

## **Global Perspectives on Gender, Health, and Reproduction**

Women's Studies/DAAS 365  
Fall 2014  
**Tue-Thurs. (4-5:30pm), RM: MLB 2114**

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### **Course Description**

Feminists and Anthropologists have produced voluminous work on the body as a site of gendered and sexualized practices. Building on this rich corpus of literature, the course focuses on the body as a point of entry to examine the intersecting meanings of gender, health and reproduction and to understand their impact on cultural politics and the construction of social difference. By using various cross-cultural examples, we will discuss how gender, racial, and class differences are enacted and manifested in the divisions of social spaces, and in bodily conduct, function, hygiene, and the narration of health and sickness. In its entirety, the course attempts to introduce students to the complexity of the local and global processes underlying the cultural production of gender identities and social differentiation.

### **Course Evaluation**

Attendance (5%), assignments and active active participation in class (10%)	15%
Mid-term paper	30%
Facilitation	20%
Final group project (presentation 10%, 20% paper)	35%

Your grades depend on your attendance, good reading of material, and active participation in class discussions and presentations. Attendance is very important that missing more than one session drops your grade one level down (from A to B etc). I designed this course to help you enhance your writing, presentation, and discussion abilities. Readings are chosen to generate controversial issues on the topics to help enhance your ability to read, write, and discuss critically. You are expected to underline important points of controversy and debate from the reading and to be able to critique or support author's positions. **Also you will be asked to do *One* collective response paper at the end of your facilitation week (this is part of your assignment grade).** I expect that in every class, each of you will be able to speak and enhance class discussion and dialogue. Don't force yourself but be ready when you are comfortable to talk and voice your opinion when appropriate. Speaking in class is a good exercise to show how you understand the reading and how you formulate questions about important issues, be courteous, however, and not dominate discussion in order to allow your colleagues to speak too. In this class we will learn that all ideas are acceptable however controversial--without accepting plurality in our thinking it will be hard to learn or to critique our own intellectual positions.

Throughout the semester, you will be working in groups of (2-3) for facilitation, presentations, class assignments, and final project. The articles assigned for each week are classical articles that will help ground your knowledge about these topics. Each week, the group presenting will be asked to find a new article, book, or newspaper article related to each week's topic and to comment on it in class discussion and when you write your facilitation response paper. This extra material will also be graded as part of your assignment and class participation. I evaluate group work seriously to see how you work collaboratively in reading, discussing, and sharing opinions (or disagree) about debated issues. You are expected to do *one* group facilitation and *One* group presentation on your final group project. You will be writing a mid-term *paper* (5 pages) based on a take-home exam question and *a final paper* (10-12 pages) based on a final group project based on a researched topic chosen from our weekly readings and discussions. For the mid-term you will be given a question or a set of questions to write about. You will write individually on the mid-term paper. Your presentations and papers depend on the readings and film material we will discuss in class. Deadlines for papers are non-negotiable unless in critical situations where proof is provided. Please abide by these regulations, especially deadlines, page limit, double-spacing, and 12 point font/times format, in order to enhance your grades. **1) *Mid-Term Paper Due 10/10.* 2) *Your Final Project Paper Due 12/5 (Both papers are due in class).***

Since class presentations are organized to reflect your collaboration, the exams will give you the opportunity to present your individual creativity, which should reflect what you have learned through group coordination and during presentations and discussions. Any extra class assignments will be designed according to my evaluation of your work and your performance during class discussion.

*Note: plagiarism is prohibited by law (please check university guidelines for academic integrity) <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/>*

**Usage of Lap-Top and other devices:** As much as we try to be multi-tasked, working on other assignments or responding to other business during the class time will certainly affect your performance. I appreciate if you always have printed articles in front of you rather than looking them up on ctool the same day of class. I trust that you will come up with creative strategies that demonstrate your interest in this class and the discussion it generates.

**Email:** Please allow 24 hours to respond to your important emails. I value office hours and I hope you can show up at least twice during the semester.

**Syllabus:** This syllabus is our contract. Please keep it handy every week for all information pertinent to this class and assignments.

