

**The University of Texas at El Paso  
Syllabus**

**Introduction to Women's Studies - 33944 - WS 2300 - 003**

**Associated Term: Summer 2025**

**Lecture (LECT) Schedule Type**

**100% Online Instructional Method**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION: Dr. Hilda Y Sotelo (PhD TLC)**

**Office located at Liberal Arts room 233** Office Hours by appointment: Virtual via Zoom. I will be available in BB Zoom or TEAMS every Wednesday from 10:00 to 11:30 AM Chihuahua time, so email me to [hysotelo2@utep.edu](mailto:hysotelo2@utep.edu) if you need to meet with me individually.

**Communication through Blackboard: Announcement will be sent each Monday**

**Diversity and Inclusion.** Women's and Gender Studies supports an inclusive learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated. We believe that all students benefit from training and experiences that will help them to learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society. All members of our program must accept the responsibility to demonstrate civility and respect for the dignity of others. Expressions or actions that disparage a person's race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or disability are contrary to the mission of our program. All our faculty and staff are responsible for promoting inclusive spaces for all, including students with children and breastfeeding mothers. While a Women's and Gender Studies student, you will be given an equitable opportunity to contribute and succeed. The diversity of lived experiences and knowledge that you bring to our courses are considered a resource, strength, and benefit. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our program! **Policy on Children in Class:** It is our belief that if we want diversity in academia, that we should also expect parents and children to be present in some form. Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus a reflection of Women's and Gender Studies' commitment to students, staff and faculty parents. If you are breastfeeding or are the guardian of a child, feel free to bring them to class if there is a gap in childcare. You may sit near the door or leave us a text in the Zoom chat in the case of online courses, and we understand if you must step out occasionally to meet their needs.

Furthermore, I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities.

**Description:**

This is a bilingual course (English and Spanish). When I said bilingual, it means that you have the option to employ either language for assignments or expression. This course aims to provide students with an overview of the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies. The cultural and sociopolitical aspects of gender across various historical periods will be examined. This course explores the inequalities experienced by women, often intersecting with the inequalities faced by other marginalized groups. Topics addressed in the course include how gender stereotypes are influenced by media (including all channels such as social media), artistic representation, culture, and other factors. Through assigned readings, class discussions, and projects, students will develop skills to analyze social changes and the evolution of the women's rights movement over time and to conceptualize how sex, race, gender, and other systems of power intersect to shape social inequalities. The specific course content introduces:

- \*WOMEN, GENDER, SEXUALITY STUDIES
- \*CHALLENGING BINARY SYSTEMS AND CONSTRUCTIONS OF DIFFERENCE
- \*INSTITUTIONS, CULTURE, AND STRUCTURES
- \*GENDER AND WORK IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
- \*HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
- \*ETHICAL RESPONSABILITIES DEPICTING GENDER VIOLENCE AND FEMINICIDE
- \*NEW MASCULINITIES

**Theory:**

In all my Women's and Gender Studies courses, I encourage you to make connections between the theories you are studying and your own place in history. Consider the importance of understanding your history: How is this history relevant to you, as a student, and to your environment? Reflect on how these ideas resonate with your own experiences and cultural background and how they shape your perspectives. Establishing this cultural relevance is fundamental for developing a deeper understanding of the theories and their impact on your life and community.

During my doctoral studies, I developed a pedagogy titled ECO in Spanish (Escritura Crítica Orgánica), COW in English, where students connect with individual and collective memory through writing, whether by hand, on a keyboard, or through any form of artistic expression. To articulate events of life, we need to give a name and narrative to the "invisible"—to what historically causes us suffering. Therefore, I recommend that you acquire a journal or notebook to take handwritten notes on the readings and documentaries for this class, as well as your thoughts and reflections, which will later help you write your essays and projects.

**Format:**

This course will be taught by employing multiple modes of learning including lectures, student presentations, media and discussions. The subject matter that is categorized as a social science lends itself to learning through class discussions and student presentations (seminar format).

