

SOAN 2400
Introduction to Gender Systems
Department of Sociology & Anthropology
University of Guelph

Instructor Information

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Course Description

In this course, we will explore how sex and gender are socially constructed. The main purpose of the course is to understand how gender inequality creates gender difference. As such, we will critically interrogate the notion that sex and gender are fixed biological realities. Our focus will be on discussing sociological and anthropological theories of gender and their application to analyze 1) how gender operates as a central organizing principle of society and 2) how gender relations are shaped by social and cultural institutions like the family, education, work, and the media. Throughout, we will pay attention to the intersection of gender with other structures of inequality such as race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality.

This course is interactive – each class has a lecture component that will focus on the readings and small in-class exercises and class discussions geared towards the application of the course material to your own experience and to Canadian and global contexts. You must come prepared to participate and to share your thoughts and questions with the rest of the class.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will be able:

- to understand the social construction of gender using sociological and anthropological perspectives
- to analyze the intersection of gender with other structures of inequality like race/ethnicity, class, and sexuality
- to apply sociological and anthropological research on gender and intersectionality to interrogate historical and current assumptions about gender difference and how they have shaped research, policies, and popular culture
- to critically reflect on the relationship between gender inequality at the structural and individual levels and various social problems affecting both women and men in Canadian society and globally
- to develop critical reading and writing skills to demonstrate both the ability to comprehend course materials and apply them to everyday life

Textbooks and Other Materials

The primary textbook for the course is *The Gendered Society: 2nd Canadian Edition*, authored by Michael S. Kimmel and Jacqueline Holler, published by Oxford University in 2016. There will be additional readings posted on CourseLink.

* Note: This is NOT the same book as *The Gendered Society Reader*. Nor is it the same book as Kimmel's *The Gendered Society* (which is the American edition).

Evaluation Components

This course has different evaluation components, including ongoing participation in class discussions and exercises, a midterm and a final test, as well as various short written assignments (reading responses).