



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

GWS 445: The Body in Theory

T/TH 11:00-12:15
1333 STERLING
FALL 2018

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Office Hours: Th. 1-3 and by appt.

This course will explore a broad range of contemporary theory concerned with bodies, embodiment, and bodily difference. As a field shaped by questions of gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, and race, body theory is generally concerned with power and inequality, difference and resistance. Yet body theory also has its critics who accuse it of losing track of the physical realities of embodiment in favor of abstract, overly-constructivist approaches. We will examine all sides of this critique, as well as the usefulness of body theory for students' own fields and interests, and its relevance to our embodied experiences.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Michel Foucault. *The Foucault Reader*. Ed. Paul Rabinow. (FR)

Susan Bordo. *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*.*

Rosemarie Garland Thomson. *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*.*

*Available as e-book through library website.

→You must purchase *The Foucault Reader*. It has been ordered at A Room of One's Own bookstore, 15 W. Gorham St. (off State), 257-7888.

All other course readings will be posted on Learn@UW (Canvas).

CANVAS URL: [HTTPS://CANVAS.WISC.EDU/COURSES/120067](https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/120067)

COURSE ATTRIBUTIONS AND FEATURES

Prerequisites: None

Designations: Level: Intermediate. Breadth: Humanities. L&S Credit Type: C

Credit Range: 3

Instructional Mode: Face-to-face

How Credit Hours are met by the Course: This course includes 48 hours of face-to-face class time and at least 96 hours of reading, studying, and writing. At UW-Madison, one credit is the learning that takes place in at least 45 hours of learning activities, which include time in lectures or class meetings, in person or online, labs, exams, presentations, tutorials, reading, writing, studying, preparation for any of these activities, and any other learning activities.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Gain familiarity with a range of contemporary theories of the body.
2. Understand that bodies and bodily experience are shaped not only by biology but by social, political, and cultural forces.
3. Be able to analyze how embodiment is shaped by social factors including gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, ability, and nationality.
4. Practice critical thinking and analysis with regard to the representation of bodies, gender, and sexuality in cultural, medical, scientific, and digital media texts.
5. Respond imaginatively to social and political issues related to bodies, gender, and sexuality.
6. Practice effective and respectful written and oral communication skills.

THIS COURSE COUNTS TOWARD THE FOLLOWING DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) GWS Major/Certificate: theory course.
- 2) LGBT Certificate: course credit.
- 3) GWS Ph.D. Minor: course credit.
- 4) GWS M.A.: theory course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STUDENTS:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance in this class is required and essential for our community learning process. Each absence above three (3) per semester will result in a five (5) percentage point reduction of your semester grade (i.e. a 90% AB would become an 85% B). You must attend at least 50% of classes to receive a passing grade. Lecture notes and powerpoint slides will not be posted online or shared. If you must miss class, please obtain notes from a classmate. Absences due to religious holidays will not be penalized: You must inform me in advance if you are missing a class for religious reasons.
2. **Participation:** Active and engaged participation is very important for this course. You may earn participation points for coming to class well-prepared, showing that you have completed all assigned readings, engaging in a lively discussion of class topics, doing in-class writing assignments, responding thoughtfully and generously to your classmates, and visiting me in office hours. Participation grades begin at an 85 (B), and can be increased or decreased based on the criteria above.
3. **Discussion Posts:** Most **Wednesdays by 7:00 p.m.**, beginning on **September 12**, you are required to post a comment or question to the “Discussions” section of our Learn@UW page on the course readings for the current week. Postings may be simple or complex, short or long, single or multiple, original or threaded. Postings receive 10 points per week. Late postings will receive 5 points.

ADDITIONAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:

1. **Presentations:** You will each make a brief (4-5 min.) presentation to the class which can be creative, critical, or a combination of both. I will explain presentations in more detail in class when we sign up for them. On the day of your presentation, a 1-page write-up of your presentation is also due. See Handout: “Presentations.”

2. **Midterm Exam. DUE OCT. 9:** This take-home, open-book exam will be in essay form and will be entirely based on lectures and discussions of readings in class.
3. **Critical Paper. DUE NOV. 13:** A 4-5 page critical paper on course readings. Guidelines and topics will be distributed two weeks in advance.

