

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Course Descriptions
Fall 2026
Undergraduate Courses*

01:988 – Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Course Number/Title: 988:101:01 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: David Carre

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:02 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Lu Biltucci

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:03 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Samira Moaddeli

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:04 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: K Anderson

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:05 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Robin Konuk

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:06 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Meryem Uzumcu

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:07, 08, 90, 91 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Heather Lewis

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face/Online Asynchronous

Course Description: This course explores how race, gender, and sexuality shape both our broader social structures and our most intimate experiences. We examine what it means to call these aspects of identity as socially constituted while investigating the concrete mechanisms that create, maintain, and reinforce these categories along with the tangible, material ways power operates through them. This course is project-based, meaning that students engage with readings and materials before class, then apply their thinking through discussion, collaborative research, and hands-on projects. Our sources span film, documentary, journalism, activist writing, scholarly research, music, social media, and more. The breadth of sources reflects the course's commitment to bridging academic inquiry with the range of lived experiences and social engagements surrounding gender, race and sexuality today.

Students are encouraged to bring their own perspectives and experiences into the room, treating lived experiences as legitimate forms of knowledge. Those lived experiences can then be examined, developed, and interpreted in light of contemporary scholarship on race, gender, and sexuality. This course provides opportunities to connect intellectual scholarship with the vital questions and social concerns about gender, race and sexuality that are informing their lives and communities.

Course Number/Title: 988:101:09, 10, 98 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Anel Mendez Velazquez

Course Delivery: Face-to-face/Online Asynchronous

Course Description: This course is an interdisciplinary introduction to key concepts, topics, and questions in the study of gender, race, and sexuality. The main goal of this course is to help students develop the critical thinking skills that will allow them to question and analyze the gender and race power dynamics that organize the world in which we live. The class will explore gender, sexuality, racialization, ethnicity, colonialism, class, and knowledge production, amongst other aspects of feminist inquiry, and how they construct one another and are intertwined in people's lives. Students will have the opportunity to read, discuss, and write using theoretical, narrative, and experience-oriented texts, as well as audiovisual materials. Through this course, students will develop interdisciplinary analysis skills and feminist thinking tools useful for addressing knowledge produced in various disciplines, as well as contemporary issues, media, and cultural products that we encounter in our everyday lives.

Course Number/Title: 988:101:11 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Zakia Salime

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:12 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Ileana Nachescu

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:13 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Martin Manalansan

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:14 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Martin Manalansan

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:15 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Kara Donaldson

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:92, 93, 94 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Tiffany Marra

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: In this introductory course, you will learn about the ways gender, race, and sexuality come to have meaning in the world as social categories. We will interrogate these terms through a range of conceptual frameworks that emerge from the field of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Lessons will give particular attention to the meaning, purpose, and applications of feminist thought. This section will have a narrower focus on sexuality, how race and gender relate to it, and the way sexuality is informed by our experiences and social environment.

This section is highly collaborative – both at the levels of class discussion and practical application. The goal is to encourage and challenge students to be prepared to hold conversations regarding sensitive issues related to gender, race, and sexuality. If you do not intend to both be present and participate within our classroom, this may not be the section for you.

Course Number/Title: 988:101:95 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Nehal Naser

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:96, 97 – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Taida Wolfe

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: In this introductory course, we will learn about the ways that gender, race, and sexuality interact, intersect and contribute to the social construction of identity. Using mediums such as film, mainstream and social media, literature, and scholarly texts, this course will explore the following themes: history of feminisms, feminisms of color, masculinities, queer theory, body and reproductive politics, systems of oppression and privilege, gender/work, and gendered violence. By the end of the semester, students will be better poised to address questions of difference and diversity outside of the classroom as critical thinkers.

Course Number/Title: 988:101:99, 9A – Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Rawshan Fatima

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 988:101:9B, 9C– Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Sam Brooks

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: "Who's Afraid of Race, Gender & Sexuality?" (a reference to Judith Butler's 2024 book, *Who's Afraid of Gender*) is an introduction to thinking about race, gender, and sexuality as social and political power formations that shape our world. This course explores how these categories have been navigated, institutionalized, and resisted in the past and present across cultures and geographies.

Beyond the foundations of feminist and critical race theory, we will cover topics such as prisons and policing, electoral politics, reproductive justice, US feminist histories, and feminist futures. We will analyze documentaries, podcasts, and films as social texts alongside academic readings.

Assessments are diverse and participatory, including video discussions, current events discussions, liberation journaling, and a class-wide live debate hosted on Zoom. This course draws on several theoretical traditions — Black feminism, transnational feminism, LGBTQ studies, and trans theory, among others.

Students will come away with a broad foundation in women's, gender, and sexuality studies, whether as a complement to work in other fields or as a starting point for a major or minor in the Department.

