

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Course Title, Time and Location	Course Code Number	Credit Value
Sex, Gender and Philosophy Mon, Wed, Fri 2-3 PM TBA	PHIL 334 002 2025W2	3 credits

Course Instructor	Contact Details	Office Location	Office Hours
Dr. Willow Verkerk	willow.verkerk@ubc.ca	BUCH E 158	Mon, Wed 1-2 PM

#### OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

TBA

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the philosophy of sex and gender in three steps. It first looks at how the human subject in the history of philosophy is sexed and privileged as a man. It then examines the metaphysics of gender, questioning both essentialist and constructionist versions of gender ontology. Lastly, it pursues the question of intersectionality and its relationship with sex and gender. This is an in-person lecture style course with class discussion.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Students are expected to read the materials before class and come prepared to take part in class discussion. The schedule includes all of the readings which can be found in the Library Online Course Reserves (LOCR).

#### ASSESSMENTS OF LEARNING

Take Home Exam 1 (750 words) 20% posted Feb 6; *Due Feb 9 at 2 pm.*

Take Home Exam 2 (750 words) 20% posted March 13; *Due March 16 at 2 pm.*

Final Essay (3000 words) 50% posted March 11; *Due April 10.*

Participation self-assessment 10%: based on attendance and participation in class and/or during office hours posted April 8; *Due April 12.*

All assignments are submitted on Canvas.

#### SCHEDULE: MON, WED, FRI 2-3 PM

#### Introduction: Sex, Gender, and Feminist Methodologies

January 5: Thinking Sex and Gender: An Introduction

**Jan 7-9: Feminist Curiosity with Perry Zurn**

Read: "Feminist curiosity," in *Philosophy Compass*, 2021.

**Part I: A Critique of the Sexed History of Philosophy****Jan 12-16: The Androcentric Human of Philosophy: A Critique**

Read: Adriana Cavarero, "Introduction," in *Inclinations: A Critique of Rectitude*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016, pp. 1-15.

**Jan 19-23: Sexed Verticality and the Autonomous Subject**

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 1-3 in *Inclinations*, pp. 17-44.

**Jan 26-30: Homo Erectus**

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 4-7 in *Inclinations*, pp. 46-79.

**Feb 2-6: Becoming Inclined or How to Rethink the Subject of Philosophy**

Read: Cavarero, Chapters 9, 10, pp. 89-106 and Chapter 12 pp. 121-131 in *Inclinations*.  
Further reading: Willow Verkerk, "A Re-evaluation of the Androcentric Subject of European Philosophy," *Critical Horizons*, 2023.

**Feb 6:** *Take Home Exam 1 posted*

**Feb 9:** *Take Home Exam 1 due before the start of class at 2 pm*

**Part II: Gender Ontology****Feb 9-13: Sex, Gender, and Desire**

Read: Chapter 1 sections I to IV, pp. 3-22 in Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York/London: Routledge, 1999.

**February 16-20: Family Day and Midterm Break****Feb 23-27: Identity, Sex, and Language**

Read: Chapter 1 section V and VI, pp. 22-44 in *Gender Trouble*.

**March 2-6: Sex, Gender, and Performativity**

Read: Chapter 3 section IV "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions" pp. 163-180 in *Gender Trouble*.

**March 9-13: Gender Regulation**

March 9: Read: Chapter 2 "Gender Regulations" pp. 40-56 in *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

**March 11 \*Final Essay Topics, Essay Checklist, and Essay Writing Guidelines Posted (see Modules)\***

March 13: Chapter 1 "Coming to Terms with Transgenderism and Transsexuality" pp. 23-34 in Julia Serano, *Whipping Girl: A transexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*. Berkeley: Seal Press, 2007.

**March 13:** *Take Home 2* posted

**March 16:** *Take Home 2* due before the start of class at 2 pm

**March 16-19:** Gender Trouble Still: Biopolitics

Read: Isabell Dahms, "Always trouble: Gender before and after Gender Trouble," *Radical Philosophy* 2.09 (Winter 2020-21), pp. 41-54.

**Part III: Sex, Gender, and Intersectionality**

**March 23-27:** Intersectionality

Watch: Ted Talk, "The urgency of intersectionality" (\*trigger warning for violence against women\*)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle\\_crenshaw\\_the\\_urgency\\_of\\_intersectionality?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en)

Read: Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review*, Vol. 43. 6 (July 1991), pp. 1241-1299.  
AND Brittney Cooper, "Intersectionality," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*. OUP: 2016.

**March 30-April 1:** Intersectionality and Feminism

Read: Cooper "Intersectionality" continued

AND Ahmed, Sara, "Chapter 1: Feminism is Sensational" in *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

**April 3 and 6: Holidays- Good Friday and Easter Monday**

**April 8-10:** Intersectional Feminisms and Indigenous Knowledge Practices

Read: Ahmed continued

AND Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy" in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

*Self-assessment 2* posted December 3

*April 8- Participation Report* posted

**April 10: \*Final Essay Due\***

*April 12: Participation Report Due*

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

---

During the course, students will learn concepts central to the philosophy of sex and gender in feminist, queer, transgender, and antiracist philosophy. They will practice talking and thinking critically about the arguments and ideas. The take home exams provide the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of the key concepts studied to date. The final paper is an exercise in critical thinking to explore and deepen understanding of one or more of the thinkers studied during the course. By the end of the semester, students will be familiar with key figures and themes in the philosophy of sex and gender.

### UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND SUPPORT

---

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on **the UBC Senate website**.

#### Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. A link about Academic misconduct is below

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

The use of *Chat GPT* and similar online resources is considered “cheating” in the UBC policy if students make unauthorized use of this tool in the creation of assignments or on exams (“use...of unauthorized means to complete an examination or coursework...including, but

not limited to, ...accessing websites or other online resources not specifically permitted by the instructor or examiner”).

---

**COPYRIGHT**

All materials of this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. Audio recordings of the class are allowed (video recordings and photos are not permitted).