

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
WS 2166B: DIY Gender for the 21st Century

Preliminary Course Outline
Winter 2021

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 11 of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America) to the development of Canada.

Instructor: Dayna Prest

Contact Information: dprest@uwo.ca

Date/Time: Wednesdays, 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Office Hours: I will hold a virtual office hour on Zoom every Thursday from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm. Email me (dprest@uwo.ca) to make an appointment.

Email Policy: Students can expect a response to emails within 48 hours. I will not accept assignments submitted via e-mail. Please submit all assignments through OWL. See the section on methods of evaluation below for details on assignments and submission policies.

Delivery Format: Asynchronous online – this means that you will be responsible for watching the lecture before Wednesday at 4:30 pm (2 hours – on your own time) and participating in forum discussions. Lectures will be posted on OWL each Friday. See the section below on how this course will run for further details.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Description: Today we are starting to see official recognition, in some places, of trans and non-binary people, while social recognition of proliferating gender identities has become increasingly the norm. This course interrogates changes in the way genders are understood, from social to scientific recognition, and questions rhetoric of “choice”, “biology,” etc.

Course Objectives: The objective of this course is for students to think critically about gender and changes in the way genders are understood. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate discourses and rhetoric about gender and gender identities;

- Critically analyze media representations of trans and non-binary people;
- Apply their knowledge of queer, trans and gender theories to current media discourses
- Understand and analyze key concepts and approaches in gender and sexuality studies.

This course will also enable students to:

- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills;
- Improve written communication skills;
- Synthesize theoretical ideas and draw connections between concepts;
- Engage in generous, scholarly discussion with peers.

How this course will run:

Each Friday, the lecture for the following week will be posted to the OWL site for this course. The first lecture will be posted on Friday, January 1. Each student is responsible for accessing and viewing each lecture prior to our course time on Wednesday at 4:30 pm.

If you have questions about the lecture, readings or anything else pertaining to the course, send me an email at dprest@uwo.ca and I will respond to you within 48 hours.

Course materials:

Book: Coyote, I. (2019). *Rebent Sinner*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

All other readings are available through the Western library and are linked both in the syllabus and on OWL under the readings tab

Course website: All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment:	Percentage of Final Grade:	Due Date:
Forum posts	10%	Ongoing throughout the semester
Critical Response Paper (3 pages)	15%	Ongoing throughout the semester.
Midterm (online)	25%	Due February 10 at 6:30 pm
Media analysis (6-7 pages)	20%	March 24 at 11:59 pm
Exam (online)	30%	TBD (during exam session)

In order to be considered on time, all assignments must be submitted via OWL before the day and time they are due. Submissions will not be accepted by e-mail.

Detailed assignment descriptions and rubrics are available under the assignments tab on OWL.

Assignment Formatting:

- Write in 12-point font, Times New Roman (or equivalent) for all assignments
- Double-space all assignments and use 2.54 cm margins (the 'normal' setting in Word)
- Students can select APA, MLA or Chicago as their citation style for assignments
- Students **must** include a bibliography/works cited with their work (excluding midterm/exam); not doing so constitutes an academic offense

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day (including weekends) unless there is a valid reason and proper documentation has been filed.

Missed Assignments: Academic Accommodation must be requested within 28 days of the missed assignments.

Assignment Details

Forum participation (10%): Ongoing throughout the semester

Students are responsible for making five forum posts during the course of the semester (weeks 2-13). You do not have to select the week in advance, but keep in mind that you should complete at least your first two posts before reading week (February 10) to avoid a heavier workload at the end of the semester.

The objective of these forum posts is to provide students with a space to reflect on the readings, to make connections between readings, to pose critical questions about the readings, to challenge aspects of readings, and to gain an understanding of how their peers are engaging with the course material. Each post should be a minimum of 200 words.

Posts will be submitted through the forum on OWL by 11:59 pm on Wednesday of a selected week. For example, if you select week 3, you need to submit your post by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, January 20.

Critical Response Paper (15% / 3 pages): Due date selected by students during week 1

This paper is an opportunity for a reflection on **both** readings assigned for the week you select. You are required to write a reflection on the **two** readings, how they intersect with one another, and how they relate to course themes.

Critical reflection papers are due on the day the readings you've selected are assigned by 11:59 pm. For example, if you write your reflection paper on week four, your paper is due by 11:59 pm on January 27, 2021.

During the first week of the course, students will have the opportunity to select which week they want to write their critical reflection paper on using an online form (available on OWL).

Midterm (25%): Due Wednesday, February 10

The midterm takes place during week 6 and will cover weeks 1-5. The midterm will be administered online, and no monitoring software will be used. The midterm questions will be

made available on OWL on Tuesday, February 9 at 6:30 pm and must be submitted on OWL by Wednesday, February 10 by 6:30 pm. The midterm should take 2 hours to complete.

The midterm exam will consist of 3 parts:

Part A will be short answer questions (~ half page each).

Part B will be a reading reflection (~1 page per passage).

Part C will be an essay question (~4-5 pages).

