

MIT 3201G: SEXUALITY & THE MEDIA



Course instructor: Dr. Andie Shabbar
Contact information: ashabba@uwo.ca
Office hours: TBA or zoom appointment

Delivery mode: In-person
Class meeting: Monday 1:30-4:30 p.m., SSC-3028

Course Description

This course investigates how human sexuality and sexual identity are represented through various media (film, advertising, television, print and electronic media). We will look at how media sources both reinforce and challenge dominant understandings of concepts commonly associated with sexuality, including masculinity and femininity, and heterosexuality and homosexuality.

Classes Start	Reading Week	Classes End
January 8	February 19-23	April 8

Prerequisites

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission to enrol in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

In the event of a health emergency during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Evaluation	Weight	Due date
Participation, Preparation, In-class Activities	15%	ongoing
Essay outline	Ungraded, mandatory	Jan 29
Mid-term	20%	Feb 12
Media Analysis rough draft	15%	Mar 4
In-class Peer-assessment	10%	Mar 4
Media Analysis final essay	25%	Apr 1
Group discussion facilitation	15% (group grade)	To be assigned

Course Materials: **Bring a pen and paper to class every week for in-class activities.**

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate concepts and theories surrounding sexuality and the media;
- Understand the relationship between embodiment, technology, and ideology;
- Learn how to critically assess media representations of sexuality and their political implications on social life and identity;
- Develop peer-assessment tools.



Communication

- A weekly checklist will be provided on OWL. You can find the checklist for each week by navigating to the “Lessons” tab
- You **MUST** include the course number “MIT3201” in the **subject line** of your email
- Emails will be monitored daily during the week; students will receive a response in 24 – 48 hours
- **Missed classes:** PowerPoint slides for lectures will be available on OWL. In addition to accessing lecture content, if you miss a class you should prepare to contact classmates to obtain lecture notes.



Professionalism & Privacy

- Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations and professional conduct apply to this course:
- Students are expected to follow online etiquette expectations provided on OWL
- All course materials created by the instructor(s) are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared
- Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without explicit permission
- Permitted recordings are not to be distributed
- Students may be expected to take an academic integrity pledge before some assessments. All recorded sessions will remain within the course site or unlisted if streamed



Late assignments

Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day. All written assignments are to be submitted to OWL (no paper submission required).

Statement about the use of generative AI technology

Students in this class are reminded that plagiarism – using another’s work, ideas, or words without giving credit -- is a serious scholastic offence. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one's own. **Students who use AI-content generators (such as ChatGPT) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic offence.** Should a concern about plagiarism arise, instructors may require the student to share their rough work, research notes, or previous drafts. Students are advised to retain these materials until the graded assignment is returned.

Evaluation Descriptions

**Rubrics for each assignment will be provided on OWL*

1) PARTICIPATION, PREPARATION, IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES 15%

To successfully complete the course, you will need to **complete readings before class**. It's a good idea to bring an annotated copy (your notes) of the readings to class. Having familiarity with the readings before lecture will enhance your performance with group work, in-class activities, and pop quizzes.

Attendance is mandatory: You will not be able to make up for missed participation (without academic accommodations). Please be aware that an absence is not an acceptable excuse for incomplete work. If you miss lecture, I expect you to ask a classmate what you missed. **There are no make-ups for missed pop-quizzes.**

Your final participation grade will be assessed based on a combination of participation during class discussion, in-class activities, and completion of pop quizzes. A participation rubric is available on OWL.

Pop Quizzes: There will be **FIVE pass/fail pop quizzes throughout the term**. Quizzes will be five minutes with 1-2 questions based on the week's required readings or the previous week's lecture. You must correctly answer all questions to pass the quiz. If you pass all five quizzes you guarantee yourself 5% of your final participation grade. The purpose of pop quizzes is to assess your preparation and ongoing engagement with coursed materials.

2) DISCUSSION FACILITATION

In groups of four to five, students will facilitate a class discussion on one of the course readings. Your facilitation should include a very brief overview of the reading (if necessary), a media object for the class to analyze in relation to the author's key points, and two critical questions to pose to the class for discussion. Facilitation times may vary depending on class engagement. At the very least, groups should plan for a 15-min facilitation period that includes 1) an explanation of the media object and its relation to the reading. Some questions to consider are: How does the media object exemplify the author's key points? Or, how does the media raise questions about the validity of the author's argument? How does the media expand the author's argument? 2) a short activity to help facilitate class discussion (think-pair-share, writing prompt, debate, pro-con grid, mind-mapping, brainstorming on paper or on the blackboard, kahoot, etc. – a list of possible activities will be made available to you). 3) Responding to ideas and questions generated during the activity. More details and suggestions on how to approach this assignment will be available on OWL.

3) ESSAY OUTLINE (mandatory)

In-class you will begin the initial stages of your final paper by filling out an essay outline on OWL. The outline will ask you to brainstorm ideas for your essay including identifying which course reading you plan to use, which media object you will analyze, and a tentative thesis statement. To hand in your rough draft assignment, you must complete the essay outline. No exceptions.

4) MID-TERM 20%

The 2hr mid-term will be composed of True and False, fill in the blank, and two short answer questions. If you require academic accommodations, please arrange these well in advance.