Course Number/Title: 988:101:9D– Introduction to Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Instructor: Al Valentin

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:200:01 – Gender, Digital Media, and Social Curation

Instructor: Tiffany Marra

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description: Within our digitally ruled lives, everything seems to necessitate an online and visible presence to be deemed “real.” This begs the question of how gender, race, and sexuality thrive or reach their demise in this digitalization. Furthermore, how do we curate (select, organize, and look after) what to include within our digital personas and how does this tie into power, privilege, & surveillance.

This course is highly collaborative – both at the levels of class discussion and practical application. The goal is to encourage and challenge students to find and analyze everyday examples of curation and to consider the connections between social curation and categories of difference. If you do not intend to both be present and participate within our classroom, this may not be the section for you.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:202:01 – Gender, Culture, and Representation

Instructor: Evelyn Autry

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description: This course explores the close associations between decolonial and Indigenous feminisms and a wide range of issues, such as race, indigeneity, coloniality, and earth rights. In particular, the course presents literature, film, and visual art as dynamic arenas of social struggle and possibility and aims to introduce students to some of the key thinkers and critical frameworks in the humanities. The course examines how meaning is generated, represented, and mediated through various cultural practices, products, and archives and engages students in the analysis of a range of cultural texts that shed light not only on the colonial mechanisms behind the objectification of Indigenous peoples but also on how they resist colonial domination and work toward liberation, re-existence, and resurgence of knowledge. The course is a humanities-oriented analysis of conditions and cultural representations of women, men, trans, and non-binary people through engagement with a range of traditions and modes of representation in the Global North and the Global South—mainly Latin America. Nevertheless, the readings also include theoretical lenses from the Social Sciences.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:235 – Dynamics of Class, Race, and Sex

Instructor: Karla Jackson-Brewer

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:255:90, 91, 92 – Gender, Art, and Society

Instructor: Wendy Ritch

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:257:90, 91 – Gender and the Body: Representation and Pornography

Instructor: Molly Stinchfield

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: We will consider how the body has been represented in art and visual culture, as well as in pornography. We'll discuss definitions of each of these kinds of representations. To complicate ideas of objectivity in art and to examine the ways in which ideology functions through representation, we will utilize theories such as feminism, critical race theory, and queer theory. We'll look at "gender and the body" in terms of the makers, subjects, and audiences of art and pornography. In other words, we'll look at artistic intention in relation to representing the body and the ways ideas about gender, race, and sexuality have shaped depictions and interpretations. Many artists have considered and engaged pornography in different ways in their art and used pornography as a liberating force. Some contemporary art has been regarded as pornographic because the artist incorporated the nude body or reference to bodily functions. In this course, we'll consider the range of ways the nude body and pornography exist in contemporary art. Although we'll focus primarily on contemporary feminist art and pornography (since 1970) made in the United States, we'll also examine the broader history of cultural conflict in U.S. America regarding the representation of certain types of bodies. We will also examine how other cultures have represented and understood the body and sexuality in art.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:258:90 – Gender, Race, and Contemporary Art

Instructor: Jennifer Vilchez

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: This course examines how gender and race influence the production and exhibition of contemporary visual art through the study of diverse American and international artists. Students will apply theoretical frameworks to analyze the work of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and mixed-race creators while critically reflecting on the intersections of identity and politics within the art industry.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:259:91 – Homosexuality & Visual Culture

Instructor: Molly Stinchfield

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: How has history been changed by queer artists? The canon of western art history has been marked by exclusion and restriction. Revisionist efforts have reclaimed previously overlooked artists played. Artistic representations and the historicization of them reveal the social, political, cultural, and economic forces that construct gender visually. This course will introduce you to the central role of homosexuality and homoeroticism in visual culture in the distant and recent past as well as the present. You'll learn about the marginalization of homosexual artists and how, even when seemingly secret or invisible, they continued to participate directly in cultural production of art and popular culture. You'll also learn about the ways artists, critics, and patrons remedy the neglect and overcome the censorship, as well as considering how the changing notions of language and the community have impact on their lives.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:301 – Feminist Theory: Historical Perspectives

Instructor: Kyla Schuller

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:305 – Women and Art

Instructor: Jennevieve DeLossantos

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:308 – Women in the Middle East

Instructor: Sandra Russell-Jones

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:317 – Gender and Consumption

Instructor: Jennifer Vilchez

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description: This course uses interdisciplinary feminist frameworks to investigate how gender, race, and class shape modern consumption practices and the broader structures of capitalism. Through critical analysis of media and academic texts, students will apply social reproduction theory and gender studies methods to develop original research on the intersections of identity, wealth, and labor.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:321 – Queen Cleopatra

Instructor: Al Kuntar

Course Delivery: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:408 – Gender, Economic Inequality, and Health

