This course focuses on the sociological study of gender as a basic dimension of social life and social relations. Gender, understood as the collection of behaviors, attitudes, attributes and assumptions about what it means to be a man or a woman, relates to social identity and social status. Gender roles are the social roles that are prescribed for a society’s members, depending on their perceived sex category (the biological or physiological categories of male, female, etc.). Sexuality refers to sexual orientation, preference, and practice.

We will consider the gender ideologies, or social meanings and implications of being male, female, masculine and feminine. In considering how society and its members think about sex and gender attributes, we will focus on how these attributes shape and constrain attitudes, social behavior and beliefs.

Sociologists are concerned with the social construction of gender, which refers to how expectations associated with being male and female are created, reinforced and transmitted throughout our society. Sociologists are interested in examining how gender norms affect our expectations for social interaction, and how individuals actively (and unintentionally) reinforce gender expectations by “doing” gender-related things and by expecting gender difference in relations with others. In addition, sociologists study how beliefs about gender difference help shape the structure and process of social institutions, and how these institutions in turn affect men’s and women’s status in social, economic and political hierarchies. Gender difference is often used within societies as a justification for patriarchy and for greater male access to economic resources, power and status. We will explore how such systems of gender inequality shape our perception and understanding of gender difference.

Evaluation will be based on:

1. attendance
2. active participation in discussion
3. six short written exercises
4. mid-term and final examinations

These will be weighted as follows: six exercises (60%) and exams (40%). Poor attendance can lower your grade, while class participation can raise your grade by up to a full letter grade. No extra credit will be awarded in the course. (See below for details.)
Required Reading


Selected readings available on reserve in the McWherter Library Reserve Room [L], on the internet as a web-linked document [W] from the course home page (http://umpeople.memphis.edu/dshinbrg/3432/SOCI3432.htm) and as handouts.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance: Your regular and punctual attendance in class meetings for this course is required. Students are expected to attend every class, be on time (or even be early), and stay for the entire class period. Students who skip class or are consistently late and/or leave early can find their final course grade lowered up to one whole letter grade. Students who miss class are responsible for the material covered.

2. Participation: Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and activities. To fully participate in class, you will need to complete the assigned reading before the class meeting, and be prepared to discuss the material (including asking questions about information you did not understand) in a thoughtful and respectful way. Students with excellent and enthusiastic class participation, who contribute constructively to class discussions, can find their final course grade raised up to one whole letter grade. Some of the material we read and discuss may be challenging, controversial or touch on sensitive topics. Students are expected to approach these ideas and their discussion as mature adults.

3. Exercises: There are six (6) exercises due over the course of the semester. Four are “interview exercises” and two are “activity exercises.” All exercises should be carefully written, typed, double-spaced with reasonable margins and fonts (margins no greater than 1 ¼ inches; fonts no larger than 12 point), with a separate cover page that includes your name. Written exercises should be thoughtfully organized and carefully proofread. Pages should be numbered. Please use staples rather than paper clips or report covers. Each exercise will be due in class. Late work will be penalized one whole letter grade per week late. Papers that do not conform to these guidelines can be returned to the student ungraded.
(a) **Interview exercises:** You will complete four (4) brief interview exercises to explore people’s beliefs about the social institutions/practices considered in the course, and the results of these interviews should be handed in as short written essays. The maximum page limit for these exercises is four (4) pages (and this may require writing a longer draft and then condensing/organizing it into a more concise version for a clear and analytically focused exercise). For each exercise, you should interview at least three (3) people—although the interviews can be quite brief (10-15 minutes should be adequate). Additional details, including questions to use in your interviews, will be distributed by the instructor ahead of time. Interviews will focus on people’s beliefs about what exists, what is good and/or what is possible relative to the social institutions or practices we are considering and/or some particular aspect of that institution or practice.

(b) **Activity exercises:** You will complete two (2) brief activity exercises to explore aspects of gender in American culture related to the social institutions/practices considered in the course, and the results of these activities should be handed in as short written essays. The maximum page limit for these exercises is four (4) pages (and this also may require writing a longer draft and then condensing/organizing it into a more concise version for a clear and analytically focused exercise). For each topics, you should complete the activity (a scavenger hunt and either a shopping field trip or listening to popular music). Activity details and related essay questions will be distributed in a handout.

