



THEORIZING INTERSECTIONALITY (GWS 547) – Fall 2020

Meeting Time:

Tuesday, Thursday 9:30am-10:45am

Instructor:

Professor Keisha Lindsay
knlindsay@wisc.edu

Virtual Office Hours:

Mondays 3:45-4:45 pm
Thursdays 11:15-12:15 pm

Canvas URL: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/221567>

Course Description:

The aim of this course is to critically examine important issues, questions, and debates regarding intersectionality or the notion that race, gender, sexuality, and other terrains of difference are mutually constructing. GWS 547 is interdisciplinary in its approach. Course materials include texts, films, and other multimedia resources drawn from an array of disciplines including gender and women's studies, sociology, critical race theory, history, political theory, and cultural studies.

Section one of the course explores classic conceptualizations of intersectionality including how scholars understand the relationship between intersectionality, on the one hand, and feminist theory and practice, on the other. We move on to analyze specific tensions and debates in intersectional theorizing regarding: 1) who qualifies as an intersectional subject; 2) the strengths and limitations of examining intersectional privilege and 3) whether intersectionality can be used for anti-feminist ends. The third final section of the course contextualizes intersectionality. Our goal is to explore how scholars use intersectionality to understand disadvantage within specific social, economic, and political spheres including the family, the state, and the labor force. In this section and throughout the course, we pay particular attention to the notion that intersectionality is both an analytical tool and a distinct form of subjectivity.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify the relationship, if any, between intersectionality and feminist theory
2. Explore key debates regarding who qualifies as an intersectional subject
3. Interrogate the merits of conceptualizing and examining intersectional privilege
4. Examine how scholars use intersectionality to understand disadvantage within specific spheres including the family, the state, and the labor force.
5. Survey the interdisciplinary literature on intersectionality, identify key "gaps" and tensions in the literature, and formulate an original research question related to these "gaps" and tensions (Graduate Students Only)

Requisites:

GEN&WS/AFROM AM 333, and/or GWS 441, 445, 446, 449, 546 or graduate/professional standing

Course Designations and Attributes:

Breadth - Humanities

Level - Advanced

L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S

Credits: 3 credits

Instructional Mode, Meeting Time, and Location:

Class will meet online, synchronously (live), on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9:30 AM-10:45 AM, using the **CANVAS** Learning Management System. Please click on this link (TBA) to access class sessions. You can access all other course materials and resources using this CANVAS course [link](#). If you are having trouble logging in please contact the [DoIT Help Desk](#) for assistance.

Course Readings:

The following two books are required for this course:

-Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge. *Intersectionality (Key Concepts)*. Polity Press. ISBN-10: 0745684491

-Dean Spade. *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. Duke University Press. ISBN-10: 0822360403

Both books are available via our CANVAS course [page](#) (click on the relevant module) and via major online booksellers. All other readings are also available on the Canvas course [page](#).

Course Requirements:

Undergraduate Course Assignments:

1. **Class Attendance/Participation (10% of total grade).** This is an upper-level seminar in which extensive class participation is key to your success. To this end, **you are allowed 2 absences**. Any absences greater than this number, without an acceptable excuse, will drop your participation grade by one full letter grade regardless of the extent to which you participate in class discussions when present. If you are absent as a result of a COVID-19 diagnosis, I will work with you on an individual basis to (re)^{design} relevant assignments and implement other learning measures to help ensure that you continue to make progress in the course.
2. **Discussion Questions/Responses (15% of total grade)**
 - a. You will submit 3 pre-scheduled discussion questions, of 100 words or less, during the semester. A discussion question is **open ended. It cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.”** Use each question to comment on anything that you find contradictory, controversial, confusing or otherwise noteworthy in one or more the readings. Your question may seek clarification of particular terms or ideas; it may challenge an assigned author’s presumptions; it may interrogate the implications of an author’s claims; or it may attempt to relate assigned readings to materials beyond the course. I will use your questions to shape our in-class discussions. I will also post at least 1 of your discussion questions on our course discussion board to facilitate extended, after-class discussion. **Your discussion questions are due on either Monday at 6pm or Wednesday at 6pm (please click [here](#) to access the schedule).**
 - b. You will respond to 3 of your classmates’ discussion questions during the semester. At least one of your responses should be in the form of a meme, video, digital collage or other creative/visual format. In crafting your responses, focus on *complimenting* something specific in the discussion question, *commenting* on what you find meaningful about the question, *connecting* the question to an assigned text, and *asking* a new question of your own. You have three days to respond to a given discussion question. Put more specifically, **discussion responses are due on either Thursday at 6pm or Saturday at 6pm.** You must submit 1 of your responses by October 23.

