



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**WMST 301.5-01
Gender and Popular Culture
Spring Term 2017**

Course Outline

Lectures: Monday/Wednesday 1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. in SA 129

Instructor: Joe Kadi

Office: Social science 1205

Office Phone: Please use email

Email: jkadi@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:45 pm to 4:15 pm or by appointment

Course Description:

Popular culture is a powerful force in our society, providing representations, messages, images, and ideas about gender, as well as race and class. In this course, we will think critically and analytically about these representations, about popular culture itself, and about the technology that produces it. We will also examine representations offering alternative portrayals to those of the mainstream. We will draw from a variety of cultural forms, including film, video, music, television, advertising, books, and the internet.

Prerequisites:

No prerequisites.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- To understand mass media and pop culture more fully.
- To examine the ways in which gender and race are represented within pop culture, and how they connect to systems of sexism and racism.
- To gain a historical perspective on pop culture.
- To develop and strengthen critical thinking skills.
- To become a more conscious, self-reflective person.
- To create a vibrant learning community based on respect and curiosity.

WARNING:

Some of the materials and topics in this class may include explicit written or audio-visual content (violence, sexuality, objectionable or illegal conduct). If these materials make you uncomfortable, you are encouraged to speak with the professor. You will not be exempt from any assigned work but we will work together to accommodate your concerns. This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical debate and discussion.

Student Agreement and Other Important Matters:

Students are expected to carefully read the Student Agreement, and sign it, after our first class. The Student Agreement explains important issues having to do with creating a respectful environment, ensuring confidentiality, setting up a distraction-free classroom, and so forth. If a student has concerns about the Student Agreement and needs to speak to me in order to negotiate a modified agreement, you need to come to discuss this with me. Otherwise, I expect that all students will sign the document, and follow the guidelines stated therein.

Responsibility for attending and fulfilling the requirements for all aspects of the course resides with the student. The professor will not give out lecture notes, repeat information, nor provide replacement copies of material that was provided during regular class hours. The course includes a combination of individual assignments, group work, lectures, screenings, and readings.

Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited.

A D2L portal has been set up for this course which allows for group correspondence, course announcements, assignment submissions, and other forms of communication. Students are expected to check D2L, and their email, regularly.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared to work.

Plagiarism, defined as using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it, is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement on plagiarism provided at the end of the syllabus. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

Required/Recommended Texts (including electronic resources):

Amusing Ourselves to Death, by Neil Postman.

Other class readings posted on D2L site.

Course Assessment:

Please note: All assignments must be completed in order to achieve a passing grade.

Participatory Classroom, part I and part II. 20%. Due 17 May, 26 June.

48-hour experiment essay, 25%. Due 31 May.

Make It Right assignment, 25%. Due 14 June.

Take-home exam, 30%. Due 26 June.

Participatory Classroom, a two-part assignment, worth 20% of the grade:

Refer to the document entitled 'Guidelines for the participatory classroom assignment', on our D2L site, which will explain that assignment in detail.

In this two-part assignment, students will write a short paper (2 to 3 double-spaced pages) near the beginning of term outlining goals and intentions regarding attendance and participation, and a second 2 to 3 page, double-spaced paper near the end of term, assessing whether these goals and intentions have been met. Each paper will be double-spaced, and printed with 12 point font; clear writing and strong organization is necessary. In the first paper, the student will set out their plan for their level of attendance, participation, and adherence to the Student Agreement. Considering that this is a participatory classroom, and that the success of a participatory classroom depends on

each individual, this assignment will provide the chance for students to set out their intentions for the term. These assignments will be discussed in small groups, and the instructor will check to ensure that everyone has written one. In the second part of the assignment, students will begin by assigning themselves a grade that they believe accurately reflects their attendance, participation, adherence to the Student Agreement, and depth of learning. They will explain their rationale for this grade by explaining how they have conducted themselves throughout the semester, and they will also refer to the first paper (intentions and goals set in the first paper will help frame the second paper).