These modes of teaching are strongly emphasized as they place a high importance and value on your narratives as individuals and actors in society. Your stories and perspectives on the issues covered are consequential to the learning process.

**EDGE ADVANTAGES**

This course is designed to equip students with essential Edge Advantages that contribute to their professional and personal development. Through the completion of course requirements and assignments, such as team projects, presentations, and essays, students will develop the following Edge Advantages:

	Problem-Solving	Assignments will challenge students to identify and address complex issues using innovative and analytical approaches.
	Communication	Class discussions and written assignments will improve students' skills in articulating ideas clearly and persuasively in both oral and written forms.
	Social Responsibility	Through community engagement opportunities and course content that encourages ethical considerations, students will foster a sense of responsibility towards their community and society at large.
	Confidence	By actively participating and successfully completing assignments, students will build self-assurance in their abilities to tackle academic and real-world challenges.
	Critical Thinking	The course's emphasis on analysis and synthesis of information will strengthen students' abilities to think critically and make informed decisions.

#### **\* REQUIRED MATERIALS**

**Texts and Materials:** Most of the readings will be in an available PDF format by accessing UTEP library collection or by subscribing to Scribd for free. Instructions on how to search and locate readings will be on Blackboard.

Main textbook available on Blackboard:

**Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies MILIANN KANG, DONOVAN LESSARD, LAURA HESTON, AND SONNY NORDMARKEN UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST LIBRARIES AMHERST, MA**

#### **\* ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Assignments for this course are assessed according to rubrics. You can find these rubrics by clicking on the appropriate assignment link in Blackboard and choosing to "View Rubric" from the button beneath the Points Possible for the assignment.

#### **Grade Distribution:**

**4 weeks 200 points each assignment/ 2 assignments per week will be listed as Week 1 a)**

**Week 1 b)**

**Final exam 400 points**

**Grading Scale (Total: 2000 points per semester)**

A 2000–1800 Excellent (200-point range)

B 1799–1600 Good (200-point range)

C 1599–1400 Satisfactory (200-point range)

D 1399–1200 Needs Improvement (200 points)

F 1199–0 Failing

**Summary of assignments:**

Genre Analysis: To deepen our understanding of discourse community concepts, students will be asked to analyze both traditional and multimedia documents as genres.

Literature Review/Primary Research Report: Students will conduct primary and secondary research on a social, political, or ethical issue and will then write a literature review that synthesizes the arguments as they pertain to the questions of inquiry.

Community Engagement: Students will identify and participate a community engagement opportunity (preferably related to their research topic) and write a reflection essay.

Participation: For this online course, students will be required to participate in weekly discussion boards – both an initial post and responses to your peers. Students will also have a collection of smaller assignments throughout the week that will work to build toward the larger projects. Each of these activities will be given point values that add up to the total 100-point participation grade. These points cannot be made up, so students are expected to stay active in the course by logging in at least three times a week.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

**IMPORTANT:** If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Technology Support](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

**Course Communication:** How we will stay in contact with each other

Because this is an online class, we won't see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours:** We will be able to meet on campus for my hybrid class and online only for my online class, refer to my office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours will be held on Blackboard Collaborate using a link send to your UTEP email.
- **Email:** UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.
- **Discussion Board:** If you have a question that you believe other students may also have, please post it in the Help Board of the discussion boards inside of Blackboard. Please respond to other students' questions if you have a helpful response.
- **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages. Once a week. Your assignments are due Sunday at 11:59pm Chihuahua Time. A new assignment will be open at **12AM on Monday** and you will get an announcement.
- All assignments are due **Sunday 11:59PM**

## NETIQUETTE

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It's possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

**Course Policies:** What do you need to do to be successful in the course

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance in the course is determined by participation in the learning activities of the course. Your participation in the course is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. Participation is determined by completion of the following activities:

- Reading/Viewing all course materials to ensure understanding of assignment requirements

- Participating in engaging discussion with your peers on the discussion boards (grading rubric provided in the “grading information” area of each forum)
- Participating in scheduled Blackboard Collaborate sessions
- Other activities as indicated in the weekly modules

Because these activities are designed to contribute to your learning each week, they cannot be made up after their due date has passed.

