**Sample Syllabus**

**WMST 300**

**Genders, Cultures, and Identities:**
**Intersecting Identities in Life and Literature**

Section | term | University of Nevada, Reno
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | MSS

**Instructor:**

**Office Hours:** (Or by Appointment)

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**About the Course**

Welcome to Genders, Cultures, and Identities. In this course we will read, analyze, discuss, and write about the experiences, relationships, and perspectives of people of different genders, cultural backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic classes in a variety of historical and sociopolitical contexts to develop an understanding of how those perspectives, experiences, and relationships are connected and influenced by various social/ideological systems and processes.

We will examine intersections among gender, cultural, national, and sexual identities constructed, contested, reinforced, and/or subverted by groups, individuals, cultural productions, and institutions. We will take a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding the evolving power relationships that have shaped and continue to shape intersecting identities, and develop an understanding of the experiences of individuals and groups whose voices have historically been silenced, marginalized, or filtered through the perspectives of more privileged groups and individuals. In addition to examining cross-disciplinary scholarly analyses of various gender, cultural, and sexual identities, we will analyze short works of literature written from and informed by the perspectives of people from a variety of backgrounds whose works reveal complex power/identity relationships in various cultural, political, and historical contexts. This is a process-oriented course in the sense that we will be examining questions and issues that do not easily offer concrete answers. As we seek answers we will re-examine what we already know while building our knowledge and developing more nuanced understandings of genders, cultures, and identities.

This is a discussion-based course and your thoughts and ideas are expected and necessary to its success. Although there will be some lecture, the majority of the course will consist of thoughtful discussion of the texts and ideas we encounter as we expand our knowledge over the course of the semester. We will cover delicate and controversial material that will personally and intellectually challenge all of us. Sensitivity and discretion are required so that we all will feel free to express our thoughts and confident they will be respected.

**WMST 300 and the Silver Plan**

WMST 300 satisfies CO 10 Diversity & Equity and CO 13 Integration & Synthesis. WMST 300 integrates CO 1 Effective Composition & Communication and CO 3 Critical Analysis & Use of Information.

**CO 10 Diversity & Equity**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of diversity through courses that focus on topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, physical ability, language, and/or social class with an emphasis on the analysis of equity. Students will apply and evaluate approaches or modes of inquiry used to analyze diversity and equity and the social barriers to these goals.

**CO 13 Integration & Synthesis**
Students will be able to integrate and synthesize Core knowledge, enabling them to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues.

**Students in WMST 300 will be able to:**

- Describe different identity categories and how they are constructed and experienced; (CO 10)
- critically compare and appraise theories and methods for examining gender, cultures, and identities; (CO 3, CO10, CO13)
- articulate the significance of relationships among intersecting gender, class, race, sexual orientation, nationality, physical ability, and other identity categories in shaping experiences and perspectives; (CO 10)
- articulate the concept of socially constructed identities and related ideas; (CO 10)
- articulate relationships among identities, institutions, socialization processes, and power;
- read, discuss, analyze, and write about the experiences and perspectives of people of a variety of intersecting identities in a variety of social and historical contexts; (CO 1, CO 3, CO 13)
- explain the interplay among different disciplinary fields to make complex critical connection(s) between between women's or gender issues and race, class, sexuality, colonialism, multiculturalism, and/or globalization. (CO 1, CO 3, CO 13)

**Please note:** Access to the Internet and a printer is required for this course. Students should also bring paper and a pen to class each day for unscheduled in-class writing.

**Required Texts**


**Additional Readings**

Additional readings and videos may be announced during the semester in class and on WebCampus. Any additional readings, films, or video presentations assigned during the semester will be made available through WebCampus and/or Course Reserves.

**Accessibility for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me or the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building Suite 100) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. Call (775) 784-6000 or visit www.unr.edu/drc for information.

**Contact:**

I will respond as promptly as possible to your emailed questions, and am happy to schedule a time to meet outside of office hours. Please note that some emailed questions take more than 24 hours to answer, and that it may be impossible for me to respond to last-minute questions before an assignment is due.
University Tutoring Center and Writing Center
Free tutoring may be available for a variety of subjects. For information, visit the University Tutoring Center website www.unr.edu/tutoring-center, or the University Writing Center website: http://www.unr.edu/writing-center.

