

# Lehigh University

## SSP 461: SOCIOLOGY OF THE BODY

Wednesday: 4:10 - 7:00, Room: Maginnes Hall 110

### Syllabus and Course Guides

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#### Course Overview

Does our speaking voice show our class background? Why someone who is “black” or “white” in the United States may not be considered so in another country? Who decides what a healthy body is? This course will examine the body not as a biological entity but as a product of complex social forces and historical processes. Many of us, for example, spend our lives trying to change the dimensions of our body based on social expectations. Throughout the semester we will study how our bodies are deeply connected to larger social structures, such as class, gender and race. In doing so, students will realize how bodies, our bodies, are simultaneously expressions of the self as well as powerful social factors. To explore these topics we will analyze the work of social thinkers such as Karl Marx, Norbert Elias, Erving Goffman, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Judith Butler, and critical race theory approaches.

#### Objectives

- Become critical, creative, and independent thinkers.

#### Course Grading and Components

Class Participation	30%
Memos	30%
Individual Project	40%

Course grades follow the letter-grade system. Please consult the Lehigh Student Handbook for a description of the level of work characteristic of each grade. The numerical ranges used in assigning each letter grade in this course are as follows:

A	93% - 100%	A-	90% - 92.9%	B+	87% - 89.9%	B	82%-86.9%
B-	80%-81.9%	C+	77%-79.9%	C	72%-76.9%	C-	70%-71.9%
D+	67%-69.9%	D	63%-66.9%	D-	60%-62.9%	F	Below 60%

Bear in mind that any late assignment will lose a third of a letter grade per day (i.e., B to B-). If you will not be available for a deadline because of athletics, religious holidays, family vacation, job interviews, or a similar kind of reasons, you are responsible for completing the necessary work **before** the deadline.

- Class Participation (20%)

Attendance is not enough; you need to be proactive expressing your ideas and doubts and interacting with other classmates. Participation is essential to generate a rich and stimulating discussion and to maintain students involved and motivated. In order to facilitate participation you have to make all the readings and be ready to define the main arguments and ideas addressed in each document, give your opinion about the content and style of each text, and establish connections with what we have read so far and your previous knowledge and experience. Asking questions is also an essential element of the learning process, so do not feel ashamed about having doubts. One of the main goals of graduate education is to develop a critical mind and be able to see the world from various perspectives, so please do ask questions.

Each student will be responsible for helping me lead at least two weekly class discussions. Sign-up sheets will be passed around during the first week of class. As a co-discussant, your job is to critically introduce the material and to come up with a few (3-5) substantive questions in the form of a one-page handout (to be electronically distributed to the rest of the group by 9 am on the day of class) to get the discussion rolling. Such questions may target what you consider the key issue/problematic raised by the author(s) in question, a shortcoming in the argument/evidence, a puzzling claim, broader implications, exciting/provocative comparisons, and so forth.

- Memos (30%)

Over the course of the semester, each student will be expected to write a 1-2 page memo responding to each week's readings. (1.5 line spacing is fine.) These comments will be uploaded to the appropriate folder on Course Site the day before class (Tuesday) by 11 pm, so that everyone has time to read each other's comments by Wednesday afternoon. Comments may be informal, but they must reflect a critical reading. You can take one exemptions from writing these memos. If you choose to take an exemption, please let me know by email.

These memos should help you focus your ideas in a way that can contribute to our collective conversation during class time. In general, each memo should include: a) a brief summary of the main idea of the readings and how these claims were supported; b) a synthetic analysis of some dimension of the course readings that you found compelling and warrants further discussion; and c) two to three questions for the class to consider as a group. These memos ought to compare readings within that particular week, but you may also bring compare that week's readings to themes and theories discussed earlier in the semester. This is also a good opportunity to raise questions and concerns about the substance of the readings.

- Individual Project (40%)

Throughout the semester you will carry out an in-depth study about any topic of your interest related to the body. Students will submit several assignments and present their progress in front of the class. Each stage is essential and should be given the importance of an independent assignment. At the end students will submit a dossier including all the previous work and present their final outcome.

- 5% Research Topic**  
Provide a tentative title, a 200-word description addressing the questions what, why, and how, and a bibliography including at least six academic books or articles. You should use Chicago Style in all citations and references.
- 20% Literature Review**  
A four-page paper discussing the available material on your subject. You will continue researching, reading and adding material for your final paper, however this literature review will be the first approach to your topic revealing if you should follow a different line or explore other topic. You should include at least 6 sources.
- 20% Research Project**  
A five-page long project including: title, introduction, and an outline or description of each section of your paper. A bibliography should be included, but it does not count as part of the five-page assignment. The outline must include your main argument and how are you going to develop it. A week after you submit your project you will present it to the class in order to receive feedback from your classmates (*see next headline*).
- 10% Project Presentation**  
Presentations should last 15 minutes in which each student will elaborate on their thesis and how he/she plans to prove it. The aim of these presentations is to receive feedback from your classmates
- 20% Draft of your paper**  
Length: 11 pages including introduction and conclusions. A bibliography should be included, but it does not count as part of the 14-page assignment.
- 15% Final paper**  
Length: 16 pages including introduction and conclusions. A bibliography should be included, but it does not count as part of the 16-page assignment. Alongside the final paper you will submit a document explaining what concrete changes have you made to the paper (i.e. content not style).
- 10% Final research presentation**  
A 20 minute presentation that will take place the last class of the semester, the same day in which the final paper and dossier are due.