Instructor: Omid Mohammadi

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: How does economic inequality contribute to public health crises? This course investigates the current state of the global economy with a focus on how economic inequality produces wide disparities in health risk, access to healthcare and clinical outcomes. By tracing the links between the structural and social determinants of health, more specifically, the course explores how economic policy, political ideology, and geopolitical conflict produce and exacerbate current health disparities between nations, races, and genders. Through this course, students will not only gain a better understanding of the inequalities made worse by public health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic but also how we can address these inequalities and create a blueprint for health equity.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:409 – Gender, Environmental Justice and Health

Instructor: Sophie Smith

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: This course examines the causes of environmental crisis and its consequences for the health of individuals, communities, ecosystems, and the planet. We will analyze how extractive economic systems and anthropocentric cultures have wrought diverse impacts for the distribution of health, wealth, and resources, and biodiversity. We will pay particular attention to how environmental determinants of health disproportionately impact those classed as women and girls, people of color, low-income, and indigenous on a global scale. We will trace genealogies of environmental justice movements to ground our understanding of practical and aspirational pathways towards growing more just and sustainable futures.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:414 – Care Work

Instructor: Lynda Berg

Course Delivery: Online Asynchronous

Course Description: This course will examine the nature of care work and reproductive labor — the process of maintaining and reproducing life — and investigate how the devaluation and exploitation of such labor is both a condition and effect of capitalist economic production and social organization. Throughout the semester we will consider the gendered and racialized dynamics of care work in the history of capitalist development, from primitive accumulation to the current crisis of care wrought by neoliberalism and global finance. The course will explore the role of housework, emotional and affective labor, sexuality, kinship, the public/private divide, and the construction of normative (white, cisgendered, heterosexual, abled) bodies in the formation of economic production and social reproduction. We'll analyze case studies of care work and how they engender and challenge patriarchal oppression and capitalist exploitation. Finally, we will look at the radical potential of care work for transforming the economy and social life.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:431 – Gender, Nation, and Literature in South Asia

Instructor: Mani Preetha

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

Course Number/Title: 01:988:491 – Senior Seminar in WGSS: Feminism as Otherwise Worlds

Instructor: Evelyn Autry

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description: The course begins by contextualizing the recent feminist turn towards decoloniality in the Americas. In the first part of the course, we begin to make sense of what decoloniality entails by learning more about coloniality as a field of study. As we will see, coloniality has repercussions that exceed theory and academia. Coloniality structures all aspects of people's lives, from their ways of thinking and being to how they organize labor and reproduction. In the second part of the course, we will engage thinkers such as Maria Lugones, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, and Julieta Paredes, who, while theorizing the oppressive structures of coloniality, situate their thinking in what Gloria Anzaldúa describes as the borderlands to theorize otherwise worlds. We will focus on Indigenous peoples who explore new epistemologies and practice decolonial feminism as otherwise worlds. Course texts will draw primarily on intersectionality,

Indigenous and decolonial feminism, advocacy, social justice, and more. We will also watch films and read in various genres, such as novels, activist manifestos, personal essays, and short stories. The seminar guides students through the process of creating their own final projects focused on feminist theory and praxis as resources for crafting new possibilities. Projects can manifest in many ways, including academic essays, personal essays, podcasts, and art creation.

Course Number/Title: 01:988:497 – Honors Research in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Instructor: Ileana Nachescu

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description: Honors Research Seminar

Individual research project to be written as honors thesis. Permission of Director of Honors Program required. Please reach out to Prof. Ileana Nachescu at vn122@womenstudies.rutgers.edu. Both semesters required.

This two-semester course provides you with the structure, deadlines, and community meant to support you while you produce your senior research thesis (at least 50 pages) in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. How can you produce a research piece on a topic you feel passionate about? What is a valid research question? What is the best method for answering it? How can you plan this seemingly overwhelming task? What kind of institutional help is available at Rutgers? In what ways can a community of peers help you achieve your goals? By the end of the academic year, you will be able to answer all these questions based on your own personal and intellectually rewarding experience.

01:904 – Social Justice

Course Number/Title: 01:904:201 – Introduction to Social Justice

Instructor: Elmira Nazombe

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description:

01:888 – Sexualities Studies

Course Number/Title: 01:888:290 – Introduction to Critical Sexuality Studies

Instructor: Asli Zengin

Course Delivery: Face-to-face

Course Description: This course introduces students to critical sexuality studies from historical, cross-cultural, contemporary, and global perspectives. We will look at the different meanings given to sexuality and how sexual practices manifest in diverse contexts. We will discuss how they are shaped by race and ethnicity, economy and class, culture and media, colonialism and empire, social structure, morality, stigma, etc. We ask: What is defined as sex and what is prescribed and prohibited in diverse communities? What is considered normal and what is perverse? How is sexuality related to gender, to homoeroticism, to transness? What defines a sexual minority? What constitutes commercial sex?