

Introduction to Gender and LGBTQI+ Studies GEND-1000 (3 credits)

The Netherlands: Gender and LGBTQI+ Studies

This syllabus represents an Experiment summer thematic program. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from program to program.

Course Description

This course provides a general introduction to gender and LGBTQI+ studies. The goal is to introduce students to basic theoretical and analytical tools necessary for the understanding of sexual difference and feminist approaches to bodily experience of sexuality. Students examine the crucial principles of queer theory and develop critical thinking about the situation of women and LGBTQI+ community in the Dutch and European contexts. Students develop a general understanding of impacts of systems of power and oppression and learn how to critically read and interpret social and cultural representations of women, men, trans and non-binary people through the intersectional lens that contextualize race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, class, and disability. The ultimate objective is for the student to learn how to apply the methods of feminist and queer theories in the analysis of gender and sexuality.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Develop a general understanding of the field of gender and LGBTQI+ studies;
- Analyze representations of gender and sexuality through intersecting lenses;
- Show understanding of the Dutch approach to LGBTQI+ rights and sex education;
- Identify key notions of feminist and queer theories and their cultural and political implications;
- Demonstrate knowledge of intercultural intelligence, interpersonal communication, and teamwork proficiency;
- Synthesize learning acquired through lectures, readings, and field visits in reflection papers, podcasts or other creative projects, and college admission essays.

Language of Instruction: This course is taught in English.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

The course is delivered using classroom sessions, field activities, workshops as well as a weekly three-hour group synthesis or activities. Some sessions will include short videos and class discussion.

Module 1: Introduction to the Field of Gender and Sexuality Studies

This module provides a general overview of the history and development of the field of gender and sexuality studies. Students learn about the meanings of gender and sexuality, and cultural and political constructions of gender roles. The module also introduces a general overview of the Dutch approach to LGBTQI+ rights, sex education, and trans issues.

Sessions in this module may include:

- Gender and sexuality as identity: issues and Questions
- Same sex marriage and human rights
- Social and cultural constructions of gender roles
- Reproductive politics, sexuality, and gender: making modern families
- Field visit to IHLIA, and International Gay and Lesbian Archive and Information Center
- Discussion about sex work and the (legal) position of sex workers in the Netherlands during field visit to The Red Light District and the Prostitution Information Center

Readings:

Saraswati, Ayul et al. (2020). *Introduction to Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies: Interdisciplinary and Intersectional Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (second edition) (introduction) [henceforth WGSS]. Bell hooks, "Feminist Politics: Where We Stand" (WGSS, pp. 23-25).

C. J. Pascoe, "Making Masculinity: Adolescence, Identity, and High School" (WGSS, pp. 46-53).

Module 2: Introduction to Queer Theory

In this module, students are introduced to the key concepts of queer theory in the context of the Netherlands, particularly the way the Dutch view themselves and their position as the gay capital of the world. The module includes discussions about intersectionality, trans issues, and the physical embodiment of gender that has shaped the medical and philosophical discourse about sexuality and gender in the past decades.

Sessions, activities, and class discussions in this module explore:

- Sexual democracy and everyday life in Amsterdam (as discussed in the work of Paul Mepschen)
- Key notions in queer discourse on intersexuality
- Trans and intersex identities in the Netherlands
- Discussion with representatives about sex education in the Netherlands at Rutgers International, the Dutch center of expertise on sexual and reproductive health (<https://www.rutgers.international/>)
- Field visit to the Tropical Museum with assignment on gender and race in Dutch colonial history

Required Readings:

Mepschen, Paul. (2016). Sexual democracy, cultural alterity and the politics of everyday life in Amsterdam, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 50:2, 150-167, DOI: 10.1080/0031322X.2016.1164426

Tina Vasquez, "It's Time to End the Long History of Feminism Failing Transgender Women" (WGSS, pp. 171-174).

Recommended Reading:

European Commission Document. (2012). Trans and intersex people: Discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender identity and gender expression". European Union.

<http://www.nondiscrimination.net/content/media/Trans%20and%20intersex%20people.pdf>

Module 3: Gender, Sexuality, and the Intersection of Categories of Identification

This module examines the layers of identity, such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, place of origin, immigration status, age, ability, and religion. Students study the racially charged discourse in the Netherlands and across Europe regarding the interaction of LGBTQI+ identities and immigrant identities.

Sessions, activities, and class discussions in this module may include:

- Gender and sexuality in multi-racial and multi-ethnic families in the Netherlands
- Other genders/sexualities: femininity and masculinity among 2nd generation migrants in the Netherlands
- Field visit to LGBTQI+ migrant/bi-cultural organization Respect2Love and discussion of LGBTQ+ rights of people of color
- Simone Zeefuik Queers the Museum: field assignment with activist and author of #decolonizethemusuem leads students on a tour of the Afterlives of Slavery exhibit at the Tropenmuseum (The Museum of the Tropics)

Required Readings:

Ashley Currier and Thérèse Migraine-George, "Queer/African Identities: Questions, Limits, Challenges" (WGSS, pp. 77-80).

