COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course examines current issues and responses to the problem of gender-based violence. We will focus especially on the topics of rape/sexual assault, child sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual harassment. We will discuss ongoing controversies about the causes and effects of such violence and examine the psychological, legal, sociological, and political discourses surrounding these issues.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to
• identify cultural and structural sources of gender-based violence;
• understand how the intersections of gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, and other characteristics are reflected in women’s experiences of gender-based violence;
• apply key concepts and approaches from a variety of disciplines, including Women’s and Gender Studies, Political Science, Sociology, and Psychology, to analyze the problem of violence against women and responses to it in the U.S.;
• propose appropriate individual and policy responses to violence against women; and
• articulate the ways in which gender-based violence is a social justice issue.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

TEXTS

The following required text is available in the university’s bookstore:
• There are many additional assigned articles. Some are available through Pius Library and on the internet and others on Blackboard. Blackboard items are indicated with an asterisk.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

REQUIREMENTS:
Class attendance: It is important to attend each class meeting so that you remain engaged with the course material and discussions. You may miss a total of two class periods during the
semester for any reason (you need not provide an excuse); additional absences will lower your grade. I strongly urge you to save your excused absences for when you are sick.

Class participation and preparation: Since the class periods will be primarily discussion based, your substantial, consistent, and thoughtful contributions to class discussion (as both a speaker and a listener) are essential. I will use participation in class discussions as a factor in deciding borderline grades for the course.

Computer use: Based on studies about optimal student learning and classroom dynamics, students will NOT be allowed to use computers during class unless otherwise noted.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Your final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

10% Daily discussion questions. By 9:00 a.m. the morning of one class period each week (I will assign you to either the Tues. or Thurs. class), email to me one open-ended question that can be discussed in class, along with a sentence or two about why you chose this particular question. I will grade these credit/no credit. You can skip doing these for one class period during the semester. If you successfully complete 90% of these, you will earn an "A" for this portion of your grade; 80% will earn a "B", and so on. Here are some ideas to get started:

Discussion question topic:

- Something in the reading that stood out to you, surprised you, or resonated with your experience;
- Something that connects (or contrasts) with things you have learned in this or other courses;
- Something in the reading that you want a deeper understanding about; or
- Something that has implications for your media project.

Open-ended questions: In general, these are questions that begin with the words What, Why, and How. Good questions will:

- Ask the class to reflect on the topic;
- Invite the class to think critically;
- Invite the class to think independently and creatively; or
- Allow for students to express opinions based on what was read.

10% Rape Law Analysis paper. You will be required to write a 500-750 word analysis of your state’s laws regarding rape/sexual assault. The assignments is available on Blackboard.

50% Media Project. You will choose some everyday representations of violence against women in the media (for example, news reports, advertisements, magazine articles, or episodes of a TV show) and create a piece online that critically analyzes the assumptions and expectations they promote about gender-based violence. (For details, see separate handout, which is also posted on Blackboard.)
Your total grade for the Media Project will be comprised of the following:

- 10% Designer’s statement (graded pass/fail)
- 10% Preliminary analysis paper (graded with letter grade)
- 30% Final project

30% Take-home final exam (2 essays worth 15% each). Available on Blackboard, choose 2 of the 4 essay questions and write a 500-750 word answer to each one. The topics span the entire semester. The final due date is specified at the end of this syllabus, but you can turn it in any time during the final exam period.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

TRIGGER WARNING
This class contains a lot of information that may be triggering to people who have or have not experienced violence. If the material becomes emotionally overwhelming at any point during the semester, please talk to the instructor and/or seek the support of formal or informal resources that can help.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at:

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

Disability Services Academic Accommodations
Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course.

Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at Disability_services@slu.edu or 314/977-3484 to schedule an appointment. Confidentiality will
be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student’s eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor’s course roster.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact to Disability Services.

