Gender and the Life Course  SESP 317  
Spring 2006  T-Th, 12:30 – 1:50 p.m.  
Dr. Regina Lopata Logan  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. or by appointment

Course description
This course looks at how gender influences the major stages of the life course. We will discuss the several meanings of gender and sex to set the context. We will focus on the psychosocial effects of gender on children, adolescents, and young, midlife, and old adults. In addition, we will investigate how gender influences major societal institutions and selected social policy issues.

Readings
Reader available in SESP Student Affairs office.

Course objectives
1. to understand the several meanings of gender and sex
2. to understand how gender influences the major stages of the life course
3. to understand how gender influences major societal institutions
4. to understand how gender influences selected social policy issues

Teaching Method and Philosophy
My teaching philosophy is based on the application of theory to real life. Although I will give weekly lectures, my teaching method is based primarily on discussion. You will do one observation, and conduct surveys or interviews outside of class. We will have specialists present guest lectures and occasionally view short videos. Outside data collection, guest lectures, and media presentations, in addition to the weekly reading assignments, are the basis for class discussion. In order for you to succeed, you must come to class and you must be prepared. I expect you to read what is assigned for every class in advance of the class for which the readings and/or other homework are assigned.

Evaluations and Grading
There are three short papers and a take home final exam of several short essays. Papers must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Unexcused late papers will be graded down one half grade per day late. However, an unexcused absence on a day a paper is due will result in your paper being graded down one full grade. You may have ONE excused late paper, that is, you may turn in ONE of the three papers (NOT THE FINAL EXAM) twenty-four hours after the due date and not be graded down. The only acceptable excuse for late papers or absence on the day a paper is due is illness. I reserve the right to ask for medical verification. As mentioned above, attendance and active participation are required and will make a difference in your final grade.
Papers: 60% -- 3 short (5 page MAXIMUM) papers (20% each paper)
The papers require empirical data collection. See separate handout for rubric.

Due dates and topic areas:
Paper 1 due Thursday, April 20. Topic: learning gender roles in childhood. You will conduct an observation of pre-school or elementary school children.


Class participation: 20%
Attend class, ask cogent questions, engage in discussions. Participate in a meaningful way. This means you will have to do the reading for each class prior to that class. Regular attendance, punctual arrival, and active participation in the course will result in the most successful outcomes. Attendance will be taken at each class. If you expect to miss a class, please communicate with me and explain the situation.

Participation assessment guidelines:
Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are substantive, provide major insights, and help direct the discussion. Student is eager to volunteer, interacts and negotiates with other students, always goes beyond what is expected, and is always well-prepared.

Good Contributor: Contributions reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights, and sometimes direction for the class. Student is attentive, responsive, and goes beyond what is required, if not always successfully. Is almost always well-prepared.

Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation, but waits to be called upon.

Non-Participant: This person says little or nothing in class and contributes minimally. There is little effort to participate; the responses are generally incorrect and reflect little preparation.

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation, erratic oral and written performance. Contribures nothing to the class as a whole.
Final exam: 20%
Exam questions distributed Thursday, June 1; exam due Tuesday, June 6. This is a take home comprehensive final exam, consisting of four questions. Exams must be typed. More information will be given later in the quarter.

Academic Integrity Statement
Students in this course are expected to comply with the policies found in the booklet, "Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic guide". All papers submitted for credit in this course must be sent as email attachments as well as delivered in printed form. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern, visit: http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/. If you need a copy of the brochure visit the SESP Student Affairs Office.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Class #1
Introduction
Tues., 3/28

Class #2
Beliefs About Gender
Thurs., 3/30

Class #3
Gender: Nature
Tues., 4/4

Class #4
Gender: Nurture
Thurs., 4/6

Class #5
Gender, Childhood, & Family
Tues., 4/11

Class #6  
Gender, Childhood, & Family – con’t  
Thurs., 4/13  

Class #7  
Gender, Childhood, & Education  
Tues., 4/18  
Observation completed by today  

Class #8  
Gender, Childhood, & Education – con’t  
Thurs., 4/20  
Paper #1 due  

Class #9  
Gender, Adolescence & Identity  
Tues., 4/25  
Guest speaker: Dr. Al Ross, Exec. Dir., Haven Youth Services  

Class #10  
No Class  
Thurs., 4/27

Class #11  
Gender, Adolescence & Identity – con’t  
Tues., 5/2  
Research for paper #2 completed by today  

Class #12  
Gender, Adolescence & Identity – con’t  
Thurs., 5/4  
Paper #2 due

Class #13  
Gender, Adulthood, Work & Family  
Tues., 5/9  

Class #14  
Gender, Adulthood, Work, & Family – con’t
Thurs., 5/11  Guest Panel: Balancing Work and Family

Class #15  **Gender, Adulthood, Work, & Family – con’t**
Tues., 5/16  *Interviews for paper #3 completed by today*

Class #16  **Gender and Aging**
Thurs., 5/18  *Paper #3 due*
Calasanti, T. & Slevin, K. (2001). “Gender and the study of old age”

Class #17  **Gender, Aging, & Health**

Class #18  **Gender, Aging, & Care-giving**
Thurs., 5/25  Guest speaker: Dr. Celia Berdes, Assistant Professor, Buehler Center on Aging, Northwestern University

Class #19  **Gender, Aging, & Retirement**

Class #20  **Wrap up/Summary**
Thurs., 6/1  *Take home final exam distributed*

Tues., 6/6  *Take home final due by noon in my office, Annenberg 216*