

PSY 380 – Psychology of Gender – CRN: 35201 – 4 Credits
Spring 2016 2:00-3:20 101 Living Learning Center South (LLCS)

Instructor: Dr. Sean Laurent

Email: slaurent@uoregon.edu, Straub 437

Office hours: T/H 11:10-11:50; 1:30-1:50

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Ashleigh Landau

Email: alandau2@uoregon.edu, Straub 365

Office hours: H 11:30-1:30

Course Webpage available at: <https://canvas.uoregon.edu>. Please check email and Canvas website daily, as I will post important course information there and may sometimes contact students through email.

Class Description/Overview & Objectives:

Welcome to the psychology of gender! This course is designed to open an honest and respectful dialogue about how people think about sex/gender and how sex/gender influences the way people think about, feel about, and behave toward females and males (and other gender categories). For the most part, sex and gender will be discussed in light of empirical findings (i.e., scientific research on the topics), although our discourse will likely also include opinions/beliefs, philosophical positions, and intuitions.

Following is a sample of the types of questions we will discuss in class: *What does it mean to be a woman or a man? Is sex the same thing as gender? Why are sex/gender differences rather than similarities so often emphasized? What roles do biology, culture, and situations play in influencing our understanding of sex and gender? What do people expect of women and men and how are men and women treated?*

The class will primarily be a lecture format, but we will have frequent class discussions that will be essential to your learning and moving the conversation forward – it should be a lively class! There will also be occasional films/film clips, small group discussions, graded in-class exercises, and exams. Outside of class, students will be expected to complete weekly readings (textbook and/or articles posted to Canvas), and written work. To succeed in the class, students will need to come to class, complete all readings and assigned work on time, and engage with the class material. Although I will usually provide lecture slides (when used), these are not substitutes for attendance.

By the end of class, students should have a broad overview of some of the main findings about sex and gender in the scientific literature. Students should also leave with a basic understanding of the methodologies researchers use to answer questions about sex and gender, and should have improved their skills as informed consumers of popular and scientific research on sex and gender. Students will also have sharpened their analytical skills and broadened their thinking about sex and gender. Finally, by the end of class, students will be expected to have integrated enough knowledge about sex and gender to propose an original research idea.

My Class Philosophy:

The advancement of knowledge depends on all of us, including instructors, teaching assistants, and students. Learning requires an **active** involvement with course content; merely reading the material and showing up for class will not be enough to advance the goals of class. It is important to exercise one's brain, to *think* about the course material and *relate* it to experiences in one's own life, rather than just remembering facts. Students who do so will do well in the class.

The types of material we will cover often elicits strong reactions in those who engage with it; I encourage this, and strongly support all forms of *respectful* interaction with the material, each other, and the ideas presented in class. As we make our way through the course, there will be many opportunities to engage with the material, and we should all reflect on what gender means to us, and the ways that gender interacts with our personal lives and society.

My Expectations:

Active learning is a constantly evolving dialogue that has no clear beginning or end. Learning is not just acquisition of facts; it represents personal growth. Because of this, it is important to establish some ground rules to which we can all agree.

First, attendance is paramount - skipping class is similar to walking out in the middle of a conversation. That said, I will not be taking attendance— I expect students to come to class without being forced. Attendance alone is not enough, however. To make this class an optimal learning environment, everyone involved should come to class **prepared**. This includes having completed assigned readings prior to class and being ready to devote the 1:20 of class time twice a week to the topics we will cover. As part of this, I expect that students will **not** be sitting in class texting or surfing the interwebs. While I understand the allure of screens, be aware that if use of phones or non-class-related computer use becomes distracting to me or to class, I will ask people to turn electronics off or leave.

Be aware that this is a four-credit class. Four credits translate into 120 hours over the course of the term (12 hours per week, or up to 9 hours of work *outside of class* each week). See http://registrar.uoregon.edu/faculty_staff/academic_scheduling/syllabus or page 20 of the student handbook: advising.uoregon.edu/AA_Pages/documents/StudentHB2014-FINAL_000.pdf . This course is designed to comply with the psychology department's guidelines for learning. For information about expectations for psychology undergraduates (including information about grading policies) see: psychology.uoregon.edu/undergraduate.

