



The City, the River, the Sacred

GEND 320: *Studies in Gender*

Course Description

This course introduces students to salient discourses and local practices in Indian society from a gender perspective. This course aims to further students' understanding of gender in contemporary India through the concepts and frameworks of socio-cultural understanding. The course will explore the diversity of social practices and complexities of gender relations in different social groups. The course will also highlight key cultural and structural issues, and includes in its scope, invisibility and marginalization of women in the economic, legal and cultural areas. It will also focus on counter responses in the form of activism and social movements.

Case studies from diverse areas will supplement the conceptual analysis.

Learning Objectives

Through the course, students will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the challenges that women of the subcontinent face in the areas of health, education, inclusion, inheritance, and development. Emphasis will be on student discussion and collaboration.

In this course, students will be expected to:

- Achieve an understanding of the connections between gender, sexuality, race, class, religion, nationality, and other social categories; different subjects will shed light on different aspects of such connections.
- Achieve interdisciplinary perspectives on the formation of gender and its intersections with other relations of power, such as sexuality, race, class, nationality, religion, and age.
- Achieve an understanding of perspectives as diverse as history, sociology, literary and cultural studies, law and art.
- Achieve an interdisciplinary research skills will focus on practices of gender in a particular domain such as family, history, film, religion, and politics.
- Achieve a working knowledge of the range and uses of feminist theory.
- Achieve the use gender as a category of analysis, and also reflect on the manifestation of gender in their own lives, leading to a range of personal and intellectual discoveries.

Course Schedule

Session 01-29 Introduction to the course

Course description and themes of the units. Expectations of the students from the course and discussion about the modules for fulfilling those. Evaluation process.

Session 02-29 Key Concepts

Gender and Sex: Are 'Gender' and 'Sex' synonymous? What are the different ways of understanding gender? What is masculinity and femininity?

Readings:

Menon, Nivedita. (n.a.) *Gender, Foundation Course on Human Rights, Gender and Environment*. Delhi:Delhi University.

Assignments:

- Take-home Assignment - 2/3 page response paper on one movies among "Mother India", "Water", "Mirch Masala" and "Dor". Due on class 7.
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Session 03-29 Women in Indian mythology

Readings:

Hedman,Hanna. (2007). Hindu goddesses as role models for women? A qualitative study of some middle class women's views on being a woman in the Hindu society. *Hogskolan I Gavle*. 2. (pp. 1-31).

Session 04-29 Field visit to Renuka temple

Session 05-29 Indian Marriages

Marriage negotiations practiced by different sections of Indian castes and communities (dowry), rules of endogamy and exogamy, divorce.

Readings:

Diamond-Smith, Nadia, Luke, Nancy and McGarvey Stephen. (2008). Too many girls, too much dowry's son preference and daughter aversion in rural Tamil Nadu, India. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*. Vol. 10, Issue 7. (pp. 697-708).

Session 06-29 Mother in Indian tradition

Divine mother, Mother India, mother in the common households.

Readings:

Poggendorf-Kakar, Katharina. (2003). Virtuous Mother, Virile Hero and Warrior Queen:

The conception of Gender and Family in Hindutva. in Pernau, Margrit, Ahmad, Imtiaz and Reifeld, Herlmut. *Family and Gender. Changing Values in Germany and India*. New Delhi, India: Sage Publications. (pp. 179-195).

Session 07-29 Widowhood

Readings:

Vlassoff, Carol. (1990). The Value of Sons in an Indian Village – How Widows see it. *Population Studies*. 44. (pp. 5-20).

Session 08-29 Field visit to Widows' Ashram

Assignments:

- Take-home Assignment due.
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Session 09-29 Women in Islam (Guest Lecture)

Assignments:

- Written paper mentioning title, topic and objective (i.e. the question that the research seeks to answer) of final research papers. Due on class 13.
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Session 10-29 Women and Law

Readings:

Upadhyay, Reecha. (n.a.). Women's Empowerment in India An Analytical Overview. Retrieved from <http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/womensempowermentindiabriefs.pdf>

Session 11-29 Colonialism and Gender

How did colonialism interact with constructions of ideal manhood and womanhood?

Readings:

Chatterjee, Partha. (1999). The Nationalist Resolution of Women's Question. in Sangari, Kumkum, Vaid, Sudesh (ed.). *Recasting Women. Essays in Colonial History*. New Delhi, India: Kali for Women. (pp. 233-253).

Session 12-29 Field visit to Bharat Mata Temple

Session 13-29 Indian women's Movements

Readings:

Basu, Aparna. (2009). *Indian Women's Movement*. Delhi, India: University of Delhi

Session 14-29 Field Visit to Panini Kanya Mahavidyalaya

Assignments:

- Statement of title, topic and objective of final research papers due.
 - 1500-2000 words Research Paper due on class 22.
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Session 15-29 The Missing Woman

Female foeticide, infanticide, malnutrition, prenatal/postnatal care, medical treatments.

Readings:

Sen, A. (2001, Oct. 27 – Nov. 9). Many Faces of Gender Inequality. *Frontline*, Volume 18 (22); Bahn, G. (2001, August). *India Gender Profile Report*, No. 62. Brighton, U.K.: University of Sussex Institute of Development Studies. (pp. 2 – 9).

Session 16-29 Child Marriage

Child marriage, human trafficking in the name of marriage: Focus on Hyderabad cases.

Readings:

Sagade, Jaya. (2005). *Child Marriage in India*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press. (pp. xxiii-xlv, 221-230).

Session 17-29 Rape

Readings:

Batra Bakshi, Amba, Banerjee, Chandrani. (2013, January 14). Cover Story – Delhi Gangrape : Rape Happens, *Outlook*. (pp. 2-12).

