FRAN 6200 | RE-THINKING THE HUMAN

Instructors: Professor Carla Rice with Class Co-Developers: Shannon Boss, Jess Boule, Sheila Cranmer-Byng, Karima Dorney, Riley Easterbrook, Devan Hunter, Andrea Kirkham, Rachel Monahan, Victoria Muñoz, Teresa Smith, Nicholas (Nick) Sorg, Megan Wilson

CLASS MEETING COORDINATES
COURSE TIME: 2018 @ 830AM to 11:30AM Thursdays (Final Days and Time TBD at our first class)
COURSE LOCATION: Re•Vision: The Centre for Art and Social Justice | REDLAB | University of Guelph | 70 Trent Lane | Blackwood Hall (Rm 103)
Carla’s Office: REDLAB | Revisioning Differences Mobile Media Arts Lab, 103 Blackwood Hall, Trent Lane, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment
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COURSE OVERVIEW
In this course, we identify and engage with emerging directions and critical dialogues in the inter- and trans-disciplinary study of the “human”. We collectively determine course topics, pedagogy and assessment methods. This allows us to centre professor/student collaboration in innovative ways that open up space for all to actively engage in teaching and learning. Fusing critical pedagogy, methodology and theory, the course provides a unique opportunity for students to become immersed in important new directions in theory and to gain greater familiarity with emergent and creative methods for understanding, and appreciating, the diversity of human experience. Emphasis will be placed on student research interests and on emergent notions of the human and of human experience as becoming.

COURSE ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT
We expect that students in this class have many different physical, mental, sensorial and emotional ways of being, learning, and engaging in the classroom. We also expect that as a class, we will collectively attend to and respect all of these needs/interests. As such, we will begin this class with a discussion about accessibility and how we can collectively, and perhaps creatively, make the classroom accessible to everyone. If you do not feel comfortable sharing your accessibility needs in class, please talk to me or visit Student Accessibility Services at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or refer to the Accessibility Services website (https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility). If you want to pursue the question of access and accommodation more fully please consider checking out “Beyond Compliance” http://bcccsyracuse.wordpress.com/, which is a radical accessibility statement. As a class, we have agreed on the following:

- Our classroom will be scent-free (please refer to email from Carla Rice regarding alternative products that can be used to ensure a scent-free environment)
- Eating in class is acceptable
- Fostering a culture of “calling in” all class members into discussions. Given that we are coming from different disciplinary perspectives, we will foster this culture in two ways:
  1. **The garden.** We will develop a collaborative glossary for the class. This glossary will develop over time through the use of a poster that is brought to each class (referred to as the “garden”).

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Throughout our meetings, everyone is welcome to contribute terms/ideas to the garden that they would like to ‘grow’ throughout the class. We also encourage all co-designers to reach out to others regarding specific terminology/theories that are raised in discussion but not elaborated due to time.

II. **Assumption of wanting to learn.** We begin this course with an assumption that everyone is here with the intention to learn with and from one another, and we shall proceed with gentle questioning and respectful discussion where we diverge and where we inadvertently hurt each other. Students commit to engaging in open and respectful discussion with peers about sometimes difficult readings that may be interpreted differently based on each class member’s social location and areas of interest. For students and instructor, part of this engagement will involve avoiding monopolizing conversations and being sure to engage in active listening rather than always talking.

