

UMBC UGC New Course Request: GWST 220: Introduction to Transgender Studies

Date Submitted: 8/19/2016

Proposed Effective Date: Spring 2017

	Name	Email	Phone	Dept
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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	GWST 220
Formal Title	Intro to Transgender Studies
Transcript Title (≤30c)	Intro to Transgender Studies
Recommended Course Preparation	
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 <small>This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.</small>
Grading Method(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words):

Drawing on historical and contemporary sources, this course is an introduction to and survey of the field of transgender studies with a particular emphasis on the intersection of the field with feminist and LGBTQ studies. While seeking to understand the emergence and varied lived experiences of transgender identities, the course also aims to teach students to think critically about the political, economic, ideological, and transnational lives of "transgender" as a concept.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE:

- a. There are currently no courses offered at UMBC that explicitly explore the field of transgender studies. This is a growing area of scholarship in Gender and Women's Studies that students across campus need to be able to access. Students have requested a course such as this one, and we feel it is essential not just for the academic integrity of our curriculum, but also to meet student demand.
- b. The course is likely to be taught every other year.
- c. The course strengthens departmentally-controlled offerings for the Critical Sexuality Studies minor and appropriately responds to a growing field of study within our discipline.
- d. The course will serve primarily upper division students who are majors or minors in our department as well as the wider campus community interested in these issues.
- e. The course is offered at the 200 level to serve as an introduction to transgender studies.
- f. Course is not repeatable for credit.

ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):

GWST 220: Introduction to Transgender Studies

UMBC Fall 2016

M/W 1:00-2:15

410-455-6371

Office Hours: M/W 12:00-1:00pm and by appointment

Dr. Kate Drabinski

Fine Arts 417

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Fine Arts, 417

Course Description

This course is an introduction to and survey of the field of transgender studies. The course is divided into three units that each offer a different approach to understanding this field of study.

Part I: Introducing Terms exposes students to the core vocabularies and theoretical landscapes of transgender studies. Special attention will be paid to the intersection of transgender studies with both feminist and queer studies. **Part II: Telling Transgender Stories** offers students a critical perspective on the role of memoir and self-telling in the formation of transgender identities as well as political, social, and medical expectations for transgender people to “tell the truth” about themselves. This unit also gives students an opportunity to think critically about the differences between memoir, fiction, and truth. **Part III: States of Transgender** takes a different turn, looking at the role of the state in constructing, normalizing, transnationalizing, and policing gender identities. Particular attention will be paid in this section to transgender activist movements and visions for building a more just world for all of us.

Course Goals and Objectives

Students who complete this course will:

1. demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of new theoretical terms and concepts by completing 3-4 page argumentative response papers following each of three units.
2. learn to debate controversial issues in contemporary gender politics by participating in a series of debates based on current events.
3. synthesize and reflect on the role of transgender studies in the broader landscape of media, popular culture, and politics by completing a final reflective essay connecting course material to current events.

Course Requirements

Debate

25 points

Students will participate in one of three scheduled debates. Topics may include: laws concerning gender and bathroom use; housing antidiscrimination ordinances; the medicalization of transgender identities; and others. Teams will be assigned in the third week of the semester. Guidelines will be provided separately.

Unit Response Papers

60 points (20 points each)

Students will complete short 3-4 page response papers based on questions that arise during each unit of the course. Prompts will be provided in advance and exams are due to be uploaded to Blackboard no later than 5:00PM on the day they are due. The Unit One paper is due **October 5**; the Unit Two paper is due **November 2**; and the Unit Three paper is due **December 7**.

Final Reflective Essay

15 points

Students will complete a final 3-4 page reflective essay connecting course themes to a current event of their choosing. Guidelines will be provided in advance.

Required Texts

Imogen Binnie, *Nevada*

Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw*

Christine Jorgensen, *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*

These books are available for purchase at the UMBC Bookstore in the Commons. They are also on reserve at the library. Other readings will be provided on Blackboard (marked BB) or via databases at the Albin O. Kuhn Library (marked Academic Search Complete).

**** All assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard by the assigned due date and time in order to earn full credit. I will accept papers *for up to two days after the due date*. (If a paper is due on Wednesday, I will accept it until Friday.) For each day the paper is late, however, you will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade. (If a paper that is due on Monday is turned in on Wednesday, it will receive a grade of B- if the paper grade was originally a B+). A grade of zero will be assigned to papers received after that date.****

Course Policies

The success of this course depends largely on our mutual commitment to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. You can't do this if you aren't in class; to this end, you may miss three sessions without penalty. Each subsequent class missed lowers your final grade by a third of a grade. If you miss more than six classes you will automatically fail the course. Please contact me **immediately** in the case of medical leave or other emergencies that will result in excessive absences so that we can figure out a way for you to successfully complete the course.

