will NOT email grades** to you. If you miss the class in which we hand back an assignment, you can pick it up during office hours or arrange an appointment. We will not bring assignments to lecture a second time.

Office hours are the perfect opportunity to talk about your questions and concerns. If you are having difficulties in the course, I implore you to talk to me as soon as possible. Of course I can meet with you at the end of the term, however, issues are more easily dealt with and solved if you talk to me as quickly as possible!! **BE PROACTIVE!**

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be penalized **10%** (if the assignment is worth 20 then 2 marks are taken off the top) if handed in during the 24-hour period after the deadline and **another 5% for each 24 hour period** thereafter (again, if out of 20 this means an additional mark will be deducted per day). Assignments not submitted within 5 days following the due date will **NOT** be accepted – you will receive ZERO.

To avoid penalty, students must provide legitimate documentation from a doctor and/or counselor. Furthermore, you are responsible for getting all written assignments into my hands (of your TA's) by the deadline. You should not put written assignments in a mailbox, under a door etc. without expressed permission. If you do this without permission and the paper is misplaced, your grade will be penalized as a late assignment **determined by when we receive the paper.**

Medical Accommodation Policy for Undergraduates:

In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf

Documentation from Student Health Services:

Students obtaining documentation from Student Health Services should sign a "release of information." This form authorizes Student Health Services to provide information to the student's home Faculty. Release of information forms are available from, and can be arranged through, the student's home Faculty Academic Counseling service.

Grade Appeals

There will be a strict protocol for the appeal of any grade:

Step 1. If you feel the grade you have received for an assignment or test is not appropriate you must produce a 1-page note which specifically points to the way your assignment satisfies the description of a higher grade and return your assignment to your TA. The TA may a) adjust the grade if a technical mistake was made (e.g. error in the addition of marks), b) return it to you with any additional explanation which may be warranted or c) change the grade upon notification of the instructor. Important: your grade can be adjusted up or down at this stage.

Step 2. If you are not satisfied with the grade, you may submit the assignment or test and 1-page note to the Instructor who may a) speak to the TA about an adjustment or b) return it to the student unchanged. Important: your grade can be adjusted up or down at this stage.

Step 3. If the student is still not satisfied, he or she will have to engage in formal extra-departmental appeal processes.

***Again, at stage 1 and 2, your grade may remain unchanged, increase or decrease. When requesting re-evaluation, be prepared for these possibilities.*

Accommodation

Western's commitment to accessibility:

The University of Western Ontario is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for persons studying, visiting and working at Western.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Academic Integrity: Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

This course requires that you form strong critical thinking and writing skills; you must conduct yourself in a professional manner. One of the most important things you can do is try your best – and *plagiarism is not trying*.

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writing, etc. which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. You are also plagiarizing if you change a few words in a quote then use it in your paper without citation. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which knowledge cannot be safely communicated.

It your responsibility to be aware of the University's policy and procedures regarding Academic Integrity including how to cite properly and paraphrase effectively (see links below). However, I want to make a special caution regarding material downloaded or found on the Internet. It is imperative that students treat material found on the Internet exactly the same as material found in a scholarly article or book: the material must be cited in the written text of an assignment if quoted or paraphrased. Material from any source must be properly cited.

Students are reminded that no essay is complete unless they can come to my office and explain it—this is something I might ask them to do if I am concerned about the legitimacy of your paper.

Schedule:

Week 1 - January 8 - Introduction/Orientation: Feminist Geographies

Week 2 - January 15 - Geography and Gender

Week 3 - January 22 - Introducing Masculinities

Week 4 - January 29 - Race, Feminism, Geography

Week 5 - February 5 - Queering Feminist Geography

Week 6 - February 12 - Midterm: Feminist Methodologies

Week 7 - February 19 - Reading Break - No Classes

Week 8 - February 26 - Bodies I: Sex(y)ing Bodies

Week 9 - March 5 - Feminist Geographies of Home

Week 10 - March 12 - Cities I: Public Space

Week 11 - March 19 - Research Discussion

Week 12 - March 26 - Bodies II: Power/Resistance

Week 13 - April 2 - Cities II: Claiming Space

Week 14 - April 9 - Nation, Conflict, Frontline Feminism