**COURSE THEMES AND TOPICS**

This is an open topics course. Based on the interests of those who came to our organizing meetings, held on April 26, May 7, and June 20, 2018 we decided on course themes and readings, established course learning goals and objectives, and developed assignments and processes for assessment. Our areas for theoretical and methodological exploration are as follows:

- Critical Pedagogy and Theory
- Decolonization, Kinship and Intimate Relations
- Critical Childhood Studies
- Gender, Sex and Sexuality Theory
- Theories of the Body, Embodiment, Identity and Subjectivity
- Intersectional Approaches in Theorizing and Research
- Corporeal, New Materialist and Becoming Theories of the Human
- Feminist Post-humanism
- Theorizing Time, Memory and Futurity
- Emergent and Creative Approaches to Research

This course will start in September 2018, running for 12 weeks. We will meet once on Thursday from 8:30 pm to 11:30 am and then decide our final meeting time to accommodate as many schedules as possible. Masters and doctoral students from across and beyond the University of Guelph were eligible and welcome. Now that the course has been designed with the students who are already enrolled, enrolment is closed.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course has nine collectively-determined objectives:

1. Establish a critical and an applied or practical appreciation of contemporary feminist-informed gender, sex, and sexuality theory; critical and Indigenous pedagogies; intersectionality, identity and difference; critical theories of de-colonization, embodiment, subjectivity, the life-course (childhood, aging), time, and futurity; and post-structuralist, new materialist, affect and post-humanist theory;
2. Critically engage with texts and theories introduced by collectively reflecting on materials and discussions in class; interact with and listen to others as sites of knowledge, as having insightful interpretations and understandings of theory based upon different lived experiences.
3. Practice active listening, using inclusive language and framing, and calling out and in; find meaning in contributions that are made and build on these contributions in a positive, supporting manner—this could mean acknowledging oppressive language that enters our space and addressing it.

4. Approach and critically engage with theory through an inter- and intra-disciplinary lens by teaching and learning with individuals who bring rich and diverse academic backgrounds, who may be situated inside or outside of one’s own specific discipline.

5. Begin the process of unearthing structurally- and culturally-imbued embodied understandings of the world embedded in white, settler-colonial, and westernized knowledge systems. Deconstruct taken-for-granted assumptions carried and delineate ways of reconstructing critical understandings of the world that are less eurocentric, ethnocentric and anthropocentric.

6. Employ creative, artistic, and emotive/embodied avenues for learning about and processing critical theory beyond those sanctioned by the social sciences or sciences. Explore how artistic and embodied approaches (movement, physical body and visceral/emotional reactions) can serve as alternative avenues to critically engage with/understand the world; Take risks’ and experiment with theory and the presentation of theory through artistic creation and reflection on one’s creations; For those interested in digital technologies and creative approaches, engage in a ‘hands on’ examination of course and other texts, and through an interactive mode (blogging, digital storytelling, digital fiction) to understand how digital tools can reveal new meanings.

7. Develop and enhance facilitation and communication skills by discussing theoretical knowledge in an accessible, comprehensive way, and by offering both verbal and written feedback to peers who explore their own theoretical knowledge.

8. Integrate theory-work introduced in the course and identify how this theory might help to fill gaps in prior theorizing around gender, sex and sexuality development, subjectivity, identity and difference, decolonization, embodiment/materialization, affect/emotion, and the posthuman.

9. Develop proficiency in collaborative student-led inquiry, including cooperative curriculum development and course delivery, and collective determination of types of assignments and assessments; Experience the process and benefits of engaging in positive and collaborative learning environments, and how individuals can come together to build new and unique understandings of the world.

PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT
We understand that respect is a fundamental requirement for teaching and learning. We have developed ten collectively-determined principles to guide us in enacting respectful and reciprocal relations in this class. These entail mutual commitment to:

1. **Create and sustain an open learning space.** This means people have permission to “not know” and an open invitation to ask for additional explanation/unpacking of concepts and theories without feeling they are being “tested” or judged, and without having to know the “right” answer in advance. It also means that we strive to maximize learning, and personal and intellectual growth by inviting each other into discussion but also allowing space for silent reflection. We foster an environment where learners are free to interject when requiring further clarification and where they are encouraged to ask questions and share insights.

2. **Lead and learn from and across our differences.** Since we have different disciplinary backgrounds social and political positionalities and learning styles and needs, we strive to speak in accessible language, refrain from making assumptions about what others know/don’t know (intellectually or politically), and to slow down/stop if something requires additional explanation of issues, concepts and theories raised. We use verbal and physical cues to signify when we require further clarification.

