Spring 2027 Course Descriptions – Gender & Sexuality Studies

GESS 2190 – Disability, Gender, Sexual Pol

Special Topics Long Title: Disability, Gender, and Sexual Politics

This discussion-based course explores the intersection of gender, disability, and sexuality. We examine popular culture, including stars like Lady Gaga, popular romance narratives such as Me Before You and Heated Rivalry, and media coverage of Luigi Mangione. We will also study the US disability rights and neurodiversity movements and their relationship to reproductive rights/justice, marriage equality, and the politics of self and community care.

GESS 2900 – Intro to Gender & Sex Studies

This course introduces students to key debates and theories that inform the interdisciplinary study of gender and sexuality. Taking an intersectional, cross-cultural, and transnational feminist approach, we will engage with academic scholarship, popular culture, and creative assignments to think critically about an array of themes, debates, and political struggles that animate the field, such as systemic social inequalities, violence and criminalization, work and family life, sexualities, gender diversity, gendered behaviors in language use, beauty norms, reproductive justice, and globalization, among others.

GESS 3500 – Critical Inquiry & Praxis

This course is an intersectional exploration of how feminist thinkers, activists, and culture workers have reconceptualized knowledge production and praxis, the place where theory and practice meet. Informed by the study of feminist inquiry and praxis, it is also designed to equip students with the skills needed to think critically and collaboratively, conduct original research, participate in public discourse, and apply material beyond the classroom.

GESS 4930/6930 – Queer Creativity

Across various creative disciplines and activities—writing, studio art, music, puppets, parades, protest…—we investigate the distinctive values arising from being an outsider or on the ‘fringe’. This course combines theory and discussion with substantial amounts of making art, creative writing, introspection, social design, and community exploring. By co-creating exploratory interactive activities, a mini-fest, and an art show, we hone the skills of creative

event organising and innovative workshop facilitation. This course is a community adventure that aims to cultivate our curious, creative selves.

GESS 4931/6931 – Unthinkable

Special Topics Long Title: Unthinkable: Rape Victims in Denial

Most people who are raped -- and who commit rape -- do not acknowledge this fact. They are in denial. By combining philosophy, psychology, and trauma studies, this course examines why. We will also co-create an innovative, interactive book in a box that explores the topic with artwork and written fragments.

GESS 4932/6932 – Transnational Feminisms

How is the rising suicide rate among India's cotton farmers connected to globalization? Is the hijab a symbol of oppression or a Western projection? This course critiques the global power imbalance between the Global North and the Global South, emphasizing interconnectedness, accountability, and decolonial feminist practice.

GESS 4950/6950 – Gender & Sexuality Theory II

This advanced seminar introduces students to queer theory's germinal texts and contemporary conversations. We focus on queer theory's cross-pollination with other critical theories, including disability studies, asexuality studies, critical race studies, and trans theory. Bringing our material to bear on New Orleans, this class includes a queer history tour of the French Quarter and discussions of queer Carnival traditions.