GENDER IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Fall 2019: Anthropology 432/ 432H/ 532
CRNs 14463, 14464, 14469
CH 383, MWF 11:30 – 12:35

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Office Hours: WF 1:00 – 2:00 & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This upper-level course will offer an anthropological exploration of issues of gender and sexuality in cross-cultural perspective. The first section of the course provides an exploration of the biological and social aspects of sex and gender and a discussion of the intersections between gender, race, class, and nationality. The second section of the course explores how kinship structures, social reproduction, and biological reproduction shape gender identities. Turning to an analysis of gender in a globalizing world, the third section of the course explores care work and transnational families. In the fourth section, students will read both classic and contemporary writings on sexuality, exploring how Victorian, colonial, and contemporary discourses affect gender and sexual identity. The fifth section examines how bio-power (power over bodies) plays out in political battles over women’s reputations and respectability in multiple contexts around the world, and how medicalized discussions of overweight and obesity affect people of all genders and races in the US. The final section of the course examines questions of care and intimacy in the context of sex work / prostitution. Readings, presentations, discussion, and assignments will provide supportive and inclusive avenues for study, analysis, and activism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
With regard to program goals and philosophy, students are referred to the Anthropology Department’s Learning Outcomes for Graduate and Undergraduate students. With regard to this course, by the end of the quarter, students will be able to
• Explain and discuss the cultural construction of gender and sexuality and how they intersect with other forms of identity (e.g., race, class, nationality)
• Identify and critically assess how kin relations and family reproductive strategies affect gender identities
• Analyze how migration and the commodification of care challenge gender roles as individuals engage with the global economy
• Appraise and assess how historical and contemporary discourses about sex, sexuality, and sex work affect individuals and groups politically, economically, and socially
• Identify disciplinary approaches to doing ethnographic research and performing data analysis on ethnographic information related to gender and sexuality
• Develop writing skills at the senior/graduate student level
• Ask good questions, lead engaging discussions, and present the results of independent and group projects to classmates
RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

Upper division standing and at least one junior-level core course in sociocultural anthropology, or previous junior/senior-level course work in Anthropology, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, or a related social science discipline.

READINGS

Required

- Materials on D2L (see below)
  
  o Note: Curtis’s book is available electronically on the PSU Library website; students who wish to read this book in hardcopy should purchase it independently.
- Anth 432 (optional) One ethnography selected from the list at the end of the syllabus or chosen in conversation with the instructor
  
  o PSU’s Library has available as e-books many of the ethnographies listed as options for students in Anth 432. Students who wish to read these books in hardcopy should purchase them independently. *Please speak with the instructor before making a purchase if you are interested in reading a book not on the list of ethnographies provided below.*
- Anth 432H, Anth 532 (required): Student-selected materials for term paper

Recommended


Good writing skills will serve students well in this and other classes. Students who already own a style guide do not need to purchase another one, but the instructor will assume that all students in the course have access to such a resource.

D2L (Desire 2 Learn Learning Management System)

Most course materials and readings will be available on D2L, and all student work will be submitted online through D2L. Students can access D2L using an Odin username and password to login at https://d2l.pdx.edu. Please visit the online class support website if you encounter difficulties accessing or using D2L, and contact the instructor immediately if the difficulties interfere with ability to complete assignments in a timely manner.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

All students in Anth 432 will be evaluated on attendance, discussion leadership, and participation (10%) and 2 short reading response essays and/or creative work and/or media analysis essays and/or letters to the editor (10% each, for a total of 20% of the course grade). Students in Anth 432 will have a choice of how to earn a grade for the
remaining 70% of the course. They may write a 6 page essay on Debra Curtis’s book *Pleasures and Perils* (30%), and/or they may choose an ethnographic book, read it, and write an 8-page essay on it (40%), and/or they may either write 3 or 4 additional short reading response essays and/or creative works and/or media analyses and/or letters to the editor (10% each).

All students in Anth 432H and Anth 532 will be evaluated on attendance, discussion leadership, and participation (10%), 2 short reading response essays and/or creative work and/or media analysis essays and/or letters to the editor (10% each, for a total of 20% of the course grade), and a term paper (40%) on a topic of their choice, about which they will present to the class during the last week of the quarter. Students in Anth 432H and Anth 532 will have a choice of how to earn a grade for the remaining 30% of the course; they may either write 3 additional short reading response essays and/or creative works and/or media analyses and/or letters to the editor (10% each, for a total of 30%), or they may write a 6-page essay on Debra Curtis’s book *Pleasures and Perils* (30%).

