

## Special Topics: Masculinities

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**Course:** WGS 460/SOA 480

**Credits:** 4

**Session:** Spring 2011

**Dates/time:** M 6-9:30

**Room:** UHB 2001

**Instructor:** Michael J. Murphy, PhD

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**Office Hours:** by appt.

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### Course Description

Advanced undergraduate seminar on men and masculinities primarily in the contemporary U.S. Topics: sources of masculinity, male power/privilege; the male body; social and cultural construction of masculinity; masculinity and men of color; masculine cultures of sports, war, and violence; masculinity in popular culture; and female and queer masculinities.

### Prerequisites:

There are no pre-requisites for this course however it is intended for advanced undergraduates and graduate students. Readings assume students have some familiarity with basic topics in the sociology of gender and sexuality, and assignments require solid reading comprehension, discussion, and writing skills. **Freshman and sophomores should speak with the instructor and carefully review the reading load/course requirements before committing to the course.**

### Format of course

This is an advanced seminar in which discussion of readings and other course materials (films, etc.) will comprise the majority of class time. This is not a lecture course and active student participation is required for the success of the course!

### The Minor in Women and Gender Studies

This course fulfills the “Diverse Voices” requirement of the Minor Degree in Women and Gender Studies. The minor requires 15-16 credit hours (4-5 courses) and is an excellent complement to a major in Psychology, Social Work, Criminal Justice, History, English Literature, Political Science, Sociology/ Anthropology, Communication, etc. Students planning to apply to graduate programs in Education, Psychology, Social Work and related fields, Law (family/sexuality law), Medicine (numerous specialties), and Business (especially human resources) are encouraged to pursue the WGS Minor alongside their major course of study. Visit: [www.uis.edu/womenandgenderstudies](http://www.uis.edu/womenandgenderstudies).

### Required Texts

In order to save students the cost of expensive textbooks, all readings for this course are on Blackboard. **However, because this is a reading/discussion class, you MUST print out and bring readings to class when they are scheduled for discussion.** It will not be possible to fully participate in class discussions and other in-class exercises without the readings. There are roughly 450 pages of readings assigned for the course which represents roughly \$27-\$45 in printing costs. This is substantially less than the cost of any of the available textbooks for this course (average cost \$80-\$100). If you are unable/unwilling to invest this amount in your education, you should drop the course.

→ *Strategies for lowering printing costs:*

- do not use campus printers; if you use draft setting on a personal printer, you should be able to

- print all readings for the cost of paper and one printer cartridge.
- don't print copyright pages/footnotes!
- print two pages of reading on one piece of paper (often called 'two-up' printing).
- download ALL readings to a portable drive and take to a copy center (which often offer discounts for bulk printing); ask for a UIS discount!

**Course requirements (course is worth 1000 points total):**

*1. Class participation (300 points)*

Because this is a reading/discussion seminar, voluntary student participation is essential to the success of the course. Participation is not the same as attendance; participation is meaningful, relevant, and substantive engagement with the course materials in ways that further individual and group learning. The instructor will make every effort to invite students to participate but ultimately it is up to each student to fulfill this course requirement. If participation becomes an issue, the instructor reserves the right to measure participation through more formal methods such as readings quizzes; collecting readings and notes, etc.

→ *Strategies for quiet learners:* as you read, look for passages that 1) best state the author's main or secondary points; 2) you don't understand and would like some help with; 3) you disagree with. Mark these so that you can quickly and easily find them during class. If you have trouble formulating a question/statement in the heat of the moment, prepare one or two questions in advance and read them when there's a lull in class conversation. Be prepared to respond if you are invited to contribute!

*Participation grading criteria:*

- A: speaks often and demonstrates advanced understanding of readings; always brings hard copy of readings to class; demonstrates preparation; keeps discussion focused on learning; generates discussion by picking up a discussion thread/engaging other students; listens respectfully/attentively; volunteers topics/questions for discussion;
- B: speaks often and demonstrates familiarity with the readings; brings hard copy of readings to most classes; contributions are focused on the discussion topic; responds but does not generate discussion topics;
- C: may speak often but demonstrates little familiarity with the readings; has hard copy of readings some of the time; contributions are not conducive to learning; unable to substantiate statements with evidence from readings;
- D: rarely speaks and so does not demonstrate familiarity with readings; rarely has hard copy of readings in class; contributions distract class/detract from learning; unable to substantiate perspective on readings; sometimes uses unapproved electronic devices in class;
- F: never brings hard copy of readings to class; never voluntarily contributes; cannot make a substantive/relevant contribution when called upon; does not listen with a sense of engagement or respect; unable to substantiate perspective on readings; habitual use of unapproved electronic devices in class.

*2. Presentation of readings (300 points)*

Twice during the semester, each student will introduce assigned readings to the class and provide a 2 page, single-spaced handout (double-sided printing is OK) for each member of the class. In general, each 15 minute presentation should *summarize* the readings (what are they about?); *relate* them to the course topic (how do they help us better understand masculinities?); and *identify* their most important *claims/arguments* (what is the author arguing/claiming?) In addition, please provide some basic biographical information on the authors (who are they? What is their area of exper-

tise/research?) but this should not take up more than a sentence or two of your handout. Images are not necessary for handouts.