This assignment will help students clarify their role in the participatory classroom, and it will help them clarify why they have chosen to take this course, in terms of considering questions such as: What are your desired learning outcomes? What do you think will be challenging? What issues interest you? What has your past record of attendance and participation helped you understand about yourself? What aspects do you wish to keep, and which do you want to change?

In Part II of the assignment, the student's assessment will be considered in light of the instructor's observations, and the instructor will have final say concerning the grade the student has given themselves. A hard copy of Part I is due at the beginning of class on 17 May 2017. A hard copy of Part II is due 26 June 2017, at the beginning of class.

48-hour experiment essay, 25%. Due 31 May, at the beginning of class.

Refer to the document entitled 'Guidelines for the 48-hour experiment', on our D2L site, which will explain that assignment in detail.

*The 48-hour experiment essay: This assignment involves staying away from all technological aspects of pop culture for 48 hours, and writing about what you learned from this. Students will not engage in any of the following activities: watching TV, going to the movies, listening to recorded music, watching music videos, checking favorite websites, going on Facebook, using the internet, using email, using cell phones, texting. After completing the experiment, students will write a 5 to 7 page, double-spaced paper articulating/analyzing what they learned from engaging in the 48-hour experiment. There will be a minimum of three references to course material, either to our readings, or to class discussions. These will be cited in APA style.

Make It Right assignment, 25%. Due 14 June, at the beginning of class.

Refer to the document entitled 'Guidelines for the Make It Right assignment', on our D2L site, which will explain that assignment in detail.

*The Make It Right Assignment, worth 25%: This assignment gives you the opportunity to think about, and plan for, changes in a visual image which you identify as problematic. You will write a 5 to 7 page paper (double-spaced), or you will complete a creative visual assignment that illustrates the changes you want to make to the visual image you have chosen; this visual assignment will include a short written piece that includes necessary information for the viewer. Both formats for the assignment will include a minimum of five references to course readings, lectures, or discussions, cited in APA style.

Take-home exam, 30%. Due 26 June, at the beginning of class.

The exam will be handed out on 19 June.

Registrar-Scheduled Final Exam

There will not be a Registrar-Scheduled final exam in this course.

Grading Scale

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|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|
| A+ | 96 – 100% | C+ | 65 – 69.99% |
| A | 90 – 95.99% | C | 60 – 64.99% |
| A - | 85 – 89.99% | C - | 54 – 59.99% |
| B+ | 80 – 84.99% | D+ | 53 – 54.99% |
| B | 75 – 79.99% | D | 50 – 52.99% |
| B - | 70 – 74.99% | F | 0 – 49.99% |

Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day that they are late.

Course Policies:

About the Women's Studies Program

This course may be counted toward a Women's Studies degree. The Women's Studies Program offers Major, Minor, and Honours undergraduate degrees. Housed in the Department of Philosophy, the program is dedicated to offering students a feminist social justice classroom where we can bravely explore issues relating to gender and sexual equity and diversity from many perspectives. For more information, contact the program coordinator (wmstprog@ucalgary.ca) and check out our website: <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/womens-studies>.

The University of Calgary has a number of student clubs and campus centres dedicated to issues of gender and sexual equity and diversity. Here are links to their Facebook sites (please note that the instructors are often members of social media sites):

[Consent Awareness and Sexual Education Club](#)

[Queers on Campus](#)

[Q: The SU Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity](#)

[Women in Leadership Club](#)

[Women's Resource Centre](#)

[Women's Studies and Feminism Club](#)

Content Warning:

Some of the materials and topics in this class will include explicit content (violence; sexuality; profanity; blasphemous, objectionable or illegal conduct). If you feel any materials may cause you distress or severe discomfort, you are encouraged to speak with the professor and/or to take measures to ensure that you feel braver in the classroom. You will not be exempt from any assigned work but we will work together to accommodate your concerns.

This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical debate and discussion. No one person's right to their beliefs may supersede another person's right to security and dignity.

When in a classroom dedicated to social justice education, conflict will happen. That is part of a healthy, dynamic, questioning space of learning and discovery. You are encouraged to hold onto your own personal beliefs, but recognize that there will be differences of opinion and experience, and a university classroom holds high standards of research, evidence, and analytical proof.