5) MEDIA ANALYSIS ROUGH DRAFT 15%

Students will submit an **800 word (3 full pages)** rough draft of their final essay. The draft must include a works cited list with at least three academic sources that will be used in the final essay. The draft will be peer-reviewed in-class by another student and graded by the professor. The purpose of this assignment is to provide feedback and guidance on essays prior to final submission. To hand in your final essay, you must complete this assignment.

6) PEER-ASSESSMENT 10%

During a 3hr class period, students will peer-review each other's rough draft essays. For this assignment each student will be given a detailed rubric with feedback guidelines. The rubric will include a check list and ask students to write a **250-500 word (1-2 page)** synopsis of the essay they are reviewing including any editorial suggestions. Peer-assessments will be submitted to the professor prior to being returned to the original author.

7) MEDIA ANALYSIS FINAL DRAFT 25%

In this essay assignment, students will choose a music video *or* advertisement *or* television show from a pre-determined list provided in the assignment handout and write a **5-6 page (1200-1500-words)** argumentative essay. Your essay will be graded based on written clarity and your ability to apply course concepts/readings to formulate **your own argument** on the relationship between sexual representation and the media. All essays are to be typed, double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12-point font. My citation preference is **MLA**. All assignments must have your first and last name, the course name, the professor's name, and the due date on the first page, preferably in the upper left-hand corner. Do not use cover pages.

You will also include a paragraph (250 word approx.) on the last page, after your works cited, outlining how you incorporated peer feedback or include an explanation of why you chose not to do so.

COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE

Date		Topic	In-class Activity	Due
Jan 8	W1	Introduction: What Is Sexuality?		
Jan 15	W2	Sex, gender, and meaning making: Film, Advertising and The Male Gaze		Facilitation 1
Jan 22	W3	Intersectionality, race, and identity: Music videos and The Oppositional Gaze		Facilitation 2
Jan 29	W4	Masculinity and the Media: TV and The Queer Gaze	1 hour essay workshop & outline	Facilitation 3 Essay outline
Feb 5	W5	Colonialism, news reporting & sexual exploitation: The Indigenous Gaze		Facilitation 4
Feb 12	W6	MID-TERM		
Feb 19	W7	Reading Week		
Feb 26	W8	Sexuality, surveillance and the politics of terror	AI Evaluation Activity	Facilitation 5
Mar 4	W9	IN-CLASS PEER ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENT	2.5 hour peer-assessment	Rough draft Peer-assessment
Mar 11	W10	Rape culture: Incels, revenge porn, and cyber misogyny		Facilitation 6
Mar 18	W11	Social media, dating apps, and sexting	Rough draft & peer assessment returned	Facilitation 7

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Mar 25	W12	Intimate relations, sexbots, A.I. technology, and virtual pleasure		Facilitation 8
Apr 1	W13	Topic to be announced		Final Essay

NOTES FROM THE FIMS DEAN'S OFFICE

Winter 2024

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the [Academic Policies](#) section of the [Academic Calendar](#).

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence [here](#).

Plagiarism

Students in this class are reminded that plagiarism – using another's work, ideas, or words without giving credit -- is a serious scholastic offence. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one's own.

Students who use AI-content generators (such as ChatGPT) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

[Academic Accommodation](#)

Students with disabilities work with [Accessible Education \(AE\)](#) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

[Medical Consideration](#)

Students who have medical grounds for academic consideration for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth **10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Advising office of their home Faculty (for FIMS students this is [Undergraduate Student Services](#)).

Students are required to provide

documentation in the form of a [Student Medical Certificate](#). It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if consideration is warranted.

For work worth less than 10% of the final grade, the instructor will consider requests for academic consideration on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or during office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may decide to require documentation be submitted to the appropriate Academic Advising office.

Students should also note that **individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student**, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Advising office of a student's home Faculty.**

Compassionate Accommodation

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Advisor.

If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire, or some other exceptional crisis, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation. Students seeking additional bereavement leave should contact their Academic Advisors with valid documentation.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Advisor. Additional information is given in the [Western Academic Calendar](#).

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone

through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). The gender-based violence and survivor support case managers are located in Thames Hall (3114-3127 office suite.) To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness](#) for a complete list of supports.

SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

[FIMS UGSS](#): *academic advising; career services*

[Psychological Services](#): *Information about accessing mental health supports*

[Medical Services](#): *Student health related services*

[Office of the Registrar](#): *Financial Information, Timetable, Exam Schedules, Academic Calendar Information*

[Academic Support and Engagement](#): *Central Academic Supports, including Writing Centre, Learning Development, Transition and Leadership Supports, and Careers and Experience*

[Accessible Education](#): *Assessment and recommendations for students with disabilities*

[Accessibility Information](#): *Information to help support barrier free access, including floor plans, accessible washroom locations, service disruptions etc.*

[Indigenous Student Services](#): *Includes information about financial support, indigenous self-identification, orientation, and tutor support*

[Western International](#): *Information and support for international students and students seeking to go on exchange*

FIMS Grading Policy

FIMS Undergraduate programs now have the following class average policy: **First year courses required** for entry into a FIMS module (MIT 1020E; MIT 1025F/G) have an expected course average between 68-72%. **Second year required courses** (MIT 2000, 2025, 2100, 2200, 2500) have an expected course average between 70 and 75%. The **third year required course** (MIT 3100) is expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%. **Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.**

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:

The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:

The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.

If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:

1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2. if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.

The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.

Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.