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Learners might use hand gestures (waving, putting up their hand, making eye contact) to alert speakers that they would like to ask a question or make a comment; and speakers and instructors check in with learners to see if they are accessibly capturing the content (i.e., is everyone comfortable with the concepts/language/theory being discussed? Does anyone need further clarification?). We agree to provide an accessible point of entry into the conversation through creating a glossary terms or definitions at the beginning of the seminar or a running dictionary as our lesson plan unfolds to ensure that lectures and teaching tools (i.e., slides) are accessible to all levels of learning.

3. **Lead and learn with compassion and challenge.** Whether it is because someone is struggling emotionally or academically with a concept or because people are disagreeing, we bring compassion to our interactions. We enact an umbrella of non-judgment in the class and at the same time, we open space for difference by inviting compassionate challenge and by challenging ourselves to be receptive to compassionate challenges. When engaging in critical discussion, we understand that critical analysis of one’s ideas is not critical analysis of one’s self or worth. In doing so, we foster an environment that quells defensiveness when digging into difficult learning.

4. **Learn from designated instructors while taking responsibility for our own learning.** We understand that leaders may guide the group towards better understanding of theory; however, they are not expected to be the ultimate knowers and arbiters of knowledge. In the process of being a leader, one is also a learner and is not expected to have all the knowledge or answers. For their part, learners also actively engage in the process of learning through active listening. To foster inclusive spaces, we welcome learners’ requests for pause to process content.

5. **Enact reciprocal teaching/learning relationships.** We understand that the teaching/learning relationship is necessarily iterative, interactive and engaging. It is not top-down, but rather reciprocal. All must work together to foster open learning spaces. We also understand that mutual accountability is central as we move through difficult and potentially uncomfortable subject matter. Cognizant of the difficult and sensitive nature of material discussed, we orient to how such material might affect individuals who are members of the group under discussion. We recognize that a person is not wholly summed up by an idea expressed or by a singular aspect of their identity.

6. **Create space for sharing ideas and affects through various mediums.** We strive to convey ideas through speech, film, sound, poetry, music, visual images and other media. We also create space for expressing a full range of emotions in class. We agree to practice checking in and out to provide all an opportunity to briefly explain our dispositions both pre- and post-seminar. This process gives insight into how we all are coming into the space and leaving it. Direct responses or symbolism may be relied upon to do this.

7. **Break group think.** We invite learners to express experiences and knowledges that may differ from those held by the instructor or by others in the group. We have permission to interrogate, with compassion, ideologies/perspectives that are often omitted from institutional discourse/values. At the same time, we enact social justice values in our class as an ongoing, iterative process.

8. **Give and receive peer feedback.** If asked, we give written feedback (both positive and constructive) to others about the substance of their work including feedback on their teaching, and on their final assignments. We ask for feedback from more than one peer and we ask others to provide written feedback and evaluation of our assignments through the rubrics we provide. We agree to provide that feedback within two weeks of being asked to do so.

9. **Foster trusting spaces.** Take the learning but leave the stories means that we show sensitivity to the experiences, stories and voices expressed. We learn from and with what is shared, and honour people’s privacy by agreeing not to share personal or intimate details of stories outside of the learning space. We invite and encourage each other to share our learning widely.
10. Listen actively and empathetically, have a good understanding of body language, show emotional intelligence, and understand how to employ different anger management techniques. In particular:

Make sure that good relationships are a priority. Treat the other person with respect. Be courteous and discuss matters constructively.

Separate people from problems. Recognize that, in many cases, real and valid differences can lie behind conflicting positions. By separating the problem from the person, we discuss issues without damaging relationships.

Listen carefully to different interests. We try to understand another’s point of view in order to better grasp of why they have adopted their position.

