

Language, Sex & Gender
Winter 2023
(Ling 4G03 / CogSciL 6G03 / GendrSt 6G03)

Instructor

Dr. Shamika Shabnam
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Time and Place

Fridays 14:30-17:30 in person in BSB B155

Learning Goals

In this course, students and instructor will work together to achieve the following goals:

- recognize ways that gender, sex, and sexuality are constructed, expressed and performed via language,
- understand how societal norms of gender, sex, sexuality are enforced with language policies,
- analyze how scholarly topics are communicated to a general audience via the medium of podcasts,
- create, edit and produce episodes of a podcast to communicate our ideas to a general audience.



Responsibilities, Practices, and Policies

The foundational principle in this course is that we are learning together in community. What this means is that everyone’s contributions are a valuable part of our communal work. Specifically, our responsibility to each other includes the following:

- **Preparing** for each class by reading, listening, and reflecting. We will probably want to come with some notes and some questions to add to the conversation.
- **Engaging** in conversation by offering our thoughts, giving attention to each other, and responding with care to each other.
- **Accepting feedback** and learning from each other.
- **Collaborating** to develop collective principles for our conversations.

Assessments

Identity Reflection	2%	12 January (In-Class Writing Assignment)
Checking-In Paper	5%	19 January (300-400 Words)

Three Short Monthly Reflection Entries	15%	31 January; 29 February; 28 March (500 Words; 3 assignments: 5 % each)
Weekly Reading Response Papers and Mini In-Class Presentation	20%	10% Weekly Reading Responses (400 - 500 Words) 10% Mini Presentation of 1 Response (Presentation slot sheet will be passed around on first day of class)
Draft Group Project Idea Sheet	8%	9 February
Group Project Portfolio	20%	1 March
Group Project In-Class Presentation	20%	22 March
Group Project Peer Evaluation	10%	27 March

Texts

Reading

All readings, hearings, and viewings are available through Avenue to Learn.

Hearing

Some of the weeks' texts include at least one podcast episode connected to the week's theme. You can find all the assigned episodes curated in the Playlist linked in Avenue.

Viewing

The final week's texts include a one-hour video performance, free to watch and linked on Avenue. The video includes subtitles.

Identity Reflection (2%)

This assignment will take place on the first day of class (Friday, January 12). This is a reflective assignment meant to be written in a personal and informal manner. You can write this in creative form, through prose or poetry - the point is that there are no limitations on the way that this assignment can be framed. A completion mark will be provided upon the completion and submission (on A2L) of this assignment. The instructor will provide more details on the first day of class.

Checking-In Paper (5%)

A lot has happened over the last couple of years! A pandemic, global protests, environmental disasters, and the ups and downs of virtual learning. This assignment is an opportunity for you to pause and reflect on how you are feeling in light of all of this, what you have learned about yourself and the world, and how this shapes your thinking and motivations as you enter into this school year and this course. How can this course help you prepare for the realities of education, the workforce, and the community given all of this rapid social, political and economic change? What should I, as the instructor for this course, be aware of that will help me create a supportive and effective learning environment for you? This

submission will be worth 5% of your final grade, should be 300-400 words in length and can be written in a personal and informal manner.

Three Short Monthly Reflection Entries (15%)

Students will be responsible for submitting monthly reflection entries on A2L (500 words). One reflection entry will be submitted per month throughout January, February, and March. This will serve as evidence of your engagement in the course. In these entries, you will be invited to reflect on something that stood out to you, challenged you, surprised you, sparked a particular emotion, and/or expanded your thinking from in-class discussions and/or readings. The writing does not have to be polished, and point form is fine as long as your thoughts are fully articulated.

Weekly Reading Responses (20%)

Actively engaging in the class is critical to gaining the most out of the course content and experience and succeeding academically in the overall course.

(10%) Ten Reading Responses: Over the course of the semester, you will write **ten** response papers on one assigned weekly text (this could be a video, podcast, or article depending on the texts assigned for the week). The short response paper is a formal exercise of 400 – 500 words that is designed to help you strengthen your skills of writing critically and concisely about the texts that we will be exploring in this course. The assignments will allow you to work on different skills of writing and thinking: 1) formulating an argument about a chosen text; 2) analyzing a textual concept through discussing its significance/impact/problem related to gender, sex, and language. More detailed instructions of how to structure the reading responses will be provided on Avenue to Learn.

(10%) Mini In-Class Presentation: You will present **one** out of the ten response papers that you will be writing and submitting. On the first day of class, I will pass around a sign-up sheet for you to choose the preferred date for your presentation, which I will then upload on Avenue to Learn. The presentation will be of 10 - 15 minutes. You can use presentation slides if you want, but it is not necessary.

Group Project Details:

The class will be randomly split into small groups (5-6 students per group). Each group will compose a project that applies some of the textual themes related to gender, sex, and language that we will be exploring in the course. The final group project can be produced in a variety of ways. You could compose a documentary film, a video, a blog site, a podcast, an Instagram page, a cycle of poems, a play, a short story, a zine, a website, a graphic novel, an essay, a photo essay, personal story collections etc. You might write a cycle of songs/lyrics or create a map of a neighbourhood. It might be something we instructors have not yet thought of. The point of this exercise is to work together as a team to produce something important that not only aligns with the topics of the course but with your own learning objectives - something you enjoy or are passionate about.