3. **Module Reflections/Journal Entries (15% of total grade).** You will write 6 journal entries in which you reflect on what you have learned from the readings, videos, and class discussions in a specific course module. Each of your 200-word reflections should emphasize: (a) your opinion on the relevant readings, videos, and class discussions, (b) how your opinion is related to your personal experience at school, home, and elsewhere, and (3) why the readings, videos, and classroom discussions associated with the module in question do or do not reflect your opinion. This assignment is designed to help you make links between the course content and your own intellectual and personal perspectives. Your reflection journal is private. None of your classmates will see it. You must submit 3 of your journal entries by October 23.
4. **Mid-Term Essay (25% of total grade).** You will write a 5-page paper in which you critically analyze an advertising image that appears in a magazine/newspaper or on a website. Your mid-term essay is **due in my office on October 19 at 1:00 PM.**
5. **Final Essay (35% of total grade).** You will write: a) a 7-8 page manifesto outlining why feminist activists working in a particular arena (reproductive rights, sexual violence, affirmative action, workplace discrimination, subsidized childcare for working mothers, etc.) can and should embrace intersectionality **OR** 2) a 7-8 page essay in which you use intersectionality to analyze a major (post 1960) socio-economic or political change (rise of single parent families, the prison industrial complex, of criminal incarceration, the legalization of gay marriage, COVID-19 and its effects, etc.). Your final essay is **due on December 14 at 1:00 pm.**

Graduate Course Assignments:

1. **Discussion Questions/Responses (15% of total grade)**
 - a. You will submit 3 pre-scheduled discussion questions, of 75 words or less, during the semester. A discussion question is **open ended. It cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.”** Use each question to comment on anything that you find contradictory, controversial, confusing or otherwise noteworthy in one or more the readings. Your question may seek clarification of particular terms or ideas; it may challenge an assigned author’s presumptions; it may interrogate the implications of an author’s claims; or it may attempt to relate assigned readings to materials beyond the course. I will also post at least 1 of your discussion questions on our course discussion board to facilitate extended, after-class discussion. **Your discussion questions are due on either Monday at 6pm or Wednesday at 6pm (please click [here](#) to access the schedule).**
 - b. You will respond to at least 3 of your classmates’ discussion questions during the semester. At least one of your responses should be in the form of a meme, digital collage, video, or other creative/visual format. In crafting your response, focus on complimenting something specific in the discussion question, commenting on what you find meaningful about the question, connecting the question to an assigned text, and asking a new question of your own. You have three days to respond to a given discussion question. Put more specifically, **discussion responses are due on either Thursday at 6pm or Saturday at 6pm.** You must submit 1 of your responses by October 23.
6. **Module Reflections/Journal Entries (15% of total grade).** You will write 6 journal entries in which you reflect on what you have learned from the readings, videos, and class discussions in a specific course module. Each of your 200-word reflections should emphasize: (a) your opinion on the readings, videos, and class discussions, (b) how your opinion is related to your personal experience at school, home, and elsewhere, and (3) why the readings, videos, and classroom discussions associated with the module in question do or do not reflect your opinion. This assignment is designed to help you make links between the course content and your own intellectual and personal perspectives. Your reflection journal is private. None of your classmates will see it. You must submit 3 of your journal entries by October 23.