Listen first, talk second. We listen to what the other person is saying before defending our own position. They might say something that changes our mind.


EXPLANATION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

20% Self-Evaluation (through 1 mid-term reflection assignment)
20% Classroom Teaching
60% Portfolio

20% Self-Evaluation
20% of the student’s grade will be determined through one self-assessment completed at the midpoint of the course (Week 6). Each student will be required to assess their own level of engagement in the course through a written reflection (2-3 pages single or 3 to 6 pages double spaced) on how they met the course objectives and their own personal goals for the course.

20% Classroom Teaching
Over the course of the semester, students and instructor will engage in a deep reading of major theoretical texts introduced in the course. Class members will take turns teaching course content, and the person(s) assigned to the week will develop a presentation of the key ideas introduced in the assigned text(s), their interpretation of the text(s), and its applicability to their main area of interest. Each will identify areas where they feel that their understanding could be enhanced and develop questions to pose to the class during their presentation.

Prior to the presentation, the presenter will be required to develop a lesson plan that will be included in their final portfolio assignment. This lesson plan should outline the plan for the presentation, along with the key ideas that will be discussed, their interpretation of these ideas, and ideas and questions that they have regarding the texts. Instructor/presenters will circulate the questions at least two days prior to the presentation to allow peers to reflect on them prior to class time.

Following the presentation, students may choose to solicit comments about their presentation by asking the group to identify i) what they, in their role as scholar/instructor, did well and ii) what they might want to unpack or develop further. The presenter may choose to ask two or three members of the class (or students may volunteer) to provide written feedback on their evaluation of the presentation. This evaluation is intended to support the growth of the presenter, and it can be included in the final portfolio.
60% Portfolio

The portfolio assignment is intended to be the cumulative assignment. Throughout the semester, students will complete and document a collection of activities that reflect their engagement in the class. They will assemble these into a portfolio including the following: a ‘starting point story’, which captures where they are at in relation to theory before the course; documentation of activities, power-points and talking points that they developed for their presentation; peer evaluations of their presentation; and a conventional academic or creative assignment that they develop. The final assignment—whether creative or conventional—must demonstrate that they have engaged with some of the key theories introduced in the class and how they are thinking through these theories in relation to their area(s) of interest/research. Students may also wish to incorporate into their final assignment insights provoked by other course readings and discussions.

The design of the final assignment is completely up to the student. Students who decide to do a creative assignment may choose to post commentary and insights about theory and its relationship to their research/praxis/areas of interest in an interactive mode online—such as in discussion format via Courselink or in a blog with photographic or video content. Alternatively, those interested in digital storytelling or digital fiction might opt to develop a digital story/fiction that animates and explicates some of the theory examined in the class and how it might relate to their own work. Those who decide to do a more standard assignment might opt to complete a trial draft of a mock thesis proposal or mock qualifying exam proposal that incorporates theory introduced in the class as it relates to their area of research/interest. Others might opt to conduct a literature review/bibliography on their research areas. Still others may decide to prepare a manuscript for publication in an academic journal. Students may decide to create a hybrid final assignment that combines traditional academic work with more abstract/artistic work. Students are invited and encouraged to propose other creative and more standard final assignments.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect for individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website. The standard statements are available on the AVPA website (undergraduate courses) or from the Office of Graduate Studies (Graduate Courses).

