GROSSMONT COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Curriculum Committee Approval: 11/29/2022

Approved by GCCCD Governing Board: 12/13/2022

ENGLISH 201 – WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IN LITERATURE

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units

ENGL 201 Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Literature 3

Semester Hours

3 hours lecture (48-54 total hours); 96-108 outside-of-class hours; 144-162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

None

Corequisite

None

Recommended Preparation

None

3. Catalog Description

This course is designed to examine gender and sexuality in diverse literature with emphasis on the representations of women. Students learn to use different theoretical lenses to critically interpret and discuss fiction, graphic literature, poetry, drama, and creative nonfiction in historical, political, literary, and cultural contexts. Through active reading and discussion, students interrogate how literature informs, reinforces, challenges, alters, resists, or otherwise influences social constructions of gender and sexuality.

4. Course Objectives

The students will:

1. Interpret, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize representations of women, gender, and sexuality in diverse literature from varied genres: fiction, drama, poetry, graphic literature, and creative nonfiction. Media such as film, television, video games, podcasts, and texts from the Internet may also be assigned.
2. Illustrate an understanding of academic discourse and the conventions of evidence-based

literary analysis, including the integration of secondary and/or theoretical material, documented

in MLA format.

1. Utilize standard literary terminology to discuss and write about women, gender, and sexuality in literature.
2. Define key concepts related to representations of women, gender, and sexuality in literature, such as the social construction of gender, differences between gender and sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, masculinity and femininity, womanhood, etc.
3. Summarize and apply assigned literary theory, including the core tenets of Feminist literary criticism and Queer Theory.
4. Situate literary texts in various historical, political, literary, psychological, and cultural contexts and discuss how those contexts inform their meanings, values, and roles in larger debates about gender.
5. Discuss how authors use, resist, and alter conventions of genre to inform representations of women, gender, and sexuality in assigned literature.
6. Acknowledge and evaluate various perspectives and assumptions about women, gender, and sexuality in literature and consider those from their own critical enterprises.
7. Account for the relationships between gender and intersectional formations such as race/ethnicity,

class, age, sexuality, (dis)ability, religion, national identity, etc., in assigned readings.

1. Identify and evaluate how literature informs, reinforces, challenges, alters, resists, or otherwise influences social constructions of gender and sexuality.

5. Instructional Facilities

Standard Classroom

6. Special Materials Required of Student

None

7. Course Content

1. Work primarily by, but not limited to, women and other historically underrepresented writers from any of the major periods in American literature (colonial, romantic, realist/naturalist, modernist, contemporary) and from Western and non-Western cultures representing diverse perspectives (i.e., Sojourner Truth, Juana Inés de la Cruz, Zitkála-Ša, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, Kate Chopin, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Gloria Anzaldúa, William Shakespeare, Ursula K. Le Guin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Margaret Atwood, Ernest Hemingway, James Baldwin, Henrik Ibsen, Jhumpa Lahiri, Marjane Satrapi, Allison Bechdel, Maia Kobabe, Audre Lorde, Jamaica Kincaid, Zora Neale Hurston, Virginia Woolf, Marge Piercy, Adrienne Rich, Waris Dirie, Jane Austen, Octavia Butler, Tillie Olsen, Yukio Mishima, Gertrude Stein, Sandra Cisneros, Langston Hughes, Carmen Maria Machado, Toni Morrison, Elizabeth Acevedo, Azar Nafisi, Annie Proulx, Danez Smith, Ocean Voung, Louise Erdrich).
2. Fiction, drama, poetry, graphic literature, and works of creative nonfiction that engage with issues related to representations of women, gender, and sexuality, as well as intersectional key concepts and experiences such as race, ethnicity, class, dis/ability, language, religion, etc.
3. Women, gender, and sexuality in media such as film, television, video games, and the Internet.
4. Sociohistorical, political, and cultural artifacts, such as articles, essays, music, photography, art, advertisements, and short videos, to provide enrichment and context for primary texts and their authors.
5. Literary theory and criticism relevant to primary texts, with an emphasis on Feminists and Queer Theory. Additional approaches may include Critical Race Theory, Masculinity Studies, Marxism, New Historicism, Postcolonialism, etc.
6. Gender, such as differences between sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexuality/attraction; the social construction of gender and the body; gender binary vs. spectrum; masculinity and femininity; transgender and non-binary identities; language and pronouns.
7. Sexuality, such as sexual orientation and identities; heteronormativity; homoeroticism; representations of desire, pleasure and attraction; representations of sex work; intersections between sex and power.
8. Feminisms, such as first, second, third, and fourth waves; Liberal Feminism; Radical Feminism; Socialist/Marxist Feminism; Psychoanalytic Feminism; Black Feminism; Eco-feminism; the “Me Too” movement.
9. Gender in genres like horror, gothic, science fiction, the coming-of-age novel (Bildungsroman), graphic novels, comics, manga, and postmodern, with an emphasis on how authors use, resist, or alter the conventions of genre to challenge, interrogate, revise, and reimagine representations of womanhood, gender, and sexuality.
10. Theoretical key concepts central to the analysis of gender and literature, such as the gaze, embodiment, consciousness raising, agency, essentialism, domesticity, public/private sphere, family/motherhood, girl power, performativity, patriarchy, heteronormativity, representation, reproductive technologies, sex work, stereotype, etc.
11. Rhetorical and literary devices, including how authors use language, form, structure, and other tools to reinforce, resist, interrogate, or otherwise critically engage with ideologies about women, gender, and sexuality (and related/intersectional key concepts).

