



Department of Psychology

## Psychology 439 (L01) – Psychology of Gender

Winter 2008

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**Office: Admin 255B**

**Office Hours: TR/4:00 pm or by appointment**

**Lecture Location: A 140**

**Lecture Days/Time: TR/5:00 pm**

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### Course Description and Goals

The psychology of gender intersects with virtually every other field within psychology. Hence, we will explore the meaning of gender, the development of gender, gender and social relationships (stereotypes, emotion, relationships, sexuality), and the association of gender with mental health. We will also touch on the distinction between gender and sex. A gender perspective involves recognizing that femininity and masculinity/female and male are defined in relation to one another, and maintains a focus on similarities and differences. Rooted in feminist theory and scholarship that was spawned by the second wave of the women's movement, the psychology of gender foregrounds the experiences of girls and women and existing gender inequities and offers a corrective to the historical male bias at the centre of feminist critiques of psychology in the 1960's. The male experience is incorporated, and we will specifically consider some of the research from the developing field of Masculinity Studies. An important theme woven into the treatment of each topic is diversity--it is well recognized that other social differences intersect with gender in shaping our experience.

The learning environment will be a hybrid between the traditional lecture model and a collaborative learning model. Thus, a key course component is a group project, providing students with an opportunity to work together on a gender-relevant problem. Through the sharing of project outcomes with the class, all students will benefit from the knowledge generated by each group.

**[NOTE: This course is under development. Consequently, there may be some changes to aspects of the course, such as the lecture schedule. Any changes will be posted on Blackboard.]**

### Required Text

Brannon, L. (2005). *Gender: Psychological perspectives* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

## Evaluation

Final course grades will be based on three main course components - (1) Exams (50% of final grade), (2) Class participation (10% of final grade), and (3) Course project (40% of final grade).

(1) **Exams** (50% of final grade): There will be **three** non-cumulative exams, with multiple choice and short answer format. Please note that exam questions will be generated from the textbook, lectures, and student presentations for the course projects.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Course Component</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Tuesday, February 5, 2007	Midterm 1 (Lectures 1-6; Brannon, Ch. 1-4)	15%
Tuesday, March 18, 2007	Midterm 2 (Lectures 7-15; Brannon, Ch. 5-9)	20%
Scheduled by the Registrar (April 21-30)	Final Exam (Lectures 16-23; Brannon, Ch. 10 and 14)	15%

(2) **Class participation** (10% of final grade): A collaborative learning model requires students to actively participate in the learning environment. Lectures 12 – 14 (March 4 - 11) will involve group project progress presentations, and the last five classes will be devoted to final group project presentations (April 3-17). You will receive .5% for each group project presentation you evaluate, not including your own. Thus, the maximum possible is 9%. All students who qualify for 9% will receive an additional 1%. You will be required to hand in a written evaluation at the end of each presentation.

(3) **Course project** (40% of final grade): The projects will be completed by groups of up to four students and entail a number of specific assignments, some evaluated for the group as a whole where each group member will receive the common group grade and some evaluated individually where each group member will receive a grade based on their individual work. Some class time is set aside for the project, including progress reports and presentations, but otherwise, group members are expected to meet (whether face-to-face or electronically) outside of class time as needed.

There are 10 topics (see the list provided below). Following the deadline for changes in registration (**January 25, 2008**), students will be asked to pick the three topics they would most like to work on for the group project. You may hand a list to the instructor in person or send her the list by email (**Tuesday, January 29, 2008** is the last day to do this). The instructor will then assign students to groups based on their preferences. Where more than four students identify a specific topic as their first choice, the instructor will randomly select group members. This same procedure will be followed for second and third choices. Should unassigned students remain at this stage, the instructor will randomly assign the remaining students to a group. Assignment to groups will be completed by **Thursday, January 31, 2008**.

Evaluation of the course project will be based on the following:

(a) **project plan** (5% of final grade; due **Tuesday, February 26, 2008**) - This plan will include an outline of the research needed to address the topic, including a preliminary reference list; a breakdown of the tasks each group member is responsible for; and a timeline for completion of

the tasks. The instructor will review the plan, provide feedback to the group, and award a group grade (i.e., all members of a group will receive the same grade).

(b) **project progress presentation** (5% of final grade) – For this assignment, a group grade will be awarded (i.e., all members of a group will receive the same grade). Each group will prepare a 10-minute power-point presentation that outlines their progress on the project. The purpose of this presentation is to obtain feedback from your peers in the class (approximately 5 minutes will be allowed for discussion). Each group will choose one of their members to make the presentation. The instructor will determine the schedule of presentations based on the order in which the groups will be making their final project presentations (all presentations will take place in class between **Tuesday, March 4, 2008** and **Tuesday, March 11, 2008**. The slides must be sent to the instructor the day before the presentation so that they can be posted on Blackboard and made available to other students in the class. Presentations will be evaluated by the instructor (70%) and by your class peers (30%), excluding members of the group presenting.