4. **Final Project. DUE DEC. 11**

The final project may take one of the following forms:

- 1) A critical paper of 5-6 pages.
- 2) A substantial creative project (art, creative writing, performance, etc.) accompanied by a 3-4 page critical paper relating the project to the theories we read in class.

ADDITIONAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS:

1. **Précis, DUE DEC. 11:** A précis (annotated outline) of a major theory monograph, part of which was assigned for this class. This assignment requires that you read the entire text, not just the excerpts assigned in class. In the case of the *Foucault Reader*, you would not read the rest of the *Reader*, but rather, one of his complete books: either *The History of Sexuality, Part I*, or *Discipline and Punish*. You should select your text in consultation with me early in the semester. For more details, see the handout, “Précis Assignment.”
2. **Graduate Student Discussion Section:** Graduate students are expected to meet as a group, in addition to our regular class meetings, a total of five (5) times during the semester: three (3) times on your own, and two (2) times with me.
3. **Final Paper. DUE DEC. 20:** The final paper will be a seminar length (15-20 page) critical research paper. If you wish to integrate any form of creative work into this paper, please see me early in the semester to discuss it.

ADDITIONAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR HONORS STUDENTS:

Students may earn honors credit by completing one of the following options:

1. Attend two of the extra credit events announced throughout the semester and write a 2-page reflection paper on each, relating it to theories studied in class. DUE: One week after date of event, on Learn@UW.
2. Complete both the critical and creative project options for the final project (creative project plus 5-6 page critical paper).

Grade Breakdown:	
Participation:	10%
Discussion Posts:	10%
Presentation:	15%
Critical Analysis Paper	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Project:	25%

Grading Scale:	
A:	93-100
AB:	88-92
B:	83-87
BC:	78-82
C:	70-77
D:	60-69

COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- 1) **Emails and Office Hours:** I will endeavor to respond to emails within 48 hours of receipt. Emails are fine for short questions, but to discuss papers and exams, it is necessary to meet in person. I welcome you to office hours, and suggest you plan ahead to make appointments for the busy weeks before deadlines. Questions about grades will only be discussed during appointments, not over email or in class.
- 2) **Classroom Conduct:** Please respect your fellow students' right to a quiet and non-distracting learning environment. Cell phone use, texting, messaging, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Fortnite, and other distractions of modern life are not allowed during class. If you use a laptop computer or tablet during class, you may not have a web browser, social media app, or chat window open.
- 3) **Late Paper Policy:** Papers turned in late will be penalized by five (5) percentage points for each 24-hour period after the due date. No late papers will be accepted more than one week after the due date.
- 4) **Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism and Cheating):** By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>
- 5) **Writing Center:** For additional help with papers, visit the Writing Center at any stage during the writing process. Stop by 6171 Helen C. White or consult the Center's resources online at www.wisc.edu/writing/.

STATEMENT ON ACCESSIBILITY

It is very important to me to fully include all students with disabilities or learning differences in this course. The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

STATEMENT ON GRADE APPEALS

If you have questions about a grade, please speak first to me. If the question is not resolved, speak with the Chair, Aili Tripp. She will attempt to resolve the issue informally and inform you of the Appeals Procedures if no resolution is reached informally.

WEEK 1

Sep. 6: Introductions

WEEK 2

Sep. 11: Foucault: Bio-Power

FR, "Right of Death and Power over Life," 258-272

→ *Sep. 12: Discussion Post #1 due on Learn@UW by 7:00 p.m.*

Sep. 13: Foucault: The Repressive Hypothesis

FR, "We 'Other' Victorians," "The Repressive Hypothesis," 292-329

WEEK 3

Sep. 18: Foucault: Docile Bodies

FR, "The Body of the Condemned," "Docile Bodies," "The Means of Correct Training," 170-205

→ *Sep. 19: Discussion Post #2 due*

Sep. 20: Foucault: Surveillance and Panopticism

FR: "Panopticism," "Complete and Austere Institutions," 206-225
Shapiro, "Panopticon," from *Archaeologies of Vision*

WEEK 4

Sep. 25: Foucault Meets Feminism

M.E. Bailey, "Foucauldian Feminism: Contesting Bodies, Sexuality, and Identity"
Sandra Lee Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power"

Kate Soper, "Forget Foucault?"

