

# Gender and Body Image in USA Syllabus Winter 2010

Instructor: **Hank Renfrow**

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Office Hours by appointment only

Phone: Email is the best way to contact me

SPST: GENDER & BODY IMAGE - 44000 - WS 399 – 003

MW in NH 209 10AM-11:50AM

**A note on email:** If you are sending me an email, please put your name in the subject line along with “Gender and Body Image.” Because of the threat of email viruses, I will not open any email without that information. Please email me ONLY through blackboard.

## Required texts:

#1. Wann, Marilyn. (1998). Fat? So!: Because You Don't Have to Apologize for Your Size. Ten Speed Press, California.

#2. Wolf, Naomi. (1991). The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women. William Morrow and Company, New York.

## And ONE of the following Two:

#1. Edut, Ophira (ed.). (2003). Body Outlaws: Rewriting the Rules of Beauty and Body Image, Second Edition. Seal Press, California.

OR

#2. Kilbourne, Jean. (1999). Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel. Touchstone, New York.

The texts are available to you at In Other Words Bookstore at 8 NE Killingsworth and during the first week of the term at the Women's Resource Center on campus.

**Additional articles may be assigned or substituted at my discretion.**

**Course description:** This class looks at institutionalized forms of oppression that shape women's body image in the USA and although we are primarily exploring the relationship to gender and body image, no oppression exists in a vacuum so we will also be looking at the relationship between body image and race, class, sexuality, and ability.

## Course Objectives:

- 1) Students will improve their critical thinking skills.
- 2) Students will improve their critical reading skills.

- 3) Students will understand how their own body image has been shaped by outside forces.
- 4) Students will understand how institutionalized gender oppression contributes to shaping women's body image in the USA.
- 5) Students will understand the concept of social construction as it relates to body image, sexuality, gender, race, ability, and class.
- 6) Students will understand how privilege operates within our society (male privilege and white privilege as they relate to body image).
- 7) Students will improve their ability to participate in elevated discussions of sensitive matters.

### **Class Policies:**

**Attendance:** You need to be in class. This is a discussion based class and missing more than two classes can affect your grade.

**Late Work:** I do not accept late work.

**Discussing Grades:** If you disagree with a grade you receive, unless the dispute is a calculation error, I will require a written appeal of the grade due to me within one week of receiving the grade. I will respond to your request in a timely fashion and will allow myself one week to respond to you. **I will not discuss your peers' grades with you. Grading is done on an individual basis.**

**Discussion Preparation:** Please be prepared for the weekly discussions. A calendar of discussions and assignments is included. It is also **your job** to keep up on the syllabus with what is due.

**Incompletes:** It is very difficult to get an incomplete so please keep me updated of any extenuating circumstances.

**Breaks:** We will negotiate breaks.

**Food and Drinks:** Please feel free to eat and drink in class except during presentations.

**Written Assignments and Professionalism:** All writing for this class needs to be in APA format. You are expected to use spell check and grammar check on **all** assignments. All writing assignments are to be typed and double-spaced (in a Times New Roman font of 12 point). If you need help with writing assignments, please consider using the writing center (listed in syllabus). More than three writing errors in any written component will result in a lowering of your grade. You will need to familiarize yourself with APA format for the citations and writing in this class. I will provide you with a link to get you started. **You will lose points for not following the writing guidelines.**

Your work in this class is expected to be professional. This is a 300 level course and your writing needs to reflect that. You must capitalize and punctuate appropriately. This course is not an acceptable venue for shorthand, abbreviations, or "casual" conversation. Likewise, I will return any **email** to you, which is not written in a professional, academic manner.

**Discussions and Professionalism:** We are discussing some incredibly sensitive material in this class. Racism, sexism, classism, ableism, sizeism, or any other oppressive language in discussions will not be tolerated. Please remember that everyone in this class will have their own unique experiences and feelings about the material and we must be respectful of that even when we do not agree. If you feel that you must interrupt someone else's behavior that you perceive as oppressive, please remember that human beings are fallible. We are all learning and this class should be viewed as a learning opportunity for everyone and the utmost sensitivity should be used in addressing oppression.

Respectful communication is of the utmost importance to the success of this class.

**Academic Honesty:** Only original work by the student will be accepted. I, along with the university, take academic dishonesty very seriously. To avoid academic dishonesty, you must always properly cite materials, ideas, and quotes that are not your own. The university's policy also includes the prohibition of buying and selling papers, plagiarism, performing tests for other people, and other activities generally regarded as academically dishonest. Failure for the assignment, course, suspension from the university for up to two years, and a mark on your permanent record are all possible consequences of academic dishonesty.

You may disagree with material you are reading, which is fine. Be mindful, however, that these authors are putting themselves out there for your criticism and need to be treated with respect. Use appropriate language when discussing sensitive subjects.

## **Support Services**

**Child Care:** *Children's Center* 143 Smith Center (503) 725-CARE.

**Information and Academic Support Center (IASC):** 425 Smith Center (503) 725-4005. IASC offers a variety of supportive opportunities for newly enrolled students to aid in retention.

**Student Health & Counseling (SHAC):** <http://www.shac.pdx.edu> 1880 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. (UCB 200) (503) 725-2800

All regularly enrolled students taking 9 or more credit hours, or students taking 4-8 who elect to pay the health fee, are eligible to use SHAC. SHAC offers medical, counseling, pharmacy and testing services, and complete dental. It's difficult to be a good student if you're in poor health.

**Writing Center:** <http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu> 188F Cramer Hall; (503) 725-3570. Offers professional critique of student work for all writing abilities. Repeat appointments with a consistent person are advised.

