**ENGL 395**

**Language, Gender, and Sexuality**

**Fall 2017 Syllabus**

**Instructor:** James A. Berry, Ph.D. **Email:** jberry@uwsp.edu

**Office:** CCC 426 **Office phone:** 715-346-2385

**Office hours:** Mon/Tue/Thu, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

and by appointment

**Class meets:** Tue/Thu, 12:30-1:45 p.m. CCC 323

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on the relationship, in theory and in practice, among language, gender, and sexuality. As these are highly complex cultural constructs, interrelated but not completely overlapping, the course will be somewhat artificially divided into two modules.

In the initial portion of the class, we will survey the major theories of gender and language in various subfields of linguistics over the last forty years, with a focus on the expressions of gender in Western culture. A major goal will be to challenge our received notions of what gender is and how language and gender are interconnected. Among the topics covered are institutional language and power; gender identity and language use; ideologies of gender and language; cultural definitions of “masculinity” and “femininity” and their relationship to language use; and the social construction of gender identities through linguistic performance.

The second module will concentrate on the relationship between language and sexuality as expressed in both sexual identity or orientation and sexual behaviors. Again, we will largely limit ourselves to Western culture and contemporary definitions of sexuality, while acknowledging that this topic is understood in a way highly specific to our place and time. This is a relatively new area of investigation, and our class will examine a variety of topics, including the ways sexuality is represented in language; the relationship of gender and sexuality; the specialized languages of sexual subcultures; and the issue of language and desire.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:**

***Rental:***

Eckert, Penelope, and Sally McConnell-Ginet. *Language and Gender* (2nd edn.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

***Readings assigned from:***

Cameron, Deborah, and Don Kulick. *Language and Sexuality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Other readings will also be assigned.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:**

Over the course of the semester, there will be five reflection papers and three exams. Attendance and participation will also play a role.

***Reflection papers:***

These will be brief, 1-2 pages, and will discuss the readings for the week. They should be submitted to D2L before our course discussion and should discuss topics such as: What did you find interesting about this reading? What did you learn from it, and how does it relate to class discussions? Do you have any criticisms of the reading? You may choose the readings from any week, but I advise you not to wait until late in the semester.

***Exams:***

These will be based on our readings and discussions and will focus on your understanding of the material rather than memorization of terminology.

***Attendance and participation:***

Because this class will be run as a discussion-based seminar, much of your learning will take place in class, and you must attend on a regular basis. I will take attendance every class period. For this class, “attendance” means being present, on time, and prepared for the entire class period. A student who is chronically late to class, leaves early, or is not prepared to participate in the day’s classwork will not receive attendance and participation credit.

If you miss more than two scheduled classes, each subsequent missed class will result in the loss of ***one full grade*** (e.g. from A to B) from your attendance total.

***Grading:***

5 Reflection papers (6% each) 30%

3 Exams (20% each) 60%

Attendance/participation 10%

TOTAL 100%

***Grading scale:***

93-100% = A 87-89% = B+ 77-79% = C+ 67-69% = D+ 0-59% = F

90-92% = A− 83-86% = B 73-76% = C 60-66% = D

80-82% = B− 70-72% = C−

**university policies:**

***UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities:***

The University of Wisconsin−Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the Rights and Responsibilities document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. This document can be found at <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>

***Plagiarism and academic dishonesty:***

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. ***Don’t do it!*** The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failing grade (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” section of the Rights and Responsibilities document, found here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

***Emergency management:***

For details on all emergency responses at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, see the UWSP Emergency Management Plan at [http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/default.aspx](https://email.uwsp.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=GX1lGcFYhkOSArus6JRql6OQYVSrmdEIh67-MUQ24B2cn-30AayTmwdAplBEblCPBxVKj6XLvH4.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.uwsp.edu%2frmgt%2fPages%2fem%2fdefault.aspx)

**Americans with disabilities act (ADA):**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP’s policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

**Classroom protocol:**

We will spend most of our class time in group work and discussions. A portion of some classes will also include lecture. Regardless of the class format, you are expected to be prepared, to listen, to contribute, and to participate in an appropriate fashion.

At all times you should be respectful toward others; inappropriate/disruptive behavior won’t be tolerated. Our classroom is a place where we all feel safe when exchanging ideas. Diverse opinions and concepts are a fact of adult life both in and beyond college. As a class we will work together to understand and appreciate different viewpoints.

*Failure to abide by any of these rules may result in being asked to leave the classroom, resulting in an absence for that day.*

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (Additional readings to be assigned):**

**Week Assignments**

1 Introduction to class

E&McG-G: Chapter 1: Understanding gender

2 E&McG-G: Chapter 2; Jespersen; Lakoff: History of lg and gender

3 E&McG-G: Chapter 3: Some sociolinguistic basics

4 E&McG-G: Chapter 4: Discourse analysis

5 E&McG-G: Chapter 5: Politeness

***Exam 1***

6 E&McG-G: Chapter 6: Assertiveness

7 E&McG-G: Chapter 7: “Common sense” and linguistic assumptions

8 E&McG-G: Chapter 8: Categories and labels

9 E&McG-G: Chapter 9: Gender across languages and dialects

10 E&McG-G: Chapter 10: Identity

***Exam 2***

11 C&K: Chapter 1: Connections among sex, gender, sexuality

12 C&K: Chapter 2: Linguistic/discursive construction of sexuality

13 C&K: Chapter 3: Language, heterosexuality, heteronormativity

14 C&K: Chapter 4: Gay and lesbian language and identity

15 C&K: Chapter 5: Language and desire

16 ***Exam 3 (T 12/19, 8:00-10:00 a.m.)***