

WST 4930: Transgender Studies Spring 2019



Gender is the poetry each of us makes out of the language we are taught. – Leslie Feinberg

Instructor: Billy Huff, Ph.D.

CRN: 21175

Time/Location: Monday 4:05 pm – 6:00 pm; Wednesday 5:10 pm – 6:00 pm/Pugh 120

College/Department: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences/Center for Gender, Sexualities, and Women's Studies Research

Credit Hours: 3

Office Location and Hours: Reitz Union (2nd floor) Rainbow Suite – Monday 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm

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Required Texts

In an effort to make this class universally accessible, all required readings are available on CANVAS.

Course Description

This course introduces the interdisciplinary field that is currently known as Transgender Studies. In this course, we will critically examine Transgender as a concept as it travels across social, historical, cultural, legal, medical, national, political, and affective spaces. We will consider the centrality of the socially constructed body and the flesh within Transgender Studies, as well as the relationship between bodies and texts. Third, and perhaps most important, we'll connect theory and research to our personal lives. Your experiences, insights, questions, and ideas are a key part of this course. Throughout the term we'll consider not only what is in terms of gender, but also what might be and how we, as change agents, may act to improve our individual and collective lives.

Content Notes and Contested Space

In this class, we will sometimes read and critically discuss texts and topics that include violence, anti-trans arguments, and terminology that may be archaic, disputed, or used in a derogatory way. You will learn that one of the promises of trans- (as a theory, method, and a way of thinking about bodies and identities) is that it is constantly changing, and it is always open to critique. Publishing, however, fixes texts in time. We will confront contested arguments in order to better understand how they work and how to critically respond. All of the readings we do will be political *and* personal. They might trigger strong feelings – anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, or even boredom. In addition, people in this class will have very different levels of familiarity with trans- topics and people who are trans-. The subject of this course makes it likely that people in this class will make mistakes, accidentally misgender someone, say something hurtful, or otherwise make others uncomfortable. We all have a responsibility to create an intellectually rigorous space in which difference can exist in an atmosphere of risk and respect. I cannot presume how each individual in the room will respond emotionally to each text. For that reason, I will not provide “trigger warnings.” You are encouraged to take care of yourselves when making decisions about how to approach the assigned readings and discussions. Above all, be respectful (even while we critique “respect”), use correct pronouns, and be conscious of the ways that your identities position you in the classroom.

Course Objectives

The following objectives will be met through group projects, class lectures, activities, and discussions. By the end of the term, the student will:

1. understand the foundations of Transgender Studies as a discipline, including pivotal texts.
2. understand how normative gendered structures are constructed, policed, reified, and resisted.
3. analyze and critique institutional constraints regarding gender and possibilities for resisting institutional barriers.
4. adopt a critical trans- lens in which to interrogate their own identities.
5. connect normative gendered structures with other structures of domination and oppression, such as race, class, body size, sexuality, language, religion, ability, nationality, etc.
6. apply trans- theoretical perspectives to personal reflections on sexuality and gender expression/embodiment in the everyday world.
7. appreciate the legacy of activism that brings trans- to its contemporary moment.
8. think creatively about trans- futures and possibilities.
9. grapple with the paradoxes inherent in Transgender Studies (i.e. unprecedented visibility for trans- simultaneous with unprecedented violence against trans- people, specifically trans women of color).

Course Assignments

1. **Initial and Final Reaction Papers:** Students will respond to prompts prior to the second week of class engaging current knowledge of trans- theoretical concepts. A similar reaction paper will be required again at the end of the semester. (2 reaction papers @ 25 points each = 50 points)
2. **Online Corkboard (Journal):** Instead of a traditional journal, students will create an online corkboard on <http://www.pinup.com> that connects their own experiences with concepts from the readings. Creativity is encouraged. Students can include text, images, videos, audio etc. (10 @ 20 points each = 200 points)
3. **Institutional Analysis Group Project:** Students will sign up for a group project that analyzes a particular social institution. As a group, students will present their findings in a 30-45 minute presentation. More specific details will be provided. (150 points)
4. **Transgender Time Capsule Midterm Project:** In groups, students will select five items that reflect popular understandings of trans- today. Using course concepts, students will imagine how these artifacts might be received in 100 years. Groups will present their ideas in a 10 – 15 minute presentation. More specific details will be provided. (100 points)
5. **Doing Trans-/Thinking Trans Final Project:** In groups, students will reflect on their learning/unlearning regarding trans- and present a creative and/or academic project of their choosing. More detailed information will be provided. (200 points)
6. **Participation:** Participation is an integral component for successful completion of this course. Students will have numerous opportunities to earn participation points throughout the semester. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, participating in class discussions, presenting online corkboards, relating course content to current events, attending and presenting on related academic cultural events on campus, etc. (200 points)
7. **Peer Evaluation:** At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the members of their groups on performance and commitment to the group. (100 points)

Exams

Trans- lacks fixity and closure, and it is always open to constant critique. For that reason, students will not take traditional exams in this course. Student learning will be assessed through class discussions, group projects, and class presentations.

