

Bellevue College

SOC 258 Sociology of the Body

Fully Online Course

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Spring 2019: April 3rd – June 21st

Office Hours – By appt, online only

We can meet online or on the phone

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Human bodies are contested, heralded, celebrated, cherished, loathed, abused, and questioned. They are normalized and demonized. They feel and touch. We dress them, mark them indelibly, pierce them, and decorate them. Bodies are used as art and for art. They may or may not be vessels for our souls. They are held sacred, and they tell stories. Bodies are social spaces as they interact and communicate. They hold traumas, birth children, break, heal, and are eventually cast into flame, dirt, or sea at their immutable end. How do we measure the social, cultural, or political body against how we measure ourselves and others? Bodies are sites of political and social struggle and are often defined by race, class, gender, and religion (and vice versa).

In this course, we will engage bodies and their multiple meanings—which are shaped by social expectations—and look at how bodies (and body parts) are socially constructed, why some bodies (and body parts) are privileged above others and develop a critical understanding of how the body is sexualized, raced, gendered, and classed. How the body is situated to reinforce social expectations—and why—is a key element of study in this course.

“Doctors don’t seem to realize that most of us are perfectly content not having to visualize ourselves as animated bags of skin filled with obscene glop.”

— Joe Haldeman, *The Forever War*

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: In Social Science and Humanities, we examine just about every aspect of the social world, we talk about provocative material. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, and they are always framed within an academic context. Keeping in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, and you may be confronted with subject matter that might challenge you. Please note, however, that you are responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to email me at any time.

READING REQUIREMENTS:

- All readings & handouts are available on our Canvas site.
- Readings are uploaded in each module.
- Handouts and resources are uploaded to the course in your Get Started Module

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Any current Sociology Dictionary
- Any writing guide to help you in your quest for mastering college-level writing.

- Purdue College's [resources for college students](#).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, please see me immediately so I can also refer you to our Disability Resource Center (DRC). If you prefer, you may contact them directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their [website](#).

EXPLORE THE LMC! The Library Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the LMC at least once a week, but you can also access it via the web. Talk to a Reference Librarian at the Library (D-126), by calling (425) 564-6161, or by [email](#).

- [LMC Research Guide](#)
- [Main Library Media Center](#)
- [For article databases](#)

Learning & Course Outcomes:

Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you should:

1. Explain how the body is simultaneously biological and social;
2. Discuss the body at a theoretical and abstract level;
3. Identify the role of culture and group norms in the presentations of our bodies;
4. Illustrate the complex interactions between culture, groups, identity, the Self, and the body;
5. Analyze the major social problems connected to the body;
6. Assess the impacts of power, dominance, and inequality on our bodies;
7. Explain how bodies can be a site of both oppression and empowerment; and
8. Apply the course material to his or her own life, allowing for a deeper understanding of his/her own bodily experience.

Rules & Expectations:

Check into our online classroom often. No need to check in with me on this one. Make this class work for you on your own time.

Complete readings and homework assignments *on time*. You need to read/review your required material to complete all homework assignments.

You may submit multiple papers leading up to the deadline; *however*, once your paper is graded, it's locked in. I don't grade papers twice! 😊

Late Work Policy:

- You will recognize that every professor has their approach to late work. This goes together with teaching philosophies and styles, and as such, you want to review and understand the rules. I try to make mine as clear as possible but if you ever have questions, post to our Q&A Forum.

- Discussion Boards: Initial Discussion Board Posts (your main Discussion Board homework) are due on Thursdays. You are required to respond to the Initial Posts of two of your colleagues by the Sunday in the week of the active Discussion Board. Your Initial Post is deducted by five points for each day it's late. After Sunday, the Discussions are closed for that week, and no more late work is accepted.
- Other Homework: There is a two-day grace period for homework assignments. After that, I do not accept late work.
- Exams: If you don't have a midterm or final exam, no worries. Otherwise, note that I do not accept any late midterms or exams. The quizzes I have for my classes are always open until the end of the term.
- Final Paper: There are no late assignments accepted for Final Term Papers (sometimes called Portfolio Assignments) and all Incremental Assignments associated with the Final Paper.

Life happens. We have stressors. We must manage them. That includes traveling for work or pleasure and any problems with your jobs, partners, parents, siblings, friends, kids, other classes, etc. that come up. Please manage your lives so that you can also manage this class. Your life (and your homework) is your responsibility. That said, I allow two assignment extensions per term, and they must be requested before an assignment's deadline. Use those opportunities wisely.

