

**EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM**

**CMN 3903: Gender and Sexuality**

Section: 001, CRN: 30713, 3 credit hours
Meeting Time/Days: T/R 12:30 – 1:45
Location: Buzzard Hall 2441
Instructor: Dr. Richard G. Jones, Jr. (he/him/his)
Office: Buzzard Hall 2411
<b>Student Help Hours: Mon. 1-2:00, Tues. 3:30-5:30, Thurs. 2:00-3:00, and by appt</b>
<b>Email: rgjones@eiu.edu</b>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Use this contact information to keep me informed of anything that is interfering with your performance or attendance in class such as illnesses, family emergencies, or other personal issues. You do not need to share details, but letting me know what's going on before you miss class will increase the chance that arrangements can be made for you to make up assignments.

**Required Materials:**

**Textbook:** Fixmer-Oraiz, N., & Wood, J. T. (2019). *Gendered lives: Communication, gender, and culture*. Boston, MA: Cengage.

**Readings will be posted on d2l**

**Description:** This course is an exploration of the ways in which identity categories, such as woman and man, feminine and masculine, homosexual and heterosexual, are constructed and maintained through public and popular discourses. In part, we will study the theoretical literatures in communication, feminism, poststructural, and queer theory that “trouble” supposedly static categories of gender.

**Course Objectives:**

- To analyze and evaluate the ways in which gender, particularly concepts of femininity and masculinity, are social, historical, and cultural constructions rather than a natural biological “given.”
- To understand the ways in which gender intersects with other social constructions (sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, etc.) and with human biology.
- To hone research and critical theoretical perspectives that analyze how gender constructions shape the realities of women’s and men’s lives, particularly in U.S. society.

The syllabus and calendar contain all the information you need to be successful in this course. You are responsible for knowing and being accountable for the information included in these documents. If you have a question about the class, these should be your first stop. Keep these documents handy and review them often.

- To learn how heteronormativity and compulsory heterosexuality influence a variety of cultural artifacts, from news media discourses to film.
- To create a final project that will demonstrate how material and discursive forces produce a disciplining function that enforces a binary gender system.
- Students will also deconstruct the ways in which specific discourses and practices challenge or “trouble” gender norms and expectations.

**Welcome:** Welcome! I am excited to work with you this semester on broadening your understanding of the complexity of gender! We are going to tackle some challenging readings and controversial ideas and I’m sure we will all learn a lot from each other. My default is to refer to you with the name that appears on my roster. If you have a preferred name that you would like me to use, please let me know. Again, welcome, and let’s have a great semester!

**Professor’s Note on Expectations:**

1. I am completely committed to facilitating your needs as they arise. Please ask me for help if you find that you have questions I have not answered in class, or if you would like to discuss any (potential) problems.
2. Understand that my commitment to facilitating your needs and goals for the class is extended primarily to those students who are proactive and address concerns before they become significant obstacles.
3. You will be graded based on standard collegiate-level expectations. To earn an A or a B, you will need to consistently exceed those expectations.
4. Please don’t feel any shame if you find this course difficult or struggle with assignments. My job is to help you and I’m always willing to try. I don’t take your performance in the class personally and if you do ask for help, I will not think any less of you. In fact, it takes a stronger person to ask for help.
5. As a professional, I will strive to enable you to succeed, but I won’t “enable” you to rely on excuses or exceptions to get by. What’s most important is that you meet me somewhere in the middle, so we both find the course rewarding.

**Student Responsibilities:** Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions, read the assigned reading material before class, and complete the assignments. Federal guidelines dictate that institutions should expect students to work for at least two hours outside of class for each hour of in-class instruction. That means that you should expect to work, on this class, at least six hours a week in order to earn credit for this course. The bulk of your out of class work time should be spent on reading and completing the reading responses.