(c) **final project presentation** (10% of final grade; **Thursday, April 3, 2008** and **Thursday, April 17, 2008**) – For this assignment, each group will prepare a 30-minute power-point presentation, detailing the outcome of the project. Each group member will present for 5 minutes. The slides must be sent to the instructor the day before the presentation so that they can be posted on Blackboard and made available to other students in the class.

Seven of the 10 percentage points awarded for this assignment will be based on an evaluation of the presentations as a whole, again 70% based on the instructor's evaluation and 30% based on peer evaluations (excluding members of the group presenting). The evaluation forms will allow for feedback to individual presenters regarding their style of presentation. All group members will receive the same grade.

The remaining three percentage points will be based on group members' formal peer evaluations of one another's project participation. Thus, each group member will receive an individual grade. It is important that all group members contribute equitably and to the best of their abilities. To be most effective, group members need to develop positive working relationships that are respectful and collaborative, and where differences of opinion, whether about the topic itself or about how to complete the project, can be openly discussed and resolved. The project participation grade will be based on your level of participation as judged by the other group members. Altogether, group members will evaluate one another's participation on three occasions. The first two evaluations will be informal, i.e., group members will evaluate one another and publicly share those evaluations within the group, but these will not affect students' grades (see form posted on Blackboard). These evaluation exercises will provide an opportunity for group members to become familiar with the evaluation criteria and to work out any problems that may arise regarding individual group member's contributions to the project. If a group member disagrees with how the other group members have evaluated her/him, the group will have to work it out. Evaluation forms will be turned in to the instructor, signed by the person evaluated. The informal evaluations will be submitted to the instructor on **Tuesday, February 26, 2008** and **Tuesday, March 25, 2008** - for information only. They will be returned in the next class. For the formal peer evaluation, each group member will receive a single score based on the consensus of the other three group members (see form posted on Blackboard). These are to be submitted to the instructor by **Thursday, April 17, 2008**.

(d) **individual paper** (20% of final grade; due **Monday, April 21, 2008**) – Each student will submit a paper based on the group project. Although the four members of each group will be drawing on the same material used in the group presentation, each group member is expected to write their own paper in their own words. Care must be taken to avoid plagiarism.

The paper has a 2000 word maximum. It must be double-spaced, using APA reference conventions. Include a title page with your name and the word count. Papers may be handed in to the instructor or in the green box outside A275. Late assignments will be accepted, but will be penalized one letter grade per day (e.g., an A paper handed in on April 22 will have the grade reduced to A-, etc). Students must provide a printed copy of their paper; emailed papers will not be graded.

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Course Project Assignments</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Tuesday, February 26 (in class)	Project plan	5%
Tuesday, March 4 (in class) Thursday, March 6 Tuesday, March 11	Project progress presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.5% based on instructor's evaluations</li> <li>• 1.5% based on class peer evaluations</li> </ul>	5%
Thursday, April 3 (in class) Tuesday, April 8 Thursday, April 10 Tuesday, April 15 Thursday, April 17  Thursday, April 17	Final project presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7% based on instructor and class peer evaluations (70% and 30%, respectively)</li> <li>• 3% based on peer group evaluations of project participation</li> </ul>	10%
Monday, April 21 (by 4:30 pm)	Individual project papers	20%

**Topics for Group Projects**

All 10 topics focus on a problem related to the psychology of gender. They will require library research, but your main task will be to use the literature to address the problem.

1. Most people (including psychologists) assume that there are two sexes and two genders, with gender identity developing relatively early in life and remaining stable throughout the lifespan. This view is challenged however in the following quote from a book review of several titles on the transgender experience, written by Deirdre McCloskey and published in the *Globe & Mail* (Nov. 15, 2007):

Perhaps you've thought about changing gender. I don't mean you've thought about doing it yourself. Good Lord, no. We who have thought that way are only 1 in 500 of the born males, roughly the same of born females. Most people, even people who have complaints about how society makes women or men behave, settle their gender choices at about the age of two. Probably you have thought about the matter merely in the sense of catching half of the sweet movie *Transamerica* on cable TV, or watching for a few minutes one of the gender-crossing shows that Oprah does with her girl-friendly grace every year or so. Probably your thinking hasn't gone much beyond "Gosh; strange." ... The story you'll learn ... is not, as people always think, that a MtF ("male to female"...) is "a woman trapped in a man's body." What you'll learn instead is freedom. That's all. You were once a child. Without knowing exactly what it was like to be an adult, you knew you wanted to be one, and freely became one. It wouldn't make much sense to say you were "an adult trapped in a child's body." ... A guy wants to go to Venice on holiday. Feel free. That's similar to cross-dressing ... But one in 500 men, say wants to go to Venice ... and become Venetian. That's like MtF gender crossing. No one would say that the new Venetian was trapped in an Upper Canadian body. He chooses, freely.