Session 18-29 Politics of sex workers

Readings:

Gangoli, Geetanjali. (2008). Immorality, Hurt or Choice: Indian Feminists and Prostitution; Chatterjee, Gayatri. (2008). The Veshya, the Ganika and the Tawaif: Representations of Prostitutes and Courtesans in Indian Language, Literature and Cinema. in Sahni, Rohini, Shankar Kalyan, Apte Hemant (ed.). *Prostitution and Beyond*. New Delhi, India: Sage Publications. (pp. 21-39 and. 279-300).

Session 19/20-29

**Guest lectures by NGO directors working for
defense and promotion of women rights**

Session 21-29 Honor Killing

Readings:

Palakonda, C. (2011). Patriarchal Ideology of Honour and Honour Crimes in India. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences (IJCJS)*. Vol. 6, 1&2. (pp. 386–395).

Session 22-29 Gender and Media (newspapers, magazines and television)

Readings:

Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. (2001). Gender and Advertisements: The Rhetoric of Globalisation. *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol. 24, No. 3/4. (pp. 373-385).

Assignments:

- Research paper due.
 - In-class presentation on Gender and Advertisement. Due on class 27.
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Session 23-29 Gender and Bollywood

Readings:

Datta, S. (2000). Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema, *Social Scientist*, Vol. 28, 3/4. (pp. 71-82).

Session 24-29 Representation of woman in performing arts

Session 25-29 Gender and Politics

Readings:

Subramanian, Malathi. (n.a.). *Political Participation and Representation of Women in Indian Politics*, Delhi, India: University of Delhi.

Session 26-29 Homosexuality

Readings:

Gupta, Alok. (2006, November 18). Section 377 and the Dignity of Indian Homosexuals. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 41, No. 46; Lakshmi, Rama. (2014, April 15). India recognizes a third gender, but homosexuality is still a crime, retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/04/15/india-recognizes-a-third-gender-but-homosexuality-is-still-a-crime/>

Session 27-29 In-class Presentation

Session 28-29 Transgender – Kinnars and Hijras

Readings:

Goel, Ina. Beyond the Gender Binary, retrieved from [https://www.academia.edu/6684937/Beyond the Gender Binary](https://www.academia.edu/6684937/Beyond_the_Gender_Binary);
India recognises transgender people as third gender, retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/15/india-recognises-transgender-people-third-gender>

Session 29-29 Interview with Kinnar/Hijra

Evaluation

Attendance & Class Participation	15%
Take-home Assignment	20%
In-class Presentation	25%
Research Paper	40%

Assessment Criteria

Take-home assignment

Students will write a 2/3 page response paper on one of the movies suggested by the teacher (“Mother India”, “Water”, “Mirch Masala” or “Dor”). While evaluating the thematic content and the female presence in the film, students are expected to address the following points:

- How are women represented in the film?
- What stereotypes the movie still adheres to?
- Would you consider this film women- friendly?
- Is the film a model of gender equality?

Students will be assessed on their ability to reply to the above questions and express evidence supported opinions.

In-class presentation

Students will collect 5 or 6 different advertisements of a particular type of product from sources like newspapers, magazine and TV clippings and analyze them in a gender perspective. Students are expected to examine female and male stereotypes portrayed into the advertisements of their choice and consider the role of various media in shaping attitudes towards femininity and masculinity, the economic interest behind those stereotypes as well as efforts made to counter them. The results of the study will be shared in a power point presentation to the class (15 minutes approx.. devoted to presentation itself including problem statement, explanation of the main idea and results and exposition of personal perspective, followed by 5 minutes of

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discussion and question-answer), students are also expected to submit a 2-3 page written summary. Students will be graded on the basis of effort, creativity, content, and style, presentation will be assessed according to its sequential and logical organization and ability to express thoughts in a coherent manner may be noted during oral presentations and subsequent discussions.

Research Paper

In the research paper, students will choose a class-related topic of their own interest which needs to be approved by the course professor and write a 1500-2000 word survey. The paper will contain an overview of the topic area, a summary of the key trends and insights, along with the appropriate references. Arguments should be supported by at least five outside sources, in addition to the course materials provided.

Students are expected to submit within class 13 a written paper mentioning title, topic and objective (i.e. the question that the research seeks to answer) of their research papers.

Students will be assessed on their ability to formulate a clear research question, review the relevant literature in the field, engage in independent research in addressing the question, justify the research methods used for the study, present and analyze their findings.

Grading

Alliance programs utilize the follow standard grading policy well accepted by most US institutions.

Excellent	A	93-100%	Good	B+	87-89%	Acceptable	C+	77-79%
	A-	90-92%		B	83-86%		C	73-76%
				B-	80-82%		C-	70-72%
						Unsatisfactory	D+	67-69%
							D	63-66%
							D-	60-62%
						Failing	F	<60%

Course Policies

Exams and Assignments

Students are required to take all regularly scheduled exams in courses for which they are registered, and to submit all assignments on time. Any compelling academic, personal, or medical reason that might justify a rescheduled exam or assignment must be brought up to the Resident Director, not program faculty. Failure to take scheduled exams or submit the requisite assignments for a course will adversely affect your grade as per the stated grading criteria for each course.

Classroom Conduct

Student punctuality is extremely important in China and India. Please do not be late for classes or other activities, as it is considered impolite to do so. It is improper to eat in class, to engage in other activities such as texting, or to slump or nap. Students are expected to be alert and engaged as a sign of respect for their professors.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory. It is essential that the students participate fully in the coursework and all required academic activities. Authorized absences may only be approved by the Resident Director, and students are expected to make up any missed work. Unauthorized absences will adversely affect a student's grades.