I expect that your behavior in our classroom is respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class will result in your grade lowering. Please keep your postings to discussion boards (DBs) thoughtful and polite. One-on-one conversations should be taken offline, so our DBs don't get clogged. If you find at any point that you are uncomfortable with anything posted to a DB, please email me right away. Be wary of soapboxing in this class; you may be tempted to present your opinion and editorialize but refrain from doing this. We're here to think about the world in a fair, balanced, thoughtful, and nuanced manner. One-way thinking doesn't work here.

Remember: Falling behind can be hazardous to your health!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: In this course, you will be completing assigned readings, participating in discussion board assignments, and completing short homework assignments. The work you do for this class will keep you critically engaged with the world around you from a sociological perspective. There are no exams for this course. Expect to be writing every week. The key to this course is your thoughtful reflection on course material. The first seven weeks of the course include your review of assigned readings and films. The remaining weeks are for you to engage in the research process, reviewing articles you've found for your research paper, sharing them with the class (and with me), and wrapping up your Incremental Assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation*: 100 points

Journal Assignments (8):	400 points
Main Discussion Boards (3):	150 points
Final Research Paper Increments (4):	100 points
Final Research Paper (1):	310 points
TOTAL:	960 points

The Fine Print:

*Participation points accrue with various short assignments in the Discussion Area, such as your Introductory DB. These are labeled **PARTICIPATION DBs**. The Main DB assignments are labeled **MAIN DBs**.*

Attendance & Participation: Check in no less than four times per week. Be engaged with all of your discussion board assignments. Provoke energetic and polite discussion. Listen, read, and comprehend actively. Work respectfully with your colleagues in class. Take loads of notes from your readings. Look up words you don't understand. Ask questions. Think critically about the world around you. Make use of the Q&A Board (the Q&A Board is encouraged, but not required).

Journals: You will be investigating dynamic topics about the Body through a wide variety of mediums, including film, music, art, recorded lectures, and critical writing/essays. The Journal Assignments engage you deeply with the course content, some of which might be new to you regarding how you understand The Body in society. We engage a variety of experiences from multiple perspectives, so you should expect to be challenged. Stay open to learning new things and different ways of thinking about the world. Journals *are not editorials, opinion pieces, or space for you to soapbox*. Please keep that in mind as you prepare thoughtful and reflective pieces of writing throughout the course material.

Main Discussion Board Assignments: Discussion Boards have you engage in the course material and work closely together. You are expected to participate in these assignments to generate critical discussion amongst one another. Be aware that some of these require a few days, or even a week, of preparatory work. Make sure you look ahead at your homework. These assignments are always due on Thursdays and Sundays (your initial posts go up Thursdays, and your responses to one another's initial posts are due by Sundays, not necessarily *on* Sunday ☺). Your DBs are graded on two things: your original post and your responses (two of them) to your colleagues' Initial Posts. *You must do both to earn full credit*. Your Initial Important note: Responding to people in your thread is great; you should do it. But you won't get those Response Points for them. You must respond to others' initial posts. Also, when I pop in and engage in the dialogue (I don't always do this, but I will on occasion), it's great to respond to me, but you also do not get points for this. Keep an eye out for my responses; I may be trying to help you improve your grade. If I don't respond, you'll see me "like" your post; I do this to let you know that I am engaged and following along.

Participation Discussion Board Assignments: These are meant to support you throughout the course and are required; the grades get folded into your overall Participation Grade.

Final Research Paper + Incremental Assignments: Throughout the quarter, you will be working on a research paper to do with Body in the U.S. You may make this about anything you want. You will submit five assignments for this:

1. Topic
2. Proposal + Annotated Bibliography
3. First Draft + Annotated Bibliography
4. Peer Review
5. Final Submission

More information about this project is in the course handouts area.

For all your written work: Submit proofread work **only**. Work not proofread will be returned **once** for a rewrite, expected to be handed in within 48 hours. If you need help with your writing, please make use of the following student support services:

- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [Academic Tutoring Center](#)
- [TRiO Student Support Services](#)
- [Writing Lab @ BC](#)

Required Writing Guidelines (emphasis on *required*):