The following table illustrates the assignment options for Anth 432, Anth 432H, and Anth 532.

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<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Short essays on Sections #1 and #2</td>
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<td>Long essay – Curtis</td>
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<td>Long essay – Book of your choice</td>
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<td>4 Short essays (on Sections #3, #4, #5, and #6)</td>
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<td>3 Short essays (choice of 3 of 4 from Sections #3, #4, #5, and #6)</td>
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**Attendance, discussion leadership, and participation (10%)**

The instructor will ask students to lead discussions on some course materials during the term. Distribution of discussion responsibilities will be discussed in class.

Class participation provides an important aspect of the learning experience in this class, and is therefore both expected and required. *Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will receive no points for class participation.* Legitimate reasons to miss class are few and dire, and should if at all possible be reported to the instructor before the start of the class period.

**Short reading response essays (each 2-3 double-spaced pages / 600-1000 words; each worth 10%)**

Students are asked to interact synthetically with materials in the course. This interaction may take a number of different forms.

- **Creative endeavor and reflection essay.** Write a short fictional story, a poem, or screen play, or craft a piece of artwork, dance, or music inspired by or related to
an issue raised in class. Write a short (2-3 page, double-spaced) reflection essay relating your work to the section’s readings. (Note: the assignment will be evaluated on the reflection rather than on the creative endeavor.)

- **Media analysis.** In a 2-3 page, double-spaced essay, analyze media coverage of a gender-related issue in light of the section’s readings.
- **Letter to editor and reflection essay.** Responding to a current issue or recently published newspaper article, write and submit a letter to the editor. Write a short (2-3 page, double-spaced) essay relating your letter to the section’s readings.
- **Short essay** (2-3 page, double-spaced) on a topic of your choice related to the section’s readings.

Each student will submit their work to a discussion group on D2L. Classmates are welcome to view and comment constructively on the material.

*All students are asked to submit creative works and/or media analysis essays and/or letters to the editor and/or short essays for the first two sections of the course.* Thereafter, students may choose to submit additional short essays or to write longer essays on ethnographic books.

Graduate and Honors students are encouraged to select media coverage, write creatively, and reflect upon readings and cases related to their graduate studies and/or honors theses. They may consider how anthropological concepts and comparative cases from course materials apply to media coverage and readings drawn from other disciplinary perspectives.

**Essay on Debra Curtis’s book *Pleasures and Perils* (30%)**

All students are asked to read Debra Curtis’s book *Pleasures and Perils*. Each student has the option to craft a question/topic about the book and write a 6-page / 2000-word, double-spaced essay on it.

**Anth 432: Essay on an ethnography of your choice (40%)**

Students in Anth 432 have the option to select and read one of the books listed at the end of the syllabus (or choose a different book in conversation with the instructor). They may write an 8-page / 2600 word, double-spaced essay on their chosen book, putting the material into conversation with readings from the course.

**Anth 432H, 532: Term paper and presentation (40%)**

All students in Anth 432H and Anth 532 will write a 20 page / 6500 word, double-spaced, page research paper on a topic of their choice related to class themes and make a short presentation about the topic to the class during the final week of the term. A time-line for scaffolding the research and writing for the term paper is available on D2L.

The project will offer the opportunity to choose a subject related to the student’s MA research or applied project or Honors project and explore it in detail, drawing on comparative cases and theoretical concepts elucidated in the course.

Note: If students wish to write a term paper worth of material but present it in a different format (e.g., a literature review for a proposal, or a chapter of a thesis), please discuss this option with the instructor.
POLICIES

Extensions

Students live busy, complicated lives. Sometimes schedules and events conspire against timely submission of assignments. The instructor will grant no-questions-asked extensions on deadlines. Students who require extensions on due-dates are asked to notify the instructor in writing in advance.

Assignments turned in late (i.e., those without extensions or those turned in after the new due-date) will lose a letter grade for each day past due except in the event of severe illness or emergency; the clock stops ticking when the student contacts the instructor to arrange a new deadline.

Courteous use of technology

Courteous use of technology is allowed in the classroom, including accessing reading materials on laptops or tablets and typing notes into an electronic document. Checking email and accessing social media websites is disrespectful and distracting; students who engage in these activities while class is in session will be asked to shut down their technology immediately and will be barred from using it for the remainder of the quarter. All cell phones should be silenced during class.

