

PSY 380-01 Psychology of Gender Spring 2007

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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 12:00 – 1:00 pm and by appointment

Textbook: "Women's Lives: A Topical Approach" by Etaugh & Bridges

e-mail: beyer@uwp.edu When contacting me by e-mail include your name and the course number in the subject area of the e-mail. This is especially important if you don't have a university e-mail account and/or you are including an attachment. Otherwise you run the risk of having your e-mail deleted by my junk e-mail filter.

Course content and objectives

Psychology of Gender is a course for everyone who wants to learn more about research and theories on gender and gender stereotyping. We will discuss research and theories on the relevance of gender and stereotyping in the areas of physiology, sexuality, interpersonal relations (e.g., marriage, family, communication), employment (preferences for particular professions, discrimination), cognition and motivation (e.g., intellectual aptitude), personality (e.g., self-esteem, self-concept), psychological disorders, and violence against women. Topics that have traditionally received little attention such as women and politics will also be discussed.

Class schedule

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Overview of theories and research on gender	Chs. 1, 3
Gender stereotypes and media	Ch. 2
Physical development and issues	Chs. 4, 7, 12
Mental health	Ch. 13
Sexuality	Ch. 6
Interpersonal relationships	Ch. 8
Social behavior, personality, and cognition	Ch. 5
Gender and employment	Chs. 10, 11
Gender and education	Ch. 9
Violence against women	Ch. 14
What the future holds	Ch. 15

Course requirements and grading

Course grades will be based on three exams, several assignments dealing with writing a research proposal, and class attendance and participation.

Exams: The tentative dates for the exams are listed below. Firm dates and the topics covered on an exam will be announced at least one week prior to the exam. Exams cover material from lectures and the textbook. Make-up exams will be granted only in extraordinary cases such as medical emergency. I must be immediately notified and you are required to provide written proof of emergency.

Papers: The final paper will be a research proposal on a topic in the area of psychology of gender, selected by the student and okayed by me. Examples: Discrimination in the workplace, effect of female (male) role models on women (men), gender differences in (specific area), etc. Model papers are available in the psychology office (under my name).

The research proposal is supposed to be scholarly. PSY 300 (Research Methods) is a prerequisite for this course. Therefore I assume that you are familiar with PsycInfo, APA style, and research design. You are

expected to become familiar with your topic by reading and citing at least **12** scholarly pieces of work. Your paper will consist of a title page, introduction, method section, and a reference section in correct APA style.

The final paper is broken down into several assignments designed to help you compose a competent final paper. Although you will always be working on a new assignment, you will find that each assignment is of manageable size, will pace you, and will make completion of the final paper MUCH easier. The assignments related to the paper are worth **55%** of your grade.

Policy on late papers: I will penalize late papers by subtracting a full letter grade from the attained grade for **EACH** day that the paper is late. Each day of a weekend counts as a full day. You are responsible for ensuring that a late paper receives proper credit when received, by handing the paper to me personally, or having the secretary put the date of receipt on the paper before putting it in my mailbox. Failure to do so will result in the paper being counted as handed in whenever I find it.

Attendance and participation: Attendance and participation make up **5%** of your grade. Coming to class late or leaving early will adversely affect your grade, as will disruptive or uncooperative behavior. There will be many opportunities to discuss important issues relevant to our lives, so be an active participant in this course. It is expected that comments are respectful and courteous. Rude or intolerant behavior will not be tolerated.

Statement on academic dishonesty

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are completely unacceptable. Students who are caught cheating will receive a failing grade for the course and will be reported to the university for appropriate disciplinary action.

Policy on classroom disruptions

As a courtesy to me and your fellow students, please turn off the ringers on all cell phones, pagers, PDAs, and other electronic equipment during class time.

	Important dates (tentative)	
	% of grade	Due dates
Topic selection	1	January 26
References and title page for the paper	6	February 9
Exam 1	12	February 21
Introduction for peer review (bring 3 copies)	-	March 7
Peer reviews due back	2	March 9
Introduction	14	March 23
Exam 2	12	April 2
Method section for peer review (bring 3 copies)	-	April 4
Peer reviews due back	2	April 6
Method	14	April 13
Final research proposal for peer review (bring 3 copies)	-	April 25
Peer reviews due back	2	April 27
Final research proposal	14	May 4
Final exam	16	May 7, 10:30

Instructions for the Paper Psych 380 Spring 2007

Your paper will be a research proposal on a topic in the Psychology of Gender. Your paper is supposed to be a scholarly project. Therefore you need to cite research. You cannot rely on your personal experience.

The final research proposal has to be at least 10 pages long (excluding title page and references), double-spaced, typed, contain at least 12 references, and be in correct APA style. Since you will be rewriting sections of your paper several times, use a word processor. The paper should include a

- title page,
- introduction (use subheadings for clearer organization),
- method section (with appropriate subsections), and
- references.
- You may include an appendix if applicable.