Media Analysis (20% / 6-7 pages): Due Wednesday, March 24 at 11:59 pm

Students will select an artifact (item/event/article/video etc.) in the media that relates to course themes and will provide an analysis of that artifact. In this analysis paper, students are expected to reference a minimum of 1 course reading and 2 scholarly readings beyond the course materials. The objective of this assignment is to demonstrate that you are able to apply course themes and theories to “real world” examples and contexts. How do you understand your artifact and the discourses surrounding it and/or produced by it to affect or relate to course content?

Students are encouraged to be creative with their choice of artifact. Examples could include: an episode (or excerpt of an episode) of a show; *specific* coverage of trans issues in the media; a phenomenon like gender reveal parties; an art piece/installation; a spoken word performance; a song/music video.

Fill out the “Media Analysis Assignment” form (available on OWL) by March 3 to confirm your selection of media for this assignment.

Exam (30%): Date TBD (during the exam period)

The exam will be administered online, and no monitoring software will be used. The questions will be made available on OWL 24 hours before the scheduled exam date. For example, if the exam for this course is scheduled for April 14 at 2:30 pm, the exam questions will be made available on OWL on April 13 at 2:30 pm.

The exam will consist of 3 parts:

Part A will be short answer questions (~ half page each).

Part B will be a reading reflection (~1 page per passage).

Part C will be an essay question (~4-5 pages).

The exam will be cumulative but will focus on the material following the midterm (weeks 8 – 13). While students have 24 hours to complete the exam, it should take approximately 3 hours to finish.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity / Plagiarism: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
<https://www.lib.uwo.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>

Accessibility: All lecture content will have accurate/reliable close captioning.

Attendance Policy: While it is expected that students will access and watch the lecture each week, students are not required to “attend” the lecture for this course at a specific time or place.

Content Warnings: As relevant, content warnings have been included with readings. Some of the content in the course is sensitive and may be difficult. See the mental health resources below if you're in need of support.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day (including weekends) unless there is a valid reason and proper documentation has been filed.

Medical Policy: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see the online Academic Calendar. The Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found here:
https://www.uwo.ca/arts/counselling/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Mental Health Resources: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health at Western. Visit the following site for a complete list of options about how to obtain support: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>.

Missed Assignments: Academic Accommodation must be requested within 28 days of the missed assignments.

Note for Students with Disabilities: Please contact ws-ugrad@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical or digital space accessible to you. You may also contact aw@uwo.ca to find out the full range of services available to you.

Self-Reported Absences: Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical or provide appropriate documentation if

there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Turnitin: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com.

Expectations for Required Readings

Please read each required reading for each week in full. Students are encouraged to take notes while reading and to keep track of any comments, questions or connections that stand out in the readings. These notes will help you with your forum posts.

As you read, be critical but generous. Students are encouraged to engage critically and productively with the readings. Approach each reading with an open, analytical mind. Students are not expected to agree with any or all of the arguments made by particular authors, but are expected to consider what they're arguing, how they're making their arguments and the context in which they are making their arguments. There are multiple ways to look at and engage with the issues and topics we cover in this class. However, please make your arguments respectfully and with specific references to the readings. There is a link to an article on critical reading strategies in the resources section below. We will discuss strategies for reading critically during the first week of the course.

We'll be discussing a range of topics in this course which may be sensitive for some students. It is our collective responsibility to be respectful, open minded, critical, and to listen to one

another. A reminder that all students are bound by the Student Code of Conduct and that there are penalties for breaching that code.

Student Resources

Citation Style Guides - <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>

Use either APA, MLA or Chicago for this course.

Critical Reading Strategies - <http://writing.umn.edu/sws/assets/pdf/quicktips/criticalread.pdf>

Learning Development & Success - <https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>

Description: As part of the Student Experience portfolio, **Learning Development and Success** offers confidential appointments to all students at Western. Counsellors and staff members help students cope with the demands of post-secondary learning, helping to identify strengths and develop new skills and strategies for success. Counsellors also work with students to alleviate academic stress and anxiety, and to develop positive motivation and confidence toward learning. This service is available for successful students wanting to maintain their already strong skills and those having academic difficulties.

This site has lots of helpful FAQs and information about learning online, developing academic skills, time management strategies, and more.

LGBTQ2S+ Friendly Resources in the London area - <https://www.healthunit.com/lgbtq-resources>

Pride Library - <https://www.uwo.ca/pridelib/>

Spectrum UWO - <https://www.facebook.com/spectrumuwo/>

Spectrum is a student run club that aims to create a social network on campus for LGBTAQ+ students.

Western Libraries - <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/>

Western Libraries Research Guides - <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/researchtools/index.html>

Writing Support Centre - <http://writing.uwo.ca/>

This now includes online writing assistance.

Zoom - https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/getting_started.html

Western's Technology Services provides information about how to use Zoom, privacy/security considerations, and best practices.

Zotero - <https://www.zotero.org/>

Zotero is a useful program for managing your sources and generating citations and bibliographies.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Week 1: January 6 – INTRODUCTION

****No forum posts this week****

The instructor will be available on Zoom from 4:30 – 5:30 pm on January 6 to answer any questions about this week’s lecture and the course. Information on how to access this Zoom meeting will be posted in an announcement on OWL.