Intellectual honesty

Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is a serious academic offense. Students are responsible for reading the Anthropology Department handout on academic honesty and the student code of conduct, both of which are also linked on D2L. Note that PSU supports the plagiarism-check program Turnitin, and this function is linked to the “Assignment” dropboxes on D2L. Suspected infractions will be turned over to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for investigation. Please ask the instructor or contact the Writing Center if you have any questions about plagiarism.

Statement on names and pronouns

Dialogue and activism characterize the history of how we address one another. Students and faculty should refer to others by their preferred name and pronoun, with the proper pronunciation. We will go over preferred forms of address on the first day of the course.

Statement on self- and community-care related to course content

This course covers some intellectually and emotionally challenging topics. I am committed to making my courses academically rigorous while maintaining an ethic of self- and community-care related to intense content. I aim to help deepen people’s capacity for both personal/emotional engagement and nuanced political and academic engagement. I will give a “heads up” about potentially intense content, but I cannot anticipate the potential needs of all students. If you have concerns about your ability to participate in a particular course topic, please notify me so that we can discuss alternative arrangements. However, please honestly assess your readiness to participate in this course and its content this semester. Your continued enrollment in this course indicates that you have read this syllabus, including this statement, and agree to participate in the course in a thoughtful and respectful manner.
Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, http://www.pdx.edu/drc.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
- Please be aware that the accessible tables or chairs in the room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not useable.
- For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (http://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety) for information.

Title IX Reporting Obligations

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU’s support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU’s Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor or the University’s Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Affirmative Action. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your D2L.
COURSE OUTLINE

SECTION 1: The Cultural Construction of Identity
Read one of the following two on the cultural construction of identity:


Read two of the following three on intersectionality:


SECTION 2: Kinship, Marriage, and Social Reproduction

Read one of the following two on marriage and divorce:

Read two of the following three on reproductive technologies:

Video: Baby M and the Question of Surrogacy

SECTION 3: Care Work and Transnational Families

Read two of the following three on transnational families:

Read two of the following three on care work:
SECTION 4: Sexuality

Read one of the following two on the colonial era:


Read one of the following two on sexuality:


SECTION 5: Power over Bodies

Read one of the following two on respectability:

Read two of the following three on overweight and obesity:


Video: Killing Us Softly 4

SECTION 6: Sex Work vs Prostitution


Read two of the following three on sex work:


Suggested ethnographies for final essay (Anth 432)

For their final essay, undergraduate students in Anth 432 may read one of these ethnographies or, in conversation with the instructor, select another of their own choice.


Constable, Nicole. 2014. *Born out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.


CLASS SCHEDULE:
Note: schedule is subject to change, but assignment due-dates will not be moved earlier.

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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Mth</th>
<th>Sectn</th>
<th>Readings, assignments</th>
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<td>Sept</td>
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<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>Read: One of two on cultural construct’n of identity</td>
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<td>Read: Lorber, Butler</td>
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<td>Read: Ortner</td>
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<td>Read: Two of three on intersectionality</td>
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<td>Read: Brubaker &amp; Cooper</td>
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<td>Due: Section 1 short essay</td>
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<td>Read: Yanagisako &amp; Collier, one of two on marriage</td>
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<td>Read: Jegathesan</td>
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<td>No face-to-face class; Video: Baby M</td>
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<td>Due 432H/532: Topic and 5-item Bibliography</td>
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<td>Read: two of three on reproductive technologies</td>
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<td>Due: Section 2 short essay; Read: Freeman</td>
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<td>Read: Two of three on transnational family</td>
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<td>Read: Two of three on care work</td>
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<td>Due: Section 3 short essay; Read: Foucault</td>
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<td>Read: Said, one of two on colonial era</td>
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<td>Due 432H/532: 5 questions &amp; 15-item annotated bib</td>
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<td>Read: Kulick, one of two on sexuality</td>
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<td>Due: Section 4 short essay</td>
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<td>Read: Curtis Chapters 1-3 (pp 1-69)</td>
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<td>Guest Skype lecture: Debra Curtis</td>
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<td>Read: Curtis Chapters 4-6 (pp 70-144)</td>
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<td>Read: Shell-Duncan</td>
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