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## GRADING

### Grading Scale:

Grade	Percentage
A	100 – 90
B	Below 90 – 80
C	Below 80 – 70
D	Below 70 – 60
F	Below 60

### A More Concrete Version of the Grading Scale:

- 0 = You Don't Try
- F = You Submit Nonsense (and waste my time)
- F+ = You Submit BS
- D = You Barely Try
- D+/C- = You Try and You Miss
- C = You Try and You "Kinda" Get It
- B = You Try and You Get It
- A = You Try and You Get It and Then You Try More and You Get it More

Assignment	Weight (%)
Exam 1	10
Exam 2	17
Exam 3	17
Exam 4	17
Exam 5	12
Presentation	10
Final Project	17

\*You can use D2L to monitor your grade in the class at any time.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct. Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

- The Student Code of Conduct states that students should meet the following standard: "Eastern students observe the highest principles of academic integrity and support a campus environment conducive to scholarship."

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- The Code defines *plagiarism* as: “the use, without adequate attribution, of another person's words or thoughts as if they were one’s own, failing to cite outside sources used in completion of the work, improperly citing sources, and submitting work that was previously completed for another class without prior approval from the instructor.”
- About 80% of your papers involving research should be in your own words.
- You cannot use content from a previous class.
- You cannot “borrow” content from another student.
- You cannot have someone else write any part of your content.
- You cannot get all or part of your content from an online paper mill.
- You cannot use content that is written by AI or other text-generation services.
- **At a minimum, a student who engages in academic dishonesty/plagiarism will receive a 0 (F) on the assignment and be reported to the Office of Student Standards.**
- If there are multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Office of Student Standards may sanction the student further, i.e., suspension for a semester or academic year or expulsion from the university.
- Your instructor reserves the right to utilize TurnItIn or other tools to evaluate your work.

**Statement Regarding Disabilities:** If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

**The Student Success Center:** Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/success](http://www.eiu.edu/success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1336.

**Class attendance and participation:**

1. Class attendance is expected. The Student Catalog states: “Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. When an absence occurs, the student is responsible for the material covered during the absence. Instructors will grant make-up privileges (when make-up is possible) to students for properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, participation in an official University activity, or participation in volunteer emergency work.”
2. I understand that there are times when you must miss class due to a previously planned event, illness, or family emergency. **If you know you will need to miss a class, tell me about it so we can make arrangements as needed.**
3. Show respect for others by listening, taking turns, not having side-conversations, not arriving late, or packing up or leaving early. Disruption of teaching and/or learning is

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a violation of the Student Code of Conduct. For the purposes of this class, “Disruption” is defined as, but not limited to: repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom without authorization, making loud or distracting noises, persisting in speaking without being recognized, and/or resorting to personal insults and challenges, taunts, physical threats or contact. If you disrupt the class, you may be asked to leave.

4. You may use a laptop or other device to facilitate note-taking. If you are found to be using your device for non-class related tasks or your use of your device is distracting to others, you may no longer be allowed to use the device in class.
5. You may not audio or video record anything in this class without permission.
6. If you use any electronic devices in ways that distract or disrupt the class in others ways, you may be asked to leave.
7. Bring your course materials in hard copy or digitally to each class period. We will do handwritten assignments in class. If this is an issue you need accommodation for, please let me know. I highly recommend having a 3-ring binder to keep things organized. I’ll be happy to give you one and will have some in class on the first week, and in my office later if you would like one.

**Safe Learning Environment:** This class should be a safe space for communication, learning, and the sharing of ideas. Each of us will need to be conscious of our role in providing a place where every class member, given all our differences, will feel safe and function as part of our learning community. Inclusive language is important to maintaining a safe class environment—no language will be tolerated that demeans, belittles, or marginalizes someone because of their gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, age, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Such language will not be accepted in your classroom communication, written work, or your oral presentations. If you disrupt the safety of our learning community you may be asked to leave.

**Lateness:** Expect that I will begin class at the scheduled start time with important reminders, announcements, and other pertinent information. Therefore, it will be in your best interest to get to class a few minutes early so you will be ready to engage course materials at the scheduled start time.

**Make-up work:** Make-up privileges, where make-up is possible, will be granted to students who have properly verified absences, University approved absences, or made arrangements with the instructor. Otherwise, I will use my discretion to decide whether or not a student can make up work and how much of a penalty to impose (the standard penalty is a 50% grade reduction on the late assignment). It is the student’s responsibility to initiate plans for make-up work and complete the work promptly.