1. **Abstract (20% of total grade).** You will prepare a 4 page, double-spaced abstract outlining the main claim of your proposed research paper, the possible significance of your work, the types of materials/sources you plan to examine, and how you propose to examine them. At this stage, you may not have finalized your main argument or the types of materials you will examine. However, the point of your abstract is to narrow down your topic in a way that is intelligible to others. So, if there are aspects of your project that remain uncertain, make temporary choices or posit a claim that may be relevant or useful in the weeks to come. Your abstract is **due on November 18 at 6:00 pm.**
2. **Research Paper (50% of total grade).** You will write a 20 page research paper on a relevant topic of your choice. Your research paper is **due on December 14 at 1:00 pm.**

| | | Student Workflow | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|--------|----------------------------|
| GWS 549 Online Weekly Rhythm | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | Submit Discussion Question | | Submit Discussion Question | Submit Discussion Response | | Submit Discussion Response |
| | | | *Synchronous Class Meeting | | *Synchronous Class Meeting | | |
| | Complete Required Readings/Work on Journal Entries | | | | | | |
| | | | Virtual Office Hours Mondays 3:45-4:45 pm | | Virtual Office Hours Thursdays 11:15-12:15 pm | | |
| | Communications Via Email Throughout The Week | | | | | | |

Statement Grade Related Questions and Appeals: I will discuss questions about grades during office hours or by appointment - not over email or before/after class. If you would like to challenge your grade, please wait 24 hours after receiving the grade before contacting me. If you have questions about a grade, please speak to me first. If the question is not resolved, speak with the department Chair who will attempt to resolve the issue informally and inform you of the Appeals Procedures if no resolution is reached informally. Final grades will be determined according to the following official UW grading scale: A 93-100; AB 88-92; B 83-87; BC 78-82; C 70-77; D 60-69; F below 60.

Late Paper Policy: Papers and exams turned in late will be penalized by **ten (10) percentage points** for each 24-hour period after the due date.

University of Wisconsin-Madison Policies Rules, Rights & Responsibilities

- See: <https://Guide.Wisc.Edu/Undergraduate/#Rulesrightsandresponsibilitiestext>
- Academic Calendar & Religious Observances
- See: <https://Secfac.Wisc.Edu/Academic-Calendar/#Religious-Observances>

Academic Integrity

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. (Source: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/syllabus-statement/>)

Accommodations For Students With Disabilities

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (Source: <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/instructor/>)

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. (Source: <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>)

Privacy Of Student Records and the Usage of Audio Recorded Lectures

See the following link for information about [privacy of student records and the usage of audio-recorded lectures](#). Lecture materials and recordings for Theorizing Intersectionality are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Section I – Theorizing Intersectionality

Sept 3:

- Syllabus Review
- Meet and Greet
- Interactive Exercise

Module 1- (Re)Reading Intersectionality's Past and Present

Sept 8:

- Bilge and Collins. "What is Intersectionality"
- Kimberlé Crenshaw, Sumi Cho, and Leslie McCall. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis"
- Film Clip. "Laverne Cox Talks about Intersectionality at Harvard"

Sept 10:

- Sojourner Truth. "When Woman Gets Her Rights Man will be Right"
- Anna Julia Cooper. "The Status of Woman in America"
- Bilge and Collins. "Getting the History of Intersectionality Straight?"

Section II – Debating Intersectionality

Module 2- Who Qualifies as an Intersectional Subject?

Sept 15:

- Nikol Floyd-Alexander. "Disappearing Acts: Reclaiming Intersectionality in the Social Sciences in a Post-Black Feminist Era"
- Julia Jordan-Zachery. "Now you see me, now you don't: My political fight against the invisibility/erasure of Black women in intersectionality research."

Sept 17:

- Jennifer C. Nash. "Re-thinking Intersectionality"
- Ange Marie Hancock. "Intersectionality: Intellectual Property or Meme?"

Module 3- The Who, What, and Why of Intersectional Privilege

Sept 22:

- Peggy McIntosh. "White Privilege and Male Privilege"
- Michael Kimmel. "Masculinity and Homophobia"

Sept 24:

- Karen Sacks. "How Jews Became White"
- Phoebe Maltz Bovy. "Checking Privilege Checking"

Module 4- Anti-Progressive Intersectionality?

