

LIBS 497: Gender and Visual Culture
GDRS 425: Gender, Culture, Society / ART 436: Women and Art
Dr. Emily Newman
Texas A&M University - Commerce

Fall Web-Based Class, 2020
Office Hours: by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through the careful study of artworks and popular culture, students will be engaged in an extended, historically-based examination of issues concerning gender. In this course, we will pay particular attention to societal constructions of gender, exploring the way that art, television, film, graphic novels and other media shape the way that we understand what it means to be “male” and “female.” Students will read challenging, sophisticated and seminal texts and demonstrate their command of such texts in short responses and online discussions. Additionally, students also evaluate their own understanding of gender, by considering images and videos they see in their everyday lives. By the end of the course, the student will have a broad knowledge of varying approaches to gender and will become critical evaluators of societal ideals. *This class is entirely online.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- understand definitions of sex and gender, and be able to analyze and discuss various uses and misuses of the terms
- discuss and explain historically significant works of art concerning gender
- learn to analyze the relationships among content, context, and style
- analyze and discuss significant popular culture texts (including a variety of types of media) and then apply the evaluation techniques to everyday life
- enhance visual literacy and critical thinking skills
- develop an understanding of visual culture for the critical analysis of images generated by art, popular culture, fashion, journalism, advertisements, etc.
- analyze and discuss significant theoretical and feminist texts
- demonstrate an awareness of gender differences in a given society or culture.
- understand the approaches used by multiple academic disciplines to make arguments about attitudes toward gender.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSESSMENT

Students’ ability to meet the course objectives and learning outcomes will be evaluated through written assignments, class participation, exams, and essay questions.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Gina Siciliano *I Know What I Am: The Life and Times of Artemisia Gentileschi*. Seattle, WA: Fantagraphics, 2019. ISBN: 1683962117.
- Alok Vaid-Menon, *Beyond the Gender Binary*. New York: Penguin Workshop, 2020. ISBN: 0593094654.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Grade Breakdown:

5% Participation
15% Discussion Posts
30% Written Assignments
15% Artemisia Book Review
30% Biography Project
5% Reflection Paper

GRADE SCALE

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Participation: Each person is expected to come to class prepared, which means having done the reading and/or worksheet and ready to engage in the class. The class should not just be a lecture, rather, people are encouraged to speak up, contribute to the conversation and ask questions. At the beginning of class, students may be asked to write up responses to the readings, which will count towards participation.

Attendance: Each student in this course is allowed no more than **three** unexcused absences. Each absence after three results in the lowering of the grade by 1/3 of a letter grade. When a student accrues **more than eight unexcused absences** the instructor has the right to drop the student from the course or to give a failing grade.

Unexcused absences require no explanation. For an absence to be considered excused, appropriate documentation must be presented. Excused absences are defined in The Student Guidebook and various university policies, but the policy employed in this class is confined to the following: (1) Participation in pre - approved University activities such as athletic events, sponsored field trips, and travel for specific University - related academic reasons; (2) Verifiable legal proceedings; (3) Documented cases of illness, injury, or emergencies. **All such excuses must be shown to the instructor in original, written, documentary form within 7 days of the absence(s) together with a photocopy for the instructor's records.** (Please understand that this copy is a student's only record of an absence.) In lieu of documentation, the absences become unexcused and are counted as such.

Written Assignments: Throughout the class, we will do several different writing projects ranging from a film review to book review to a discussion of Disney. These will all be turned in online and discussed in more depth as they appear in the course.

Research Project: There will be one research assignment, where you will be asked to read a biography on a prominent women artist. After completing the book, you will research the same artist and compare the results. This will build on the work we have done on Artemisia Gentileschi.

Discussion Posts: Each week, 1-2 discussion posts will also be required on Thursdays, where the student is asked to engage the reading, ask questions, and respond to their peers. .

Academic Dishonesty: There is **no tolerance** for any kind of academic dishonesty in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, theft of instructional material or exams, representing the work of someone else as one's own, and misrepresenting absences. Academic dishonesty is a severe transgression and may result in referral to the Dean of Students, expulsion from class and/or the University, and a failing grade. More info below:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the school or local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

WORKLOAD:

The rule of thumb for time required for course study and preparation each week for a face-to-face class or an online course during the spring and fall semesters is three times the number of credit hours (or 9 hours per week) for the course. If you find yourself unable to complete course requirements in a timely manner, refer to the University's withdrawal policy and the appropriate dates. Incomplete grades are only granted for extreme emergencies. Being "overloaded" either from other class assignments or job commitments are not considered to be emergency situations.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