MIDTERM EXAM distributed in class

→ *Sep. 26: Discussion Post #3 due*

Sep. 27: Foucault Deployed

Honi Fern Haber, "Foucault Pumped: Body Politics and the Muscled Woman"

Eugenia Kaw, "Medicalization of Racial Features"

Paisley Currah, "Securitizing Gender"

WEEK 5

Oct. 2: Foucault Complicated/Expanded

Ann Laura Stoler, "Placing Race in the History of Sexuality"

Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics"

→ *Oct. 3: Discussion Post #4 due*

Oct. 4: Foucault and "Bare Life"

Adriana Estévez, "The Biopolitics of Asylum Law in Texas"

Alexander G. Weheliye, "Bare Life: The Flesh"

WEEK 6

Oct. 9: MIDTERM EXAM due at the beginning of class

Oct. 11: Ab/Normal Bodies: Extraordinary Bodies

Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*, 4-53

WEEK 7

Oct. 16: *Extraordinary Bodies*, 55-80

→ Oct. 17: Discussion Post #5 due

Oct. 18: Presentations-Group 1

WEEK 8

Oct. 23 : Ab/Normal Bodies: Unbearable Weight

Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, 1-42, 139-212

→ Oct. 24: Discussion Post #6 due

Oct. 25: *Unbearable Weight*, 245-275

Cecilia Hartley. "Letting Ourselves Go: Making Room for the Fat Body in Feminist Scholarship"

Ragen Chastain, ["This is My After Body"](#)

WEEK 9

Oct. 30: Ab/Normal Bodies: Baby's Got Back edition

Janell Hobson, "The 'Batty' Politic: Toward an Aesthetic of the Black Female Body"

Isabel Molina-Guzmán, "Disciplining J. Lo: Booty Politics in Tabloid News"

→ Oct. 31: Discussion Post #7 due

Nov. 1: Presentations-Group 2

NOVEMBER 6: VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE

WEEK 10

Nov. 6: Explicit Bodies: XXX edition

Rebecca Schneider, "Binary Terror and the Body Made Explicit"

Juana María Rodríguez, "Latina Sexual Fantasies, the Remix"

Nguyen Tan Hoang, "The Politics of Starch"

→ Nov. 7: Discussion Post #8 due

Nov. 8: No class meeting.

Watch *Sins Invalid* (library catalog: Kanopy; 33 mins)

→ Nov. 8: Discussion Post #9 due (on *Sins Invalid*)

WEEK 11

Nov. 13: Constructing Gendered Bodies

Thomas Laqueur, "Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology"

→CRITICAL PAPER DUE

→Nov. 14: Discussion Post #10 due

Nov.15: Performing Gendered Bodies

Judith Butler, Excerpts from *Gender Trouble*, *Bodies That Matter*, and *Undoing Gender*

WEEK 12

Nov. 20: Trans-ing Gendered Bodies

Jay Prosser, "Judith Butler: Queer Feminism, Transgender, and the Transubstantiation of Sex"

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

WEEK 13

Nov. 27: Presentations-Group 3

→Nov. 28: Discussion Post #11 due

Nov. 29: Hybrid Bodies: Cyborgs

Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs"

Anne Balsamo, "Reading Cyborgs, Writing Feminism"

Jennifer González, "Envisioning Cyborg Bodies"

WEEK 14

Dec. 4: Hybrid Bodies: Crips

Alison Kafer, "The Cyborg and the Crip: Critical Encounters"

Watch in class: *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement* (60 min.)

→Dec. 5: Discussion Post #12 due

Dec. 6: Hybrid Bodies: Mestiza Consciousness

Gloria Anzaldúa, Excerpts from *Borderlands/La Frontera*.

WEEK 15

Dec. 11: FINAL PROJECTS DUE (undergraduates). PRECÍS DUE (graduates).

Dec. 20: GRADUATE STUDENT FINAL PAPERS DUE VIA EMAIL

UW MADISON OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>