**Please do not hesitate to contact me if you find that you are not doing well or if you have any question about any of the assignments and/or requirements for the class.**

**Schedule (subject to change)**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading / Assignments</i>
<i>Week 1</i>			
1	08/28	Introduction – The Social Body  <i>Explanation: Research Topic</i>	Shilling. 2007. <i>Sociology and the Body</i> . <u>Sociological Review</u> , 55(1).
<i>Week 2</i>			
2	09/04	An overview	Mauss. 1973. <i>Techniques of the Body</i> . <u>Economy and Society</u> , 2.  Merleau-Ponty. 1945. “Situating the Body” & “The Lived Body.” In, <i>The Body</i> . Welton (Ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

<i>Week 3</i>			
3	09/11	Material Bodies  <b>Research Topic</b>  <i>Explanation: Literature Review</i>	Slavishak. 2010. <i>Made by the Work</i> . In <u>The Body Reader</u> , eds. Kosut and Moore, New York University Press.  Featherstone. 1982. <i>The body in consumer culture</i> . <u>Theory, Culture &amp; Society</u> , 2.
<i>Week 4</i>			
4	09/18	The Civilized Body  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Elias. 2000. <i>Civilization</i> . In <u>The Civilizing Process</u> , Pp. 47-52 & 109-160.  Varner & Knottnerus. 2002. <i>Civility, Rituals, and Exclusion</i> . <u>Sociological Inquiry</u> , 72, 3.
<i>Week 5</i>			
5	09/25	Social Bodies  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Goffman. 2008. <i>Face-Work &amp; Embarrassment and Social Organization</i> . In <u>Interaction Ritual</u> , Pp. 5 – 45 & 97 – 112  Crossley. 1995. <i>Body Techniques</i> . <u>Sociology</u> February, 29.
<i>Week 6</i>			
6	10/02	Disciplined Bodies  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Foucault. 1984. <i>Disciplines and Sciences of the Individual</i> . In <u>The Foucault Reader</u> . Rabinow, ed., Pp 170 - 238
<i>Week 7</i>			
7	10/9	Symbolic and Material Bodies  <b>Research Project</b>  <i>Explanation: Presentation</i>	Bourdieu. 1984. <i>The Habitus and the Space of Lifestyles</i> . In <u>Distinction</u> , Pp.  Bourdieu. 1980. <i>Belief and the Body</i> . In <u>The Logic of Practice</u> , Pp. 66 – 79.
<i>Week 8</i>			
8	10/16	Habitus and the Body  <b>Presentation</b>  <i>Explanation: Draft</i>	Wacquant. 2006. <u>Body and Soul</u> . 3 - 127
<i>Week 9</i>			
9	10/23	Habitus and the Body  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Wacquant. 2006. <u>Body and Soul</u> . 127 - 265
<i>Week 10</i>			
10	10/30	Gendered Bodies  <b>Draft</b>  <i>Explanation: Final Paper</i>	Butler. 1993. <i>Bodies That Matter</i> . In <u>Bodies That Matter</u> , Pp. 27 - 57  Butler. 1990. "Monique Wittig: Bodily Disintegration" & "Bodily Inscriptions." In, <u>Gender Trouble</u> .
<i>Week 11</i>			
11	11/06	Gendered Bodies  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Correll, et al. 2007. <i>Is There a Motherhood Penalty?</i> <u>American Journal of Sociology</u> , 112, 5.  Udry. 2000. <i>Biological Limits of Gender Construction</i> . <u>American Sociological Review</u> , Vol. 65, No. 3.
<i>Week 12</i>			
12	11/13	Racialized Bodies  <b>Literature Review</b>  <i>Explanation: Research Project</i>	Caldwell. 2000. <i>A Hair Piece</i> . In <u>Critical Race Theory</u> , Delgado, ed., Pp. 275 – 285.

			Fausto-Sterling. 2008. <i>The Bare Bones of Race</i> . <u>Social Studies of Science</u> , 38, 5.
<i>Week 13</i>			
13	11/20	Urban Bodies  <b>Final paper</b>	Sennett, "Introduction: Body and City" & "Naked: The Citizen's Body." In, <u>Flesh and Stone</u>  Maharaj, "Talking Trash: Professional Basketball." In, <u>SportCult</u> , 1999.
<i>Week 14</i>			
14	11/28	<b>THANKS GIVEN</b>	<i>ENJOY</i>
<i>Week 15</i>			
15	12/05	<b>Final presentation</b>	

### Notes about In-class Participation and other General Expectations

- As a courtesy to the class, please be on time. Lateness will affect your participation grade.
- Please turn off your cell phones during class. ***No texting will be tolerated.***

### Notes about Electronic Communication

All students must have access to Course Site and have a functioning Lehigh e-mail. All communications for this class will be sent via the Lehigh e-mail and Course Site system, so be sure to check those accounts daily. Please also be aware that:

- I may not read or check email immediately after I receive a message
- I may not read or check email after daytime working hours (5:00 p.m.)
- I may not read or check email on weekends or holiday breaks
- The instructor takes no responsibility for e-mails sent from other e-mail addresses that are blocked by the Lehigh spam filters.

### Academic Honesty

An important note about academic honesty: Plagiarism and cheating are both forbidden by University policy. Ideas as well as every word in your writing must be your own unless contained in quotation marks and properly cited. This includes text taken from the Web. Plagiarism or cheating will, at minimum, result in an F for the entire course, in addition to any other sanctions imposed by the University. If you have questions or concerns about acceptable ways to use and cite outside material in your writing, please contact the TA or send me an email, we're happy to help.

### Disability

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please contact both your instructor and the Office of Academic Support Services as early as possible. You must have documentation from the Academic Support Services office before accommodations can be granted.