Students need to listen attentively and critically to the evidence provided in class lectures, readings, discussions, and other materials.

If you feel that you need more support than can be provided by the classroom or the instructor, you are encouraged to take advantage of some of these resources:

SU Wellness Centre

(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/> 403-210-9355 / 403-266-4357)

Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse Hotline

(<http://www.calgarycasa.com/> 403-237-5888)

Alberta Mental Health Hotline

(<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services.asp?pid=saf&rid=1019446> 1-877-303-2642)

Trained peer supporters are also available on campus through:

Women's Resource Centre

(<https://www.ucalgary.ca/women/> 4th Floor, MacEwen Centre, in The Loft)

Q Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity

(<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/programs-services/student-services/the-q-centre/> 2nd Floor, Mac Hall, near The Den).

If you have a serious concern about the instructor's conduct, you may speak in full confidence to either the Women's Studies Coordinator (wmstprog@ucalgary.ca) or the Head of the Department of Philosophy (phildept@ucalgary.ca) Please note, Women's Studies is a program that is administered by the Department of Philosophy.

Braver Space Guidelines

"Braver Space" principles recognize that everyone brings different resiliencies and capacities to a group setting. We must all bring our personal bravery into the classroom space, and be mindful of what that means specifically to us. This does not mean sharing or participating in a way that violates personal boundaries (yours or another person's), nor cajoling others into participating in ways that are not conducive to their personal bravery. Rather, it means being respectful, self-aware, and mindful of the classroom dynamic and your place in it. Some guidelines are provided below.

Do not make assumptions about other people's identities and life experiences. That includes but is not limited to race, gender, sexuality, physical ability, mental and emotional wellbeing, age, citizenship status, and reproductivity.

Recognize that language is a powerful tool in social justice education. It also changes as new issues and greater clarity develop. Therefore, if you need to correct language use, do so respectfully; and if you are corrected, accept that correction respectfully.

Make an effort to speak from the position of “I” (not the generalized “you” or “people”) and to clarify any statements you make, using verifiable evidence and experience. Making a sweeping judgment on a class or group of people is not acceptable.

Address people without assuming their gender. Some ways to do this:

- Don’t refer to groups as guys, ladies, women, men, etc.,
- Refer to individuals whose gender has not been disclosed to you in gender-neutral ways such as “the person who said...”

Address people using the gender pronouns they have indicated for themselves. Offer your gender pronouns to others to make it a braver space to talk about gender pronouns. Some gender pronouns include, but are not limited to:

- they/them/theirs
- she/her/hers
- ze/hir/hirs
- he/him/his
- ey/em/eirs

Provide discrete and succinct content warnings if you will be talking about topics that may be traumatic for some and the content is not already apparent. Examples of such topics could include abuse, violence, addiction, suicide, mental health, transphobia/homophobia/other forms of discriminatory behaviours. An example of wording could be, “Please note that there will be (x) content in my discussion.”

Respect your own and others’ physical, mental, and emotional boundaries. Please speak up in a respectful way if you are uncomfortable, seek support if you want/need it, and engage in self-care as required and/or desired.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

This will be handed out the first day of classes.

IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Academic Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about correct referencing, consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on student accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

D2L Help

Desire2Learn is the University of Calgary's online learning management system. Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/it/services/d2l> for help.

Student Advising and Information Resources

- **General Academic Concerns and Program Planning**– Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email ascarts@ucalgary.ca. Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns.
- **Advice on Women's Studies Courses** - You may find answers to your more specific questions about a degree in WMST in the University of Calgary <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/arts-4-66.html> or contact the 2015-16 Coordinator of the WMST Program, Dr. Rebecca Sullivan rsulliva@ucalgary.ca
- **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers** – If you are seeking to register in a WMST course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the instructor of the course.

Protection of Privacy

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

Safewalk

Call 403-220-5333 (24/7/365) for a Safewalk volunteer to accompany you safely to your destination on campus including parking lots, housing, and the LRT station or use a Campus Help Phone.