

LING 2400 – Language, Gender, and Sexuality
Syllabus, Spring 2020

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Lecture: M W 11-11:50pm, Hellems 141

Recitation: F 8-8:50, Visual Arts 1B90
F 9-9:50, Roser Atlas 1B25

Office Hours: M 1:30-3:30pm, Hellems 164A **Office Hours:** T R 11am-12pm, Hellems 4

Course Description

This course serves as an undergraduate introduction to the study of language, gender, and sexuality. We explore how the use of language both reflects and constructs differences in identities related to gender and sexual orientation. How do speakers use language to signal gender differences, and what are the social implications of the use of different gendered linguistic varieties? How does speaking in a particular way contribute to the construction of stereotypes related to queerness and sexual identity? How is language used in the expression of desire? What are the social consequences of speaking in a socially stigmatized way that doesn't conform with normative gender ideals?

Objectives

This course is designed to provide a foundational overview of the study of language, gender, and sexuality. We will view gendered linguistic stereotypes with a critical eye, and explore the roles of language varieties in contributing to conceptualizations of gender and sexual identity. What is the role of language in constructing gender difference and difference in sexual orientation?

Required Texts

There is no required textbook. Articles and chapters will be provided on Canvas.

Grade Distribution

Lecture (attendance, participation)	7.5%
Reading quizzes	7.5%
Recitation (attendance, participation, assignments)	15%
5 written reading responses (1-page each)	30%
Mid-term exam	20%
Final exam	20%

Requirements

Participation in Lecture and Recitation. (7.5% lecture + 15% recitation = 22.5%)

This is a discussion-driven course. In order to get the most out of the material, students are expected to complete the readings for each course **prior to the start of class** and participate in discussions. Recitation sections will provide hands-on activities designed to supplement the lectures and discussions. Attendance in both lecture and recitation is mandatory, though you are allowed two excused absences with no questions asked. Use these two excused absences wisely, because we will be unable to excuse an absence past these two. Missing more than two classes may result in a lowered grade.

Reading Quizzes. (7.5%)

At the start of each class meeting, the instructor will give a short pop-quiz on the readings, so be sure to keep up with the material! Make sure you have read the readings for each meeting **prior to the start of class**, because you will be quizzed on them every class!

Written reading responses. (6% each x 5 assignments = 30%)

There will be **five** short written reading responses throughout the semester, due every two or three weeks. These assignments should engage with the theoretical topics and readings for the weeks leading up to them. You should pick one of the readings and write **three paragraphs** that engage with the reading:

- The **first paragraph** should be a summary of the reading (the who, what, how, and why):
 - **Who** does this reading deal with?
 - **What** is the argument this reading makes? What is the main point?
 - **How** does the author argue the main point? How is the study conducted?
 - **Why** is the study important?
- The **second paragraph** should be a critique:
 - What could the reading do better? Do you agree with the methods? What does the argument / methods fail to capture?
- The **third paragraph** should be an application of the concepts and go beyond the material in the reading:
 - Do you have a personal experience that relates to the topic? Have you seen the subject of the reading play out in a real life situation? Do you have something to add that the reading doesn't quite capture? What larger questions does this reading raise?

You do not need an introduction or conclusion paragraph, so don't feel like you need to pad. Just three paragraphs: (1) summary, (2) critique, (3) application.

Each assignment should be about **one page, single-spaced, Times New Roman 12 font, with 1 inch margins**. Your name should appear in the header. **These assignments should be submitted via Canvas by 11:59pm the Friday they are due**. Each assignment is worth 6%, for a total of 30% of your grade.

Exams (20% mid-term + 20% final = 40%)

There will be two exams: a mid-term and a final exam. Exams will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short-answer, and free-response questions. The mid-term exam will be

cumulative and cover the first eight weeks of material, worth 20% of your grade. The final exam will focus more heavily on the last seven weeks of material, but will also include questions relating to the first half of the course. Please see the course schedule for exam times (noting that the final exam will be taken during the last class period, rather than during finals week). Note that we are **not** able to schedule other times for these exams unless you have a registered conflict that is communicated to the instructor well in advance.

E-Mail Policies

Please feel free to contact the TA and/or instructor via e-mail with any questions, concerns, or if you need to schedule a meeting outside of the regular office hours. **Be sure to make sure your question is not already answered in the syllabus before e-mailing with questions.** We will respond to your e-mail by the following business day. Given that it can take up to one business day to receive an e-mail response, please do not wait until the last minute to ask questions about assignments or exams. **We will not answer questions about assignments or exams the day they are due.**

Late Assignments

Written assignments should be submitted by 11:59pm the day they are due. See the course schedule below for due dates. Late submission is discouraged, but late submissions will be accepted with a deduction of ten percent per day late (-0.6 points out of a total 6 points per day late), unless accompanied by a valid and documented excuse. This means that **after ten days, assignments cannot be turned in for credit.** No exceptions. Pop quizzes cannot be made up, so make sure to come to class regularly. Since you are allowed two excused absences, you are able to miss two pop quizzes, but no exceptions will be made beyond two missed quizzes.

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu; 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#). Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. **Please let the instructor know at least two weeks in advance of a potential conflict to schedule alternative arrangements.**

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Disclaimer

Syllabus, course schedule, and readings are subject to change at the professor's discretion. We may spend longer or shorter on a particular topic depending upon class interest in each topic! Any changes to the syllabus or schedule will be e-mailed to the class and updated on Canvas, so **be sure to check and read all e-mails sent from the instructor and/or TA, and check Canvas regularly!**

Schedule

Week 1

- Monday 1/13: **Course introduction and syllabus**
- Wednesday 1/15: **Introduction to gender and sexuality**
 - Readings:
 - Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003, Ch. 1: An introduction to gender

Week 2

- Monday 1/20: **NO CLASS! Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- Wednesday 1/22: **Foundations of language and gender**
 - Readings:
 - McElhinny 2003. Theorizing gender in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.