Required Reading: Johnston, L. (2019). Transgressive bodies and places: Bending binaries. In *Transforming Gender, Sex, and Place: Gender Variant Geographies* (pp. 1–17). Routledge.

Required Reading: Beemyn, G. (2016). Genderqueer. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
<https://academic-eb-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/levels/collegiate/article/genderqueer/607836>

Week 2: January 13 – SOME HISTORICAL CONTEXT

****Forum posts start this week****

Required Reading: Stryker, S. (2017). Contexts, Concepts and Terms. In *Transgender history: The roots of today’s revolution*.

Required Reading: Gill-Peterson, J. (2018). Trans of Color Critique before Transsexuality. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 5(4), 606–620. <https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-7090073>

Week 3: January 20 – BEYOND THE WESTERN BINARY

Required Reading: Pruden, H. (2019). Two-Spirit Conversations and Work: Subtle and at the Same Time Radically Different. In A. Devor & A. Haefele-Thomas (Eds.), *Transgender: A Reference Handbook* (pp. 134-137). ABC-CLIO Greenwood.

Required Reading: Robinson, M. (2020). Two-Spirit Identity in a Time of Gender Fluidity. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 67(12): 1675 – 1690.

Week 4: January 27 – INTERSEX PERSPECTIVES

Required Reading: Spurgas, A. (2016). (Un)Queering Identity: The Biosocial Production of Intersex/DSD. In M. Holmes (Ed.), *Critical Intersex* (pp. 97–122). Routledge.

Required Reading: Rubin, D. (2012). “An Unnamed Blank That Craved a Name”: A Genealogy of Intersex as Gender. *Signs*, 37(41): 883-908.

Week 5: February 3 – GENDER DIVERSITY IN ONTARIO

****We will do a review session for the midterm this week****

Required Reading: Scheim, A., & Bauer, G. (2015). Sex and Gender Diversity Among Transgender Persons in Ontario, Canada: Results from a Respondent-Driven Sampling Survey. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 52(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2014.893553>

Required Reading: Ware, S. M. (2017). All Power to All People? Black LGBTTI2QQ Activism, Remembrance, and Archiving in Toronto. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 4(2), 170–180.

Week 6: February 10 **MIDTERM**

****No forum posts required this week****

Week 7: February 17 **READING WEEK**

****No forum posts required this week****

****note that the second Critical Response Paper is due in a couple of weeks & it would be strategic to start reading this week****

Week 8: February 24 – MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS

****We will review the requirements for the media analysis assignment this week****

****Forum posts resume this week****

Required Reading: Anson, K., Yekani, E., & Verlinden, J. (2020). Representing trans: Visibility and its discontents. *European Journal of English Studies*, 24(1): 1-12.

Required Reading: Capuzza, J.C., Spencer, L.G. (2017). Regressing, Progressing, or Transgressing on the Small Screen? Transgender Characters on U.S. Scripted Television Series. *Communication Quarterly*, 65(2): 214-230.

Week 9: March 3 – GENDER & LITERATURE

****Confirm artifact choice for media analysis via online form****

****Critical Response Paper 2 is due****

Required Reading:

Coyote, I. (2019). *Rebent Sinner*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

Week 10: March 10 - GENDER & SPACE

Required Reading: Johnston, L. (2019). Public and private (in)conveniences. In *Transforming Gender, Sex, and Place: Gender Variant Geographies* (pp. 59–80). Routledge.

Required Reading: Flint, M., Kilgo, C. A., & Bennett, L. A. (2019). The right to space in higher education: Nonbinary and agender students' navigation of campus. *Journal of College Student Development*, 60(4), 437–454.

Week 11: March 17 – TERFs and Anti-Trans Rhetoric

Content warning: the readings and lecture for this week will discuss trans exclusionary radical feminism and anti-trans views.

Required Reading: Pearce, R., Erikainen, S., Vincent, B. (2020). TERF wars: An Introduction. *The Sociological Review Monographs*, 68(4) 677-698.

Required Reading: Awkward-Rich, C. (2017). Trans, Feminism: Or, Reading like a Depressed Transsexual. *Signs*: 42(4): 819-841.

Week 12: March 24 – BILL C-16

****Media analysis due****

Content warning: the readings and lecture for this week will discuss anti-trans views

Required Reading: Airton, L. (2018). The de/politicization of pronouns: implications of the No Big Deal Campaign for gender-expansive educational policy and practice. *Gender and Education*, 30(6): 790-810.

Required Reading: Florence, A. (2018). Don't be so hateful: The insufficiency of anti-discrimination and hate laws in improving trans well-being. *University of Toronto Law Journal*, 68(1): 1-36. **Content warning: discussions of transantagonism; discussions of rape culture**

Week 13: March 31 – COMMUNITY, CARE & FUTURITY

Required Reading: Malatino, H. (2020). Surviving Trans Antagonism. In *Trans Care* (pp. 1-18). University of Minnesota Press.

Required Reading: Morse, N. E. (2019). The Transfeminine Futurity in Knowing Where to Look: Vivek Shraya on Selfies. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 6(4), 659–666.
<https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-7771810>