



Sociology 3341f (570)
The Social Construction of Gender
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: Miele, Rachelle

Email: rmiele@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

The course will consider the ways in which our view of gender has changed from one that saw gender as an attribute of individuals to one that sees gender as a social construction that shapes social life. Implications of this change for gender inequality will also be explored.

Prerequisite(s): Third or fourth year standing in a module in Criminology, Criminal Justice or Sociology.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: SOCIOLOG

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
SOC3341F
Social Construction of Gender, Fall 2025

Instructor: Dr. Rachelle Miele (she/her)

Email: rmiele@uwo.ca

Office Hours (Zoom): Wednesday, 6:30 - 7:30 pm or by appointment

Kings University College is on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples. In our class, we are working towards reconciliation by learning about the history, experiences, and cultures of Indigenous peoples.

Course Description:

In this course, we will explore how we 'do' and perform gender and how others do it to us. From the perspective of social constructionism, together we will examine what 'doing' gender means, and critically engage with dominant understandings of sex and biology. Moving beyond the understanding of gender as directly linked to biological sex, we will examine how gender is constructed, produced, reproduced, upheld, and challenged through social institutions (e.g., education, sport, media) as well as in our everyday lives. We will focus mostly on the Canadian experience, but a global focus will be integrated. The course will be intersectional and each week we will consider and learn about how gender operates in relation to race, sexuality, class, disabilities, and other social locations.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon the completion of this course, you will:

- Have a strong understanding of the main issues and debates related to gender from a social constructionist perspective.
- Be able to critically examine and discuss how gender is constructed both through social institutions and in our day-to-day lives.
- Consider the ways in which dominant understandings of masculinity and femininity impact and inform our assumptions.
- Make connections between gender and other social locations.
- Refine your communication skills through class participation.
- Incorporate course material into class discussions and assignments.
- Make connections between readings and pose effective questions topics.
- Improve your communication, writing, and analytic skills through course work.
- Reflect on your experiences and understand them in relation to course materials.

Mode of Instruction: In-person

Course Textbooks/Materials:

- **Required Text(s):**

-Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies by Kang et al. (2017) (a free online text): <http://openbooks.library.umass.edu/introwgss/>

-Assigned readings, documentaries, or podcasts available on OWL

- **OWL Brightspace:**

OWL will be used regularly for this course and will include course information/schedule, assigned readings, and assignment instructions. I will also post announcements regularly. Please make sure to check our OWL site frequently.

Method of Evaluation:

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

- Class Engagement (Self-Assessed) (October 8 & December 3): 15%
- Reflections (2 total, weeks 2 - 12): 30% (15% each)
- Midterm – take home essay (October 22): 20%
- Final Project
 - Final Project Proposal (November 12): 5%
 - Final Project (December 9): 30%

Assignment Descriptions – See OWL for detailed instructions:

Class Engagement (Self-Assessed) (15%) – Check in: Oct. 8; Final: Dec. 3

Each of our classes will include discussions and you will have the opportunity to discuss the topic at hand, ask questions, and bring in your knowledge to our class. Mid-semester and at the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a self-assessment. Your professor will review your self-assessment and assign a grade.

Reflections (30%) (2 x 15%) – Ongoing, Weeks 2-12

In 2-3 pages double spaced, you will complete two reflections throughout the course during two different weeks (weeks 2-12). Reflecting on one of the class materials for each of the weeks you choose, the focus of this assignment is on reflecting on the topic, using your critical thinking skills, and applying the knowledge from the course.

Midterm – take home essay (20%) – Due October 22

A week before the deadline, you will be given a choice of three questions where you will respond in essay format. Using course material and lectures, you are to respond to one question in an essay 5-8 pages double spaced. Full instructions will be posted on OWL.

Final Project (2 parts)

Your final assignment is your opportunity to explore a topic you are interested in relation to gender. You have two choices: (A) Written Project; (B) Alternative Medium

- **Part 1: Final Project Proposal (5%) – Due November 12**

In 2-3 pages double spaced, outline your final assignment. The purpose of the proposal is for you to receive feedback and guidance before starting your final project.

- **Part 2: Final Project (30%) – Due December 9**

Choice A: Written Project: Once you have decided on your project and topic, you will write an 8–10-page paper double spaced (not including reference list).

- **Choice B: Alternative Medium:** In addition to your alternative format project, you will write a 4–5-page double spaced (not including reference list) description of your project.

Academic Considerations:

Please reach out to your professor via email if you need an extension for your assignments. Together we will come to an agreement so that you can submit your written assignment without penalty.

Academic Integrity:

- Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
- Within this course, use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT, translation tools, and grammar-checking tools) is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.
- Notice of Turnitin Analysis: All assignment may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

Week 1: Sep. 10

- **Introduction to the Course; The binary: Sex vs. Gender**
 - Textbook: Social Constructionism
 - OWL: Fausto Sterling (2012); Lorber (1993)

Week 2: Sept. 17

- **Gender as a Social Construct: Doing Gender, Race, Class, and Colonialism**
 - OWL: Holmes (2007); West & Zimmerman (1987)

Week 3: Sep. 24

- **Masculinities**
 - OWL: Connell & Messerschmidt (2005); Coston & Kimmel (2012); Ging (2019)

Week 4: Oct. 1

- **Femininities**

- OWL: Pyke & Johnson (2003); Currie et al. (2011); Del Campo (2023)

Week 5: Oct. 8 **Class Engagement Check-In Due**

- **The Gender Spectrum**
 - Textbook: Gender and Sex – Transgender and Intersex
 - OWL: Hossain (2017); Darwin (2017); Podcast: All My Relations

Week 6: Oct. 15 **Midterm – Take Home Questions Assigned**

- **Gender and Sexuality**
 - Textbook: Sexualities
 - OWL: Schilt, & Westbrook (2009); Fahs (2014)

Week 7: Oct. 22 **Midterm – Take Home Due before class**

- **Gender, Labour, and Education**
 - Textbook: Unit IV: Gender and Work in the Global Economy (all chapters)
 - OWL: Sandler (1999); Laughlin (2016); Sandau & Cousineau 2025

Week 8: Oct. 29

- **Gender, Health, and Medicine**
 - OWL: Patterson et al (2022); Courtenay (2000); Denton et al. (2004); Martin (1991)

Reading Week: Nov. 5 – Rest!

Week 9: Nov. 12 **Final Project Proposal Due**

- **Gender and Violence (sensitive content; trigger warning: rape, gendered based violence, state violence)**
 - Textbook: Intersecting Institutions Case Study: The Struggle to End Gendered Violence and Violence Against Women
 - OWL: Martin (2016); Lopez Fernandez (2020)

Week 10: Nov. 19

- **Gender and Sport**
 - OWL: Ezzell (2009); Messner (1990); Podcast: Engendering the Politics of the Black Athlete

Week 11: Nov. 26

- **Gender and the Media**
 - OWL: hooks (1992); Gill (2008)

Week 12: Dec. 3 **Class Engagement Self-Assessment Due**

- **Disrupting and Challenging Gender: Where do we go from here?**
 - OWL: The Man Enough Podcast

Dec. 9 **Final Project Due on OWL at 11:59 PM**

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.