Drawing on what psychology has to say about gender, evaluate the argument that gender identity is a matter of choice. Discuss the implications of this choice argument for psychology and for everyday life.

2. In the late 1960's and throughout the 1970's, feminists played a particularly important role in criticizing and reshaping the discipline of psychology. Today, feminist psychologists continue to contribute to the discipline. Evaluate the argument that psychology needs feminism and feminists to develop theory and conduct research that addresses the everyday lives of women and men, girls and boys.
3. Researchers interested in the psychology of gender generally recognize the significance of cultural and ethnic diversity (your textbook, for example, makes this clear). Frequently, however, when researching the topic of cultural and ethnic diversity, the focus is on those who are different from the researchers, i.e., non-white and non-western. Thus, the experience of being White in a western culture is often treated as the standard (usually implicit) against which the experience of non-White and non-western women and men is compared. Rarely is White privilege explicitly explored. One area where this may be relevant is research on gender and health. Within this area, one often-cited statistic is the high mortality rates among men (compared to women) due to violence, including homicide, accidents, suicide and risk-taking behavior. Differences among men varying in cultural/ethnic background have also been noted. Evaluate the research in this area in relation to the question of White privilege and develop a set of guidelines for researchers regarding how culture and ethnicity should be incorporated into research on gender and health.

4. Assume that you have a consulting business specializing in advice to parents on best practices in childrearing. A parent comes to you seeking advice on gender-neutral childrearing. This parent wants to raise children who do not conform to gender roles but instead develop according to their individual abilities and interests and not according to social norms regarding what is appropriate for females and males. The parent wants to know if this is possible, and if so, what they need to do. Also, the parent is concerned that the childrearing practices not be harmful to the child. Drawing on the psychology literature, prepare a report for the parent that includes your recommendations. Bear in mind that this parent is educated (has a BA degree) but not in psychology.
5. A recent *Globe & Mail* article (Sept. 21, 2007) reported the following: “Young men are far less likely to attend university than young women, and a new study attributes the gap to differences in academic performance and study habits at the age of 15, as well as parental expectations.” In fact, a gender gap in educational achievement has been a concern for some time. Use the psychology literature to develop a set of recommendations regarding the gender gap. Be clear about whom the recommendations are directed at. Your recommendations may be directed at more than one audience.
6. Canada has had a woman as Prime Minister only once and only for a brief period of time (Kim Campbell, June 25 – Nov. 4, 1993, 19<sup>th</sup> Canadian Prime Minister); Alberta has never had a woman as Premier; Calgary has never had a woman as Mayor; and the University of Calgary has never had a woman as President. Discuss what the psychology literature contributes to the understanding of this gender gap in political leadership and develop a proposal for narrowing the gap.
7. Domestic life is one area where women continue to bear a disproportionate amount of responsibility (for both domestic work and child care). This gender gap is striking in light of the increased participation of women in the labour force and the gender egalitarian views of many women and men. Use the psychology literature to develop a set of recommendations regarding the gender gap.
8. We often hear about the Alberta Advantage. Yet, Alberta has the highest rate of domestic violence in Canada (see Statistics Canada data). Drawing on the relevant psychology literature, develop a set of recommendations for reducing this rate.
9. Although the majority of women and men in Canada participate in the labour force, there is still evidence of occupational segregation (i.e., either women or men are under-represented in particular job categories). Moreover, the movement of women into traditionally male occupations has been greater than the movement of men into traditionally female ones. Identify the obstacles to men’s participants in traditionally female occupations and develop a set of recommendations regarding the gender gap for these occupations.
10. Heterosexuality is frequently taken for granted, leading to concepts like *heterosexism* (i.e., the assumption that everyone is or ought to be heterosexual, which is reflected in the organization of social institutions and practices). Suppose you are an expert on gender and sexuality and have been asked to develop the curriculum for a sex education program for adolescents. The program sponsor wants the curriculum to be groundbreaking in avoiding heterosexism. Generate a proposal for a curriculum that is grounded in psychological research.

**Grading Scale**

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course there will be no rounding up of final grades, especially in light of the opportunities students have to increase their final grade via bonus credits.