→*Hint*: readings in this course have been selected because of the value of their ideas and arguments, not because they offer basic facts or information. Example: the article “Warrior Narratives in the Kindergarten Classroom,” was not selected because it helps us understand kindergartners! When in doubt, ask what each reading argues or helps us learn about the main topic “masculinities” and the sub-topic of each day’s class. And don’t be afraid to ask for help/hints from the instructor!

### 3. Ethnomethodology experiment, paper, and presentation (400 points)

A 3000 word (roughly 10 pp.) paper based on a social experiment that makes the ‘invisible’ social norms of masculinity visible by disrupting them. Paper will be due in three installments: a one-paragraph proposal, a description of the experiment with raw data; and a paper that ties the whole thing together, with analysis of findings using knowledge gained from readings and class discussion.

### 4. Extra credit (50 points maximum)

Occasional extra credit opportunities may be made available to the class. If you become aware of an event or speaker that is *free*, clearly *relevant* to course topic, and *available* to all students—please inform the instructor!

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## General Course Policies

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### 1. Syllabus = contract

Your continued enrollment in the course implies that you have read and agreed to be bound by the terms of the syllabus. Minor adjustments will be made at the discretion of the instructor; major adjustments in consultation with the class as a whole.

### 2. It’s your education!

Your enrollment in this course implies you are interested in the material and want to be here. You are expected to assume responsibility for your education by attending class regularly, keeping up with readings, showing up on time and staying for the entire class, actively participating in class activities, finding out what you missed if you have an absence, turning in your work on time, retaining all your graded work in case there is a grade discrepancy, and communicating about potential problems in time for them to be solved.

### 3. Attendance

- **Because so much of the learning in this class requires your physical presence in the classroom, regular, punctual attendance is required.** A sign-in sheet will be circulated during the first few minutes of class. It will serve as proof of your presence/absence.
- Each student is allowed **one** absence without grade penalty and can use it for any purpose without explanation: illness, team travel, job interview, etc. No distinction will be made between excused or unexcused absences.
- **Second** absence will result in a **course** grade penalty of 100 points (full letter grade).
- **Miss three or more classes and you automatically fail the class, regardless of the quality of other work.**
- If you are experiencing profound life issues (chronic illness, death in family, etc.) affect your attendance you should meet with the instructor to talk about negotiating an incomplete grade contract!

#### 4. Classroom etiquette

In order to facilitate learning:

- use of personal electronic devices—cell phones, laptops, personal music players, etc.—is **prohibited** during class unless specifically allowed by the instructor. If you need to take an urgent call, **excuse yourself from class and step outside!**
- to protect privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property rights, **video/audio recording in class is prohibited** without permission from the instructor **AND** all enrolled students.
- **class time is not meal time!** Please eat, drink, and use the restroom before/after class or on our break.

#### 5. Course perspective and classroom civility

This course is explicitly taught from a gender-justice perspective that celebrates human gender and sexual diversity with an eye towards the social equality of women and men. Though readings and other materials are diverse, there has been no attempt to be ‘fair and balanced’ in their selection. However, this course is not an indoctrination camp where everyone is required to think alike. **Your grade will be based on how well you *engage with and demonstrate understanding of the course content, not whether you personally agree with that content.*** Everyone in the class—students, guests, instructor—has a right to a respectful hearing of their perspective on course topics and materials, however comments that are not civil, respectful, and courteous will be terminated. Repeat violators will be expelled from the course or referred to the Dean for a conversation about the virtues of civility in higher education.

#### 6. Explicit content

Some of the readings and other material in this class contain explicit language and imagery about sex, gender, and sexuality. Materials have been selected for their educational—not shock—value. You are encouraged to explore any concerns during our class discussion, with the instructor during office hours, your academic advisor, or the campus counseling center. You might also use your free absence to ‘strategically’ miss a day that you might find particularly difficult. Please review the syllabus carefully before committing to the course.

#### 7. Grading

- late work is **NOT** accepted. Period. (Really!) Plan your time accordingly....
- graded work must be submitted on paper **NOT** via email.
- instructor reserves the right to adjust a student’s final course grade (up **OR** down) if grades earned on course requirements do not reflect a student’s overall performance in the course.

*Number to letter equivalents for assigning course grade:*

	B+= 88-89%	C+= 78-79%	D+= 68-69%	F = 0-59%
A = 93%	B = 83-87%	C = 73-77%	D = 63-67%	
A- = 90-92%	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	D- = 60-62%	

#### 8. Academic integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the University’s Academic Integrity Policy, which governs student work in this course. Students caught cheating or representing someone else’s work as their own (plagiarism) will automatically **FAIL** the course and be referred to the Academic Integrity Council for appropriate discipline. Ignorance of the policy is no defense!