M. Soledad Caballero, "Before Intersectionality" (WGSS, p. 81).

Kimberly Williams Brown and Red Washburn, "Trans-forming Bodies and Bodies of Knowledge: A Case Study of Utopia, Intersectionality, Transdisciplinarity, and Collaborative Pedagogy" (WGSS, pp. 81-86).

Module 4: Cultural Constructions of Gender and Sexuality

In this module students learn about the cultural and political representations that influence debates about gender and sexuality. The module stresses the importance of the contested territory that gave birth to the Gay Rights Movements and shows how gender and sexuality are culturally constructed sites at the very foundations of queer theory.

Sessions, activities, and class discussions in this module may include:

- Popular culture and media representation of gender and sexuality
- Dutch media and Muslims
- Group discussion with gay and lesbian Dutch Muslim youth
- Van Gogh and nude paintings (visit to the Van Gogh Museum: <https://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en>)
- Field visit to Bijlmerpark Theater, a cultural center working with and for communities in Amsterdam Zuidoost

Required Readings:

Sarah E. Fryett, "Laudable Laughter: Feminism and Female Comedians" (WGSS pp. 592-595).
Guerrilla Girls, "When Racism and Sexism Are No Longer Fashionable" (WGSS pp. 596).
Vlasnik, Amber L. "Campus-Based Women's and Gender Equity Centers: Enacting Feminist Theories, Creating Social Change" (WGSS, pp. 604-609).

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

1) Field Visit Reflection Papers (20%)

Following the excursions/field visits, students will be expected to prepare a 300-word small reflection paper focusing on their observations, activities, interactions and learning experience during the visit.

2) Reading Analysis (20%)

Students choose one assigned text from the list of their course readings from Modules 1, 2, 3 or 4, and engage with the main argument the text. The text analysis should integrate information collected through class lectures, activity sessions and field visits. The paper should be 300 words long.

3) Gender and LGBTQI+ Paper/Video/Podcast (40%)

For this assignment, students conduct a small fieldwork project on an aspect related to gender or LGBTQI+. Students can do observation or conduct informal interviews/conversations and synthesize the information in a 600-word paper/10-minute video, podcast or another creative project of their choice.

4) Weekly Synthesis Sessions (10%)

All Students are required to lead one weekly synthesis session along with a small group. Leading a synthesis session requires that the student prepare a summary of the week's activities and prepare questions for discussion.

5) Participation (10%)

This includes active involvement in lectures, readings, discussions and excursions using the following criteria:

- Attendance - promptness to class and positive presence in class.
- Active Listening - paying attention in class and during field excursions, asking appropriate questions, showing interest and enthusiasm (this includes body language), entertaining contradictory perspectives, taking notes.
- Involvement in Discussions - either in small or large groups, sharing knowledge. This means challenging yourself to speak up if you usually don't, and also means allowing others to speak if you are a person who tends to dominate class discussions.
- Group Accountability – positive participation in the group during field excursions and classes; not keeping others waiting.
- Displaying Respect – culturally appropriate interaction with hosts, program staff, speakers and communities.

Assessment

- Field Visit Reflection Papers – 20%
- Reading Analysis – 20%
- Gender and LGBTQI+ Paper/Video/Podcast – 40%
- Weekly Synthesis Sessions – 10%
- Participation – 10%

Attendance and Participation

Due to the nature of The Experiment programs, and the importance of student and instructor contributions in each and every class session, attendance at all classes and for all program excursions is required. Criteria for evaluation of student performance include attendance and participation in program activities. Students must fully participate in all program components and courses. Students may not voluntarily opt out of required program activities. Valid reasons for absence – such as illness – must be discussed with the program director or other designated staff person.

Late Assignments

The Experiment programs integrate traditional classroom lectures and discussion with field-based experiences, site visits and debriefs. It is critical that students complete assignments in a timely manner to continue to benefit from the sequences in assignments, reflections and experiences throughout the program.

Grading Scale

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|-----------|----|
| 94-100% | A |
| 90-93% | A- |
| 87-89% | B+ |
| 84-86% | B |
| 80-83% | B- |
| 77-79% | C+ |
| 74-76% | C |
| 70-73% | C- |
| 67-69% | D+ |
| 64-66% | D |
| below 64% | F |

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you

are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

- **Storing Your Work:** Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- **Personal Technology Use:** Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- **Classroom recording policy:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

The Experiment Policies and Resources

Please refer to The Experiment handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.