Diversity of People/Diversity of Opinions:

It is *vitaly important* that we all share the responsibility of being open to the variety of thoughts, ideas, and feelings held by all of us about the material. If there are 150 of us in the room, we can expect 150 different perspectives. No one experience or viewpoint is more important or more valuable than the others. You may not agree with the views expressed by others in the course, but we must all agree to respect each individual's right to have and share their own experiences. Hearing and listening to the perspectives of others helps create greater understanding of the diversity of experience in contemporary American society.

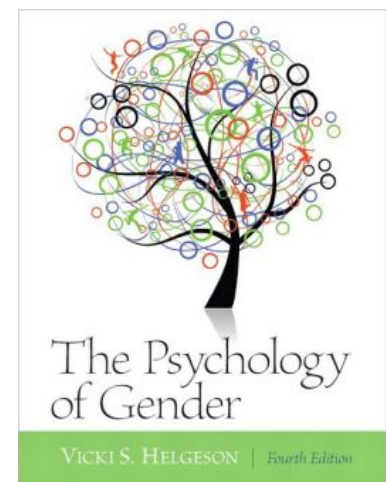
This class promotes respect for diversity in all of its forms (some examples are: gender, cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, political, sexual...there are many forms). Although it may hard to believe, the predominant cultural beliefs in the U.S. are not the only views that exist in the world, or even within this country. We should therefore all try to *understand* and *celebrate* the diversity of human experience. The multiple cultural, ethnic, and religious views about sex, gender, and gender roles that exist are as valid as mainstream American beliefs, and all of human behavior should be viewed within the context of broader social, political, and cultural backgrounds.

Required Text and Readings:

Helgeson, V. S. (2012). *Psychology of gender*, 4th Ed.

This is a really good textbook written by an excellent researcher. It is available for purchase from the Duckstore (prices range from \$90.75 for rental to \$152.25 for a new copy; an ebook is also available for \$103.25) or through online retailers. Search <http://uoduckstore.com/books/>

Other readings will be announced and posted on Canvas.



Grading

Exams (62%):

Because this is a large class, learning will be assessed primarily through performance on exams. There will be **four** exams spaced somewhat evenly throughout the course. Content of exams will focus primarily on information presented since the last exam, but questions may also be drawn from earlier material when appropriate. Exams will typically be multiple-choice, although other types of questions may appear (e.g., short answer). There will be no final exam.

The first three exams will cover material from lecture and the text. Although I will usually provide lecture slides (when used), which can be helpful in preparing for exams, these are not substitutes for attendance and careful note-taking. It would be a mistake to treat them as such. I will often present material from the textbook and other readings, but lecture will not simply be a reiteration of readings. Instead, I will provide examples of concepts, discuss information from outside the readings, and present research findings. Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, in-class discussions, and readings. **The 4th exam will cover information presented by students in class presentations.**

To allow for unexpected absences or poor performance on an exam, I will drop your lowest exam grade. Because of this, I will not allow any make-up exams, except for documented university-sponsored excuses. All exams must be taken on the days they are scheduled. Please make sure to plan your schedule around exam periods.

Study Guides (3%):

Because exam questions will be drawn from all aspects of course content (e.g., lectures, readings, in-class discussions), any study guide I offer would necessarily be a summary of everything covered in the course. Therefore, I will not provide study guides for exams: A much better idea is to design your own study guides as you progress through the course.

Prior to each of the FIRST 3 exams, you will turn in (on Canvas) a study guide covering what you think you should know for each exam. Study guides should be organized by topic (e.g., “Defining terms”) and should include questions (e.g., “How is sex different from gender?”) or statements (e.g., “Know the difference between sex and gender”) that will help you guide your studying for exams. These will be graded pass/fail (i.e., any genuine attempt to create a study guide will get full credit, and any study guide that does not appear to be a genuine attempt or is not turned in will get a grade of 0) and can be worked on or created/drafted in groups.

