



SYLLABUS

Syllabus

PLG 211: Sex in the City Fall 2017,

Instructor: Kristina M. Currans, PhD

Online Office Hours: By request and as needed online or in person. Email to schedule.

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CLASS DESCRIPTION

Urban areas are concentrated sites of human interaction, cultural practice, and social innovation, and therefore are prime locations in which to examine changing ideas, practices, and policies related to sex and gender. This class is designed to illuminate how gender – as an identity – and sex – as a series of public and private activities, a commodity or economic determinant, and a part of identity – shape urban communities and are themselves shaped by urban planning.

The course incorporates three sections, each looking at a group identified by gender or sex that has been marginalized in urban areas: (1) women, (2) LGBTQ communities, and (3) sex workers. We will be reading significant work from the urban planning literature, but also incorporating research from other academic fields – anthropology, geography, sociology, gender and women’s studies, and policy and government studies – and items from the popular media.

This class will challenge you to think critically about several categories, ideas, and objects that we often take as “normal” and unquestioned. This will include asking:

- ▶ How are cities gendered and sexualized spaces?
- ▶ How has urban space been defined along common binaries, including female/male, straight/queer, safe/unsafe, public/private, and rich/poor?
- ▶ How does urban planning shape and also respond to public perceptions of sex work?
- ▶ How have LGBTQ communities influenced urban growth and development?
- ▶ How are gender and sex factors in urban growth across the global south?

As a General Education course, the goals of this class are to encourage you to think critically about how urban planning and policy shapes specific communities and, concurrently, about how the experiences of marginalized communities shape urban areas. Many of our readings will focus on the US and the global north, but we will also briefly examine how similar topics are playing out in some of the rapidly growing cities of the global south and Middle East.

You do not need to have previous knowledge about urban planning to succeed in this class. To pass you will need an interest in critical inquiry, an open mind, and the ability to dedicate sufficient time to reading and course work. My goals as the instructor of this course are to encourage critical thought, to provide foundational information on topics covered, and to further develop your academic writing skills.

Course Objectives

1. Outline how gender – as an identity – and sex – as a series of public and private activities, a commodity or economic determinant, and a part of identity – shape urban communities and are themselves shaped by urban planning
2. Analyze how urban planning and policy shapes specific communities and, concurrently, about how the experiences of marginalized communities shape urban areas
3. Inspect three sections, each looking at a group identified by gender or sex that has been marginalized in urban areas: (1) women, (2) LGBTQ communities, and (3) sex workers

Course material and content: The premise and content for this course was developed previously by Sandra Rosenblum (the creator of the course) and later (and more recently) Angela Storey at University of Arizona.

Grading Guidelines

This course is completely online! It is very important to understand that online does not mean self-paced. That means you will have to spend time on reading and/or assignments every weekday during the course. Please read through the "Online Learning & Tech help" document to understand more about what you need to do in order to be successful as an online learner.

The standard workload for a three-credit course is approximately 9-10 hours per week on average. This course has been designed to meet that standards on average. As it currently stands, this course is somewhat front-loaded. Later weeks should feel somewhat 'lighter' than the earlier weeks.

There are assignments due almost every week during the course on D2L in the Discussions section and the Assignment Submission section of the course. The D2L Assignment Submissions folders for homework will stop accepting assignments at 11:59 pm on the listed due date. Make sure to plan out several hours each week for coursework.

Course grades and feedback are available for your review on D2L at all times. It is your responsibility to keep track of your academic progress throughout the course.

DISCUSSION POSTS (10 points each x 8 posts = 80 points total)

During some of the weeks, you'll have discussion posts to complete. These discussion posts are meant to demonstrate your knowledge of each topic gained through course readings; your own constructive and critical perspective on the readings and topics; and your engagement with other students and with the instructor on course topics. Posts must be constructive and respectful – any posts that are derogatory towards other course participants or towards any outside individuals or groups of people will be given a zero.

Each post must be at least 200 words, must critically engage with at least one reading from that day, and must respond to the discussion prompt. All discussion posts must be posted under the correct topic heading on D2L and must be posted as text within the "Discussion" section of your post and not as an attachment! All discussion posts are due by 11:59 pm on the day in which they are listed in the syllabus.

Each discussion post will be worth 10 points, and will be graded on the following broad scale, with points between each of these markers possible as well:

- ▶ 10 points = Post reflects critical thought; responds to the prompt; cites and engages academically with the readings, videos, and topics of the class; and is at least 150 words. 8 points = Post reflects the topic, but possibly relies too heavily on opinion or does not demonstrate full comprehension of readings; and/or does not meet 150 word minimum. 6 points = A mediocre and/or very short entry that fails to address the readings, displays little evidence of critical thinking, and/or simply repeats ideas heard elsewhere.
- ▶ 0 points = Post does not demonstrate that the student has completed the readings or videos; and/or does not meet post requirements; and/or is disrespectful.