Because you are proposing a research project, rather than conducting one, there will be no results or discussion sections in your research proposal. Therefore use **the future tense** in the method section.

Let's say you are interested in maternal employment. This topic is much too broad. You need to narrow it down so that it becomes manageable. Let's say you narrow it down to "The effects of maternal employment on children's achievement motivation." Your next step is to locate research on your topic in the library. PsycInfo will prove especially helpful. So, now you're ready to run several computer searches. To do an effective search, you need to have good key words.

For our example, you might try

- "maternal employment" and "achievement"
- "maternal employment" and "children"
- "mother" and "children's achievement"

You will probably have to try several different key words before you will find what you are looking for. Alternatively, you can use PsycInfo's Thesaurus to locate appropriate index terms. While you're doing the searches make sure you read the abstracts for the materials the computer located for you. From the abstracts you can often tell whether a given article will be helpful in writing your paper.

For example, after plugging in the key words "maternal employment" and "achievement", you may get five references, but when you look at the abstracts for these references, you discover that they are about the achievements of working mothers rather than the effect of maternal employment on children's achievement motivation. Print out those references that look promising.

Now locate these materials. Does the library carry the book(s) or journal(s) you need? If yes, look them up and start reading them. If no, use **inter-library loan**. However, **this takes time**, so don't delay the process of finding relevant materials. There is a reference section at the end of each article or book. Scan this section for further references related to your topic. Once you have a few good articles, it is easy to find more materials by conscientious scanning of reference sections. It is a good idea to copy the entire article including the reference section and to write on the copy of the article the name of the journal, volume, year, etc. This will save you much time in the long run.

You will need a minimum of **12** scholarly references in your paper, but you'll probably want more than that. You have to read **every source** listed on your reference page. In the end, you should feel that you have a good understanding of the major research projects and theories in your area of interest.

Remember that you have to be explicit. Define terms and describe results of any research you use to support your argument rather than assuming that the audience will be familiar with the research.

Use direct quotes sparingly. Paraphrase instead. However, be sure to always give proper credit to the original source. Plagiarism is a mortal sin!

The assignments will prepare you for the final research proposal which will be a more polished, rewritten version of the previous assignments.

In the introduction you need to answer the following questions:

- What is the paper about?
- Why is this topic worth pursuing? Why should the reader care?
- What is your hypothesis and how did you arrive at it? For example, is it based on a particular theory? You may have to define some terms here.
- What kinds of theories have been advanced?
- What are the typical research methodologies in this area?
- What has been found? Is there consistency in the findings?
- Are there any problems with this research? If yes, how do you propose to eliminate them in your study?

Use the literature review to support your hypothesis and to explain your conclusions. Do not talk about your opinions. You must support your claims and conclusions with references.

Don't ignore research that runs counter to your hypothesis. Try to deal with inconsistency, don't simply ignore it. What might be a reason for the inconsistency between your hypothesis and a particular research finding?

- Is your hypothesis wrong,
- did other researchers use a different population,
- different procedures,
- did they make mistakes in their methodology, etc.?

Weave the articles together in a coherent and logical way. The point of the literature review is to put your own work into perspective. How is it different from or similar to other work? Be careful not to just give me a literature review that says "Study 1 found X, Study 2 found Y, etc." The purpose of the literature review is to understand why you are proposing the study you are proposing.

In the method section you propose a study. The method section has to be very explicit. Use appropriate subheadings to organize the information. **Be specific.** Will you employ tests, questionnaires, interviews? If you make up your own materials, you can include them in an appendix. If you don't want to make up an entire questionnaire, you have to indicate what kind of questions, response alternatives, ways of distributing the questionnaire, etc. you would use. By reading your method section, your readers should be able to replicate your study if they wanted to.

We'll be talking about the specifics later when you will receive more detailed handouts for the assignments. However, if you have questions at any time during the process, contact me. I am willing to listen to your ideas and give suggestions. You will receive feedback on your written work. Before handing in the introduction, method section, and the final research proposal, three of your peers will critique your work. You will revise your paper in accordance with their suggestions and then hand it in to me. Then you will get feedback from me which is designed to help you improve your final research proposal.

Having to rewrite a paper many times can be a frustrating experience if you take the criticism from your peers and me personally. Accepting criticism of one's work is DIFFICULT. What you need to remember are two things.

- How else can you improve your skills?
- Criticism is a fact of academic life. Even the best writers and most famous psychologists have to face scathing criticism. Thus, you are in good company.

Accepting criticism graciously, being able to distinguish good advice from bad, and using the good advice to improve one's work is a sign of intellectual maturity!