

Trans Studies: Identities, Embodiment, & Politics

WGSS 135

Fall 2025 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/27/2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. CJ Jones

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Office Hours: Mondays 9am-10am & 12-1pm in DMH 211 and Zoom. See Canvas for Zoom link.

Classroom Location: Sweeney 313

Course Description and Requisites

Introduction to the field of transgender studies. A look at the present moment of transgender experience and embodiment through the lenses of history, science, institutions, cultural production, and activism. Explores the past and future of trans, transgender, intersex, nonbinary, genderqueer, and transsexual people. Working with the assertion that "the personal is political" that emerged from Feminist of Color scholarship, course is also attentive to questions of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, legal status, and ability, while introducing transgender identity and politics.

Prerequisite(s): Upper Division standing or instructor consent.

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

Email Etiquette

It is your responsibility to read information communicated through your SJSU email account. I am available through email Monday-Friday 9-5pm, except for holidays and I will typically respond within 24 hours, but budget for 48 hours.

Professional email etiquette is required. All emails should have the course and section number and the topic of your email in the subject ("WGSS 101 01 Question about Discussion Q" or "WGSS 101 80

Link not working"). Your email should have an opening salutation such as, "Hi Dr. Jones" and a closing salutation like, "Thank you, [your name]." I will not respond to emails that include slang (Lol, idk, plz) read like a text message ("when is the paper due?"), and do not have a clear body.

Civility & Respect

Many theories and corresponding topics may be challenging. That's okay. The important thing is that we maintain a respectful climate where one another's ideas and perspectives are considered. People making rude, discriminatory, or hateful comments may be removed from discussions or asked to leave the class.

Generative AI Policy

Here's my deal with generative AI: it is an incredibly powerful tool that can streamline burdensome, time-consuming, and difficult tasks.

To me, generative AI is comparable to a power tool—say, a drill. If I'm putting together a desk, it can be manually completed with a screwdriver and it will take time, effort, and probably sweat. A drill can complete the task in a fraction of the amount of time and leave me with more time and brain power to focus on (what I find to be more interesting) things like figuring out where the desk should go or what color I should paint it. But the drill can't build the desk for me. It to be used with care and caution, *especially* if I have little experience using it *or* a screwdriver. Respect the tools: know their benefits and know their limitations. I can hurt myself with a power tool if I have little knowledge of how it operates and the consequences of not using it properly.

If you use AI tools for any assignment in this course, you must submit a [Student AI Disclosure \(https://the-said.pages.dev/\)](https://the-said.pages.dev/) (SAID) certificate. You can find out how to do this [here \(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XjSmMeGR98jHjyTyl4XawSxEgAQDPaDHKY-WP5f6QKw/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.vrepi4k7ihlo\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XjSmMeGR98jHjyTyl4XawSxEgAQDPaDHKY-WP5f6QKw/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.vrepi4k7ihlo). This tool empowers you to transparently document your use of AI tools in academic assignments.

Failure to disclose the use of AI tools as specified will result in a grade of '0' for the assignment and referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development, in accordance with SJSU's [Academic Integrity Policy \(https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf?mkt_tok=NjYzLVVLUS050TgAAAGcOUMeOXibgfXYsHwcehh4yedEazgOX26N1IBkpUKITKNHkJwmCqjRv-w9M_4XUn2HEJ1U7pbubnNuB7uAERrHqcdLS1Dx-zEE2ANKFREBwK92Eg\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf?mkt_tok=NjYzLVVLUS050TgAAAGcOUMeOXibgfXYsHwcehh4yedEazgOX26N1IBkpUKITKNHkJwmCqjRv-w9M_4XUn2HEJ1U7pbubnNuB7uAERrHqcdLS1Dx-zEE2ANKFREBwK92Eg) (University Policy F15-7 (https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf?mkt_tok=NjYzLVVLUS050TgAAAGcOUMeOXibgfXYsHwcehh4yedEazgOX26N1IBkpUKITKNHkJwmCqjRv-w9M_4XUn2HEJ1U7pbubnNuB7uAERrHqcdLS1Dx-zEE2ANKFREBwK92Eg)). If you are ever in doubt about acceptable applications of AI tools for an assignment, please don't hesitate to ask me!

The Writing Center has an [AI Writer Toolbox \(https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox/home?mkt_tok=NjYzLVVLUS050TgAAAGcOUMeOXT-LDeE6rOi6GeMUUY8u3C1HDmNddtsTcFk_nmWW3icWHmMdwNz97IOPla0DRvx7n03n7wCyyXvqK0ptweCcYfROV9CsqDmLkU_vy0I2g\)](https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox/home?mkt_tok=NjYzLVVLUS050TgAAAGcOUMeOXT-LDeE6rOi6GeMUUY8u3C1HDmNddtsTcFk_nmWW3icWHmMdwNz97IOPla0DRvx7n03n7wCyyXvqK0ptweCcYfROV9CsqDmLkU_vy0I2g) to help you navigate how to ethically use AI for things like generating ideas and revising your writing.