Week 3

- Monday 1/27: **The two-culture (difference) model of gender**
 - Readings:
 - Tannen 1998. Talk in the intimate relationship: his and hers.
 - Freed 1992. We understand perfectly: a critique of Tannen's view of Cross-Sex Communication.
- Wednesday 1/29: **The dominance (power) model of gender**
 - Readings:
 - Mendoza-Denton 1995. Pregnant pauses: silence and authority in the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas Hearings.
 - Ochs & Taylor 1995. The "father knows best" dynamic in dinnertime narratives.
- Friday 1/31:
 - **Written assignment 1 due at 11:59pm**
 - Covering foundations, dominance model, difference model

Week 4

- Monday 2/3: **"Women's language"**
 - Readings:
 - Lakoff 1973. Language and woman's place.
 - O'Barr, William, and Atkins. 1980. "Women's language" or "powerless language?"
- Wednesday 2/5: **Language and masculinity**
 - Readings:
 - Kiesling 2005. Balancing and re-creating cultural discourses of masculinity.
 - Cameron 1997. Performing gender identity: Young men's talk and the construction of heterosexual masculinity.

Week 5

- Monday 2/10: **Foundations of variationism**
 - Readings:
 - Fischer 1958. Social influences on the choice of a linguistic variant.
- Wednesday 2/12: **Variationism cont.**
 - Readings:
 - Eckert 1989. The whole woman: sex and gender differences in variation.
- Friday 2/14:
 - **Written assignment 2 due at 11:59pm**
 - Covering women's language, masculinity, variationism

Week 6

- Monday 2/17: **Performativity**
 - Readings:
 - Butler 1988. Performative acts and gender construction.
 - Hall 1999. Performativity.
- Wednesday 2/19: **Indexicality**
 - Readings:
 - Ochs 1993. Indexing gender.

Week 7

- Monday 2/24: **Communities of practice**
 - Readings:
 - Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992. Communities of practice: where language, gender, and power all live.
- Wednesday 2/26: **The heterosexual market**
 - Readings:
 - Gal 1979. Peasant men can't get wives.
 - Hall 1995. Lip service on the fantasy lines.

Week 8

- Monday 3/2: **Mid-term review**
- Wednesday 3/4: **Mid-term exam!!!**
- Friday 3/6
 - **Written assignment 3 due at 11:59pm**
 - Covering performativity, indexicality, communities of practice, heterosexual market

Week 9

- Monday 3/9: **Normativity and non-normative identities**
 - Readings:
 - Inoue 2007. Language and gender in an age of neoliberalism.
 - Cameron and Kulick 2003, Ch 3. What has gender got to do with sex? Language, heterosexuality, and heteronormativity.
- Wednesday 3/11: **“Gay men’s language”**
 - Readings:
 - Podesva 2007. Phonation type as a stylistic variable: the use of falsetto in constructing a persona.
 - Campbell-Kibler 2011. Intersecting variables and perceived sexual orientation in men.

Week 10

- Monday 3/16: **Language and lesbians**
 - Readings:
 - Levon 2011. Teasing apart to bring together: gender and sexuality in variationist research.
 - Excerpts from Lutzross 2010. You sound like a lesbian: stereotypes of lesbian speech.
- Wednesday 3/18: **The identity vs desire debate**
 - Readings:
 - Kulick 2000. Gay and lesbian language.
 - Bucholtz and Hall 2004. Theorizing identity in language and sexuality research.
- Friday 3/20:
 - **Written assignment 4 due at 11:59pm**
 - Covering normativity, non-normative identities, gay men’s language, language and lesbians, identity vs desire debate

Week 11 - No class (Spring break)

Week 12

- Monday 3/30: **Language and trans identity**
 - Readings:
 - Zimman 2011. The discursive construction of sex.
 - Gratton 2016. Indexin’ gender: variable (ING) and the creation of non-binary trans identities.
- Wednesday 4/1: **NO CLASS!**

Week 13

- Monday 4/6: **Language and trans identity 2**
 - Readings:
 - Hall 1997. “Go suck your husband’s sugarcane!” Hijras and the use of sexual insult.
 - Besnier 2002. Transgenderism, locality, and the Miss Galaxy beauty pageant in Tonga.
- Wednesday 4/8: **Intersectionality.**
 - Readings:
 - hooks 2015. Black women: shaping feminist theory.
 - Calder & King 2020. Intersections between race, place, and gender in the production of /s/.

Week 14

- Monday 4/13: **Authenticity vs appropriation**
 - Readings:
 - Barrett 1994. She is not white woman: the appropriation of white women’s language by African-American drag queens.
 - Bucholtz 1999. You da man: narrating the racial other in the production of white masculinity.
- Wednesday 4/15: **Drag**
 - Readings:
 - Barrett 1999. Indexing polyphonous identity in the speech of African-American drag queens.
 - Calder 2019. The fierceness of fronted /s/: linguistic rhematization through visual transformation.
- Friday 4/17
 - **Written assignment 5 due at 11:59pm**
 - Covering language and trans identity, intersectionality, authenticity vs appropriation, drag

Week 15

- Monday 4/20: **Trans/non-binary panel**
 - **No readings; in lieu of a pop-quiz, come prepared with questions for the panelists!**
- Wednesday 4/22: **Drag panel**
 - **No readings; in lieu of a pop-quiz, come prepared with questions for the panelists!**

Week 16

- Monday 4/27: **Final review**
- Wednesday 4/29: **Final Exam!!!**