



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 4406G-001
Media and Gender
Winter 2024
In-person

Instructor: Dr Kaitlynn Mendes, Associate Professor

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This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.

Course Description:

Media and Gender will address key issues and concerns around how women, men, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals are represented, experience, and engage with various media forms. Drawing insights feminist, queer, post-colonial, and intersectional theories, this course will engage with current topics such as #MeToo and the rising wave of digital feminist activism, pornography, music, the news, advertising, and speech. The module encourages learning outside the classroom and a 'hands on' approach to through crafts and activism. Overall, the module aims to give students the critical tools to assess and critique what they see, read, and hear about gendered bodies through the media in their everyday lives.

Please note: Through the course we will address sensitive issues such as sexual violence, oppression, colonialism, and other structural harms. Although I try my best to ensure the classroom is a safe space, it is possible students might find some of the topics triggering. I am also not a trained mental health counsellor, but students can access Mental Health Supports [here](#) and information on Gender-based and Sexual Violence support [here](#).

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third or fourth year of any program.

Unless you have either the prerequisites or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Anti-requisite(s): MIT 3210F/G, Sociology 4485F/G taken in 2021/2022.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of key theoretical and critical concepts and debates around gender, media, representation, ideology, and critical theories.
- Apply relevant theoretical concepts to analyse the ways in which gender is represented in the media.
- Be aware of ways in which scholars and activists have attempted to challenge, resist, and improve narrow gender representations
- Critically analyse the ways gender has been represented in the media through academic essays, reflective writing, and oral presentations.
- Develop well-structured and supported arguments using appropriate academic conventions and scholarly practices.
- Contribute to class discussions about gender and media, drawing both from key theoretical concepts and where relevant, personal experiences and observations.

Course Material:

There is no core book for this class. Weekly readings are assigned via OWL. Students must therefore have access to a computer and stable internet connection to access the weekly readings.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

The best way to contact me is by email: Kaitlynn.mendes@uwo.ca. Please note that I might take up to three business days to reply to your email.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Class Presentations	Assigned in Week 1	35%
Media Production	12 March 2024	15%
Reflective Portfolio	4 April 2024	40%
Attendance	All Term	10%

Class Presentation: Students will select a topic and individually or in a small group (2-3 people) will deliver a presentation in class (10 minutes per person) assigned in Week 1. Students are expected to ground their presentation in academic theory and apply it to contemporary issues or media forms.

Students will also be required to present a one-page summary of their presentation with full bibliography of all sources used. Students should draw from a minimum of **five academic sources** for this assignment. Students are particularly encouraged to take a de-colonized approach to the assignment, think about issues of power and privilege, and draw from a wide range of ideas and scholarship, such as that produced by Indigenous scholars and those from the Global South.

Due: Assigned in Week 1 – ongoing throughout the semester

Weight 35%

Submission: via Owl

Media Production: This assignment is done in class. Students can work on their own or in a group to produce a feminist artefact. This can be a physical or online artefact such as a zine, poster, leaflet, campaign, or more. The artefact will relate to a topic relating to gender and media. In the past, students have created campaigns to raise awareness of gender-based violence, the need for menstrual rights, period poverty, equal pay, trans issues, and more. Students are encouraged to be creative in the production of the artefact and will be assessed based on the visual appeal, the concept, and the content.

Due: March 12, 2024

Weight 15%

Submission: In class

Reflective Portfolio: Students are required to submit a short, written reflection on a minimum of one topic addressed in this course. Students have freedom to be creative in their presentation (e.g. as a diary, a blog, a report, a letter, a video, a collage with commentary). Students are encouraged to draw from personal experiences in these reflections and comment on how information, theories, or ideas discussed in the course resonate (or not) with their lives. Students are given flexibility on what they reflect on, including lectures, required or further readings, or seminar presentations. In the assignment, students can focus on aspects they found particularly interesting, problematic, enlightening, or challenging. Although it is not as formal as an academic essay, students should still draw from a minimum of **two academic sources**. Here, students could address the usefulness/drawbacks/failings of a particular theory or discuss how these theories (do not) relate to their life experiences. Students are particularly encouraged to take a de-colonized approach to the assignment, think about issues of power and privilege, and draw from diverse sources, examples and experiences beyond Europe or the Global North. Recommended length 5-8 pages.

Due: April 4, 2024

Weight 40%

Submission: via Owl

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes. If you miss more than 20% of classes without prior authorization, you will automatically fail the course.

Due: All term

Weight 10%

Submission: in person

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:

Regarding student attendance, if students are going to miss class for unforeseen circumstances, please contact Dr. Mendes as soon as possible. Depending on the circumstances, Dr. Mendes might consider reweighting the assignment.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible (not Dr. Mendes).

Depending on the circumstances, accommodations might be made by providing an extension or re-weighting.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Date	Week	Topic
Jan 9, 2024	1	Intro: Why media and gender?
Jan 16, 2024	2	Masculinity and the Media
Jan 23, 2024	3	Trans and Queer Identities in the Media
Jan 30, 2024	4	Intimacy Coordination: The Art of Making Safe Spaces (Guest lecture from Dr. Tanya Horeck)

Feb 6, 2024	5	Student Choice #1
Feb 13, 2024	6	The Gendered Politics of Anger and Voice in Contemporary Media
Feb 20, 2024	7	Reading Week – No Classes Student Choice #2
Feb 27, 2024	8	Student Choice #2
March 5, 2024	9	#MeToo and Digital Feminist Activism
March 12, 2024	10	Gender, Activism, and Media Production – Creative Session
March 19, 2024	11	Student Choice #3
March 26, 2024	12	1-1 Meeting to Discuss Assignments
April 2, 2024	13	Course Wrap Up

Academic Policies:

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf)” document https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health