4. **Exams:** Two exams, a mid-term and a final exam will be administered in this course. The mid-term will be given on Monday, October 11th, 2004, during class and the final during our assigned exam period, Monday, December 13th, 2003 (10:30 am to 12:30 pm). In format, these exams will include short answer questions, fixed-choice response questions (true/false or multiple choice items) and about 2 short essays.

   **Under no circumstances will make-up exams be given.** Students with scheduling conflicts must make arrangements with me to take the exam ahead of time (prior to its regularly scheduled time) and should notify me of their conflict as early in the semester as possible (no later than ten days before the scheduled exam).

5. **No extra credit:** Under no circumstances will I accept extra credit assignments from students. Students are responsible for assignments throughout the semester, not only at the end of the term.

**Grading**

Exercises ..........................................................60% of grade
   Four (4) interview exercises................................10% each
   Two (2) activity exercises.................................10% each
Exams ............................................................40% of grade
   Mid-term exam...............................................20%
   Final exam......................................................25%
Total ............................................................100%
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And, remember that final grades may be raised by up to a full letter grade for excellent classroom participation and/or lowered by up to a full letter grade for poor attendance.

Other Issues

1. Submitting assignments: Assignments are due in class on the date designated in the syllabus. Late work will be penalized one letter grade per week late. *Do not slide your paper under (or on) my office door.* It will get stepped on, kicked or otherwise misplaced. If I’m not in my office, take your assignment to the Sociology Office (Clement 231) and ask the secretary to sign and date it and place it in my mail box.

   In extreme circumstances only, I will also accept assignments by U.S. mail, by email, or by fax (901-678-2525). Be certain to correctly address and identify your assignment.

2. Keeping in touch with me: The best way to reach me is by email, dshinbrg@memphis.edu, or see me during my office hours. You may also call me in my office and leave a voice message for me if I’m not available. As I may not check my voice mail every day, in urgent circumstances I also strongly encourage you to also contact the Sociology office (901-678-2611). The office staff generally knows my whereabouts and can contact me quickly if the need arises.

   If you are unable to complete an assignment on time or expect to be late or absent or must leave class early, I expect to hear from you, preferably *BEFORE* the deadline, class meeting or office appointment.

3. Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct on the part of students will not be tolerated in this course and may result in one or more of the following: a zero (0) on the assignment, a failing grade in the course (an “F”), expulsion from the University.

   Academic misconduct includes acts of cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes (but is not limited to) using any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or tests; using sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers or other assignments; and misrepresenting assignments as the product of a student’s sole independent effort.

   Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) the use of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. This includes paraphrasing or direct quotation without references as well as copying directly off the Internet! Please refer to the University’s Code of Student Conduct in the *Student Handbook* at http://www.memphis.edu/stuhand2/ for more information.
4. Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Student Disability Services (SDS) office (located in 110 Wilder; Phone 901-678-2880 V/TTY; FAX 901-678-3070) in order to receive appropriate course-related accommodations and services. Students who formally register their disabilities with SDS are entitled to reasonable accommodations, as well as confidentiality with respect to their specific disability. If you have registered with SDS, please be certain that I receive an official memo that outlines your accommodation requirements so that we may maximize your learning experience.

5. Confidentiality: To ensure confidentiality of student information, under no circumstances will I send grades over email or discuss your grade over the telephone or voicemail.

6. Classroom conduct: Students are expected to approach controversial and/or sensitive topics as mature adults.

    Food and beverages will be permitted in the classroom, as long as the classroom is left in a clean and tidy state at the end of class and as long as such activity is not disruptive during class time.

    *Cell phones, electronic pagers, and alarms, etc. must be silenced or turned off during class.*

**Summary of Due Dates**

- Wednesday, September 15  Exercise #1  Activity: Scavenger Hunt
- Monday, September 27  Exercise #2  Interview: Home and Family
- Monday, October 11  Mid-Term Exam (in class)
- Wednesday, October 20  Exercise #3  Interview: Work and Employment
- Monday, November 1  Exercise #4  Activity: Fieldtrip or Media
- Monday, November 22  Exercise #5  Interview: Reproduction, Sex and Love or Beauty, Appearance and the Body
- Wednesday, December 1  Exercise #6  Interview: Beauty, Appearance and the Body or Violence
- Monday, December 13  Final Exam (10:30 am – 12:30 pm)