Policies

Participation in class discussions is a key component of this course. For each worthwhile contribution made you will receive credit toward that day’s participation grade. You must make at least one thoughtful contribution each class to receive participation points for the day, and **you must bring the reading to class to earn full participation points.** A good way to earn full participation points is by bringing the text with a passage you have chosen to point out to the group for discussion. I will call on students at random to discuss their reactions to specific portions of the day’s readings. All students should take notes on the readings. Your participation in discussion and **group work** accounts for 10% of your final course grade; if you find speaking up in class difficult please make an appointment to speak with me so that we can work on strategies to help you feel more comfortable.

Attendance
Failure to attend class will adversely impact your grade. You are allowed three absences before your attendance lowers your grade. **Each absence beyond the first three will lower your final grade by a percentage point** (example: a grade of 91 with 2 absences in addition to the initial 3 will become a grade of 89). Absences due to illness and other emergencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis; documentation of illnesses and other incidents is required.

Please note: Arriving late or leaving early may also impact your grade and will be assessed as follows: two infractions equal one absence.

Classroom Etiquette
Please arrive on time each day prepared to begin class. Turn off and put away all cell phones and other electronic devices before entering class to minimize distractions. Texting, checking email, doing work for other classes, and otherwise disrespectful, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may lead to loss of participation points and possible further disciplinary action.

Some texts and ideas discussed in the course may lead to differences of opinion during class discussion. Diversity of opinions is welcome and encouraged; however, students are required to show respect for the instructor and for their classmates. All students are expected to contribute to a positive and productive learning environment. Students exhibiting behavior that creates a hostile classroom environment may be removed from class, lose participation points, and be subject to further disciplinary action as warranted.

The use of cell phones, laptops, or e-readers during discussion is not allowed unless you have received your instructor’s consent prior to class. Using any of these devices without explicit consent will result in lost attendance and participation points for the day.

Late Assignments
Assignments are considered LATE if they are not submitted to me in person by the beginning of class on the due date indicated on the course calendar. A maximum of 50% credit will be awarded for late reading abstracts. For papers, the presentation proposal, and the annotated bibliography, 10% will be deducted per day the assignment is late. **No late presentations will be accepted.**
Plagiarism
Academic honesty is required and plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and possibly the course. All the work you submit must be your own and be written exclusively for this class. Using someone else’s words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism and is a serious violation of academic honesty policies. Any ideas, direct quotations, or paraphrasing that you borrow from other sources must be properly documented. If you have any questions about how to cite sources, ask me, look at the documentation section in your English 101 writing handbook, or go to the Purdue Online Writing Lab website (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/). If you plagiarize any part of an assignment or cheat on any portion of an exam, you will receive a zero and may fail the course. Students caught plagiarizing more than once will be expelled from the class and will receive a grade of F for the semester.

University Academic Standards and Academic Dishonesty Policy

Class Conduct: A student may be dropped from class at any time for negligence or misconduct, upon recommendation of the instructor and with approval of the college dean. Students may also be dropped for non-attendance upon indication of the instructor.

Academic dishonesty is against university as well as the system community standards. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: Plagiarism: defined as submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one’s own; or assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one’s work to be used in this fashion. Cheating: defined as (1) obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual or unauthorized use of books, notes, text and other materials; (2) obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination; (3) taking an examination for another student, or arranging for another person to take an exam in one’s place; (4) altering or changing test answers after submittal for grading, grades after grades have been awarded, or other academic records once these are official.

Sanctions for violations of university academic standards may include the following: (1) filing a final grade of “F”; (2) reducing the student's final course grade one or two full grade points; (3) awarding a failing mark on the test or paper in question; and (4) requiring the student to retake the test or resubmit the paper. A student found responsible for violating this policy may not withdraw from the course in question. A student failed in a course due to academic dishonesty may not utilize the "repeat option" for that course. A student may also be subject to discipline for academic dishonesty pursuant to the provisions of the Board of Regents Code, Title 2, Chapter 6.

