Overview:
In recent years there has been a growing interest in ‘the body’ in both popular and academic arenas. Writers have debated the changing social and cultural meanings of the body in Western and Transnational cultures, documented the effects of power and control on individual, social and political bodies and explored dimensions of agency and resistance. Post-modern theorists have drawn attention to performative aspects of embodiment and the cultivation of the body as a means of self-expression and identity constitution as well as a vehicle for transgression and social transformation.

Feminist scholars have contributed centrally to the development of this new field of inquiry. They have analyzed historical and contemporary representations of gender, body and sexuality in a variety of social, cultural and political domains such as medicine, science and technology, media and popular culture, religion, the legal system and social policy. Female embodiment is also increasingly the subject of work by feminist writers, poets, artists, musicians and filmmakers. The critical attention to gender, body and sexuality in feminist research and creative work has also contributed significantly to the rethinking of male embodiment and masculinities as well as the breaking down of conventionally accepted binaries of sex and gender and reframing of LGBTQ identities and body politics.

This interactive seminar course will introduce students to feminist thinking on gender, body and sexuality through the examination of foundational works from the social sciences, humanities and the arts.

Students are expected to have completed readings prior to each class and should come prepared to actively engage in class discussion. We will use a variety of pedagogical methods – group work, class discussion, lectures, audiovisual and media, guest speaker presentations and materials brought in by students to explore course themes together over the semester. A D2L class website will be set up. Please check the website daily for class announcements, news items, links to optional readings and events, and outlines to print for individual and group presentations.

Textbooks:


Evaluation (detailed guidelines will be handed out in the 2nd week of class):
Critical response papers – 2 (worth 10% each, due Jan. 30 and Feb. 27) 20%
Group research/creative project presentation (groups of 3-4) or individual research paper 30%
Weekly class participation 20%
Final take home exam - (2 essay questions handed out in the final class - due April 16) 30%

Weekly Reading Schedule:
Jan. 7 and 9 – Theorizing Gender, Body and Sexualities – Orientations
Reading: Lorber and Moore, "Chapter 1: Neither Nature Nor Nurture" (pp. 9-33) and Ferber et al. "Rethinking Foundations" (pp. 1-5).
Jan. 14 and 16 – Dueling Dualisms I - Femininities
Readings: Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling Dualisms" in Ferber et al., pp. 6-22; and Lorber and Moore, “Chapter 3: Eve, Venus and ‘Real Women,”’ pp. 64-83.

Jan. 21 and 23 – Dueling Dualisms II – Masculinities
Readings: Lorber and Moore, Chapter 4: Adonis, Don Juan and ‘Real Men’, pp. 89-117; and Messerschmidt, “Goodbye to the Sex-Gender Distinction,” in Ferber et al., pp. 49-68.

Jan. 28 and 30 – Boundary Crossings I – Intersectionalities
[Jan. 30 First Critical response paper due].

Feb. 4 and 6 Boundary Crossings II = Same Sex Narratives

Feb. 11 and 13 Boundary Crossings III – Intersexual Narratives
Readings: Preves, “Intersex Narratives” in Ferber et al. pp. 22-33; and TBA.

Feb. 18 and 20 (reading week – no classes)

Feb. 25 and 27 – Boundary Crossings IV – Transgender and Transsexual Narratives
[Feb. 27 Second Critical response paper due].

Mar. 4 and 6 – Power and Embodiment – Policing and Resisting the Boundaries

Mar. 11 and 13 – Individual and group presentations (2 per class)
Readings to be assigned by presenters in consultation with instructor

Mar. 18 and 20 – Individual and group presentations (2 per class)
Readings to be assigned by presenters in consultation with instructor

Mar. 25 and 27 – Individual and group presentations (2 per class)
Readings to be assigned by presenters in consultation with instructor
[March 27 individual research papers due]

Apr. 1 – Easter Monday – no class

April 3 – Bodies and Sexuality in Progress – Envisioning Change in the 21st Century

Apr. 8 – Final Class – Take home examination handed out