

School of Arts & Sciences Prospectus Fall 2024

Course ID and 7-digit Number: COML 1027.401

Course Description: Sex and Representation

In this course, students will engage with themes of gender, queerness, race, sex and representation in literature, particularly of the Black and Brown world. The course will begin by providing students with theoretical groundings in queer of color critique, gender theory, and intersectional theory. These theoretical texts will allow us to consider the ways in which people of color have grappled with their multifaceted identities and how those shape their experiences in the world. Theorists will include Hortense Spillers, Judith Butler, bell hooks, and Saba Mahmood. The rest of the course will be dedicated to critically reading and engaging with literary texts by authors from various parts of the world, including the US, West and North Africa, and South Asia. We will read stories by authors such as Audre Lorde, Lamya H., Ismat Chughtai, Akwaeke Emezi, Leila Aboulela, and Marjane Satrapi. The course will explore a range of literary genres and forms through which ideas of sex and gender have been represented, including short stories, autobiographies, film, and graphic novels.

This course will meet twice a week for 1.5 hours each. This is a reading intensive and highly interactive course. You are expected to keep up with weekly readings, and encouraged to ask questions and comment on readings during class. You will be encouraged to debate, reflect, bring personal experiences and share opinions in a generous, generative, and collaborative manner.

Assessment Criteria:

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

1. Weekly Responses on Texts (25%): For each text of the week, students will be expected to write a short discussion post where they will pose a question for class discussion as well as share their thoughts on the reading.

2. Active Participation in Classes (15%): We will meet twice a week. Your contributions in class should demonstrate that you are keeping up with the readings and engaged in thinking through and articulating your responses to the course material.

3. Two Critical Analysis Papers (45%): Two critical analysis papers, with a clearly articulated argument and sufficient evidence from the chosen text(s):

a) Paper 1: Essay of 5-6 pages on chosen work (20%)

b) Paper 2: Essay of 5-6 pages on chosen work (25%)

3. Leading Class Discussion (15%): On one of the weekly readings and texts, prepare a short discussion plan with some questions about the texts that you would like us to discuss in class.