Participation and Netiquette

Respectful and professional participation is expected of everyone. This includes:

- Preparing the readings and actively participating
 - Read and annotate texts and actively watch or listen to other multimedia materials before the dates for which they are assigned on the syllabus. Research shows that reading and annotating hard-copy texts is the most effective method for increasing learning for most people. All of the readings on the syllabus are required unless otherwise noted. There may be suggested readings that are not required.
 - Actively take notes on your class materials. Research also shows that handwritten notetaking is the most effective method for most people (vs. typing and reviewing posted notes). I encourage you to exchange notes and study with classmates for additional engagement. If you need assistance with note-taking strategies, please see me and/or contact the [Accessible Education Center \(https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/).
- Being respectful to everyone in the class when they are speaking live, virtually, or in writing, including fellow students, the professor, and guests.
- Most importantly, this means showing fellow members of our learning community a level of professional courtesy that facilitates an open environment where the potentially difficult and sensitive ideas that are a part of this course can be explored fully. This does not mean that members of the class community always have to agree with one another. But you must be thoughtful and respectful about the way you challenge someone's argument by grounding the discussion in readings and without attempting to invalidate the individual's experiences, statuses, or memberships. Racist, sexist, homophobic, violent, victim-blaming, bullying/harassment, or similar types of comments will not be tolerated.
- Read "[The Core Rules of Netiquette \(http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html\)](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)" to understand how to respectfully engage online in any course.*

*Participation and Netiquette is adapted with permission from Dr. DuCros's SOCI 162 course.

Attendance

I do not take attendance in this course. If you missed a class, it is your responsibility to ask a classmate for any updates, announcements, and in-class exercises that you missed. You do not need to email me saying that you will or have missed class. I will not respond to emails that ask me what you missed.

Late Work

Assignments submitted up to 24 hours after the deadline will incur a 50% deduction. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the deadline will receive a zero.

Extensions

Extensions may be granted for reasons such as medical emergencies or unforeseen personal circumstances. Requests must be submitted in writing via e-mail as soon as possible and before the assignment deadline. Approval is at the instructor's discretion, and documentation may be required.

Make-Up Work

I do not allow work to be made up unless it is for reasons mentioned above (see "Extensions"). It is your responsibility to adhere to all deadlines.

Program Information

Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program Learning Outcomes (PLO):

1. Identify and analyze the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, class, and nation social and institutional contexts.
2. Identify and describe major theories and political movements central to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, placing contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and embodied contexts.
3. Describe the global span of feminist movements and the connection among gender and sexual minorities around the world.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking and research skills through written, oral and creative means.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area S: Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.

SJSU Studies courses -- Areas R, S, and V -- help students integrate knowledge between and among disciplines. In Area S courses, students study the interrelationships of individuals, racial groups, and cultural groups to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, inclusion, inequalities, and justice in the United States.

GE Area S Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area S course, students should be able to:

1. describe how identities are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality. Examples include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, age, generation, regional origin, national identity, language, and intersectionalities;
2. analyze historical, economic, political, or social processes that shape diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S. and reflect on one's own identities and positions within these structures;
3. evaluate social actions which have or have not led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S.; and

- engage in constructive interactions about social issues in the U.S. within the framework of equality and inequalities.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 3000 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

All course materials are posted on the Canvas course site.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Engagement Exercises

Syllabus quiz: 5 points

This multiple choice quiz is meant to help you become more familiar with the syllabus, due dates, course policies and protocol, and assignment expectations.

Quizzes in class: 15 points (3 points / quiz)

I will give six (6) unannounced quizzes throughout the course. They serve as a form of reading accountability and will be based on assigned readings of the day. If you completed the readings, you will have a higher chance of passing the quiz. Quizzes will be composed of 2-4 short answer questions. Students may use a hard copy of notes (typed or handwritten) while taking the quiz. If you miss a quiz, it cannot be made up.

Your lowest quiz score will be dropped and your five highest quiz scores will account for your overall quiz grade.

10 Hypothesis weekly annotations: 20 points (2 points / week)

This assignment invites students to dig into the weekly assigned readings and begin to pull information from them that you find meaningful, provocative, and/or challenging. I grade this assignment based on completion. The deadline to complete the week's annotation is Saturday at 11:59PM. Detailed instructions on how to complete these annotations are posted on Canvas.

6 End-of-Unit Discussion Questions: 30 points (5 points / question)

This assignment is designed to help you synthesize course materials (readings, videos, etc.) at the end of each unit. You are invited to meaningfully engage in a discussion with your classmates in response to a discussion question. I grade your responses on depth, nuance, and originality. There are a total of 7 units in this course and you must complete 6 end-of-unit discussion assignments, so you are allowed to skip one.