### **\* EXCUSED ABSENCES AND/OR COURSE DROP POLICY**

According to UTEP Catalog, “At the discretion of the instructor, a student can be dropped from a course because of excessive absences or lack of effort. A grade of “W” will be assigned before the course drop deadline and a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” See Policies and Regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

### **OR**

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registration and Records Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

### **DEADLINES, LATE WORK, AND ABSENCE POLICY**

#### **Major Writing Assignments**

- Assignments will be due on Sundays at midnight (11:59 PM). No late work will be accepted if the reason is not considered excusable.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work will be given *only* in the case of a *documented* emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING LATE SUBMISSIONS:**

All assignments will remain open and available for submission throughout the semester.

However, if you submit an assignment late, **a penalty of 10 points will be deducted for every 12-hour delay.**

Late submissions will only be considered *justifiable* in cases such as illness, family emergencies, or documented technical difficulties. In such cases, **you must notify the instructor via email as soon as possible**, ideally before the assignment deadline. Supporting documentation may be requested.

### **ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES**

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word

document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort.

### **INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY**

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

### **\* ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodation, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

### **\* SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Community Standards](#) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

### **\*GUIDANCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

#### AI reflection:

In this class, handwritten notes will be a cornerstone of your learning process, fostering deeper engagement with the material. While tools like AI can be useful for some tasks, they will not replace your active participation in readings, video analyses, and class discussions. If you attempt to rely on AI, you must first engage with the material yourself, drawing your own insights and feeding the tool with your conclusions. This ensures that you remain in control of your learning, not outsourcing it.

AI cannot replace the transformative power of critical thinking and personal reflection. Reading and understanding the texts are essential not just for academic success but for your overall cognitive development. The act of handwriting your notes also activates multiple areas of the



brain, enhancing memory retention, comprehension, and creative thinking. These skills are invaluable, not only in this class but in life. Furthermore, by doing the work yourself, you build intellectual confidence, the ability to articulate your own ideas, and the capacity to challenge or build upon the concepts we explore. Remember, this class is not just about completing assignments; it's about cultivating your full intellectual potential and preparing you to contribute meaningfully to academic and societal conversations

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is ***not allowed*** for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the [Office of Community Standards](#).

AI allowed only with prior permission from instructor

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is ***only allowed with approval from the instructor BEFORE being used***. Without permission, you will be expected to think creatively and critically to complete assignments without assistance from these tools.

If given permission to use any of these tools, students must properly cite and give full credit to the program used upon submission of every relevant assignment. For example, text generated using ChatGPT must be cited:

Chat-GPT(version). Date of query (year/month/day). "Text of your query."  
Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

A short paragraph describing how the tool(s) was/were used for the assignment must be included.

AI allowed with proper acknowledgement

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is ***only allowed with proper attribution given for its use***.

Students must properly cite and give full credit to the program used upon submission of every relevant assignment. For example, text generated using ChatGPT must be cited:

Chat-GPT(version). Date of query (year/month/day). "Text of your query."  
Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

A short paragraph describing how the tool(s) was/were used for the assignment must be included.

Using AI for brainstorming

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of an activity, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often "hallucinate" or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use.



That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

#### Free use of AI without acknowledgement

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, including generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is permitted in this class. Students must include a short paragraph, with each relevant assignment, explaining how the tool was used.

#### **\* CLASS RECORDINGS**

The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous or in-person class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP's acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

#### **TEST PROCTORING SOFTWARE**

Two course assessments (the midterm and final exams) will make use of Respondus Lock Down Browser and Respondus Monitor inside of Blackboard to promote academic integrity. You are encouraged to learn more about how to use these programs prior to the first test.