### **Required Reading**

Material for this course is compiled and posted on the ctool site for this class (365 Fall2014)

**\*\* Indicates the group number and the facilitation week**

## **COUESE SCHEDULE**

<b>Week 1</b> Th. 9/2(4)	Introduction Defining our concepts
<b>Week 2</b> T. 9/9 Th. 9/11	<b>Nature/Culture: Science, Gender, and Race</b> <b>Jordanova</b> , “Natural facts: a historical perspective on science and sexuality;” <b>Martin</b> , chap. 3 “Medical metaphors of women’s bodies: menstruation and menopause” <b>Martin</b> , chap. 6 “Menstruation, work, and class”
<b>1*Week3</b> T. 9/16 Th. 9/18	<b>Colonialism, Gender and Race</b> <b>Comaroff</b> , “The diseased heart of Africa;” <b>Nelkin and Lindee</b> , “The media-ted gene: stories of gender and race.” <b>Film:</b> The life and times of Sarah Baartman (film 50m)
<b>2*Week 4</b> T. 9/23	<b>Sexing the Body: Culture, Gender, and Identity</b> <b>Urla and Swedlund</b> , “The Anthropometry of Barbie: unsettling ideas of the feminine body in popular culture;” <b>Bordo</b> ,“Material girl: the effacement of postmodern culture”

Th. 9/25 **Film:** Tough guise: Violence, media, and the crisis in masculinity (film50m)

**3\*Week 5 The Social Skin**

T. 9/30 **Ahmadu**, “Rites and wrongs: An insider/outsider reflects on power and excision;” **Sheehan**, “Victorian clitoridectomy.”

Th.10/2 **Morgan**, “Women and the knife: cosmetic surgery and the colonization of women’s bodies.”

**4\*Week 6 Reproductive Culture and Politics**

T. 10/7 **Roberts**, *killing the black body*. chap. 2 and 4

Th. 10/9 **Shapiro**, “Birth control in America: Malthus, Population control, and the women’s movement;” {reading 2 pdf—scroll down to the article}; The Lynchberg story: eugenics sterilization in America (film )

*Mid-term Question will be posted on c-tool 10/7*

*(Fall study-break October. Mon-Tues 13-14)*

**Week 7**

Th. 10 /16 **Media analysis of Iranian Film Leila (102m) and workshop-ing an idea related to it.**

**Midterm paper due in class 10/16**

**5\*Week 8 Crossing Borders, Crossing Bodies: Transnational Surrogacy or Trafficking?**

T.10/ 21 **Gupta, J.** “Reproductive biocrossings: Indian egg donors and surrogates in the globalized fertility market”

Th. 10/23 **Vora**, “Indian transnational surrogacy,” and **Film on surrogacy**

**6\*Week 9 Gender, Sex and Disease**

T. 10/28 **Farmer**, “Women, poverty, and AIDS”

Th. 10/30 **Ponty et al.**, “better red than dead.”  
**Bordo, S.** “ Whose body is this? Feminism, medicine, and the conceptualization of eating disorders,” *Film*: race against time (clips)

**7\*Week 10**  
T.11/4 **Borders, Bodies, Violence**  
**Abu Lughod**, “honor differences;” **Fadlalla** “State of vulnerability and humanitarian visibility”  
Th. 11/6 **Scheper-Hughes**, “The global traffic in human organs”

**Week 11**  
**Reproducing Racial Hegemonies: Beauty and Bleaching**  
*(general reading and web-search)*  
T.11/11 **Blay**, “Skin bleaching and white Supremacy”  
Th. 11/13 **Hoad**, “Miss HIV and Us”

**Week 12**  
T. 11/18 Consultation with professor about research paper  
Th. 11/20 Consultation with professor about research paper

*(Thanksgiving recess 5pm, wed. Nov. 26; classes resume 8a.m dec. 1)*

**Week 13**  
Tues. 12/2 Presentation of research projects  
Thurs. 12/4 Presentation of research projects end of presentations

**Week 14**  
Tues. 12/9 Conclusion  
**Final project paper due in class today 12/9**

**(Classes end Tues Dec. 10)**