Sociology of Gender

Dr. Harmony Newman
Office Hours: Happily by appointment

Email: harmony.newman@unco.edu
Office: Candelaria 2040

Summer 2019

COURSE OVERVIEW
Getting started: Click on the "Home" button and review various course components so you can find out how the course is organized. You will learn what's expected of you in terms of the hours you are expected to invest in this class as well as technical skills needed. You will also learn what to expect from me in terms of interacting with you, netiquette rules, grading policies and more. Also, please open the "Course Schedule" document and print out a summary of the required readings, assignments and due dates.

COURSE PURPOSE
This course focuses on the sociological study of gender as a basic principle of social life. Gender can be defined as the significance members of a society attach to being female or male. Gender roles are the social roles that are prescribed for a society's members, depending on their sex.

Gender is critical to individuals' sense of personal identity - the first thing we want to know about a new baby is "Is it a boy or a girl?" Sex assignment sets in motion a complex set of expectations for individuals' behavior and attitudes, and plays an important role in shaping individuals' expectations for their roles in the family, in the workplace and elsewhere in society.

Sociologists are concerned with the social construction of gender, which refers to the many different ways expectations associated with being male and female are created, reinforced and transmitted throughout our society. Sociologists are interested in examining how social norms revolving around gender affect our expectations for social interaction, and how individuals actively (if unintentionally) reinforce gendered expectations by "doing" gender related things and expecting gender difference in relations with others. Sociologists also study how beliefs about gender difference help to 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. In every society, gender difference is used as a justification for male dominance over women and for men having greater access to economic resources, power and status. This course critically examines how gender difference and gender inequality are socially constructed through socialization practices, interactions with others and through the influence of major social institutions.

Since this course is being delivered via distance technologies, we will be relying on communication and collaboration in electronic environments. Blackboard requires you to use your UNC email account. Please make sure that you have configured your email account to receive email from UNC.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• Explain a multilevel understanding of gender
• Demonstrate how gender is constructed into roles, identities, practices, and institutions
• Explain how social categories function to create and justify systems of advantage and disadvantage in society
• Synthesize and apply academic concepts to the diversity and complexity of American society, and one’s own place in it
• Use critical reading, thinking, and writing skills and apply them to theories of gender
COURSE POLICIES
This is not an independent study class, where you go completely at your own pace. The course has 6 sections that will correspond with the 6 weeks of class. You are responsible for completing all units for each section by a certain day and time. Each section has assigned reading from either the textbook or another source, a corresponding assignment, a graded exam and other materials relevant to our course topics. Note too, that since this is a shortened term, we go at a faster pace than during the regular semester, because we cover the same amount of material as in a 15 week semester course.

All assignments and discussion board posts due dates are listed in the course schedule below. You are STRONGLY, STRONGLY, STRONGLY encouraged to not wait until the last minute. I DO NOT accept late work. I urge you to anticipate that your internet will fail, your computer will crash, a family member will die, your dog will throw up, your child will get sick AND you will have a debilitating headache every Monday morning during the course and thus plan accordingly to get your assignments in well before the deadline.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

www.unco.edu/dos/communityStandards/honor_code

In short, the Code states that all work turned in for credit must be your own work in your own words, unless clear and explicit acknowledgement of the sources of the work is given. Cheating or plagiarizing will result in failing the assignment or the course.

Citation and Plagiarism
When you use the ideas of someone else, whether you quote someone directly or indirectly incorporate general points made by another person, you must cite the source. Proper citation practices not only help you to avoid the unethical act of plagiarism, but also are a mark of good scholarship. When you appropriately cite the work of others you demonstrate your ability to apply and synthesize information and to form your own ideas regarding those of someone else. Here are three examples of typical citation formats:

1) "Proper citation practices...are a mark of good scholarship" (Newman 2013, p. x). [this is a direct quote]
2) Newm (2013) has suggested that ethical citation formats indicate good scholarship. [this is an indirect reference]
3) According to some (e.g., Newman 2013), proper citation indicates good thinking. [indirect reference]

UNC's Policies on Academic Misconduct
UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link and current catalog.
http://www.unco.edu/
REQUIRED READINGS
The required books for this course, available at the UNCO Bookstore are:


CONSIDER ORDERING THE E-BOOK

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Response Memos (300 points each, 600 points total—30% of final grade)
These writing assignments are designed to help you explore readings and apply them to everyday life. You need to complete two response memos, each 3-4 typed pages.

Format
- Memos should be 3-4 pages in length.
- Double-space and use a 12-point font and one-inch margins all around.
- Number your pages.
- Don't forget to proofread for grammar, spelling, and typos. Well-written and -presented papers will receive better grades than poorly-written, messy ones.
- You must upload the paper through Canvas where a program automatically scans your paper for plagiarism and archives a copy of your paper for UNC. It is important to remember to hit the submit button when the assignment is finished. It is also strongly recommended that you keep a copy of your paper in case it is not transmitted properly. This will prevent you from having to re-write the paper!

Generally, grades in the:
- **A range** are reserved for exceptionally thoughtful and well-reasoned papers, demonstrating not only strong understanding of the concepts and/or course materials used, but also going above and beyond the call of the assignment – by bringing ideas together in novel ways or showing an unusually deep understanding of the issues at stake. They will also be well-written.
- **B range** reflect a generally good paper, featuring a thoughtful, well-reasoned analysis. There may be some minor weaknesses (e.g., underdeveloped analysis). If you follow the directions like a recipe, you will get a grade in the B range.
- **C range** indicate weaknesses in your arguments, misunderstandings of the readings, and/or that some major aspect of the assignment is missing or poorly/incompletely fulfilled.
- **D range** represents a worse version of “C.”