**The Women's Resource Center:** <http://wrc.pdx.edu> 1802 SW 10th & Montgomery **Hours of Operation:** 9am - 5pm Monday – Friday. The WRC “seeks to empower women and to encourage their active and equal participation in all levels of the university community and the larger society. We encourage the participation of ALL people in the community as we strive to provide a safe and supportive environment for self-identified women.”

Reading note: There is a significant amount of reading for this course. Please be aware of this and plan accordingly.

### **Grading Scale:**

**Before you read the grading scale below, decide what grade you would like in this class. Be honest about your commitment to attaining the grade and plan accordingly. ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE OPTIONAL as is participation in this class. It is up to you to earn the grade you desire.**

180-200 “A Range” (94-100%= A, 90-93%= A-)

160-179 “B Range” (87-89%= B+, 84-86% = B, 80-83%= B-)

140-159 “C Range” (77-79% = C+, 74-76% = C, 70-73% = C-)

120-139 “D Range” (67-69% =D+, 64-66% = D, 60-63% = D-)

Below 120 Points= F

### **Assignments and Points:**

70 Points: Reflection Papers (seven total X 10 points each)

20 Points: Talking Points and Reading Questions (two each every week- worth one point each)

20 Points: Project Write ups (two total for 10 points each)

50 Points: Creative Book Projects (two total- 25 Points Each, EITHER The Beauty Myth OR Fat? So! AND one of the optional books)

20 Points: Project Presentations (two total for 10 points each)

20 Points: Class Wrap Up Assignment (Paper, minimum four Pages double Spaced)

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Total: 200 Points for the class

Note: Everything must be turned in on time to receive any credit.

### **Additional Writing Help:**

<http://apastyle.apa.org>

and/or <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>

1. **Reflection Papers:** Reflections Papers are one FULL page double spaced. These are your reflections about the reading and how they intersect your life. You need to include two brief citations from the reading in each paper in APA format.

2. **Talking Points and Reading Questions:** This is a very simple assignment consisting of you bringing two written questions or talking points to class each Monday. They can be from one to three sentences. If you are referencing a specific place in the reading, please include a notation of that in your talking points.
3. **Project Write-ups:** Twice during the term you will write one to two paragraphs explaining what your projects are so that I can give you feedback.
4. **Projects:** You will have two projects due throughout the term (weeks five and 10). **Get creative!** I will be providing very few guidelines for the projects except that they need to be somehow related to the class and the books you have been reading. I will provide an opportunity in class to brainstorm project ideas. Remember I would like for everyone to come up with their own ideas but if you are really stuck, I am happy to help you come up with something.
5. **Project Presentations:** You will be presenting your project to the class in a brief four to five minute presentation.
6. **Class Wrap Up Assignment:** This is a four page paper (double spaced) discussing your experiences in the class and what you learned about Gender and Body Image. Please look at the course objectives as a guide for what to be thinking about. This is due week 10. All writing guidelines for the class apply.
7. **Extra Credit:** There will be no formal extra credit opportunities but feel free to propose any if you come up with a good idea.

Week	Reading/Assignment	Due	
Week 1 1/4-1/10	PDF by Natasha Lobo	4-Jan 6-Jan	Nothing Due Talking Points #1
Week 2 1/11-1/17	<b>The Beauty Myth</b> Intro, Work <b>Fat? So!</b> Intro, Lesson #1	11-Jan 13-Jan	Talking Points #2 Reflection Paper #1
Week 3 1/18-1/24	<b>The Beauty Myth</b> Culture, Religion <b>Fat? So!</b> Lesson #2 NO CLASS MONDAY 1/18	20-Jan 20-Jan 20-Jan	Brief Project Plan Talking Points #3 Reflection Paper #2
Week 4 1/25-1/31	<b>The Beauty Myth</b> Sex, Hunger <b>Fat? So!</b> Lesson #3	25-Jan 27-Jan	Talking Points #4 Reflection Paper #3
Week 5 2/1-2/7	<b>The Beauty Myth</b> Violence, Beyond the BM	1-Feb	Talking Points #5

	<b>Fat? So! Lesson #4</b>	3-Feb	Project #1
	<b>PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b>		
Week 6 2/8-2/14	<b>Body Outlaws</b> pgs. 0-67	8-Feb	Talking Points #6
	OR <b>Can't Buy My Love</b> Intro, chapters 1,2,3,4	10-Feb	Reflection Paper #4
Week 7 2/15-2/21	<b>Body Outlaws</b> pgs. 68-158	15-Feb	Talking Points #7
	<b>Can't Buy My Love</b> Chapters 5,6,7	17-Feb	Reflection Paper #5
Week 8 2/22-2/28	<b>Body Outlaws</b> pgs. 159-240	22-Feb	Talking Points #8
	OR <b>Can't Buy My Love</b> Chapters 8,9,10	24-Feb	Reflection Paper #6
Week 9 3/1-3/7	<b>Body Outlaws</b> pgs. 241-320	1-Mar	Talking Points #9
	OR <b>Can't Buy My Love</b> Chapters 11,12,13	3-Mar	Reflection Paper #7
Week 10 3/8-3/14	No Reading		
	<b>PROJECT PRESENTATIONS</b>	8-Mar	Talking Points #10
		10-Mar	Project #2
		10-Mar	Class Wrap Up

**Students with disabilities** of any kind should email me during the first week of class to discuss accommodations. If you are working with the office for students with disabilities or think that you might need to, please let me know. The Disability Resource Center can be reached at 503-725-4240 or 503-725-4150.