HANDING IN ASSIGNMENTS

Each assignment must be uploaded online on time. For each class day late, the grade will be deducted one letter grade. **Assignments will NOT be accepted over ONE week late.**

FORMATTING

All written assignments must be typed using the following guidelines: 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1" margins, double-spaced, with page numbers. Failure to format properly will result in a lower grade. Artwork titles **MUST** be italicized.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Statement on Student Behavior:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenet of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

All students must show respect toward the instructor and the instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should respect each others' differences. If the instructor determines that a student is not being respectful towards other students or the instructor, it is the instructor's prerogative to ask the student to leave, to refer the student to the department head, and to consider referring the student to the Dean of Students who may consider requiring the student to drop the course. Please refer to pages 42 – 46 of the Texas A&M University-Commerce Student guidebook's Codes of Conduct for details.

Prohibited during class:

- **Cell Phones/Blackberries/MP3 Players:** Please keep these devices off while class is in session. It is disrespectful to your classmates. No cell phones are allowed during exam sessions. If you need to check the time, consult the clock in the classroom. Repeated use of these devices will result in being asked to leave.
- **Computers and tablets**
- **Headphones or Sunglasses of any kind**
- **Sleeping**
- **Smoking of any kind, including e-cigarettes**
- **Disruptive or distracting behavior:** Texting, conversing with other students during class, loud eating, etc.
- **Repeated entering/exiting the classroom:** Please be on time to class. Not only is disruptive to the class environment, but you could miss important class announcements. This is a short class, so there should be no need to come in and out throughout the class period. Repeated tardiness will count with absences, and will result in a lower grade.

Discussion, Readings, Text: In this class, we will look at a wide array of artwork and examples of visual culture, some of which might include nudity, intense language, violence, etc. Each person will bring their own experiences to the art, and should feel comfortable expressing their opinions and vulnerabilities. The classroom is a safe environment, and each student should behave with integrity and treat their peers with respect.

STATEMENT ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ADA ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835, Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

After contacting the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of what accommodations are needed **IN ADVANCE** of when they are needed (for example, if testing accommodations are necessary, please inform the instructor with appropriate documentation at LEAST one week before the test date).

EMAIL POLICY:

Email is the preferred form of communication, with a general response time of 24 hours during the week (do not expect replies over the weekend). For all emails sent, please **include full name, student ID, and the class** that you are attending. Do not send emails to myself and other professors at once, as each professor has different issues to address. You are allotted three absences for this course; plan accordingly and there is no need to contact me about unexcused absences that are incorporated into this allowance. For excused absences, you need to bring in a hard copy of appropriate documentation of your absence.

GRADE POLICY:

Assignments are due at the start of the class or on the assigned date. Late work will only be accepted for one week after the due date, and the grade will be penalized. Concerning grade decisions, I will not discuss specific grades on ANY assignment or test the day it is returned. If you have concerns regarding a grade, email me **within one week of receiving the assignment back** clearly explaining why you think the assignment was addressed incorrectly. After the email is received, we will then set up an appointment to discuss the concern.

*** THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT ***

UNIVERSITY'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

"A&M-Commerce requires the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories. Exceptions may be made by faculty where warranted. Faculty have management over their classrooms. Students not using face-coverings can be required to leave class. Repetitive refusal to comply can be reported to the Office of Students' Rights and Responsibilities as a violation of the student Code of Conduct. "

"Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments."

CAMPUS CONCEALED CARRY

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS).

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS AND PROGRAMS NEEDED

At a minimum, you must have access to and be able to use Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Course Schedule

Section 1: Definitions

8/27: Introduction

9/3: Defining Gender

9/10: Defining Gender II

Section 2: Into Society

9/17: Pop Culture / Gender

9/24: Art/Gender

10/1: Artemisia and her peers

Section 3: Identities

10/8: Strong Young Women

10/15: Strong Young Men

10/22: Gender / Race 1

10/29: Motherhood Choices

Section 4: Authenticity

11/5: Masquerade

11/12: Gender / Race 2

11/19: Craft and Gender

Section 5: Finishing

12/2: Peer Review Due

12/7: Final Paper

12/9: Reflection Paper

Assignment Due Dates:

Selfie Project – 9/14

Artemisia Book Review – 9/30

Writing Assignment: Bechdel/DuVernay Tests – 10/12

Writing Assignment: Disney and Gender – 11/9

Biography Project:

Book Selection Due: 10/7

Bibliography Due: 10/21

Draft Due: 11/23

Peer Review Due: 12/2

Final Project: 12/7

Reflection Paper: 12/9