**Title IX**
Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU’s Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886) and share the basic facts of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU’s sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web addresses:

- [www.slu.edu/here4you](http://www.slu.edu/here4you)

**Student Success Center**
In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center assists students with academic and career related services, and is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students can visit [www.slu.edu/success](http://www.slu.edu/success) to learn more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.).
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning).

**Writing Center**
I encourage you to take advantage of the writing services in the Student Success Center. Getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels. Trained writing consultants can help with any writing, multimedia project, or oral presentation. During the one-on-one consultations, you can work on everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. These services do fill up, so make an appointment early! For more information, or to make, change, or cancel an appointment, call 977-3484 or visit [http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml](http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml).
COURSE OUTLINE

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs. Any changes will be announced at the beginning of the regularly scheduled class periods.

Class Schedule and Readings
(Blackboard items are indicated with an asterisk.)

January 15: Introduction to the course
Focus: ● How to understand men's violence against women

In class video, Jackson Katz’s TED talk. “Violence Against Women: It’s a Men’s Issue.”
Available online at
https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue

January 17: Rape history and law
Focus: ● Historical shifts in how we frame (interpret) rape
● Law enforcement frames
● Continuing problems with rape laws

Griffin, Susan. “Rape: The All American Crime.” Available online at
www.unz.org/Pub/Ramparts-1971sep-00026

January 22: Rape and trauma
Focus: ● The experience of rape and its aftermath
● Characteristics and impact of trauma on victims
● Resources for dealing with trauma

Optional: National Center for PTSD. “PTSD Basics: Understanding PTSD.” Available online at
January 24: Trauma and interventions

Focus: ● Navigating the criminal justice system
   ● Why aren’t medical institutions more responsive?

January 29: Anti-rape activism

Focus: ● Cultural underpinnings of rape laws: Why are rape laws so hard to correct?
  ● What would a "good" rape law look like?
  ● The current effort to rewrite the model rape law
  ● Unique issues associated with date rape drugs
  ● False rape accusations: myths vs. reality


January 31: Survivors who are often neglected

Focus: ● Victims who are not college students
  ● Victims who are farmworkers
  ● Male rape victims: Who are they? How do they react?
  ● Lesbian rape: How can we understand this?

February 5: Rape on college campuses
Rape law analysis paper due (see handout, also posted on Blackboard, for details)
Focus: • Who are rapists? How do they get away with it?
• What does the term "rape culture" refer to?
• Affirmative consent: What is it? Why have it?

February 7: Rape on college campuses
Focus: • What is problematic about how some universities have dealt with campus rape?
• How widespread is the problem?
Watch the video, "The Hunting Ground." Available on Netflix.

February 10: Post Preliminary Project Proposal to Blackboard before midnight

February 12: Rape on college campuses
In-class small group discussions of Preliminary Project Proposals at beginning of class
Focus: • Optimal key features of university judicial processes
• Should school investigations look like criminal procedures?
• Where does the University process typically break down?
• Are affirmative consent policies a good idea? Are they culturally acceptable?


February 14: Campus judicial responses

*Focus:* • Strengths and weaknesses of SLU’s sexual assault policy

*Guest speaker* from SLU’s Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity.

St. Louis University Sexual Assault Policy. Available on SLU website.
St. Louis University instructions for Reporting Sexual Assault. Available on SLU website.


February 19: Sexual violence in the military

*Focus:* • What are the institutional supports for sexual assault in the military?
  • Are the current remedies sufficient?

Watch the film, “The Invisible War.” Available online and streaming services.

February 21: Child sexual abuse

*Focus:* • Why does it matter how we define child sexual abuse?
  • How does child sexual abuse differ from adult sexual assault?
  • Long-term impacts of child sexual abuse
  • How can we best respond?

*Generation Five, "10 Frequently Asked Questions about Child Sexual Abuse"

February 24: Post Designer’s Statements to Blackboard before midnight
February 26: Intimate partner violence: History, backgrounds, and contexts

In-class small group discussions of Designer’s Statements at beginning of class

Focus: • What is the difference between partner assaults and coercive control?
   • How does coercive control work?
   • Blaming the victim for IPV: Who benefits?


