

GENDER AND EDUCATION

FALL 2009
ELP 455U/555 & WS 455U/555

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course, we will be examining the role played by gender in Pre-12 and higher education settings. We will analyze the influence of gender socialization, language, policy, and tradition on conditions of males and females in education, as well as the mechanisms by which gender roles are maintained in educational institutions. We will think critically about the effects of gendered differences in education and subsequent work experiences, including, but not limited to firsthand participation/observation in field settings where gender is a factor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & ESSENTIAL PRACTICES:

Goals:

1. Interpretive skills
2. Critical thinking skills
3. Experiential practice in addressing results of gender influenced conditions
4. Articulation skills
5. Advocacy skills
6. Observations skills

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the history of gender in education
2. Explore the effects of gender in education in our own lives
3. Investigate links among gender, class, race/ethnicity, sexual identity, dis/ability, etc. in educational settings
4. Explore economic and political influence on maintaining gendered difference in education
5. Investigate gendered links between educational success and occupational success
6. Explore legislation and policy intended to address sexism in public schooling
7. Explore experiences of women in higher education and as adult learners, as well as barriers to education
8. Understand and experience feminist pedagogy

TEXTS:

The texts are available from In Other Words Bookstore. They will be available at the Women's Resource Center the first week of class. They will be at the bookstore [(503)232-6003] after the first week. Any supplemental readings will be provided by the instructor.

The required text:

The Jossey-Bass Reader on Gender in Education (2002).

Additional Handouts will be supplied, as needed. They will be available in class and, also, in the Women's Studies Office (NH469).

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Educational Autobiography

Write a brief (no more than five pages, please) autobiography of your own education (formal and informal) from the earliest times. Write with attention to gender and its effects in terms of your own gender, role models, programs, social institutions, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, etc. Also, it is useful to think and write about the way your gender identity intersects with other identities to contribute to your very specific experience. You may want to write about privilege (class, race, ability, sexuality, religious, etc) in your exploration. You will share this bio with your small group and hand in a first draft early in the term. We will revisit it later in the course to see if new thoughts have occurred to you about your own “gender journey” in education. I will hand it back and ask you to critique, modify and respond to the paper and resubmit near the end of the term.

2. Reflection Papers

Write a reflection paper of 3 (minimum) to 4 pages (no longer, please) each designated week (for a total of three). The reflection should combine your understanding of the readings and your reflections on/reactions to it. Does it make sense? How does it relate to your own experiences and other things you have read/heard? What is the author’s standpoint? What is your most important learning from the reading?

Note: you will be reading your papers aloud to one another in your small groups. Please come prepared.

3. Field Study

One of the four hours (20-30 hours) of credit that you will receive for this class will be fulfilled through a field study. Beginning in the third or fourth week of the quarter, you will make regular visits to field site for the purposes of 1) observing the site, and interactions and activities that occur at the site, paying special attention to the role played by gender in all aspects of the site (noting also the influences that may result from race/ethnicity, class, sexual identity, dis/ability, etc.), 2) offering your energy as a volunteer worker for/with the people at the site, 3) recording in field notes your observations, learning and ideas for enhancement of the environment with attention to gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexual identity, dis/ability, and 4) creating a “responsive plan” that might be useful to the workers at the site. Please notify your instructor by the third week the site you have chosen.

The purpose of the field project is to serve as a learning experience for you, a chance to learn from a setting with which you may not be familiar. As you complete the required field component of the class, construct a “responsive plan” that you might present to the members and/or leadership of that program or organization that suggests some ways to enhance gender awareness or sensitivity or that might encourage movement toward greater equity. As you prepare your “responsive plan,” which should take the form of a report, be sure to include the following: 1) a demonstration of your knowledge of the theoretical and empirical underpinnings for widespread sexism in educational organizations (formal and informal), 2) a demonstration of your understanding of the various approaches for changing or solving that condition, 3) a narrative presentation of your quarter-long participation/observation at the field site including an awareness of the context of the organization, 4) a description of your plan and how it would be implemented, being sure to demonstrate your sensitivity to class, racial/ethnic, dis/ability, and sexual identity differences within gender, 5) suggestions for how you (or they) might be able to figure out whether or not your plan has worked assuming they try it (i.e., how could the plan be evaluated?). The “plan” will provide you an opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the content of the course and also a chance to apply it usefully. Whether or not you present it to the organization in which you have participated throughout the quarter, you will submit your report as the final paper for this course. Each of you will have the opportunity to informally share your findings at our final class meeting.

Final Paper: 8-10 pages (undergraduate students)

10-12 pages (graduate students)

4. Praxis

All students will read the texts and should be prepared to discuss and analyze the material presented. **Graduate Students: This is your opportunity to teach. You will divide the texts by topic and facilitate a teaching/learning experience with the students in the class. A 3-5 page reflective paper will be due the week following your facilitation.**

Undergraduate Students:

EVALUATION:

Attendance and participation at all class meetings (3 points X 10 meetings).	30 points
Completed reflection papers (2-3 pages each week (three total- 5 points each- for the term)).	15 points
Written educational autobiography (two drafts-7 points each; 3-5 pages)	14 points
Completion of a responsive plan (8-10 pages for undergraduate students and 10-12 for graduate students) written about your field experience (recommended: 20-30 hours in the field)	25 points
Praxis: participation (undergraduate students- with thoughtful feedback) and facilitation (graduate students- with reflective paper)	+16 points
	Total: 100 points

Students needing accommodations should inform instructor and contact Dis/ability Services (503-725-4005) to obtain support.

COURSE OUTLINE & READINGS

October 1

Introduction

Introduction & Course overview
Oppression Theory & Social Identity Mapping
Buy Books
Form and meet in small groups

October 8

Gendered History of Education

Theory work
Reading reaction group
Discussion
Due: Educational Autobiography (first draft)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 1 & 2 and handout

October 15

Gendered Schooling

Theory work
Reading reaction group
Discussion
Due: Reflection Paper #1 (Group 1) and site determined for field study (everybody)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 3, 4, 8-10

October 22

The Hidden Curriculum

Theory Work
Reading Reaction Group
Due: Reflection Paper #1 (Group A)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 11, 12, 13, 16 & 17

- October 29** **Single Sex or Co-ed?**
Theory Work
Reading Reaction Group
Due: Reflection Paper #2 (Group 1)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 27-31
- November 5** **Violence in Schools**
Reading Reaction Group
Praxis Project Begins
Due: Reflection Paper #2 (Group A)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 18-21
- November 12** **Intersecting Identities**
Praxis Project
Discussion
Theory work
Reading Reaction Group
Due: Reflection Paper #3 (Group 1)
Reading Completed for this Week: *Gender in Education* Chapters 22-25
- November 19** **Feminist Pedagogy**
Praxis Project
Discussion
Theory work
Reading Reaction Group
Due: Reflection Paper #3 (Group A)
Reading Completed for this Week: Handouts
- November 26** *No class. The University is closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday.*
- December 3** **Revolutionary Classrooms**
Praxis Project
Discussion
Theory work
Reading Reaction Group
Due: Educational Autobiography; 2nd draft (everyone)
Reading Completed for this Week: Handouts
- December 10** **What can we recommend?**
Share findings with colleagues from field study
Potluck