- *You must follow the required writing guidelines in the syllabus. Not doing so may result in your grade lowering by 5 points per item.*
- Twelve-point sized Times font, *double-spaced*.
- 1” margins all around
- APA Citations where appropriate – credit must be given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own (see notes below about avoiding plagiarism)
- Title pages and bibliographies *are not counted* as pages due
- Student information is at the top left of the page, single-spaced
- There are no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Paragraphs contain no less than four sentences.
- Magazines, newspapers, journals, and books are *italicized*. Movie titles, article titles, song titles, etc. are “in quotation marks.” Quotes inside of a quotation use ‘single quotation marks.’
- Avoid the universal “we,” “our,” “us” – ask yourself: Can I speak for everyone? If you cannot, do not write it. Also, avoid phrasing such as “nowadays...” and “since the beginning of time.” Be accurate. Know what you’re writing and why.
- *Do not use* Wikipedia, CliffNotes, or other such encyclopedic references or online dictionaries. Wikipedia is not peer-reviewed and therefore unreliable. Do your research. If you’re going to research online (which is encouraged and legit), make sure you understand what you’re looking for. Do a deep dive into the internet to find your stuff.
- Be sure that no more than 20% of your papers are outside sources. You must be providing your analysis while you draw from the material presented to you in class.

Your written work is evaluated on:

- 1) Content
 - a. Fulfilling the entire assignment. Doing the minimum amount of work expected will likely get you a passing grade, but not an outstanding one. You’re expected to go the extra mile.

- b. Fully developing your argument(s) and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument(s).
 - c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.
- 2) Writing Style
- a. Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. **NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, please let me know! I'm happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.**
 - b. Clarity of thought.
 - c. Good organization and attention to detail.
 - d. The persuasiveness of your argument/s.
 - e. Creativity. Make it an interesting read!
 - f. PROOFREAD your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in. Read it out loud to yourself, too! It helps.
 - g. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different way of presenting your research and ideas. ☺

Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism occurs if:

- a. You do not cite quotations and attribute borrowed ideas.
- b. You fail to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks.
- c. You do not write summaries and paraphrases in his/her own words and doesn't document a source or sources.
- d. You turn in work created by another person.
- e. You submit or use your prior work for a current or past course, or work from one current course in another course *without express permission* from your professors. This may also be considered academic dishonesty.
- f. Consequences: If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will likely fail the assignment and possibly the course, despite points earned through other work. Acts of academic dishonesty are reviewed for disciplinary action.

Grading:

Please use the following to help explain the grade you receive for a given assignment. Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions you ever have on a grade you receive. There is no limit to how many times you email me! My email door is *always* open, and I'm happy to go over grades with you.

A: 94-100
 A-: 90-93
 B+: 87-89
 B: 84-86
 B-: 80-83
 C+: 77-79

C: 74-76
 C-: 70-73
 D+: 67-69
 D: 64-66
 D-: 60-63
 F: 59 and below

90-100 = A-Range. “A” work shows me you’re engaged with all course material by utilizing quotes and ideas. It is writing *completely free* from grammar and spelling errors, demonstrating your command not only of the English language but the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your “writing voice.” That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another. Your ideas should be “fleshed out” and not just a series of statements, in other words.

80-89 = B-Range. The “B” tells me you’re doing very good work. You may have a couple of grammar issues, but your work is still tidy, and the writing is still strong. You have a firm grasp on the themes in the course, but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and media and lecture material as you could be. I should see that you’re being challenged and that you’re struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C-Range. “C” work means that you’re not as invested in the material as I would like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you’re not thinking as critically as I would like you to. You write the bare minimum of the length requirement. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

60-69 = D-Range. Ah, the “D.” “D” is for “Don’t be Discouraged.” I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point, but if they are, please see me immediately. “D” work is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is little-to-no integration of material, and you’re not responding to the questions raised in the assignment. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A “D” and below may be rewritten **once** if you choose to do so. It must be turned in within 72 hours, and I enter the better grade.)

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

ASSIGNMENTS ARE ALWAYS DUE BY MIDNIGHT

DO NOT WORK AHEAD MORE THAN ONE WEEK

Week One: April 3

Required Materials:

- [“The Body as Social: Roxane Gay’s *Hunger*” by Karen Sternheimer](#)
- “Generalizing and Stereotypes” by Joel Charon

Assignments:

- Participation DB I: Introductions & Practice Discussion. Due Sunday, 4/7

Week Two: April 8

Required Materials:

- “Dead Bodies that Matter: Toward a New Ecology of Human Death in American Culture” by Suzanne Kelly

- [C-Span Clip of a talk by Mary Roach from her book, *STIFF: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*](#)
- [“Mirrors with Memories: Why Did Victorians Take Pictures of Dead People?” by Bess Lovejoy](#)

Assignments:

- Main DB 1: Getting Comfortable Talking about Dead Bodies. Due Thursday, 4/11, responses by Sunday, 4/14
- Journal 1: An Introduction to the Body as a Concept and Construct. Due Sunday, 4/14
- Incremental Research Assignment 1: Topic Submission. Due Sunday 4/14

Week Three: April 15

Required Materials:

- "Exploring the Critiques of the Social Model of Disability: The Transformative Possibility of Arendt's Notion of Power" by J. Owens
- "Teaching Disability Studies with *Five Flavors of Dumb*" by Alisha M. White

Film Screenings:

- [Alone in a Crowded Room](#) (you must be logged into the BC Library to access the film). Alternatively, go to the BC LMC online and type the title of the film into the search bar.