February 28: Intimate partner violence and the civil justice system

Turn in paper copy of Designer’s Statement at start of class for instructor to grade

Focus: • IPV and divorce: Is the process fair?
   • Do civil procedures help the victim?

*Sample Order of Protection

March 5: Intimate partner violence and the criminal justice system

Focus: • CJ responses to IPV: pros, cons, and inherent limitations
   • Unintended consequences
   • Shortcomings of the "battered women syndrome" defense

March 7: Intimate partner violence: Women as survivors/Survivor-defined advocacy
Focus: ● What are key features of victim-defined advocacy?
● Risks from abuser vs. risks from circumstances if she leaves


March 12 and 14: Spring break: No class.

March 19: Post Preliminary Analysis Paper to Blackboard before midnight

March 19: Intimate partner violence and children and their mothers
Focus: ● How does adult abuse affect the children?
● How can we best help the children of battered women?
● How do we treat mothers of abused children? Why?


March 21: Men and women who batter
In-class small group discussions of Preliminary Analysis Papers at beginning of class

Focus: ● Why do men batter?
● Is Lundy's explanation a feminist one?
● Do batterer intervention programs work?


March 26: Battered women’s movement: Critiquing systems

**Turn in paper copy of Preliminary Analysis Paper at start of class for instructor to grade.**

Attach any written feedback you have received from your discussion group members.

**Focus:** •Intersectionality and IPV
  • How should battered women's programs take intersectionality into account?


March 28: Facing multiple oppressions

**Focus:** • Immigrant women and IPV
  • Unique barriers for immigrant women seeking help
  • Is there a "right" way for law enforcement and social services to take cultural background into account without ignoring it?
  • Pros and cons of current federal policies regarding IPV and immigrants


April 2: An intersectional analysis of family violence

**Focus:** • Benefits of an intersectional understanding of IPV
  • Non-criminal justice responses to IPV
  • Connection between micro (individual) and macro/meso (community) level changes

April 4: Facing multiple oppressions

**Focus:**
- Patterns of IPV against LGBTQ individuals
- VAWA 2013: What are the newest provisions? What gaps remain?

The Takeway (NPR podcast), "Violence Against Transgender People is on the Rise," Oct. 11, 2018 (14 minutes long). Available online at https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/transgender-people-are-being-killed-alarming-rate


Optional: For an example of an effort to address violence against those who are most marginalized, look at the website of the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective.

April 9: Stalking

**Focus:**
- Partner vs. non-partner stalking
- Relationship between stalking and IPV
- Law enforcement responses to stalking: What works?


April 9: Post First Draft of entire project to Blackboard or other agreed-upon platform before midnight.

April 11: Stalking

In-class small-group discussions of First Drafts of entire project at beginning of class

**Focus:**
- Uses of technology in stalking
- Ways to address stalking
- Campus stalking policies: How does SLU's measure up?


Look at online version of SLU's policy on stalking.

April 16: Sexual harassment in the workplace

Focus:  ● Criteria for classifying behavior as sexual harassment: What are the different standards? Why do they matter?
● What finally triggered adoption of sexual harassment policies and procedures?
● Obstacles to ending sexual harassment
● The history and future of the #MeToo movement


April 18: Easter break: No class

April 23: Sexual harassment

Focus:  ● What is the reasonable woman standard?
● Are all women equally likely to be believed?


April 23: Post Final Draft of project to Blackboard or other platform before midnight.
April 25: Sexual harassment
In-class small group discussions of Final Draft of projects at beginning of class

Focus: • Connection between masculinity and sexual harassment
       • Solutions to sexual harassment: law, training, or something else?


April 30: Using restorative justice to respond to IPV and sexual harassment

Focus: • Why respond to violence against women outside of the criminal justice system?
       • Models of restorative justice responses


May 3: Media projects due

**Tuesday, May 14, noon: Deadline to turn in take-home final exam** (you can turn them in before this, if you want)