

American University of Beirut
Department of Psychology

Fall 2017

PSYC 240K: Psychology of Gender

Nicely Hall 416, Wednesdays 3:30pm-6:00pm

Instructor: Rim Saab, Ph.D.

E-mail: rs147@aub.edu.lb

Office: Jesup 103C

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30pm-4:30pm or by email

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**Course Description**

This course provides an overview of the theories and empirical findings concerning gender in psychology. The course examines the role of gender in various psych-social domains such as cognitive abilities, friendship, romance, physical and mental health, the work place, and political life. Students will learn to think critically about gender issues by pitting myths and stereotypes against empirical evidence, and gaining an awareness of the biological and social contexts that impact women and men's behavior. The course will explore psychological perspectives on gender at the local and international level, with a focus on power dynamics. Offered annually.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

The aims of the course include introducing students to the field of the psychology of gender, its key theories, methodologies and empirical findings. Furthermore, students will be developing their essay writing and research skills.

Consequently, by the end of this course you should be able to:

- 1- Explain the theories and empirical evidence surrounding sex/ gender differences **and** similarities across various psycho-social domains
- 2- Be mindful of the influence of biological, social, political, and economic forces on women and men's differential behavior
- 3- Develop skills for critically evaluating gender research and gender depictions in the media
- 4- Develop your knowledge of the struggle for gender rights and the psychology of gender at the local/regional level
- 5- Develop skills in team work and preparing and delivering oral presentations
- 6- Develop skills in writing effective academic essays, and the proper use of relevant academic resources (e.g. PsychLit, PsychInfo, library catalogue 6b).

**Textbook**

*The Psychology of Gender*, by Vicki S. Helgeson (Routledge) 5<sup>th</sup> edition (2017). Additional material will be posted online.

**Class format and communication:**

Class will usually consist of interactive lectures, including videos and class discussion and activities. A 5 to 7-minute break is given in the middle of the session. If lectures are delivered through powerpoint the slides will be posted on Moodle along with additional relevant material. The course material may not

always be delivered through powerpoint presentations or be available in the assigned textbook, so you are responsible for taking notes of what is said in class. E-mails are a core element in our communication, especially for announcements, reminders, and details pertaining to assignments and exams.

### **Requirements and Grade Distribution**

Please refer to the tentative course plan below, which lists the topics and course work scheduled for each class meeting. Note that the grading policy for this course is criterion referenced (I measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards), which means that typically no curving is performed on grades.

#### **Exams (70% of the final grade):**

##### **Exam 1 (20%), Exam 2 (25%), Exam 3 (25%)**

Each exam will be up to two hours. The exams are not cumulative and will consist of matching, short-answer questions, multiple-choice, true-or-false questions, and fill in the blanks. The dates of these exams are provided below.

#### **Literature review (20%):**

This will be a **2000 word (excluding references) literature review on a topic of your choice which falls within the area of psychology of gender, and which tackles an issue that is of relevance to Lebanon and/or the Arab world.** The paper has to be written in accordance with the APA Manual. It will be scored according to a grading rubric which will be provided on Moodle.

**The paper should be submitted via turnitin on Moodle.**

The topic must consist of a specific research question that you should send me by email by **Sep 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9am to receive approval.** **One or two sessions will be dedicated to explain how to select a topic, identify peer-reviewed articles, structure and write the paper using APA style.**

**Use the following email to submit your proposed paper topic: [psycsubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:psycsubmissions@gmail.com)**

**Presentation (5%):** You will partner up with one of your classmates to present information on a prominent Arab thinker/activist on gender rights. The list of personalities is provided at the end of the syllabus and you will be asked to pick early in the term your top three choices for presentation to ensure that you are assigned to one of your favorite personalities to present. Every session, we will have one presentation. The presentation will be no longer than **5minutes** and will address the following questions: *brief biography of the person (whatever information you find relevant for the gender rights struggle), what did the person fight for and how did they fight.* You need to use different and reliable sources of information (e.g. not Wikipedia) and include your references in the presentation. The presentation must be submitted to me a day ahead of class on Tuesday by 9am and presented to the class the day after.

#### **Attendance (5%)**

**Please take note of the following:**

1. Please be in class on time.
2. Everyone must feel comfortable discussing their views in class. While you may disagree with other students' viewpoints, you are required to discuss your views in a respectful manner. This is part of your learning process. Disrespecting other students will affect your participation grade and may lead to disciplinary action.

3. You are responsible for the material and announcements that are made in lectures you have missed.
4. If you miss a lecture, please obtain notes from a classmate. As classmates, please be cooperative with one another.
5. Attending part of a lecture will result in a partial attendance grade.

**Other:** I sometimes provide spontaneous bonus points (e.g. for answering a question correctly in class, or doing extra-work outside class to answer a particular question that pops up in class discussions). This is usually worth one extra point on an upcoming exam. So make sure you take advantage of these opportunities by regularly studying the material and/or volunteering to do extra-work when proposed.

### Policies

**Missing Exams or Deadlines:** Late submissions for the paper are penalized at 4% per day, i.e. if you submit any time within 24 hours of the deadline you lose 4 points, any time within 48 hours of the deadline you lose 8 points and any time within 72 hours you lose 12 points, but if you submit more than 72 hours after the deadline you are automatically marked as zero. Make-up exams and paper deadline rescheduling will be provided only if the student provides a medical note or excuse letter that is acceptable by the AUB Administration (AUBMC or counseling centre).

**Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating, plagiarism, presenting work you did not do, or violating rules of proper academic conduct will be dealt with according to strict AUB recommendations. Please refer to AUB Student Code of Conduct:

<http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/generaluniversitypolicies/Documents/StudentCodeConduct/StudentCodeConduct.pdf>, in particular section 1.1, which concerns academic misconduct including cheating, plagiarism, in-class disruption, and dishonesty. Please be aware that misconduct is vigorously prosecuted and that AUB has a zero tolerance policy. **Cheating on an exam or plagiarism of an assignment or paper will earn all involved parties a grade of zero, will lead to disciplinary action and could lead to course failure.**

**If you find yourself having some difficulty with an exam question or an assignment, talk to me about it.** There are many ways to solve whatever difficulty you're having. Cheating, in all its forms, should not be one of them.

**Grading:** Grading rubrics for the presentation and the paper will be posted on moodle.

**Other issues:** I reserve the right to schedule extra sessions should these be deemed necessary but I will be providing you with advance notice. I reserve the right to change/specify grading distribution, assign extra readings, change dates of assignments/exams, modify the format of assignments or exams during the course if necessary but will provide advance notice. Any changes to the final exam dates should receive approval of all students in class before the change can be implemented. We may at times have guest speakers during class for particular topics, in which case I will let you know in advance.

### Non-Discrimination

AUB strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (such as ADHD, learning difficulties, mental health conditions, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please do not hesitate to inform the Accessible Education Office. In order to ensure that you receive the support you need and to facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you must register with the Accessible Education Office (AEO) as soon as

possible: [accessibility@aub.edu.lb](mailto:accessibility@aub.edu.lb); +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314. If you have documented special needs and anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability, please contact me and/or your academic advisor.

According to the University's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#), "AUB encourages a diverse student body and workforce, and is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment...AUB will provide reasonable accommodation consistent with the law to members of the AUB community with a disability. What constitutes a reasonable accommodation depends on the circumstances and, thus, will be addressed by AUB on a case-by-case basis."

Information about the process for students seeking special needs accommodations is available online at "[Accessible Education: Students with Special Needs](#)"  
[http://www.aub.edu.lb/sao/accessible\\_education/Pages/AccessibleEducationStudentswithSpecialNeeds.aspx](http://www.aub.edu.lb/sao/accessible_education/Pages/AccessibleEducationStudentswithSpecialNeeds.aspx)

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at [www.aub.edu.lb/titleix](http://www.aub.edu.lb/titleix) . To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator Trudi Hodges at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or [titleix@aub.edu.lb](mailto:titleix@aub.edu.lb) . An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at [www.aub.ethicspoint.com](http://www.aub.ethicspoint.com)

**Note: The dates below are tentative.**

## SCHEDULE:

Week 1 Aug 30<sup>th</sup>: Introduction (ch1)

Week 2 Sep 6<sup>th</sup>: Introduction (ch1) (continued) and Methods and History of Gender Research (ch2)

Week 3 Sep 13<sup>th</sup>: Methods and History of Gender Research (ch2) (continued) plus Session on How to Write your Paper

Week 4: Sep 20<sup>th</sup>: Gender-role attitudes (ch3) plus guest lecture

**PAPER TOPIC DUE Friday Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, at 9am**

Week 5: Sep 27<sup>th</sup>: Sex-Related Comparisons: Observations (ch4) **EXAM 1**

Week 6 Oct 4<sup>th</sup>: Sex-Related Comparisons: Theory (ch5)

Week 7 Oct 11<sup>th</sup>: Achievement (ch6)

Week 8 Oct 18<sup>th</sup>: Communication (ch7)

Week 9 Oct 25<sup>th</sup>: Friendship (ch8)

Week 10 Nov 1<sup>st</sup>: **EXAM 2** plus Session on How to Write your Paper/guest lecture/film screening

Week 11 Nov 8<sup>th</sup>: Romantic Relationships (ch9)

Week 12 Nov 15<sup>th</sup>: Sex Differences in Health: Evidence and Explanations (ch10)

Week 13 Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>: Relationships and Health (ch11) (replacement session to be delivered on Saturday Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10am to 12:30pm due to independence holiday)

**PAPERS DUE MONDAY NOV 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2017, at 9am.**

Week 14: Nov 29<sup>th</sup>: Paid Worker Role and Health (ch12)

Week 15: Dec 6<sup>th</sup>: Mental Health (ch13)

**FINAL EXAM (TO BE DETERMINED)**

### **List of personalities to present**

**Nawal Saadawi:** Egyptian feminist writer, activist, physician and psychiatrist

**Fatima Mernissi:** Moroccan feminist writer and sociologist.

**Laure Mghaizel:** Lebanese attorney and prominent women's rights advocate

**Anbara Salam Khalidi:** Lebanese feminist, translator and author

**Tawakkol Karman:** Yemeni journalist, politician, and human rights activist.

**Manal al Sharif:** A women's rights activist from Saudi Arabia

**Hoda Shaarawi:** Egyptian feminist leader, nationalist, and founder of the Egyptian Feminist Union.

**Doria Chafiq:** A feminist, poet and editor, and one of the principal leaders of the women's liberation movement in Egypt in the mid-1940s

**Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim:** Sudanese writer, women rights activist and Socialist leader.

**Tahar Haddad:** Tunisian author, scholar and reformer.

**Malek Chebel:** Algerian philosopher and anthropologist of religions

**Leila Ahmad:** Egyptian American writer on Islam and Islamic feminism.

**Anissa Raouda Najjar:** Lebanese feminist and women's rights activist.

**Leila Baalbaki:** Lebanese novelist, journalist, activist, and feminist.