**Lecture Schedule**

Jan. 15	T	Lecture 1: Ch. 1 - The Study of Gender
Jan. 17	R	Lecture 2: Ch. 2 - Researching Sex and Gender
Jan. 22	T	Lecture 3: Ch. 2 cont.
Jan. 24	R	Lecture 4: Ch. 3 - Gender Stereotypes - Masculinity and Femininity
<b>Jan. 25</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Last day for Winter registration and change of registration.</b>
Jan. 29	T	Lecture 5: Ch. 4 - Hormones and Chromosomes <b>Deadline for choosing top 3 group project topics</b>
Jan 31	R	Lecture 6: Ch. 4 cont. <b>Assignment to project groups completed</b>
Feb. 5	T	<b>Midterm 1</b>
Feb. 7	R	Lecture 7: Ch. 5 - Theories of Gender Development
Feb. 12	T	Lecture 8: Ch. 5 cont.
Feb. 14	R	Lecture 9: Ch. 6 - Developing Gender Identity
<b>Feb. 17-24</b>		<b>No classes – Reading Week – University closed</b>
Feb. 26	T	Lecture 10: Ch. 7 - Intelligence and Cognitive Abilities <b>[Project plans and informal peer evaluations of group participation handed in at beginning of class.]</b>
Feb. 28	R	Lecture 11: Ch. 8 - Emotion;
March 4	T	Lecture 12: Ch. 8 cont.; <b>Project progress presentations (3)</b>
March 6	R	Lecture 13: <b>Project progress presentations (5)</b>
March 11	T	Lecture 14: Ch. 9 - Relationships; <b>Project progress presentations (2)</b>
March 13	R	Lecture 15: Ch. 9 cont
March 18	T	<b>Midterm 2</b>
March 20	R	Project workshop
March 25	T	Lecture 16: Ch. 10 Sexuality <b>[Informal peer evaluations of group participation handed in at beginning of class.]</b>
March 27	R	Lecture 17: Ch. 10 cont.
April 1	T	Lecture 18: Ch. 14 - Stress, Coping, and Psychopathology
April 3	R	Lecture 19: <b>Final project presentations #1 and #2</b>
April 8	T	Lecture 20: <b>Final project presentations #3 and #4</b>
April 10	R	Lecture 21: <b>Final project presentations #5 and #6</b>
April 15	T	Lecture 22: <b>Final project presentations #7 and #8</b>
April 17	R	Lecture 23: <b>Final project presentations #9 and #10</b> <b>[Formal peer evaluations of group participation handed in at beginning of class.]</b> Last day to allocate Research Credits to Winter Session half courses and full courses.
April 21	M	<b>Individual project papers due by 4:30 pm</b>
<b>April 21-30</b>		<b>Winter Session Final Examinations - Final Exam Scheduled by the Registrar</b>



### **University of Calgary Curriculum Objectives**

This course addresses the following core competencies:

#### **University of Calgary Core Competencies**

- Critical and creative thinking
- Analysis of problems
- Effective oral and written communication
- Gathering and organizing information
- Logical calculation, mathematical ability
- Abstract reasoning and its applications
- Insight and intuition in generating knowledge
- Interpretive and assessment skills

With the following course characteristics:

- Class discussion; students are prompted to think critically about course material
- Emphasis is placed on problems and controversies related to gender
- Oral communication skills will be developed through class discussion and presentation of group project; written communication skills will be developed through course assignments and written exams
- Course assignments require students to gather data, search the literature and organize this material in a written submission
- Theories and controversies related to gender will be analysed and evaluated
- Course assignments require students to take a position on some issue and argue their point
- Course assignments require students to interpret data and the research literature; lectures will encourage critical evaluation of extant literature

#### **Curriculum Redesign Features**

- An international component
- An experiential learning component relevant to the program objectives
- Provision of broad and extended faculty-student interaction at the program level
- Integration of research

With the following course characteristics:

- Gender and diversity is an important course theme
- Course assignments
- Lectures will promote discussion and student participation
- Many research examples from the current literature are drawn upon in discussing course topics; course assignments involve research in some form

#### **Reappraisal of Grades**

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next fifteen days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within fifteen days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special

circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

### **Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

### **Academic Accommodation**

*It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations.* If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and **have not** registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

### **Absence From A Test**

Make-up exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). You must contact the instructor before the scheduled examination or you will have forfeited any right to make up the exam. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup exam is written within two (2) weeks of the missed exam.

A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test for health reasons. The student will be required to pay any cost associated with the Physician Counselor Statement.

### **Course Credits for Research Participation**

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to an individual's final grade. Students can create an account and access the Research Participation System website at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. **The last day to participate in research is April 17, 2008.**

### **Student Organizations**

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in the Administration building, room 170 or may be contacted at 220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 220-3911 [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)  
**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 220-3913 [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is January 25, 2008. The last day to withdraw from this course is April 18, 2008.