TIMELY FEEDBACK ON WORK

Feedback to students on work completed or in progress is an integral part of teaching and learning in that it allows you to measure your understanding of material and your progress on learning objectives. All University of Guelph instructors must provide meaningful and constructive feedback to students prior to the 40th class day.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
It is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar: http://www.uoguelph.ca/Registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/sec_d0e1609.shtml
Reading List – WHOLE LIST FOR DISCUSSION
September 6 to November 30, 2018

Introduction

WEEK 1 • SEPTEMBER 6, 2018
Terms of Engagement: Critical and Feminist Pedagogies • All to Lead

Required:


Recommended:

WEEK 2 • SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
The Intersectional Imagination • Carla Rice to Lead

Required:


Kimberlé Crenshaw - The urgency of intersectionality: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o

Kimberlé Crenshaw - On Intersectionality - keynote - WOW 2016: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DW4HLgYPIA

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Kimberlé Crenshaw - http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Intersectionality-Wars/240095?key=2LXo1L2mwMRA4ctYVJ7Z8RU7OegPve8tYncIU5IILak0xfUcr98FsQgiczuiQz9OWxuNl9qeJ0VnQxY1F1Q245NWhHT10bmd3bldmZF9scGJBMkk2d2NGVQ

Section 1: Gender, Power, Difference: An Overview

WEEK 3 • SEPTEMBER 20, 2018
Decolonizing Sex, Gender and Sexuality Studies • Teresa Smith to Lead

Required


Recommended:
Chapter 2: Sexual Orientation

WEEK 4 • SEPTEMBER 27 • Carla Rice to Lead
The Linguistic Construction of Sex and Gender

Required
Preface, pp. ix-xiv; Chapter 1: Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire pp. 1-9

Preface, pp. ix-xiv; Introduction, 1-23

Recommended:
Judith Butler - Philosophin der Gender: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlCmB---sT4
Examined Life - Judith Butler & Sunaura Taylor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0HZaPkJF6qE

WEEK 5 • OCTOBER 4, 2018
Deconstructing, Decolonizing, and Materializing Masculinities and Femininities • Nick Sorg to Lead and Victoria Muñoz to Lead?
**Required - Masculinities**
Introduction, 1-16; Chapter 1: Theorizing Masculinity, 17-54


**Choose 1 of the following 2:**

**Required-Femininities**


**Recommended**
Introduction: Masculinity in Crisis?

**WEEK 6 • OCTOBER 11, 2018**
Vulnerability and the Human Condition • Sheila Byng Crammer to Lead

**Required**


WEEK 7 • OCTOBER 18, 2018
Child studies, cultures, sexualities • Riley Easterbrook and Rachel Monahan to Lead

Required


Recommended:


Section II: Bodies, Biopedagogies, and Becomings

WEEK 8 • OCTOBER 25, 2018
Bodies and Political Economies • Shannon Boss to Lead

Required


WEEK 9 • NOVEMBER 1
Biopedagogies and Body Shame • Andrea Kirkham to Lead
Required


On shame:


WEEK 10 • NOVEMBER 8, 2108
Introducing the New Materialisms: Confrontation of Bodies and Worlds • Karima Dorney to Lead

Required
Introduction: Emerging models of materiality in feminist theory, 1-22


One of these:

Recommended
Introduction, 3-27  
Chapter 1: Refiguring Bodies  
Chapter 6: The Body as Inscriptive Surface  
Chapter 7: Intensities and Flows, 160  
Chapter 8: Sexed Bodies, 187

**WEEK 11 • NOVEMBER 15, 2018**  
**Affect and Embodiment • Devan Hunter to Lead**

**Required**  

**Additional (but not necessary) Readings:**  

**WEEK 12 • NOVEMBER 22, 2018**  
**Time Travels: Queer, Aging and Disability Futures • Jess Boule to Lead**

**Required**  
Introduction, Chapter 1


**Section III: The PostHuman Condition**

**WEEK 13 • NOVEMBER 29, 2018**  
**What is the Posthuman? • Megan Wilson to Lead**

Introduction; Chapter 1: Post-Humanism: Life Beyond the Self

Plus 1 of the 3:

Recommended:
Rosi Braidotti, Memoirs of a Post Humanist, 2017 Tanner Lectures on Human Values: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjxelMWLGCo
Rosi Braidotti, Aspirations of a Post Humanist, 2017 Tanner Lectures on Human Values: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNYOKfRQks

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