Source: http://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/university-policies-and-guidelines/academic-standards/policy

Grading Guidelines

Percentage values will be assessed as follows:

Final Exam 15% (150 points)
Final Presentation 10% (100 points)
Midterm Exam 10% (100 points)
Paper 1 10% (100 points)
Paper 2 10% (100 points)
Reading Abstracts (5) 20% (200 points)
Participation 10% (100 points)
Annotated Bibliography 10% (100 points)
Presentation Proposal 5% (50 points)
Grading Scale

93-100%  A
90-92%    A-
88-89%    B+
83-87%    B
80-82%    B-
78-79%    C+
73-77%    C
70-72%    C-
68-69%    D+
63-67%    D
60-62%    D-
59-0%     F

Please note: Wednesday, Oct. 29 is the final day to drop a class and receive a “W”

Course Assignments*
*All assignments must be submitted to me in class at the beginning of the session on the day indicated on the course calendar. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

In-class Writing
We will devote some time in class to writing brief responses to the readings, organizing ideas, and developing arguments. In-class writing assignments count toward your participation grade and may be collected for evaluation. If you fail to participate, you will lose participation points.

Participation
Informed participation in class discussions, group work, and in-class writing is essential to your success in the course and comprises 10% of your final grade. See page 2 for details.

ASSIGNMENTS IN FULFILLMENT OF CO 10*
*mastery of important concepts and theories of gender, sexuality, and power will be assessed via exams and short writing assignments

Midterm and Final Exams
You must bring a blue book to the midterm and final exams, which may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, quotation identification, and short- and long-answer essay questions based on the required readings, viewings, lecture, and discussion. More details will be discussed in class and posted on WebCampus before each exam. (midterm: 100 points; final: 150 points)

No make-up exams will be given except for thoroughly documented emergencies.

Reading Abstracts*
For the Reading Abstracts you will write a short summary of one of the day’s assigned readings, along with a bulleted list of at least three important points from the reading that includes quotations with page numbers and a short analysis of each point explaining why you think it’s important to the argument the author is making and/or connecting it to other ideas presented in class. (minimum 1.5 pages typed, double spaced, 11-12 point type, 1-inch margins; 40 points each)

Papers*
You will be assigned two 4-5 page papers for the course with specific guidelines for each provided two weeks before the due date. For each paper, I will provide a choice of topics for you to address in an analytical essay with a clear, complex, original thesis and claims you support with evidence from the readings we have done in class. You are not required to use any outside sources for these papers and it is strongly recommended that you do not. Papers must be typed, double spaced, in MLA format with in-text citations and a Works Cited page. (4-5 pages typed, double spaced, 11-12 point type, 1-inch margins, in-text citations, bibliography; 100 points each)

ASSIGNMENTS IN FULFILLMENT OF CO 13

Final Presentation and Proposal*
For the final presentation, you will research an approved topic of your choosing that relates prior course knowledge and/or personal experience to the course topic and present it to the class in a formal 5-minute presentation. This paper should critically apprise and compare approaches to women’s studies issues. Your presentation should be informed by the research you present in your annotated bibliography. More details about the final presentation will be discussed in class and posted on WebCampus. (presentation: 100 points) (proposal: 2 pages typed, double spaced, 11-12 point type, 1-inch margins; 50 points)

Annotated Bibliography*
In preparation for your final project, you will write an annotated bibliography with citations for at least five scholarly resources not covered in class that may help inform your project and notes on why, how, and to what extent those resources are relevant to your project and to the course. This paper should critically apprise and compare approaches to women’s studies issues. Specific guidelines for the annotated bibliography will be discussed in class and posted on WebCampus. Your annotated bibliography should include books, journal articles, and other scholarly or approved resources not assigned in class. (5 citations, typed, single spaced; 100 points)

WMST 300 Fall 2014 Class Calendar (subject to change)

All readings and assignments must be completed BEFORE the class for which they are assigned. Students must bring annotated readings to every class section in order to earn participation points. Please note that the reading schedule may change, and that additional short readings and videos may be added during the course of the semester. Any additional readings, films, or video presentations will be announced in class and on WebCampus. Changes may be made to the class calendar and will be announced in advance.