Assignments:

- Main DB 2: Initial Submission Due Thursday, 4/18; Responses Due Sunday, 4/21
- Journal 2: Bodies and The Sociological Arc of “Disability”. Due Sunday 4/21

Week Four: April 22

Readings:

- Nguyen, Mimi T. (2012). Riot Grrrl, Race, and Revival. *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, 22(2-3), 173-196. (Note that I've uploaded the entire journal for you in case you want to read more. You are only required to read Nguyen's article.)
- Cottom, Tressie McMillan. (9/19/2013). When Your (Brown) Body is a (White) Wonderland. Retrieved from <http://tressiemc.com/2013/08/27/when-your-brown-body-is-a-white-wonderland/>

Films:

- Spooner, J. (Producer) & Spooner, J. (Director). (2003). *Afro-Punk: The Movie*. US: Afro-Punk Productions.
- Anderson, S. et. al (Producer), & Anderson, S. (Director). (2013). *The Punk Singer*. US: Sundance Selects.

Assignments:

- Journal 3: The Body in a Boy's Wonderland. Due Sunday, 4/28
- Participation DB 2: More discussions about bodies – a check-in. Due Sunday, 4/28
- Incremental Research Assignment 2: Draft Proposal, Two Annotated Bibliographies, Working Bibliography due Sunday 4/28

Week Five: April 29

Study Week

Assignments:

- Study Week. Use this time to work on gathering research. I will have scheduled Live Sessions throughout the week for meeting with anyone who wants to discuss their research paper. Stay tuned for those announcements.

Week Six: May 6Required Material:

- “The Image of the Female Body in Contemporary Society: An Approach from the Arts Classroom” by Carol Gillanders and Carmen Franco-Vázquez
- [Guerilla Girls website](#) Please explore the site

Assignments:

- Journal 4: The Woman’s Body as Art. Due Sunday 5/12
- Participation DB 3: Sharing Topics. Due Sunday, 5/12

Week Seven: May 13Readings:

- “Age and embodied masculinities: Midlife gay and heterosexual men talk about their bodies” by Amy Lodge and Debra Umberson

Films:

- “Body Image for Boys” by Cambridge International
- [“Hip Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes” by Byron Hurt](#)
- “The Slanted Screen” by Jeff Adachi

Assignments:

- Main DB 3: Initial Post due Thursday, 5/16. Responses to at least two colleagues’ Initial Posts due Sunday, 5/19.
- Journal 5: Masculinity and The Body. Due Sunday, 5/19.

Week Eight: May 20

- No required material this week; you’ll be focusing on research for your final paper.

Assignments:

- Incremental Research Assignment 3: PART A: First Draft due to your Assigned Reading Partners Sunday, 5/26 (*no rough drafts, please*). Submit to your partner via email and copy me in the email. I will give you credit only after I’ve seen you’ve submitted your paper to your partner. This is the only step you need to take for Part A (see Week Nine).
- Journal 6: Your Research. Due 5/26

Week Nine: May 27Readings:

- Peer Review Form

Assignments:

- Incremental Research Assignment 3: PART B: Peer Review Form due via email to your Assigned Reading Partners *and me*, Sunday 6/2. Do not send me *your draft*, just the Form.
- Journal 7: Peer Evaluation Reflection. Due Sunday, 6/2.

Week Ten: June 3

- No required material this week; you’ll be focusing on research for your final paper.

Assignments:

- Incremental Research Assignment 4: First Draft, Two Additional Annotated Bibliographies, and Working Bibliography. Due Sunday, 6/9

Week Eleven: June 10

- No required material this week; you'll be focusing on research for your final paper.

Assignments:

- Participation DB 4: End of Quarter Reflection & Discussion. Due Sunday, 6/16
- Journal 8: Course Assessment. Due Sunday, 6/16

Finals Week: June 19-21

Assignments:

- Final Research Paper due Friday, June 21. *No late assignments accepted. No exceptions.*

Let's have a wonderful term!