Sept 29:

- Nancy Wadsworth. "Intersectionality in California's Same-Sex Marriage Battles: A Complex Proposition"

-Crunk Feminist Collective. My Brother's Keeper & the Co-Optation of Intersectionality

Oct 1:

-Guidroz and Berger. "A Conversation with Founding Scholars of Intersectionality"

-Bilge and Collins. "Intersectionality as Critical Inquiry and Praxis"

Module 5 - Intersectionality and/as Identity Politics

Oct 6:

-Kimberlé Crenshaw. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"

-“Combahee River Collective Statement”

Oct 8:

-Jasbir Puar. "I'd Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess: Becoming Intersectional in Assemblage Theory"

-Bilge and Collins. "Intersectionality and Identity"

Section III – Contextualizing Intersectionality

Module 6 - Work

Oct 13:

-Evelyn. N. Glenn. "Who Cares"

-Evelyn N. Glenn. "Neoliberalism and Globalization"

Oct 15: *Mid-Term Essay Preparation*

Oct 20:

*-Film – "Sorry To Bother You"

Module 7 – Family and State

Oct 22:

-Patricia Hill Collins. "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation"

-Myra Marx Ferree. "Filling the glass: Gender perspectives on families"

Oct 27:

-Linda Anichisi. "One, No One, and a Hundred Thousand"

-Dorothy E. Roberts. "Race, Gender, and Genetic Technologies: A New Reproductive Dystopia?"

Module 8 - Embodiment(s)

Oct 29:

-Eunjung Kim and Alison Kafer. "Disability and the Edges of Intersectionality"

-Pamela Block. "Sexuality, Fertility, and Danger: Twentieth-Century Images of Women with Cognitive Disabilities"

Nov 3:

- Emi Koyama. "The Transfeminist Manifesto"
- In-Class Film: "Still Juggling"

Nov 5:

- Shatema Threadcraft. "Introduction: Black Female Body Politics"
- E. Cole and N. Sabik. "Repairing a Broken Mirror"

Module 9 - Education

Nov 10:

- bell hooks. "Engaged Pedagogy"
- Bilge and Collins. "Intersectionality and Critical Education"

Nov 12:

- Mako Fitts. "Institutionalizing Intersectionality"
- Paul Butler. "Black Male Exceptionalism? The Problems and Potential of Black Male - Focused Interventions"

Module 10 - Law

Nov 17:

- Dean Spade. "Introduction: Rights, Movements, and Critical Trans Politics" and "What's Wrong with Rights"

Nov 19:

- Dean Spade. "Rethinking Transphobia and Power – Beyond a Rights Framework" and "Law Reform and Movement Building"

Module 11 - Social Movements

Nov 24:

- Film Clip – Tarana Burke. "Me Too is a Movement, Not a Moment"
- Dubravka Zarkov and Kathy Davis "Ambiguities and dilemmas around #MeToo: #ForHow Long and #WhereTo?"
- Juliana Restrepo Sanín. "#MeToo What Kind of Politics? Panel Notes"

Dec 1:

- Alicia Garza. "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement"
- Cathy J. Cohen & Sarah J. Jackson. "Ask a Feminist: A Conversation with Cathy Cohen on Black Lives Matter, Feminism, and Contemporary Activism"
- David Pellow. "Toward A Critical Environmental Justice Studies Black Lives Matter As An Environmental Justice Challenge"

Dec 3:

- Bilge and Collins. "Intersectionality, Social Protest, and Neoliberalism"
- David Spade. "Conclusion: This is a Protest, Not a Parade!"

Module 12 - (Re)Envisioning Intersectionality's Future

Dec 8: Final Essay Preparation

Dec 10:

-Bilge and Collins. "Intersectionality Revisited"

-Anne Russo. "Epilogue: The Future of Intersectionality: What's at Stake"