**Electronic communication:** Students are expected to visit the course webpage (d2l) daily for announcements and updates. **Use Panthermail – not d2l to send emails.** You should also check your Panthermail daily. Please communicate via email in a professional manner. While electronic communication is convenient at times, please take advantage of office hours to ask questions, as email responses may be delayed up to 48 hours.

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**Guidelines for typed assignments:** Standard collegiate-level criteria for writing assignments will be followed in this class. Typed assignments must adhere to the following criteria: (you may want to use this as a checklist to ensure you don't lose points):

- \_\_\_ 12 point font size
- \_\_\_ 1" margins all around
- \_\_\_ Times New Roman or Arial font everywhere (including headers and page numbers)
- \_\_\_ Double-spaced (throughout document. Do not have extra line spaces after headers)

NOTE: Most computers do not default to 1" margins so you will have to manually change them, you may also have to manually change font or font size, so always to make sure to double-check your formatting.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Reading:

- We usually do not have more than 25 pages of reading for any given class period.
- Some of the reading will be difficult. We will discuss strategies for effective critical reading in class, and I am always available to meet with you to provide any clarification or guidance that I can.
- I expect that you will read all of the assigned materials and come to class ready to discuss the readings.
- If you are not prepared and have not read, you will be holding back the class's progress since you will not be able to contribute to the discussion.
- Not reading will also diminish your ability to complete the assignments and exams successfully and result in a lower grade. I will assess your engagement with the readings through class participation, exams, presentation, and final project.

### Exams:

- There are 5 exams in this class, divided by unit.
- Each of those exams will include a combination of objective (multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer) questions that will assess your engagement with and comprehension of our core concepts.
- The first four of those exams also include a take-home essay portion that will ask you to apply, analyze, and critique course concepts.
- Each exam only covers the unit just covered. The final exam is not cumulative.
- We will do an in-class review before each exam.
- You will be able to earn extra points on your exam through class attendance and participation (see more below).

**Application and Analysis Presentation:** Each student, over the course of the semester, will deliver a presentation to the class connecting a concept or concepts from that unit to current events or popular culture. More details will be provided in class.

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**Final Project:**

- The final project is an essay.
- In the essay, students will apply concepts of their choice (and in consultation with the professor) to an artifact of popular culture.
- Students will also analyze their artifact through a lens of intersectionality and/or advocacy/activism.
- Students will incorporate content from at least one essay portion of a previous exam, being sure to incorporate feedback received.
- More details will be provided in class

**Classroom Discussion and Participation:**

- We should engage in class discussion and provide insights, grounded in the readings, and based on our relevant experiences.
- Contributions will be most meaningful when they are informed by the course readings. This includes using appropriate terminology, citing researchers, and applying concepts.
- Well-prepared students who offer insights grounded in the readings, contribute to class discussion by describing salient experiences, offer oral references to relevant materials, and are respectful of others will be successful contributors.
- The readings and discussions in this class often lead us to share personal experiences, feelings, and thoughts about our own and others' teaching/life experiences.
- It is important to respect the contributions made by class members. Our comments are "for our ears only" in the sense that we understand that disclosures can lead to vulnerability and should be viewed and handled as "private" information.
- We should try to respect and understand one another and demonstrate appropriate empathy.
- To be successful in this aspect of the course, students should make verbal contributions (as outlined above) in response to questions or prompts from the professor and in response to other classmates' contributions.
- By attending class and contributing to the discussion and completing in-class assignments, students can earn "bonus points" that will be added to their total score for the exam in that unit. Since these are bonus points and not graded assignments, there's no penalty for missing them, so therefore they cannot be "made up."