Reflection Paper (17%)

At the end of the term (due by Friday, 6/3, 6:00 PM), you will turn in a short reaction/reflection paper (3 page maximum, double-spaced, standard 12-point font). A handout describing the assignment can be found on Canvas. Late assignments will lose 15% of their grade in each 24-hour period following the due date/time. Late papers will not be accepted after Tuesday, 6/7 at 6:00 PM. Papers can be turned in early if so desired.

Group Presentation (14%) and Test Questions for Exam 4 (4%)

On four days toward the end of the term (Weeks 8-10), groups will present on a topic of their choice. Presentations will be graded on the basis of their originality, clarity, style, and quality of the information presented. Good presentations will be engaging, well-timed, informative, and well-executed. Presentations will be between 5 and 8 minutes long. A handout describing the assignment can be found on Canvas. Please read this document carefully, as it provides additional instructions and information about group work.

Each group will also provide three multiple-choice questions that may be used on the 4th exam. The assignment is due by Saturday, 5/28, 5:00 PM; questions turned in late will lose half their points and will not be accepted after Sunday, 5/29, 5:00 PM). Each question should have four possible answers, **only one of which is correct**. Each question should be drawn/based directly from/on material **presented during the group presentation** (i.e., do NOT create unfair questions that students will have no way of answering). Questions should be answerable by anyone who was present during your presentation, paying close attention, and taking notes. I will use these questions to create the fourth exam. I reserve the right to not use particular questions, to modify questions appropriately, or to create additional questions on my own, based on information presented in presentations. A handout describing this assignment can be found on Canvas.

Grading Summary: Final grades will be based on exams (62%), exam study guides (3%), reaction/reflection paper (17%), group presentation (14%) and exam questions for exam 4 (4%).

A+ (reserved for truly exceptional performance), A 93%-100%, A- 90-92.99%, B+ 87-89.99%, B 83-86.99%, B-80-82.99%, C+ 77-79.99%, C 73-76.99%, C- 70-72.99%, D+ 67-69.99%, D 63-66.99%, D- 60-62.99%, F < 60%. If taking pass/fail: >70%=pass, <70%=fail.

Meaning of Grades:

A+ signifies a rarified level of achievement. The student shows a command of material that includes both faultless explanation of the details of the content, and the ability to apply the material at all levels assessed. **A** signifies an exceptional level of achievement. The student shows a superb command of the material and the ability to apply their knowledge at many different levels. This grade is indicative of committed, motivated, and fully engaged learners who take advantage of all learning opportunities, both inside and outside of the classroom. **B** signifies a good but not exceptional level of achievement. The student shows a clear grasp of the material and the ability to apply it at several but not all levels. **C** signifies a fair or adequate level of achievement. The student shows some mastery of the material and a narrow range of application. This grade may be indicative of a mismatch between the study techniques and course assessments, or a lack of commitment, motivation or engagement leading to less than full participation in learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom. **D** signifies little or no true understanding of the material. This grade may be indicative of little or no commitment, motivation or engagement in the course learning opportunities. **F** signifies a performance below the level of random chance. It is assumed that no learning objectives have been met, and therefore no credit has been earned for the course.

Academic Honesty: Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about student codes of conduct (e.g., concerning plagiarism) can be found here: uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode.aspx

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. Plagiarism or cheating will result in a grade of zero on the assignment and all suspected academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. This is required of instructors.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and may need accommodations, contact me ASAP. Please let me know in advance even if you are not sure that your disability will require accommodation (for example, if you have a physical disability that may require you to miss class, but you aren't sure it will). With advance planning, adjustments can be made. Last minute changes will be problematic. Students who are experiencing learning difficulties are encouraged to consult the Accessible Education Center (164 Oregon Hall; 346-1155; <http://aec.uoregon.edu/>). Without documentation, accommodations are made at discretion of instructor.