Please review the following guidelines:

- The assessments will only be available at the times identified on the course calendar.
- You may take the test at any time during the 24-hour window.
- A reliable Internet connection is essential to completing the exam. If you must go to a location to take the exam (such as the library), be sure to follow their health and safety requirements.
- You have 2 attempts to take the test. Once the window closes, your answers will be saved, and no changes can be made. The higher score will be recorded.
- Responds Lockdown Browser will require that all internet tabs are closed prior to the start of the test.
- Responds Monitor requires a webcam and microphone.
- You will be required to show the webcam your student ID prior to the start of the test.
- Your face should be completely visible during the test. Blocking the camera will disable the test.
- No notes or textbook materials are permitted during the test. Respondus Monitor requires you to take a video of your surrounding area (desk, chair, walls, etc.)

- You should not have conversations with other people and/or leave and return to the area during the test.

## PLAGIARISM DETECTING SOFTWARE

Some of your course work and assessments may be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

## COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

**Important Note:** The course content may be adjusted based on student feedback and assessment outcomes

**\*COURSE RESOURCES:** Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources or visit [https://www.utep.edu/advising/student\\_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html).

**Course Schedule: This is a living document! Please be aware that things may change**

Week/Theme	Monday	Due Sunday 11:59PM
<b>Week 1 a)</b> <b>June 9<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup></b> UNIT I: AN INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN, GENDER, SEXUALITY STUDIES: GROUNDING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONCEPTS	Syllabus reviewed Introduction to the Course and Key Concepts Readings: Course Syllabus, “Intro to COW (Critical Organic Writing)”  <b>Read pages 18-46 from            textbook            Introduction to Women,            Gender, Sexuality            Studies            Take COW notes</b>	Introduction Discussion Post and Reading Response. Read instructions <b>Week #1 a)</b>
<b>Week 1 b):</b> Unit II UNIT II: CHALLENGING BINARY	<b>Read pages 48- 66 from            textbook            Introduction to Women,            Gender, Sexuality            Studies            Take COW notes</b>	Reading Response choose one option given on BB to submit your response <b>Week #1 b)</b>

SYSTEMS AND CONSTRUCTIONS OF DIFFERENCE		
<b>Week 2 a)</b> <b>June 16<sup>th</sup> to June 22</b> UNIT III: INSTITUTIONS, CULTURE, AND STRUCTURES	<b>Read Chapter III pages 68 to 96 from textbook</b> <b>Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies</b> <b>Take COW notes</b>	Share your COW notes responding to guided questions. <b>Week #2 a)</b>
<b>Week 2 b)</b> UNIT IV: GENDER AND WORK IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY	<b>Read Chapter IV from textbook</b> <b>Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies</b> <b>Take COW notes</b>	Record yourself sharing your reflection on the reading. Be sure to discuss key points, your interpretation, and how the text connects to your own experiences or perspectives. Be ready to share your COW notes <b>Week #2 b)</b>
<b>Week # 3 a)</b> <b>June 23 to June 29<sup>th</sup></b> UNIT V: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST SOCIAL MOVEMENTS	<b>Open the link to listen to my lecture</b> <b>Read pages 114-135</b> <b>Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies</b> <b>Take COW notes</b>	Hybrid essay <b>Week # 3 a)</b>
<b>Week # 3 b)</b>	Open search: Find a documentary, movie, video or article online related to any topic covered on Unit I, II, III, IV, V. You can refer to the reference section of the textbook as well.	Power Point <b>Week #3 b)</b>
<b>Week 4 a)</b> <b>June 30 to July 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Take COW notes</b> Read A: " <b>Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza</b> " de Gloria Anzaldúa	Hybrid Essay or Power Point

	<b>B: Ain't I a Woman?</b> <b>Black Women and</b> <b>Feminism" de bell hooks</b> Feminist movie, documentary, book, tv series of your choice	
Week 4 b) FINAL EXAM COMMUNITY WISDOM	Community wisdom: Share what you have learned in this course with a family member, friend, teacher or classmate	FINAL EXAM Record yourself sharing what you have learned in this course.