The deadline to complete the week's discussion question is Sunday at 11:59PM. Detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment are posted on Canvas.

Written Exercises

Trans in the News (Paper #1): 15 points

This assignment that invites students to analyze a current event (in the past year) that relates to trans identities, embodiments, and/or politics in 700 words. You will find a news event sourced from an independent journalism and explain how it relates to any of the course material. This paper is due on Sunday October 19 at 11:59PM. Detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment are posted on Canvas.

Trans in a Movement (Paper #2): 15 points

This assignment invites you to dig further into a course topic that interests you and research how a specific organization/collective/group organizes to effect change within this movement. Students will articulate how a specific organization's core purpose relates to the broader movement of which it is apart in 700 words. This paper is due Tuesday December 16 at 11:59PM. Detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment are posted on Canvas.

✓ Grading Information

Syllabus quiz	5 points
Quizzes (3 points each)	15 points
10 Hypothesis weekly annotations (2 points each)	20 points
6 End-of-Unit Discussion Questions (5 points each)	30 points
Trans in the News (Paper #1)	15 points
Trans in a Movement (Paper #2)	15 points
Total possible	100 points

Breakdown

Syllabus quiz	5 points
Quizzes (3 points each)	15 points
10 Hypothesis weekly annotations (2 points each)	20 points
6 End-of-Unit Discussion Questions (5 points each)	30 points
Trans in the News (Paper #1)	15 points
Trans in a Movement (Paper #2)	15 points
Total possible	100 points

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.



Course Schedule

Week	Date	Readings	Deadlines
.5	8.20	Welcome! Introductions & Overview of Course & Syllabus	
Unit 1: "Trans" Embodiments before Trans Studies <i>What terms about trans identity and embodiment have circulated before Trans Studies as an academic field was established? What new terms are circulating? What "trans" ontologies have existed before the category "trans" was even used? *Ask me why I put trans in quotes in class!*</i>			
1	8.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hale, "Suggested Rules for Non-Transsexuals Writing about Transsexuals, Transsexuality, Transsexualism, or Trans _____." (https://sandystone.com/hale.rules.html). Stryker, "Contexts, Concepts, and Terms," 1-33. 	
	8.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling Dualisms" Stryker, "Contexts, Concepts, and Terms," 34-44. 	Hypothesis due 8.30
2	9.3	<p>*No class on Monday 9.1 Labor Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Colonial Gender Expression and Identity in 'North America (https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/learn/PreColonialGender). Miranda, "Extermination of the Joyas" Maracle, "A Journey Through Gender" 	Hypothesis due 9.6 Discussion Q due 9.7
3	9.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gill-Peterson, "The Global Trans Panic" 	
	9.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sears, "Electric Brilliancy" 	
4	9.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schuller, "TERF Gatekeeping and TransFeminist Horizons" 	

	9.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gan, "Still at the Back of the Bus" • Koyama, "The Transfeminist Manifesto" 	
5	9.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moore and Currah, "Legally Sexed" 	
	9.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currah, "Till Birth Do Us Part" 	
6	9.29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferber, "Judith Butler on the Culture Wars, JK Rowling, and Living in 'Anti-Intellectual Times.'" • Gill-Peterson, "<i>Mujerísima</i> and Scarcity Feminism" 	
	10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barcelos, "Transgender Youth, Family Making, and the Livability of Trans Lives." 	
7	10.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender queer: A Memoir • What does it mean to be asexual? 	
	10.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gender Queer: A Memoir</i> 	
8	10.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish <i>Gender Queer</i> 	
	10.15		
9	10.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Trans Sexualities: Identities, Relationships, Desires" by Tompkins • Raun and Keegan, "nothing to hide: selfies, sex, and the visibility dilemma in trans male online cultures" 	
	10.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward, "Gender Labor" 	
10	10.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doyle, "Sports" • Heggie, "Subjective Sex" 	
	10.29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karkazis & Jordan-Young, "Athleticism" 	
11	11.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malatino, "Trans Care" Ch. 1-2 	
	11.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malatino, "Trans Care" Ch. 3-4 	

12	11.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lindores, "Voguing: A Brief History of the Ballroom" • Bailey, "Gender/Racial Realness" 	
	11.12	In class viewing of <i>Paris is Burning</i>	
13	11.17	TBA	
	11.19	TBA	
14	11.24/26	<p>No Class: No Thanks, No Giving</p> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manning, "The Thanksgiving Myth" • Virgie Tovar, "4 Body Boundary Tips For The Holidays" 	
15	12.1	1. Raha and Van der Drift, "Abolitionist Transfeminist Futures: Solidarity, Generosity, and Love,"	
	12.3	1. Singh, "Affirming and Enjoying your Body"	
15.5	12.8	1. Ward, "The Revolution Will Not Exhaust Us"	