8. Method of Instruction

1. Lectures and presentations by the instructor and visiting writers and/or speakers
2. Facilitation of student analysis, interpretation, and discussion of literature
3. Student-led inquiry into relevant literature and theoretical frameworks via discussion groups,

presentations, and other projects

1. Collaborative small group activities
2. Whole class discussion of sample writing (student and/or professional), peer workshops, and

instructor-student conferences to help students successfully complete assignments

1. Multi-modal texts (i.e., films, short video content, podcasts, social media, and audio clips),

including culturally relevant and diverse interpretations

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

Formative Assessments:

1. Reader responses/journals on assigned readings.
2. Quizzes on assigned readings.
3. Notes on video and audio presentations.
4. In-class interpretation, analysis, and discussion of literature.
5. Reviews of/reflections on literary arts activities (i.e., poetry readings, plays, etc.).
6. Source collection/research development exercises, such as annotated bibliographies.
7. Contributions to small-group activities and/or peer workshops.
8. Metacognitive reflections and/or self-assessments regarding learning experiences.

Summative Assessments:

1. Student-facilitated presentations and projects.
2. In-class essays and exams, including a final exam.
3. Out-of-class evidenced-based analytical essays (prepared in standard MLA format) that may

require research.

10. Outside Class Assignments

1. Read assigned texts and handouts.
2. Write evidence-based analytical essays, annotated bibliographies, and other shorter

Assignments, including topics such as the intersection of gender, sexuality, and race; the role of sexual identity in science fiction; the marginalization of women in early literature; etc.

1. Complete notes in response to video and audio presentations.
2. Maintain journals or other types of informal writing.
3. Research various assigned readings and/or authors using a range of critical and literary

theories.

1. Attend literary arts events and readings on campus, online, and in the greater literary community.

11. Representative Texts

a. Representative Text(s):

1) Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Aunt Lute Books, 2012.

2) Baldwin, James. *Giovanni’s Room*. Vintage Books, 2013.

3) Bechdel, Allison. *Fun Home*. Mariner Books, 2007.

4) Boylan, Jennifer Finney. *She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders*. Crown, 2013.

5) Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. Reader’s Library Classics, 2021.

6) Dirie, Waris, and Cathleen Miller. *Desert Flower*. William Marrow, 2011.

7) Erdrich, Louise. *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*. Harper Perennial, 2016.

8) Goodman, Elizabeth, ed. *Approaching Literature Series: Literature and Gender*. 1st edition.

Routledge, 2015.

9) Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. *The Complete Grimm’s Fairy Tales*. Rock Point, 2020.

10) Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Amistad, 2006.

11) Kobabe, Maia. *Gender Queer: A Memoir*. Oni Press, 2019.

12) Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Left Hand of Darkness*. Gollancz, 2017.

13) Okparanta, Chinelo. *Under the Udala Trees*. Mariner Books, 2016.

14) Palahniuk, Chuck. *Fight Club*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.

15) Shakespeare, William. *The 12th Night*. Simon & Schuster, 2004.

16) Winterson, Jeanette. *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*. Grove Press, 1997.

17) Woolf, Virginia. *Orlando*. Read and Co. Classics, 2013.

b. Supplemental texts and films:

1) *Boys Don’t Cry*. Dir. Kimberly Peirce. Perf. Hillary Swank, Chloë Sevigny, Peter Sarsgaard. Fox Searchlight, 1999.

2) Gardner, Janet E., and Joanne Diaz. *Reading and Writing about Literature: A Portable Guide*. 5th ed., Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2020.

3) *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

4) *Moonlight*. Dir. Barry Jenkins. Perf. Mahershala Ali, Naomie Harris, Trevante Rhodes. Plan B Entertainment, 2016.

5) *Pariah*. Dir. Dee Rees. Perf. Adepero Oduye, Kim Wayans, Aasha Davis. Focus Features, 2011.

6) *The Danish Girl*. Dir. Tom Hooper. Perf. Eddie Redmayne, Alicia Vikander. Focus Features, 2015.

7) *The Lady*. Dir. Luc Besson. Perf. Michelle Yeoh, David Thewlis, and Jonathan Raggett. Cohen Media Group, 2012.

8) *Two Spirits*. Dir. Lydia Nibley. PBS Independent Lens, 2018.

Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

1. Use literary terminology and critical theory to interpret, discuss, analyze, and synthesize representations of women, gender, and sexuality in diverse literature.
2. Write evidence-based literary analyses on representations of women, gender, and sexuality in literature demonstrating close reading and interpretive skills, logical reasoning, and argumentative strategies.
3. Evaluate how literature informs, reinforces, challenges, alters, resists, or otherwise influences social constructions of womanhood, gender, and/or sexuality.