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**CMN 3903: COURSE CALENDAR***Tentative: Subject to revision as needed*

<b>UNIT 1: The Social Construction of Gender</b>	
T 01/10	Welcome and Introduction to Course
R 01/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Foundational Concepts</li> <li>Read: Introduction (Textbook)</li> <li>Read: Feminism, Stereotypes, and Misconceptions (d2l)</li> <li>Other: Sign Up for Presentation Dates</li> </ul>
T 01/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Social Construction of Gender Part 1</li> <li>Read: Constructing Gender 1 (d2l)</li> </ul>
R 01/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Social Construction of Gender Part 2</li> <li>Read: Constructing Gender 2 (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 01/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Becoming Gendered</li> <li>Read: Chapter 7 (Textbook)</li> </ul>
R 01/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: The Importance of the Body</li> <li>Read: Gender, Race, and the Body (d2l)</li> <li>Content: Student Presentations</li> </ul>
T 01/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Student Presentations</li> <li>Content: Unit 1 Review</li> </ul>
R 02/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unit 1 Exam</b></li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2: Power, Privilege, and Oppression</b>	
T 02/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TBD</b></li> </ul>
R 02/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Power and Cultural Identities</li> <li>Read: Power Matters (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 02/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Privilege and Oppression Part 1</li> <li>Read: Privilege and Oppression Part 1 (d2l)</li> </ul>
R 02/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Privilege and Oppression Part 2</li> <li>Read: Privilege and Oppression Part 2 (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 02/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Student Presentations</li> <li>Content: Unit 2 Review</li> </ul>
R 02/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unit 2 Exam</b></li> </ul>

<b>Unit 3: Identity and Intersectionality</b>	
T 02/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Identity and Intersectionality</li> <li>Read: Identity and Intersectionality 1 (d2l)</li> </ul>
R 03/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Identity and Intersectionality</li> <li>Read: Identity and Intersectionality 1 (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 03/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Student Presentations</li> <li>Content: Unit 3 Review</li> </ul>
R 03/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unit 2 Exam</b></li> </ul>
T 03/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>No Class – Spring Break</b></li> </ul>
R 03/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>No Class – Spring Break</b></li> </ul>
<b>Unit 4: Intersectionality and the Hierarchy of Masculinities</b>	
T 03/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Introduction to Masculinities Studies</li> <li>Read: Chapter 4 (Textbook)</li> </ul>
R 03/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Inclusive Masculinity?</li> <li>Read: From Stoicism to Bromance (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 03/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Masculinity and Class</li> <li>Read: Masculinity and Class (d2l)</li> </ul>
R 03/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TBD</b></li> </ul>
T 04/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit 4 Student Presentations</li> <li>Unit 4 Review</li> </ul>
R 04/06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unit 4 Exam</b></li> </ul>
<b>Unit 5: Gender, Sexuality, (Dis)Ability, and Activism/Advocacy</b>	
T 04/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Feminist Activism</li> <li>Reading: Feminist Activism (d2l)</li> <li><b>DUE: Preliminary Idea for Final Project</b></li> </ul>
R 04/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Trans Activism and Queer and “Crip” Activism</li> <li>Reading: Trans, Queer, and “Crip” Activism (d2l)</li> </ul>
T 04/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content: Activism, the Body, Intersectionality, and Mass Incarceration</li> <li>Reading: Otherness, Deviance, and Surveillance (d2l)</li> <li>Other: Start In-Class viewing of <i>The 13th</i></li> </ul>

<b>Unit 6: Gender, Sexuality, and Popular Culture</b>	
R 04/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content: Bridging Activism and Popular Culture through Documentaries</li> <li>• Other: Finish and Debrief In-Class Viewing of <i>The 13<sup>th</sup></i></li> <li>• <b>DUE: Final Idea for Final Project</b></li> </ul>
T 04/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latinx in the Spotlight: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Latin Explosion</li> <li>• Reading: Ricky Martin as a Cultural Bridge (d2l)</li> </ul>
R 04/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content: Social Media Creators as Subversive Influencers</li> <li>• Reading: TikTok and Identities (d2l)</li> <li>• Course Wrap-Up and Review for Final Exam</li> </ul>
W: 05/03 8:00- 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unit 5 &amp; 6 Exam (in-class, attendance required)</b></li> </ul>
R: 05/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DUE: Final Project</b></li> </ul>