In addition to your primary discussion posts (Posts 1-8), each section (four-week period) you will need to respond to two other students' posts with constructive comments, references to additional readings, outside information, or relevant examples. These response posts will be shorter in length (50-150 words each), must thoughtfully and respectfully engage with the topics addressed by other students in their posts, and must be posted in the thread of the original comment by 11:59 pm on the Sunday of the week due. I will also participate in the discussion threads, posting comments and reflections on student posts. You certainly may reply to comments by other students on your original post for some of your response posts!

PAPERS (50 points each x 3 papers = 150 points total)

Three papers will challenge you to critically examine the course topics and readings, identifying subjects and examples of particular interest to you. A document will be posted on D2L for each paper detailing the topic and specific requirements.

Papers must each be 3-4 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, and include a works cited section. Grades will be given on a 0-50 point scale, following a grading rubric that includes: use of course readings, understanding of and engagement with the topic, critical inquiry, readability (including grammar and spelling), and proper use of citations.

Important note: You will be able to re-write Paper One for full points!! In order for you to re-write your paper, you must: have turned the paper on time initially, schedule a time to chat online with me about my comments and your rewrite plans, and must make significant changes to the content of the paper in the re-write. The purpose of the re-write is to help improve your writing skills through practice, and so papers with only minor changes or additions will not be accepted.

TESTS (75 points each x 2 tests = 150 points total)

Midterm: October 9th

Final: December 11th

You will have two tests that will assess your knowledge of the course readings. Both tests will include multiple choice and short answer questions, and will be timed tests given on D2L. You will have three hours for each exam, so you may choose the time of day that you take it, but they must be taken on the dates noted in the syllabus. You must take the test independently. You can use the readings and your notes during the test, but please do not rely upon any outside information or websites. Points for each question will be detailed in the test, and you will be graded on your knowledge of the readings and ability to make connections between course topics.

PARTICIPATION (40 points)

Your participation grade will be based on two categories of work: (1) constructive responses to other students' discussion posts, and (2) participation in chat meetings with the instructor. This grade will be cumulative and given at the end of the course.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Your grade in this course is based on several different types of assignments described previously. Here is the breakdown of total points for the class:

- ▶ 80 points - **Discussion Posts** (10 points each x 8 posts)
- ▶ 80 points - **Activity write-ups** (20 points each x 4 write-ups)
- ▶ 150 points - **Papers** (50 points each x 3 papers)
- ▶ 150 points - **Midterm & Final** (75 points each)
- ▶ 40 points - **Participation Grade** (5 points each x 8 discussion responses)
- ▶ **500 points - Total Grade**

Overall grades in this course will be given as follows. There is no 'rounding up' in the grading for this course.

- ▶ A = 450-500 points
- ▶ B = 400-449 points
- ▶ C = 350-399 points
- ▶ D = 300-349 points
- ▶ E = 0-299 points

Late or incomplete work will not be accepted, unless there is documentation of a medical or family emergency that meets UA's policies for absences. Non-emergency excused absences (such as athletes traveling for away games) require at least 24 hours notice or approval from the Dean of Students. I have adopted this rule for fairness of other students and to ensure that I have adequate time to provide detailed feedback to every student.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. **Plagiarism of any kind will cause you to receive a zero on your assignment**, and, if extensive or repeated, will be reported to the Dean's office and receive further consequences. Whenever you use phrasing or sentences that were not originally written by you, you must put those words inside quotation marks and give the original source.

You also must cite any work that you paraphrase. You may not copy another student's answer, with or without citation. Since all material is submitted via D2L, **the TurnItIn program is used to check for plagiarism on every assignment and all tests**. If someone copies from your writing, you will also be held responsible for the resulting academic integrity violation. All discussions and problem sets, etc. should be entirely in your own words. TurnItIn checks across databases of published works and unpublished student work across and within universities-- meaning that if you submit work from another student, TurnItIn does identify this.

The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism available at: <http://new.library.arizona.edu/research/citing/plagiarism> (<http://new.library.arizona.edu/research/citing/plagiarism>).

Additional Policies

Please spend some time browsing the d2l Content > Course Policies subsection which describes additional policies and support:

▶ **Strategies for Online Success**

(/d2l/common/dialogs/quickLink/quickLink.d2l?ou=710844&type=content&rcode=Arizona-3486435)

▶ **Student Support Services**

(/d2l/common/dialogs/quickLink/quickLink.d2l?ou=710844&type=content&rcode=Arizona-3486434)

▶ **University Policies**

(/d2l/common/dialogs/quickLink/quickLink.d2l?ou=710844&type=content&rcode=Arizona-3486436)

Requests for incompletes (I) and withdrawal (W) must be made in accordance with University policies which are available at **<https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/grades/grading-policy-manual-index?audience=students&cat1=15&cat2=242>**
(<https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/grades/grading-policy-manual-index?audience=students&cat1=15&cat2=242>)

The UA's policy concerning Class Attendance, Participation, and Administrative Drops is available at: **<http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/class-attendance-participation-and-administrative-drop>** (**<http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/class-attendance-participation-and-administrative-drop>**)

The UA policy regarding absences for any sincerely held religious belief, observance or practice will be accommodated where reasonable, **<http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/religious-accommodation-policy>** (**<http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/religious-accommodation-policy>**)

Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean Designee) will be honored. See: **<https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/>** (**<https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/>**)