When you are in class I expect you to be an active participant. This doesn't mean just talking a lot. Listening, writing, and leading small group work are all parts of being an active participant in your own learning as well as that of others. It also means turning off your cell phones during class. Students will be given one warning to stop cell phone use; subsequent use will result in being asked to leave class for the day, and this will count as an absence. Laptop use is discouraged in the classroom, so unless you *need* to take notes on a laptop, leave the computer at home.

Student Integrity Policy

Please be aware that the unauthorized use of sources (using sources, either printed or from the Internet, without proper acknowledgement), unauthorized tutorial help or help from family and friends, and cheating will result in severe penalties and reporting through proper university channels. All work must follow the UMBC Honor Code. I have read hundreds of student papers over the years, and I will spot plagiarism. Don't risk the penalties, and don't cheat yourself of your education. Any and all infractions will be reported to the Academic Misconduct Management Database. Be sure to review the academic integrity resources at http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad_ed/ai/students.html and clarify any doubts with your instructor or a librarian before submitting work.

Accommodations

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (SSS) is the UMBC department designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact SSS in the Math/Psych Bldg., room 213 or at 410-455-2459. SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS-approved accommodations.

This course will occasionally include material that can be difficult for some students with histories of trauma, including sexual violence, abuse, eating disorders. Please be advised that UMBC offers a full range of resources for students grappling with difficult experiences and feelings. If you experience (or have experienced) sexual violence, rape, stalking, or any kind of relationship violence, UMBC offers a range of services, and you are encouraged to connect to these resources at <http://umbc.edu/rvap>. Counseling services are available for students seeking support not just in response to trauma, but as general support. Please see <http://www.umbc.edu/counseling/> to make an appointment.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Below is the schedule of readings. Please be advised that this schedule can change; students are responsible for keeping abreast of the schedule.

PART I: INTRODUCING TERMS

8/26: Course Introduction; Hale, “C. Jacob Hale’s Rules for Non-Trans Writing About Trans”

8/31: Stephen Whittle, “(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies”

9/2: Susan Stryker: “Transgender Feminism”

9/7: **NO CLASS: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

9/9: Judith Butler, “Where Did We Go Wrong: Feminism and Trans Theory—Two Teams on the Same Side?”

9/14: Cressida Heyes, “Feminist Solidarity After Queer Theory: The Case of Transgender”

9/16: Gayle Rubin, “Of Catamites and Kings: Reflections on Butch, Gender, and Boundaries”

9/21: Jason Cromwell, “Queering the Binaries”

9/23: Katrina Roen, “Transgender Theory and Embodiment: The Risk of Racial Marginalization”

9/28: Eli Clare, “Body Shame, Body Pride: Lessons From the Disability Pride Movement”

PART II: TELLING TRANSGENDER STORIES

9/30: Christine Jorgensen, *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*

10/5: Christine Jorgensen, *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography*

UNIT ONE PAPER DUE BY 5:00PM

10/7: Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw*

10/12: Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw*

10/14: DEBATE #1

10/19: Imogen Binnie, *Nevada*

10/21: Imogen Binnie, *Nevada*

10/26: Kate Drabinski, “Incarnate Possibilities”

PART III: STATES OF TRANSGENDER

10/28: Viviane Namaste, “Genderbashing: Sexuality, Gender, and the Regulation of Public Space”

11/2: Riki Ann Wilchins, “What Does It Cost to Tell the Truth”

UNIT TWO PAPER DUE BY 5:00PM

11/4: Toby Beauchamp, “Artful Concealment and Strategic Visibility: Transgender Bodies & U.S. State Surveillance After 9/11”

11/9: Michelle O’Brien, “Tracing This Body: Transsexuality, Pharmaceuticals, and Capitalism”

11/11: DEBATE #2

11/16: Jessi Gan, “Still At the Back of the Bus: Sylvia Rivera’s Struggle”

11/18: Nael Bhanji, “Trans/Scriptions: Homing Desires, (Trans)sexual Citizenship, and Racialized Bodies

11/23: Jennifer Worley, “Street Power” and the Claiming of Public Space: San Francisco’s “Vanguard” and Pre-Stonewall Queer Radicalism

11/25: NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING BREAK.

****THREE BLOG POSTS/SIX COMMENTS DUE****

11/30: “Abolitionist Imaginings: A Conversation with Bo Brown, Reina Gossett, and Dylan Rodriguez, and Che Gossett”

12/2: Morgan Bassichis, Alexander Lee, Dean Spade, “Building an Abolitionist Trans & Queer Movement with Everything We’ve Got”

12/7: **DEBATE #3**

UNIT 3 PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

12/16: **Final Reflective Essay due no later than 3:00pm in lieu of a final exam.**