Attendance

Attendance is vital for the successful completion of this course. The world we create in our course will be negatively altered by your absence. Please make plans to attend the entire class session each week. There will be no specific grade for attendance, however, your participation grade will suffer from excessive absences. Please expect your grade to reflect your commitment to this course.

Consider adding a (second) major in Women's Studies!

Do you want to learn about issues of diversity, power, equity, and justice and gain the scholarly knowledge and skills to change the world? Adding the Women's Studies major can deepen your critical thinking, analysis, and skills in intersectional feminist approaches to **studying and transforming gender, race, class, sexualities and other systems of power**. The Women's Studies major shows graduate schools and employers that you bring advanced knowledge and skills about diversity and equity issues. The 30-credit Women's Studies major consists of four core courses and six electives. It's simple to combine with another major, and up to 15 credits can double count with another degree (English, Psychology, and Sociology in particular have many courses that can double count). It's also the perfect complement to pre-health studies. Contact undergraduate coordinator Dr. Alyssa Zucker (azucker@ufl.edu) to make an appointment to discuss adding the major. Or stop by her Spring 2019 office hours, Tuesdays 10:30-12:30 in Ustler 204.

Academic Behavior Standards and Academic Dishonesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Disability Accommodations Services

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

It is my intention to make this class universally accessible, so let me know if you experience barriers in the class. I will do what I can to make this class as accessible for everyone as I can.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu.

<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

<https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honorcode-student-conduct-code/>

Student Observance of Religious Holidays

All students at University of Florida have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices, and beliefs. Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances. Where practicable, major examinations, major assignments, and University ceremonies will not be scheduled on a major religious holy day. A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence.

Grade Tracker

Initial Reaction Paper	____/25
Corkboards (10 @ 20 points)	____/200
Institution Project	____/150
Time Capsule Project	____/100
Participation	____/200
Final Reaction Paper	____/25
Peer Evaluation Grade	____/100
Doing Trans-/Thinking Trans- Final Project	____/200
Total:	____/1000

Grading Scale

900 – 1000 = A

800 – 899 = B

700 – 799 = C

600 – 699 = D

Below 600 = F

Course Schedule

NOTE: This schedule is tentative and is subject to change at my discretion.

A note on themes. I have decided not to thematize the readings on this syllabus in order to encourage trans- thinking. I hope that the randomized order of readings will encourage you to find connections between and among readings that a more normative categorization would foreclose.

Week	Date	Content	Due
1	1/7/19	Introductions/Syllabus Review/Class Overview	N/A
1	1/9/19	Stryker, S. (2017). Chapter 1: Contexts, concepts, and terms. In S. Stryker (Ed.), <i>Transgender history: The roots of today's revolution</i> (pp. 1-44). New York, NY: Seal Press.	N/A
2	1/14/19	Raymond, J.G. (2006). Sappho by surgery: The transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 131-143). New York, NY: Routledge. AND Stone, S. (2006). The empire strikes back: A posttranssexual manifesto. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 221-235). New York, NY: Routledge.	Initial Reaction Paper Due
2	1/16/19	Stryker, S. (2006). (De)subjugated knowledges: An introduction to transgender studies. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Routledge.	Pinup Reflection #1 Due
3	1/21/19	No Class – MLK, Jr. Day	N/A
3	1/23/19	Keegan, C.M. (2018). Getting disciplined: What's trans* about queer studies now. <i>Journal of Homosexuality</i> , 1-14.	Pinup Reflection #2 Due
4	1/28/19	Griffin-Gracy, M.M., McDonald, C., & Meronek, T. (2017). Cautious living: Black trans women and the politics of documentation. In R. Gossett, E.A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), <i>Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility</i> (pp. 23-37). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. Watch: Free CeCe!	N/A
4	1/30/19	Green, K.M. (2016). Troubling the waters: Mobilizing a trans* analytic. In E.P. Johnson (Ed.), <i>No tea, no shade: New writings in black queer studies</i> (pp. 65-82). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.	Pinup Reflection #3 Due
5	2/4/19	Enke, A.F. (2013). The education of little cis: Cisgender and the discipline of opposing bodies. In S. Stryker and A.Z. Aizura (Eds.), <i>The transgender studies reader, 2</i> (pp. 234-247). New York, NY: Routledge. AND Feinberg, L. (2006). Transgender liberation: A movement whose time has come. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 205-220). New York, NY: Routledge.	Pinup Reflection #4 Due
5	2/6/19	Group Work on Institutional and Time Capsule Projects/ I will be at the Diversity in Higher Education Conference at UCLA.	N/A
6	2/11/19	Group Work on Institutional and Time Capsule Projects	N/A
6	2/13/19	Group Work on Institutional and Time Capsule Projects	N/A