2. Discussion Boards (100 points each [except Introduction for 0 points], 600 points total—30% of final grade)
Students will complete one original discussion post and two responses per unit. Each original discussion post is worth 70 points. Discussion posts for each unit will be due on Wednesdays at 11:59pm. Each response post is worth 15 points. You will not be able to view your peers’ responses until after you’ve posted your own. You will not be able to edit your posts after you hit submit (but you may post an additional post to clarify any errors.) Responses for each unit will be due on Thursdays at 11:59pm.

The purpose of discussions in this course is for students to apply the course material, communicate ideas and thoughts with other students and the instructor, and critically analyze issues in the
family. You are expected to ground your posts in the content of the course, using concepts and evidence to support your arguments. Please feel free to bring in appropriate outside resources into the discussions (images, research, or newspaper articles). To benefit the most from the discussions, it is important that you keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Participate regularly in the class discussions
- Take time to organize your thoughts before posting
- Engage directly with the ideas of other participants
- Discussion posts must offer more than “I agree;” you must add something substantive to the conversation.

**Please Note:** In this course, we are practicing scholars, and I expect students to cite course material and outside sources appropriately, using ASA citation guidelines in all discussion posts (please see ASA formatting guidelines on Canvas). Students do not have to provide a reference list if they use course materials, only the author and year. However, please provide a full reference for outside materials so that the instructor and other students can find the original source.

**NETIQUETTE**

It should go without saying that standards of common courtesy apply in our virtual classroom as they do in a face-to-face context. Please review the netiquette standards under “Start Here”. Unacceptable behavior including cyber bullying will not be tolerated. Class netiquette mandates that you do your best to act within the normal expectations of human interaction while interacting with your classmates online.

**3. Exams (400 points each, 800 points total—40% of final grade)**

There will be two exams given during the semester, each worth 40 points. The exams will cover in-class lectures, discussions, videos, and the assigned readings. They will be a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer and essay questions. See the course outline for dates.

**STUDENT EVALUATION**

Participants will be asked to evaluate the course through an online survey which will be announced toward the end of the course. Please plan to participate in this survey.

**PREVIOUS TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE**

You should have some technical working knowledge to succeed in this online course. For example, you should be able to use email, add attachments, create a document and use word processing software, etc. See this link for the tech requirements of online courses: [http://extended.unco.edu/about/unc-online/tech-requirements.asp](http://extended.unco.edu/about/unc-online/tech-requirements.asp)

**COMPUTER COMPATIBILITY AND OTHER TECHNICAL ISSUES**

In order to get information about making sure your computer is compatible for the course, please view the Canvas Support materials through UNCO. I am not an IT technician and I cannot help you upload assignments, tell you what’s wrong with your computer or give you an extension of time because of any computer related problems. You are in an online class, so you are responsible for determining whether your computer is compatible with Canvas and ensuring that you see confirmation that your assignments are uploaded successfully before they are due. Contact an IT technician immediately at 970-351-4357 if you have problems. I cannot accept any email attachments as your submitted assignments.

**DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**
It is the policy and practice of the University of Northern Colorado to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that present barriers to your inclusion or to an accurate assessment of your achievement (e.g. time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, use of videos without captions), please communicate this with your professor and contact Disability Support Services (DSS) to request accommodations. Office: (970) 351-2289, Michener Library L-80. Students can learn more about the accommodation process at http://www.unco.edu/disability-support-services/.

I realize this is a tremendous amount of information. I am here to answer any questions; please do not hesitate to ask. I want you to succeed in this course and more importantly, I want you to learn about practicing sociology!
A NOTE ABOUT SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

1) The objectives of sociological research. Sociologists conduct research in a scientific, objective, and value-free way. Sociologists focus on describing prevalent behaviors or attitudes in societies and explaining these prevalent attitudes and behaviors theoretically. The studies you will read about are not personal opinions or political ideologies. As an example: If a sociologist studies attitudes about abortion, he or she will not state whether abortion is 'right' or 'wrong.' Rather, this researcher will describe prevalent attitudes about abortion and explain why these attitudes exist.

2) The goals of sociology when studying men and women. There are different approaches to studying men and women (biology, sociology, psychology, etc.). Each discipline is going to ask different questions and interpret facts differently about the same topic. Sociologists look for patterns, not exceptions. A major goal of the sociological study of men and women is to look for the most common or most typical values, behaviors and attitudes (even though exceptions are important). Consider this example: If a police officer, firefighter, and architect examine a house, they are going to ask different, but equally important questions (“You need a bolt on your front door.” “You need to remove that fire hazard.” “You need to work on the foundation of your house.”) Each person has the same set of “facts,” but ask different (and equally important) questions about that same set of facts.

3) Sociological studies vs. personal/individual experiences. Sometimes students read about findings from sociological studies and think, “That doesn’t apply to me. It can’t be true.” Just because you, personally, have not experienced something does not detract from the sociological insight. Some studies might not apply to your personal experience but these studies do indicate social facts about patterns in behavior or attitudes.

4) Some people will feel threatened by or antagonistic towards the course material because sociologists examine inequality and behaviors and attitudes that we take for granted. People have very strong feelings about relationships between and among men and women. Many people feel threatened or hostile when they hear about certain gender issues. It makes sense: gender is a part of our core identity. Biology has something to do with who we are as men and women but sociologists do not focus on the biological aspects. We focus on environment, group membership, social structure, and interactions.

5) Sociologists do not blame or judge any groups. Sociologists do not judge groups, even when studying issues such as domestic violence or rape. As an example, instead of judging men who engage in violence towards women, sociologists will ask, “What is it about our culture that condones domestic violence? Why do women (or men) who have been abused feel ashamed of it? How do laws about domestic violence influence our attitudes about it? What do beliefs about masculinity have to do with domestic violence?”