Aug. 26 | Introductions
Aug. 28 | Introductions, continued
          Read: Disch, *Reconstructing Gender*, “General Introduction” (1-22)

*Intersecting Identities: It’s Not Just About Gender (this unit addresses CO 10)*

Sept. 2   | Read: Disch, Part I, introduction and readings 1-5 (31-73)
Sept. 4   | Disch, Part I, readings 6-10 (74-106)
Due: Reading Abstract 1 (RA1)

Sept. 4: Final day to receive 100% refund for dropping classes

*(De)*Constructing Gender: Gender Socialization and Embodiment (this unit addresses CO 10)*

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**Sept. 9**
Read: Disch, Part II, introduction and readings 11-12 (107-135)
Read: Garcia, *Dreaming In Cuban*, “Ocean Blue”-“Going South” (3-34)

**Sept. 11**
Read: Disch, Part II, readings 13-16 (136-155)

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**Sept. 16**
Read: Disch, Part III, introduction and readings 17-18 (156-199)

**Sept. 18**
Read: Disch, Part III, readings 19-23 (201-220)
Read: Garcia, “The Meaning of Shells”-“Enough Attitude” (105-144)
**Due: Reading Abstract 2 (RA2)**

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**Sept. 23**
Read: Garcia, “Baskets of Water”-“Celia’s Letter: 1959” (145-245)

*Communication, Sexuality, and Families (this unit addresses CO 10)*

**Sept. 25**
Read: Disch, Part IV, introduction and readings 24-29 (221-261)

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**Sept. 30**
Read: Disch, Part V, introduction and readings 30-33 (262-296)

**Oct. 2**
Read: Erdrich, *Tracks*, Chapters 1-3 (1-61)
**Due: Paper 1**

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**Oct. 7**
Read: Disch, Part VI, introduction and readings 34-35 (297-324)
Read: Erdrich, Chapter 4 (62-95)

**Oct. 9**
Read: Disch, Part VI, readings 36-40 (325-352)
Read: Erdrich, Chapter 5 (96-130)
**Due: Presentation Proposal**

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Oct. 14 Read: Erdrich, Chapter 6-end (131-226)

Oct. 16 MIDTERM

**Education, Employment, and Violence (This unit addresses CO 13)**

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**Oct. 21** Read: Disch, Part VII, introduction and readings 41-43 (353-391)

**Oct. 23** Read: Disch, Part VII, readings 44-45 (392-412)
Read: Friel, *Translations*, to about the middle

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**Oct. 28** Read: Friel, *Translations*, to end

**Oct. 30** Read: Disch, Part VIII, introduction and readings 46-48 (413-450)

**Due: Annotated Bibliographies**

Oct. 29: Final day to drop classes and receive a “W”

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**Nov. 4** Read: Disch, Part VIII, readings 49-53 (451-495)
Read: Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Closet*, “Come, Japanese!”-“First Night” (3-22)

**Nov. 6** Read: Otsuka, “Whites”-“The Children” (23-79)
**Due: RA3**

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**Nov. 11** VETERANS DAY; NO CLASS

**Health, Illness, and Human Rights**

**Nov. 13** Read: Otsuka, “Traitors”-end (80-129)
Read: Disch, Part IX, introduction and reading 54 (496-516)

**Due: RA4**

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**Nov. 18** Read: Disch, Part IX, readings 55-62 (517-576)

**Nov. 20** Read: Disch, Part X, introduction and readings 63-68 (577-627)

**Due: Paper 2**

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**Nov. 25** Read: Disch, Part XI, introduction and readings 69-74 (628-670)

**Due: RA5**

**Nov. 27** THANKSGIVING DAY HOLIDAY; NO CLASS
**Presentations** (this unit addresses CO 13)

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**Dec. 2**  
Final Presentations  
**Due: Final Presentation**

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**Dec. 4**  
Final Presentations  
**Due: Final Presentation**

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**Dec. 9**  
Final Presentations  
**Due: Final Presentation**

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**Dec. 11**  
FINAL EXAM, 8-10 a.m., MSS 216

Please note that changes may be made to the syllabus. Please see the course WebCampus page for links to additional readings, videos, websites, and other information that will be updated throughout the semester.