I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to raise the consciousness of students to the nature of gender as a social construct. Rather than understanding gender in terms of fixed dichotomies (e.g. male/female, masculinity/femininity), sociologists see it as a complex social phenomenon that changes over time and varies across cultures. This means that the course explores the ways in which gender is conceptualized as a social construct viewing it not as a fixed or static identity but as a product that is constructed and performed in interaction. Course readings focus on sociological theories, mainly on social constructionist approach to show how gender arises out of our everyday interactions and is shaped by different domains of social life.

The class will begin by introducing some conceptual and theoretical tools for understanding gender issues and gender research methodology within the framework of Sociology. It will critically examine the idea that sex and gender are fixed biological realities and discuss gender as a major organizing aspect of society. In order, to help better understand social life and our participation in it, the course will explore gender from both macro and micro-level of analysis. It will focus on five paradigms used in studying gender: functionalism, conflict, symbolic interaction, ethnomethodology and social constructivistic approach. In addition, the course will introduce mechanisms and technologies of gender construction and representation.

Then the course will move on to explore how gender relates to process of socialization to analyze its impact on the formation of the expected gender roles in society.
II. LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

Upon successful completion of the course, students will demonstrate:

- an understanding of social constructionist perspective on sex and gender as a social and cultural construction rather than a natural, biological “given”;
- an understanding of gender discourse within the framework of social theories; an appreciation of peculiarities of gender approach in Sociology;
- insight into mechanisms, technologies and agents for social construction of gender;
- an ability to interpret how a society’s gender constructions affect people’s lives through processes of socialization and how people “do gender” (engage in gender roles) in their everyday interactions;
- an ability to use the critical methodologies to analyze how gender constructions shape the realities of contemporary social life and theorize about it using sociological concepts.

III. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Participation and Attendance (10%): Learning takes place as a result of active participation. Consequently, attendance at each class is critical. In this course, participation should take two distinct forms:
   a) Crafting discussion questions: each student will be responsible for crafting two questions designed to stimulate thinking and provoke discussion for one specific assigned reading.
   b) Semester-long engagement with course materials in class: engagement can take the form of responses to questions, syntheses and analyses of course materials, focused interaction during group activities.

2. Critical Essay (20%): Critical essay intends to facilitate research activities of students, basically in the field of gender analyzing by using different methodological approaches and principals. Each student will prepare a critical essay which they will execute during the course of the semester. In the critical essay the development of coherent problem statements and well-reasoned, systematic and fair data analysis and conclusions are especially stressed. All of this will be worked out together as the course progresses. The
last 5 lessons before exam will be dedicated to collaborative work on student presentations of their essays.

3. **Examinations:**

   a) *Tests (40%):* There are 2 midterm exams in this course. For the 1st midterm exam students need to get ready on the basis of materials from the first thematic part of the course. The material on the exam will be drawn from lectures, recitations, and the required textbook readings. Exam contains 2 questions with 2 points for each question. The 2nd exam is based on the second part of the course. Exam contains 2 questions with 2 points for each question.

   b) *Final Exam (30%):* The final exam must be taken on the lesson and time. The final exam is a comprehensive exam covering all the lectures, recitations, and required readings for the entire semester.

**Grading and assessment:**

Generally “excellent” work earns “18-20”-range grades, “good” work earns “13-17”-range grades, “average” work earns “8-12”-range grades, “unsatisfactory” work earns “0-7”-range grades.

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>EXAM/PRESENTATIONS/PERIOD</th>
<th>% OF TOTAL</th>
<th>GRADES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterms (2)</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; exam- Mid October; 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; exam- End of December</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical essay</td>
<td>November-December</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

This course will operate as an interactive lecture, which means that there will be some lecturing but the bulk of each class will run as a group discussion. Therefore, regular attendance, student preparedness, and meaningful participation are expected of each student. It is problem-based, and inquiry oriented. While learning in this course will take place as a result of lectures, guest speakers, readings, and concentrated study by individual students within the course. A major teaching/learning strategy calls for small group discussions, individual and group presentations (spontaneous and planned), and class discussions. This will allow students to better work through difficult concepts and theories and to develop their skills in applying to theoretical constructs in solving real problems, issues, and situations.

V. STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>THEME NAME</th>
<th>LECTURING AND SEMINAR HOURS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1.</td>
<td>Introductory concepts: gender and social constructivist tradition</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2.</td>
<td>Discourse of gender in social theories</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3.</td>
<td>Sociological perspectives on gender roles: macro and micro level analysis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1st Midterm Exam

| Theme 4. | Social constructionist approach in gender studies: specialties of implementation | 2       | 2            | 4     |
| Theme 5. | Principles of gender construction: main social mechanisms and agents         | 4       | 2            | 6     |
| Theme 6. | Gender and the process of socialization                                     | 4       | 2            | 6     |

The 2nd Midterm Exam

| TOTAL    | 22 | 10 | 32 |
VI. COURSE CONTENT AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Theme 1. Introductory concepts: Gender and social constructivist tradition

Course introduction, expectations and interests, syllabus review, the assignments

1. Laying the Foundation: Sociology, Biology, Gender as System and Power
2. Perspectives of social constructivist theory development
3. A. Schutz, The structure of everyday thinking
4. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality

Readings:

- C. Wright Mills, “The Promise of Sociology,” from *The Sociological Imagination*, pp.1-5
- Chapter 7, Scott Appelrouth, Laura Desfor Edles (2011). Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era: Text and Readings
- Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1991), *The Social Construction of Reality*

Theme 2. Discourse of gender in social theories

1. Historical context of the gender discourse
2. Social constructivism versus biological determinism
3. E. Durkheim’s and T. Parsons’s approaches over the gender issues
4. Masculine culture and social psychology of gender roles: G. Simmel’s concept

Readings:

- Part 1, Janet Saltzman Chafetz (2006), HANDBOOK OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER, pp. 3-25
Theme 3. Sociological perspectives on gender roles: macro and micro level analysis

1. The varieties of gender theory in sociology
2. Gendered interpretation of functionalistic theory
3. Gendered analysis of conflict theory

Seminar work
Feminist Structural Theory (Discussion of R. Connell’s concept of gender and power).

Readings:
- Chapter 1, Linda L. Lindsey (2011) Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective, 5th edition,
- Janet Saltzman Chafetz (2006), HANDBOOK OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER, pp. 45-64

Theme 4. Social constructionist approach in gender studies: specialties of implementation

1. Social constructionist approach as a critical concept in gender researches
2. Features of social constructionist approach within the framework of gender researches in sociology

Seminar work
Analysis of any gendered issue within the framework of social constructionist approach

Readings:

Theme 5. Principles of gender construction: main social mechanisms and agents
1. E. Goffman, gender framing and representation
2. Mass media, literature and art as agents of gender construction
3. The study of gender in culture

Seminar work
Gender symbols and cultural representation (case analysis)

Readings:
• Chapter 10, Janet Saltzman Chafetz (2006), HANDBOOK OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER

Theme 6. Gender and the process of socialization
1. Features of gender socialization: gender stereotypes
2. Gender and social learning theory
3. Gender and cognitive development theory, psychoanalytic theory
4. Gender and social roles

Readings:
• Chap. 11, 12, Janet Saltzman Chafetz (2006). HANDBOOK OF THE SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER


VII. READINGS


