



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

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Course Description: Media and Gender addresses key issues and concerns around how women, men, non-binary, and trans individuals are represented, experience, and engage with various media forms. The course gives students critical tools to assess and critique what they see, read, and hear about gender through the media in their everyday lives.

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 at no cost to you. Students must however have access to a computer and stable internet connection to access the weekly readings.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) 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	17 March 2025	15%
Reflective Portfolio	2 April 2025	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: in person and via Owl Brightspace

Please note that if for extenuating circumstances, you cannot present on your chosen day, you will be given a chance to record your presentation and deliver it to Professor Mendes within 48 hours with no academic penalty. Professor Mendes reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Should students submit their assessment beyond 48 hours past the

deadline, a late penalty of 3% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

Media Production: This assignment is designed so that students can complete it 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 17, 2025

Weight 15%

Submission: via main office or OWL Brightspace

Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility in the form of the formal submission deadline being 4 days after the class in which the assignment is complete, Prof. Mendes reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Should students submit their assessment beyond the deadline, a late penalty of 3% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

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 2, 2025

Weight 40%

Submission: via Owl Brightspace

Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility in the form of grace days [a 48-hour submission window with no academic penalty], Professor Mendes reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.

Grace days: For each assignment, students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 48 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 48 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 3% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

Attendance: Class attendance is expected and students must attend at least 70% of class to pass the course. If you cannot attend a class due to illness or other reasons please inform Professor Mendes ahead of time. This course has 10 days of class where you are marked as present or absent. If you attend at least 8 classes, you will get full marks. Academic consideration will not be granted for missed days.

Due: All term

Weight 10%

Submission: in person

Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility in the form of needing to attend only 8 classes to get full marks, Professor Mendes reserves the right to deny academic consideration for classes that are missed.

Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course the following assessment has been designated as requiring supporting documentation: *Reflective Portfolio, due April 2*

Student Absences:

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

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.”

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is

described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Date	Week	Topic
Jan 9, 2025	1	Intro: Why media and gender?
Jan 16, 2025	2	Masculinity and the Media
Jan 23, 2025	3	Trans and Queer Identities in the Media
Jan 30, 2025	4	The Gendered Politics of Anger and Voice in Contemporary Media
Feb 6, 2025	5	Student Choice #1:
Feb 13, 2025	6	Student Choice #2:
Feb 20, 2025	7	Reading Week – No Classes
Feb 27, 2025	8	Student Choice #3:
March 6, 2025	9	#MeToo and Digital Feminist Activism
March 13, 2025	10	Gender, Activism, and Media Production – Creative Session
March 20, 2025	11	Wild Card: Professors’ Choice
March 27, 2025	12	1-1 Meeting to Discuss Assignments
April 3, 2025	13	Course Wrap Up

Academic Policies:

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](#)” document

https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Course Selection
- Absence from Course Commitments
- Missed Tests and Exams
- Religious Accommodations
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health
- Gender-Based and Sexual Violence statement

2024-2025