Other Students: If you are a student with children, a job, or have other circumstances that might affect your ability to devote time to the class, please let me know now so we can discuss strategies to promote your success in this course. If you wait until you have problems in the course it may be too late to salvage your grade, but planning ahead will likely lead to success.

Student Athletes: You must let me know during the first week of classes if you will miss class due to travel with a UO athletic team and require accommodation. Requirements for the course will not be relaxed for student athletes; however, minor scheduling accommodations may be made (e.g., taking a quiz a few hours early) if planned well ahead of time.

General Advice:

Procrastination is not your friend. It is my official advice to keep up with your reading and not wait until the last minute to write papers or start studying for exams. Cramming is not only a poor strategy for doing well on exams; it doesn't advance learning very well. A better idea is to keep up with reading, *think* about the material you are taking in and try to link it to experiences and feelings in your own life. Write papers early, leaving time for peer review, revision, etc. In this way, you can integrate the facts you learn into your life, creating a lifetime of knowledge.

Tentative Class Schedule – This schedule is *approximate* and is *subject to change* at my discretion and on the pacing of the course, amount of discussion, etc. Students will be informed of any changes either in class, through email, or by postings to Canvas.

Week	Date	Topic	Chapters (text)/Suggested articles (<i>Italics</i>)	Assignments
1	3/29 & 3/31	Introduction & Definitions	Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27)	
2	4/5 & 4/7	Research Methods	Chapter 2 (pp. 29-66)	
3	4/12 & 4/14			Exam 1 and group work, TU 4/12
		Gender Role Attitudes	Chapter 3 (pp. 67-101)	
4	4/19 & 4/21	Gender Role Attitudes Guest lecture		
5	4/26 & 4/28			Exam 2 and group work, TU 4/26
		Movie: Tough Guise 2		
6	5/3 & 5/5	Sex-Related Comparisons	Chapters 4 & 5 (pp. 102-182)	
7	5/10 & 5/12	Sex-Related Comparisons Communication	Chapter 7 (pp. 220-259)	
8	5/17 & 5/19			Exam 3 and group work, TU 5/17
		Presentations		
9	5/24 & 5/26	Presentations Presentations		
10	5/31 & 6/2	Presentations		Exam 4, TH 6/2 <i>Reflection paper due Friday, June 3rd, by 6:00 PM</i>

Other dates: Last day to drop without W (4/4); Last day to withdraw (5/15)

How to Succeed in This Class (and All Your Others, Too!)

Throughout the year, each and every year, I get the following questions from students: “How do I do better on your exams?” “How do I do better in your class?” “What’s the most effective way of studying for your exams?” – and so on...

What follows are my tips for success in this class and others. If you write me to ask, I’ll just refer you back to this, although you can ask anyway! As a note: Simply reading this won’t help...actually following the advice WILL help. It really will. I promise. This class will be easy for some, moderately hard for others, and very hard for still others, but the most reliable path to succeeding scholastically involves actually **WORKING** hard at learning a topic. So, to do well, you’ll (probably) need to work hard.

