

Western University
Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
2160B Intimate Relations, Sex, Gender, and Love
Course Outline Winter 2024

Instructor: Dr. Lauren Auger

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Prerequisites: No Prerequisites

Land Statement

Western University is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. In close proximity to Western, there are 3 local First Nations communities: the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region of southwestern Ontario, there are 9 First Nations and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western recognizes the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America) to the development of Canada.”

Department Course Description

Intimate Relations focuses on how expectations of intimacy and relationships rely on particular understandings of love, sex, sexuality and bodies to shape how we experience ourselves as gendered and sexual beings. The course considers how intimacy (sexual, maternal, familial, affectionate) is understood in relation to history, philosophy, health, society and popular culture.

Detailed Course Description

Intimate relations are fundamental to how we understand ourselves. This course will explore intimate relations in history, culture, society, and personal experiences. We will examine how historical and cultural understandings of gender and sexuality impact people's lived experiences as well as their subjectivities. Intimate Relations; Sex, Gender, and Love will challenge you to unpack the ways in which dominant understandings regarding sex, gender, and love impact your own intimate relations and experiences.

Key Course Questions:

- What is intimacy?

- How do dominant discourses regarding gender, sexualities, and love impact people's intimate relations?
- How do dominant discourses regarding love impact people's expectations for love in their own lives?
- How do dominant discourses regarding gender, sexualities, and love impact people's sense of self?
- How do discriminatory discourses regarding race, sexualities, disability, and gender impact people's lived experiences and identities?
- How have dominant discourses regarding gender, sexualities, and love changed over time?
- How can experiences be resistant to dominant perspectives and ways of being?

Course Objectives

1. Students will develop their understanding of intimate relations through an interdisciplinary approach.
2. Students will learn that there are many kinds of intimate relations including sexual, familial, parental, and affectionate.
3. In course assessments, students will demonstrate their ability to make connections between, and critically engage with, interdisciplinary scholarship on intimate relations, gender, sexualities, and love.
4. Students will learn through participating in this course that dominant discourses regarding gender, sex, and love impact people's lived experiences, sexualities, and subjectivities.
5. Students will grow to understand that despite the power of dominant discourses, experiences and subjectivities can be resilient to dominant perspectives and ways of being.
6. Through this course, students will learn that dominant discourses can be harmful to people, communities, and understandings of self.
7. Students are encouraged to connect course content with their personal experiences.
8. Through course work, students will develop their critical thinking abilities making connections between multiple themes, discourses, and experiences.
9. The course will help develop students' written communication skills particularly focusing on organizing essays and arguments, developing a clear writing style, and writing mechanics.

Evaluation Breakdown

Mid-Term Exam	40%
Self-Reflection Response	20%
Final Exam	40%