7	2/18/19	Family Institutional Project Presentation Stryker, S. My words to Victor Frankenstein above the village of Chamounix. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Routledge.	Institutional Project Presentation
7	2/20/19	Hale, J. (1997). Leatherdyke boys and their daddies: How to have sex without women or men. <i>Social Text</i> , 52-53, 223-236.	Pinup Reflection #5 Due
8	2/25/19	Education Institutional Project Presentation West, I. (2010). PISSAR's critically queer and disabled politics. <i>Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies</i> , 7(2), 156-175.	Institutional Project Presentation
8	2/27/19	Huff, B. (Forthcoming 2019). Transition to Neverland: Exploring trans boyhood through J.M. Barrie's <i>Peter Pan</i> ." In J. Lamothe, R. Friedman, & M. Perez (Eds.), <i>Beyond binaries: Trans identities in contemporary culture</i> , Lexington, KY: Lexington Publishers.	Pinup Reflection #6 Due
9	3/4/19	SPRING BREAK	N/A
9	3/6/19	SPRING BREAK	N/A
10	3/11/19	Trans Time Capsule Presentations	Trans Time Capsule
10	3/13/19	Trans Time Capsule Presentations	Trans Time Capsule
11	3/18/19	Government Institutional Project Presentation Bassichis, M., Lee, A. & Spade, D. (2013). Building an abolitionist trans and queer movement with everything we've got. In S. Stryker and A.Z. Aizura (Eds.), <i>The transgender studies reader</i> , 2 (pp. 46-55). New York, NY: Routledge.	Institutional Project Presentation
11	3/20/19	Beauchamp, T. (2013). Artful concealment and strategic visibility. In S. Stryker and A.Z. Aizura (Eds.), <i>The transgender studies reader</i> , 2 (pp. 46-55). New York, NY: Routledge.	Pinup Reflection #7 Due
12	3/25/19	Work Institutional Project Presentation Lewis, V. (2013). Thinking figurations otherwise: Reframing dominant knowledges of sex and gender variance in Latin America. In S. Stryker and A.Z. Aizura (Eds.), <i>The transgender studies reader</i> , 2 (pp. 457-470). New York, NY: Routledge.	Institutional Project Presentation
12	3/27/19	Cárdenas, M. (2017). Dark shimmers: The rhythm of necropolitical affect in digital media. In R. Gossett, E.A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), <i>Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility</i> (pp. 161-181). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.	Pinup Reflection #8 Due
13	4/1/19	Religion Institutional Project Presentation Preciado, B. (2013). The pharmaco-pornographic regime: Sex, gender, and subjectivity in the age of punk capitalism. In S. Stryker and A.Z. Aizura (Eds.), <i>The transgender studies reader</i> , 2 (pp. 266-277). New York, NY: Routledge.	Institutional Project Presentation
13	4/3/19	Tompkins, A.B. (2014). There's no chasing involved: Cis/trans relationships, 'tranny chasers,' and the future of sex-positive trans politics. <i>Journal of Homosexuality</i> 61(5), 766-780).	Pinup Reflection #9 Due

14	4/8/19	Media Institutional Project Presentation Gossett, C. (2017). Blackness and the trouble of trans visibility. In R. Gossett, E.A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), <i>Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility</i> (pp. 183-190). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. AND Butler, J. (2006). Doing justice to someone: Sex reassignment and allegories of transsexuality. In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Eds.), <i>The Transgender Studies Reader</i> (pp. 183-193). New York, NY: Routledge.	Institutional Project Presentation
14	4/10/19	Spade, D. (2017). Models of futurity. In R. Gossett, E.A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), <i>Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility</i> (pp. 321-337). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.	Pinup Reflection #10 Due
15	4/15/19	Ahmed, S. (2017). An affinity of hammers. In R. Gossett, E.A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds.), <i>Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility</i> (pp. 221-234). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. Class wrap up.	Pinup Reflection #11 Due
15	4/17/19	Group Work Day	N/A
16	4/22/19	Final Project Presentations	Final Presentations
16	4/24/19	Final Project Presentations	Final Presentations Final Reaction Paper