1. **Come to class.** I can’t emphasize this enough. Many students make it for a few classes, and then stop coming regularly. Since I (and most instructors) base many of my exam questions on what I actually discuss in lecture, don’t you think it might be wise to be there? I strive to make class both enjoyable and worthwhile, and what I talk about in there is what I think is important. So come to class...you will certainly do better.
2. **Spend the time!** Each credit hour = 3 hours per week. So in a 3 credit class, you are reasonably expected to spend *9 hours per week* on the class. Who does this, you ask? I reply: “The students who get A’s!” Really, you cannot cram 4 weeks (or 3 weeks, 2 weeks, 6 weeks) of studying and learning into one night, or a few short study sessions. You need to **distribute your learning**. Devote some of each day to study – not just passively reviewing notes, but actively asking questions of yourself and answering them -- and do this continually throughout the semester. Otherwise, you’ll be finding yourself merely cramming right before exams, which is both more painful and less effective as a test preparation strategy.
3. **Read the book.** Although I cover material from the book, I supplement it with my own knowledge of the field, and I don’t cover every little detail. But questions on exams can come from anywhere (i.e., book, lecture, discussion). Some people don’t even GET the book; others get it and never read it. Why not use some of those 9 hours per week reading? And don’t read it all in one session. First, *skim*, to get an idea of what you’ll be reading. Note any questions you might have. Then, go back and read closely. Some parts you may need to read several times to understand. Some parts you may want to ask me or someone else about to make sure you understand correctly. This is ok! Here, an active orientation is also helpful – don’t just read and highlight, but write notes and questions in the margins; have a conversation with the textbook. Doing this *before class* is very useful, because then you have knowledge on which to build on in lecture. If not, you should certainly read after class. But read, you must!
4. **Tie what I discuss to your own knowledge about yourself and others.** We’re talking about psychology here, right? You have a brain, nervous system, social context, personality, etc...and so do all your friends (one can hope!). We know more about ourselves and our close others than we know about anything else. So, when I discuss a concept or a fact, try to tie this to your own experiences and prior learning. Same thing when you read about something (see point 3). Do you remember ever doing that thing yourself, or having someone else you know do it? Have you experienced what I am discussing? Does it sound kind of like something you know about from another class, a hobby, a movie you like? By tying new knowledge to old, you create a network of understanding that reinforces associated neural connections. This is a good trick for remembering and making information accessible later.

5. **Teach the material to others.** Some of the deepest, most durable learning occurs when you have to teach something to others (that's why we teachers are generally working hard and learning a lot over the course of a class, ourselves)! Create a study group and take turns teaching material to each other. If everyone has an area that they are "responsible" for knowing, they will each have at least *some* expertise in *something*! So to learn, teach.
6. **Be active in class, not passive.** Passive means you just sit there and listen. Actually, you probably only half-listen. Active means you think about what I'm saying, ask questions to yourself and to me (and to the class). You try to engage with the material, tying it to your own knowledge and interests. If you're going to just come and listen, you're not doing enough...ENGAGE! Try to get excited about what you are learning. If you don't feel naturally excited, try the time-tested behavioral strategy of "fake it 'til you make it."
7. **If you're going to surf, text, or otherwise not be engaged, don't bother coming.** Many students believe it is possible to do several things at once, well. That it is possible to successfully multitask during class. Well...*psychological research* has shown that this is NOT true. You can do lots of things at once, but you can't do them all well at the same time. So if you come to class, come ready to engage in learning and to maintain focus on the class. Otherwise, you're wasting your time. I don't usually take attendance. If you want to text or surf, that's totally fine with me! Just not in class. Further, if I actually catch you texting or surfing, I'll make a big deal out of it, and you'll (maybe) be mad that I did. So, if you're in class, really use the time for class.
8. **Practice thinking.** I don't just teach material. I don't just teach to exams. I want all of us to practice thinking, to learn to reason (or reason better), to not passively accept but to actively challenge information and ideas. This is how science, including psychology, actually works; previously known "facts" are continually overturned, and grasping the *process* of scientific inquiry is at least as important as the content of any particular study. To me, this is what college is about, regardless of your goals for this class. Being a good thinker is what makes you successful in whatever field you choose to work. So, use class time as practice for living, in general.
9. **Come see me.** Come to my office hours. Ask questions. Students who do this do better, on average, than students who do not. This, however, is simply a correlation.
10. **Speak up in class.** If you have a question, many others probably have the same question. Go ahead and ask. It's fun and educational! It also helps me to know when I'm not being clear (which may occasionally happen) and will enhance everyone's learning.

That's about all I have, for the moment. It encapsulates what I have found to be helpful for myself and for many students over the years. Of course, just reading this handout won't do it...you've actually got to DO these things. That's the hard part. This is not an easy class to succeed in, although I do try to make it as painless as possible.

Good luck! ☺