## 9. Disability accommodations

UIS is committed to making college education available to all who choose to pursue it. Reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities will be made, as required by law and University policy. However, prompt action on your part is essential: if you require accommodations to complete your education please contact the instructor or the Office of Disability Services (ODS). No accommodations can be made without prior registration and documentation with ODS located in HRB 80, (217) 206-6666.

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## Schedule of Topics and Readings

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All readings on Blackboard. Be prepared to discuss assigned readings on the date listed below.

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### 1/17: MLK Birthday: no class

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### 1/24: Introduction and syllabus review

*In class:* watching something insightful and pithy; whatever strikes the instructor's fancy

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### 1/31: What is masculinity? And why should we study it (in a *Women's Studies* class)?

*Read:*

- Kilmartin, "Introduction" from *The Masculine Self*, 17pp.
  - Brod, "Studying Masculinities as Superordinate Studies," 14pp.
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### 2/7: Social Construction of Masculinities

*Read:*

- Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia," 11pp.
  - Jordan/Cowan, "Warrior Narratives in the Kindergarten Classroom," 15pp.
  - Messerschmidt, "Varieties of 'Real Men,'" 15pp.
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### 2/14: Case study: performing masculinities

*Read:*

- Franklin, "Enacting Masculinity: Antigay Violence and Group Rape as Participatory Theatre," 12pp.
- Grazian, "The Girl Hunt: Urban Nightlife and the Performance of Masculinity as Collective Activity," 18pp.

*View in class:* [Tough Guise: Violence, Media, and the Crisis in Masculinity](#) (Northampton, Mass.: Media Education Foundation, 2002). 85 min.

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### 2/21: Angry white men

*Read:*

- Kivel, "Young White Men," 6pp.
- Fine/Weis, "(In)Secure Times," 16pp.
- Calhoun, "'Will the Real Slim Shady Please Stand Up?'" 25 pp.

*View in class:* [Tim Wise: On White Privilege: Racism, White Denial & The Costs of Inequality](#) (Northampton, Mass.: Media Education Foundation, 2008). 57 min.

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### 2/28: Black masculinities

*Read:*

- Wickholm, "Plight Deepens for Black Men," 2pp.
- Herbert, "Too Long Ignored," 2pp.
- Majors, "Cool Pose," 9pp.

-hooks, "Reconstructing Black Manhood," 17pp.

View: *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes* (Northampton, Mass.: Media Education Foundation, 2006). 61 min.

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### **3/7: Sexualities**

*Read:*

-Bordo, "Pills and Power Tools," 3pp.

-Schultz, "Getting Off on Feminism," 7pp.

-Messner, "Becoming 100 Percent Straight," 6pp.

-Savin-Williams, "Memories of Same-Sex Attractions," 16pp.

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### **3/14: Spring Break**

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### **3/21: Case study: disconnecting sex/gender/sexuality**

*Read:*

-Hill, "Feminine Heterosexual Men: Subverting Hetero-patriarchal Sexual Scripts?," 7pp.

-Heasley, "Queer Masculinities of Straight Men," 10 pp.

-Anderson, "Being Masculine is Not About Who You Sleep with...." 10pp.

-Ward, "Straight Dude Seeks Same: Mapping the Relationship between Sexual Identities, Practices, and Cultures," 6pp.

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### **3/28: Interpersonal violence (and its discontents)**

*Read:*

-Foubert, "Rape Statistics," 2pp.

-Dworkin, "I Want a Twenty-Four-Hour Truce During Which There Is No Rape," 9pp.

-Anderson/Umberson, "Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men's Accounts of Domestic Violence," 18pp

-Carlson, "I'd Rather Go Along and Be Considered a Man: Masculinity and Bystander Intervention," 12pp.

-Schultz, "The Anti-Rape Rules," 5pp.

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### **4/4: Cancelled (AMSA conference)**

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### **4/11: Violence: war and terrorism**

*Read:*

-Kimmel, "Globalization and its Mal(e)contents: The Gendered Moral and Political Economy of Terrorism," 15pp.

-Peteet, "Male Gender and Ritual of Resistance in the Palestinian Intifada: A Cultural Politics of Violence," 17pp.

-Cohn, "Wars, Wimps, and Women: Talking Gender and Thinking War," 10pp.

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### **4/15: Last day to drop course/change grading option**

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### **4/18: Sports (really, 'football')**

*Read:*

-Nelson, "Men in Tight Pants Embracing," 24pp.

-Sabo/Panepinto, "Football Ritual and the Social Reproduction of Masculinity," 7pp.

-Dundes, "Into the Endzone for a Touchdown: A Psychoanalytic Consideration of American Football," 14pp.

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#### **4/25: Case Study: sports and sexual violence**

*Read:*

- Boeringer, "Associations of Rape-Supportive Attitudes with Fraternal and Athletic Participation," 9pp.
  - Crosset, "Athletic Affiliation and Violence Against Women," 15pp.
  - Messner, "Triad of Violence in Men's Sports," 16pp.
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#### **5/2: Brief presentation of papers, evaluations, and pizza party**

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