

**MASTER SYLLABUS - Identities: Gender, Race, Sexuality - PHL/WMS 104**

**Course Overview**

The study of gender, race and sexuality can provide a context within which the normally abstract concepts of philosophy such as identity, reality and knowledge can be analyzed. On the other hand, the study of philosophy can provide the methods and framework for an analysis of gender, race and sexuality.

This is a cross-disciplinary course in Women’s Studies and Social Philosophy which examines the concepts and intersections of the social identities of gender, race and sexuality within the United States. The course examines whether these identities exist as “natural facts” or are socially constructed, while also questioning how we are to understand individuals who do not fit – or refuse to fit – into these categories. Combined with the lens of feminist analysis, the course examines the intersections of gender with race and sexuality and how intersectionality affects identities.

Using a combination of written texts and analyses of the actual experiences of people’s lives students come to see how our identities, the way these identities are perceived by others, as well as cultural representations of our identities (for example, in music videos), affect our reality and construct our behaviors.

**Learning Outcomes**

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students will be able to:

* (WMS major learning outcome) Identify and evaluate the social construction of gender and the ways gender intersects with other forms of identity.
* Provide an introduction to the ideologies of gender, race and sexuality within the United States using analyses from Women’s Studies and Social Philosophy.
* Recognize the value of interdisciplinary frameworks.
* Understand how our conceptualizations of gender, race, and sexuality shape identities and our communities.
* Develop skills in the presentation (written and oral) of arguments.

University Studies Learning Outcomes:

PHL/WMS 104 **as a course to fulfill a requirement for the University Studies curriculum would fall under *Cluster 4, Area B, Option (a) - The Nature of US Society*. As such, its learning objectives are as follows:**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

**1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives;**

2. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources;

3. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society.

**Sample Texts:**

Jami Anderson. Race, Gender, and Sexuality. Prentice Hall. 2003

**Example Assignment:**

Analysis of film. 2-3 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt. font, regular margins)

At the end of the semester the film *Paris is Burning* is shown in class. The film is a documentary about the lives of poor gay men of color living in New York City, the discrimination they experience based on the intersections of race, sexuality and class, and the outlets these men find to help them deal with discrimination, violence and poverty.

The assignment is a 2-3 page **analysis** paper of the film and requires the use of **three** class readings. It is not a description of student reactions to the film or an opinion paper. Students are to use what they have learned in class to offer an analysis of the way that gender, race and sexuality (and class ?) play out in the lives of the people they see in this film.

**Requirements:**

* The paper must be 2-3 pages in length.
* The paper needs to incorporate **AT LEAST THREE** class readings for support of your ideas and explanations.
* The paper needs to **ANALYZE** how gender, race and sexuality play out in the lives of this particular American sub-culture.
* The statement needs to be error free.  Concentrate on proofreading and creating clear sentences.
* The statement needs to use an approved format correctly (MLA, CMS, etc.).  In other words, remember to integrate your quotes into a sentence, format the quotes properly, and cite page numbers.  Also, include a works cited page.

**The assignment meets all three of the learning outcomes for Cluster 4, Area B, Option (a).**

**Assessment Rubric for University Studies**

\_\_\_\_ Analyzes and explains why the student thinks in the way they do about ONE key issue such as race, class, gender, sexuality, or ethnicity (in the US).

\_\_\_\_ Statement answers the question: Why do you see the world in the way that you do as a result of this marker of identity

\_\_\_\_\_ Includes at least 2 class readings

­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_Readings are used to support statement

\_\_\_\_\_Statement is error free

\_\_\_\_\_ Statement is properly formatted and cited

**Sample Course Outline**

### Schedule of classes and readings

**Gender - Week 1:** Introduction; Lois Gould, “X: A Fabulous Child’s Story” on website

### Sex - Week 2: Fausto-Sterling (Anderson, 33) – see class website for a link to the Intersex Society of North America; 7th – Borstein (Anderson, 39) – see class website for a link to the APA’s information on transgender individuals

**Sex and Gender - Week 3:** case studies in Anderson text

**Sexuality - Week 4:** McIntosh (Anderson, 81)

**Sexuality - Week 5:** Adrienne Rich (on website)

**Sexuality - Week 6:** Mohr and Hopkins (Anderson 336 and 342)

**Whiteness - Week 7:** McIntosh (on website); Mclaren (Anderson, 150) – see class website for a link to an interview with Noel Ignatiev on “how the Irish became white”

**Race - Week 8:** Mills (Anderson, 173)

**Race and Gender - Week 9:** Hill Collins (Anderson, 293); Kelley (on website)

**Race - Week 10:** Appiah (Anderson, 206)

**Discimination - Week 11:** Churchill (Anderson, 444) – see class website for a link to a site on American Indian sports team mascots; Bullard (Anderson, 229) – see class website for central study on toxic waste site location and race

**Affirmative Action - Week 12:** Wasserstrom (Anderson, 270)

**Race - Week 13:** Race traitors please note that there are TWO readings for today (on website)

**Race/Gender/Sexuality Week 14:** film – *Paris is Burning*

**Week 15:** class presentations