Syllabus Course Description

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar will examine the social dynamics around particular diseases to illuminate gendered processes both in the US as well as cross culturally. Specifically, we will focus on diseases where there are stark gender differences in health outcomes and:

1) Examine the etiology (causation) and epidemiology of each disease

2) Explore the social and biological explanations as well as their limitations, and

3) Unpack how social processes around each disease illuminate understandings of what it means to be a man or a woman (or “do” masculinity or femininity) in different societies around the world.

We will examine gender disparities in health and illness around a variety of chronic and infectious diseases including breast/prostate cancer, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, as well as mental illness (depression), accidental and genetically caused disabilities, sexual/reproductive dysfunction (infertility/impotence), and eating disorders.

NB: Portions of the syllabus could be adjusted to spend more time on diseases that may be of particular interest to students who are registered for the class. This will be discussed on the first day of class.

REQUIRED BOOKS:


ELECTRONIC RESERVES:

All other articles and book chapters for weekly course readings are available on Desire 2 Learn.
CLASSROOM POLICIES:

1. This class meets only once a week. As such, I expect students to attend every class this semester and to make it a priority. You are expected to come on time and to stay until the end of the allotted period unless you have excused yourself ahead of time.

2. I expect you to come to class having completed all the readings for class and be prepared to regularly and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions each week. These contributions should be primarily grounded in readings done for the class that day.

3. You are responsible for keeping track of all announcements and syllabus changes made in class whether you are there or not. Announcements are often made right at the beginning of class. In addition, you are responsible for getting lecture material, class assignment sheets and handouts you missed from your classmates and not from the professor.

4. All phones and music devices must be switched off before class begins. Laptop use is allowed, but only for note taking and reference to class readings. Text messaging, emailing, IMing, twittering, facebooking and surfing the web during class time is completely unacceptable.

5. Please do your best to meet with me during office hours unless you have a recurring conflict.

6. Class will consist of varying combinations of lectures, discussions and multi-media presentations. The literature on gender and health is vast, and we will only be sampling from a limited number of topics. I encourage you to see me if you would like more references for a particular topic that interests you.

7. You are responsible for turning in assignments on time. Assignments are due in class in hard copy. Assignments that are up to one week late will receive a grade 20% lower, and will not be accepted at all (receive 0%) after that.

8. Grades: Grades are awarded on the basis of quality of work turned in rather than effort or what a student feels they “deserve.” Please see me early on in the semester if you are concerned about your grades. Assignments are distributed over the entire semester so there is plenty of time to improve. The grading rubric is as follows:

   A Consistently performs well above expectations for the course
   A- Performs above expectations for the course
   B+ Meets expectations for the course
   B Occasionally performs below expectations for the course
   B- Consistently performs below expectations for the course
   C range: Unsatisfactory work for a PhD student (student not completing work, no attending class, etc.). Instructor has serious concerns regarding student progression toward degree.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Classroom Behavior:
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference by the end of the first week of class so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also read the following policies regarding classroom behavior.
http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at
http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Discrimination and Harassment:
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/odh/.

Religious Observances and Athletic Engagements:
Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please inform me in person by the end of the second week of class (Tuesday January 20th) if you will be unable to attend class, or turn in assignments on time because of religious obligations and observances, or athletic engagements so that we can work out a revised schedule with you to meet course requirements.
http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Students with Disabilities:
Please inform me in person by the end of the second week of class (Tuesday January 20th) if you qualify for accommodations because of a disability. Please bring along a letter from Disability Services by then so that she can work with you to enable you to do your best in this course. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (Contact: 303-492-8671, Center for Community N200, and http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices or by email at dsinfo@colorado.edu ). If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links on the Disability
Services website (http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/) and discuss your needs with your professor.

Disability Services' letters for students with disabilities indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations. The syllabus statements and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices

CU Honor Code:
All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Please read the Honor Code at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/ and what constitutes a violation at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/studentinfo/violation.htm

Academically dishonest behavior such as turning in work done by someone else, having someone else sign the attendance sheet on your behalf and cheating on exams will be taken seriously in this course and could result in failing the course or more severe consequences.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:

1. **Weekly Class Assignments:**
   Short weekly writing assignments will be required for 8 classes this semester. On a given day, 3 or 4 students will be presenting and turning in a summary and critique based on one of the readings for the class that day. The rest of the class will be submitting a 2 page written response paper to one of the questions posed each week.

   a) **4 Summary and critique presentations:** 30% of class grade

   The presentation should assume that the class has read the article and should address the following:

   a) In one paragraph, describe the main argument(s) of the article
   b) What are 2 strengths of the article?
   c) What are 2 weaknesses of the article?
   d) Give 2 ways in which this article adds to or challenges what you already know from this class
   e) Give two (clearly stated) questions that arose for you from the reading to open up class discussion.

   This presentation should be handed in at the end of the class in which you present. It should be typed, double spaced and 12” font size and no more than 2 pages. Each student is expected to show up and present on the assigned day. If you are unable to do so, you are personally responsible for swopping with a class mate who has not yet presented to present on that day.

   b) **4 Response papers:** 30% of class grade

   A set of questions will be posed for the readings each week. Your task if you are not presenting will be to prepare a short 2 page critical response to one of the questions posed, drawing on all the readings (if applicable) for that day’s class.

2. **Final paper:** 40% of class grade

   You will be required to submit a 15 page (including references) final research paper (double spaced, 12” font) in hard copy. It should be on a topic of your choice, but should exhibit substantial engagement with class material. More specific guidelines will be given in class.
COURSE READINGS

Week 1: Jan 13th  Introduction

Week 2: Jan 20th  Review some classic readings in gender theory:

West, Candace and Don Zimmerman (1987) *Doing Gender* Gender and Society 1(2):125-151


Week 3: Jan 27th  Theorizing Gender and Health


Week 4: February 3rd  Breast Cancer


**Week 5: Feb 10th**  
**Prostate Cancer**

E. David Crawford  (2009) Understanding the Epidemiology, Natural History, and Key Pathways Involved in Prostate Cancer Urology 73 (5A): 4-10 Suppl. S


**Week 6: Feb 17th**  
**Gender and disabilities**


**Week 7: Feb 24th**  
**Infertility**


**Week 8: March 3rd**  
**Sexual dysfunction**


**Debate: Female Sexual Dysfunction?**


**Week 9: Mar 10th**  **Eating disorders I**


**Week 10: Mar 17th**  **Eating Disorders 2**


Throsby, Karen (2007) “*How could you let yourself get like that?*: Stories of the origins of obesity in accounts of weight loss surgery.” *Social Science and Medicine* 65: 1561-1571


**Week 11: Mar 24th**  **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**
Week 12: March 31st  **Mental Illness**


Week 13: April 7th  **Sexually transmitted infections I**


Week 14:  Apr 14th  **Sexually transmitted infections II**


**Week 15: Apr 21** *Sexually transmitted infections III*


**Week 16: Apr 28** *Student Presentations*

**Final Paper Due Monday May 4th 10am** in hard copy in a box outside my office. Please check MyCUInfo and keep track of announcements in class for possible change.