Draft Group Project Idea Sheet (8%): Once students are split into groups, they are responsible for communicating with groups members and scheduling group meetings mostly outside of class (One class time will be dedicated to group project work) and come up with a tentative Idea of what your group would like to produce as part of their project. A Draft Group Project Idea Sheet will be available on

Avenue to Learn for group members to fill out and submit so that I (the instructor) can have a clear sense about the direction in which your group is going and provide tailored specific feedback/advise.

Group Project Portfolio (20%): 20% of your grade will be based on a project portfolio that you submit as a group that will summarize your group project activities, accomplishments, and learnings. I will be using your project portfolio to assess the following:

- A. Evidence that all group members were equally engaged throughout the process,
- B. Effective project management skills, demonstrated through outputs such as timelines, delegation of roles and responsibilities, etc.
- C. Demonstrated application of knowledge and skills discussed in this course.
- D. Effective execution of initiative, as evidenced by achieving objectives outlined by the group, positive feedback from participants, high return on investment of time and resources, etc.

Group Project In-Class Presentation (20%): The lecture slot on March 22nd will be dedicated to each group who will be tasked with providing a presentation on their project. The class will then be invited to share feedback. Further direction, including a grading rubric, will be provided during class.

Group Project Peer Evaluation (10%): One of the key objectives of this assignment is to create an opportunity to develop effective collaboration and communication skills with your peers by working on the project itself. As such, a significant portion of your grade (10%) for this assignment will be determined by a peer evaluation of your contributions.

Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties

It's important to complete all the assigned tasks for this course. Most of the tasks build on each other through the semester, so missing or delaying one affects the following tasks and makes it harder to get through them all. If you find that you're unable to meet the scheduled due date for a given task, please contact Dr. Shabnam to arrange an alternate time for submission. How much flexibility there is depends on the nature of the task -- for example, tasks that get shared with other students for peer review aren't very flexible, but individual tasks can be more flexible.

Other Policies

Please see the [official course outline](#) on the Faculty of Humanities portal for other important university policies.

All Assignments are to be submitted on Avenue to Learn

Date & Topic	What to Do, Read, Listen to, Watch
Week 1 January 12	Introduction; Submit Identity Reflection.
Introductions	

Date & Topic	What to Do, Read, Listen to, Watch
Week 2 January 19 What are sex, gender, and language?	Submit Checking-In Paper Everybody: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Ainsworth "Sex Redefined" (2015) 📖 Bhatt "Search For My Tongue" (1988 - poetry on language) Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Kiesling "What Are Gender and Sexuality?" (2019) <i>useful background for those without much experience of gender studies</i> 📖 Eliot et al. "Dump the 'Dimorphism'" (2021) <i>for those who are super into neuroscience</i>
Week 3 January 26 Gender, Performativity, and Sociolinguistic Thinking	Submit Weekly Reading Responses Every Friday Starting January 26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Meyerhoff "Gender Performativity" (2014) 📖 Eckert "The Limits of Meaning" (2019) 📖 <i>Death, Sex & Money: Manhood, Now</i>
Week 4 February 2 Gender Normativity and Nonconformity	Submit your January Reflection Entry by <u>January 31st.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Hall "Exceptional Speakers: Contested and Problematized Gender Identities" (2014) 📖 Zimman "Transgender Language, Transgender Moment" (2020) 📖 <i>Gender Reveal: Jules Gill-Peterson</i>
Week 5 February 9 Bodies: Private Parts	Submit your Draft Group Project Idea Sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Braun & Kitzinger "Tell It Straight" (2001) 📖 Mookherjee "The Absent Piece of Skin" (2015) - First Half 📖 <i>The Vagina Museum: C U Next Tuesday</i>
Week 6 February 16 Bodies: Public Parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Mookherjee "The Absent Piece of Skin" (2015) - Second Half 📖 Fisanick "Fatness (In)visible" (2009) 📖 <i>Secret Feminist Agenda: #WorldObesityDay</i>
February 19-25 Winter Break: No Classes	

Date & Topic	What to Do, Read, Listen to, Watch
Week 7 March 1 Voices	Submit: February Reflection Entry by February 29th Submit your Group Project Portfolio by March 1st Everybody: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Davidson "The versatility of creaky phonation" (2020) 📄 <i>Science Diction: Why I'm Not Getting a Voice Coach</i>
Week 8 March 8 Group Project Work!	Work on your projects!
Week 9 March 15 Pronouns, Morphemes, and the Binary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Conrod "Pronouns and Gender In Language" (2020) 📄 <i>The Vocal Fries: Todos/Todas/Todes</i>
Week 10 March 22	Group Project Presentations March 29th: Good Friday Break. No Classes
Week 11 April 5 Doing Queerness	Submit: Peer Evaluations by March 27th March Reflection Entry by March 28th Everybody: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 <i>Queery</i>: Kathy Tu 📄 Mootoo "Out on Main Street" (1993) Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Salcedo González "An Exploration of Queer Diasporic Subjectivities in Shani Mooto's 'Out on Main Street'" (2020)

Date & Topic	What to Do, Read, Listen to, Watch
Week 12	
April 12	📺 Ahearn "Agency" (1999)
Dating, Sex and Consent	📺 Kitzinger & Frith "Just Say No?" (1999)
Content Note: this week's texts include frank discussion of sexual violence.	📺 Cameron Esposito, <i>Rape Jokes</i>
