GSC 60001  Perspectives on Gender
MW 12:30-1:45pm
Alison Rice/ROFR
This course encourages you to develop your own perspective on gender and gender issues by reading across a span of thinkers who have engaged issues related to sex and gender including: debates over women’s rights, difference, the body, sexuality, gender performance, gender surgery, gay marriage, masculinity, race, transgender politics, and more. Students will read and analyze texts by diverse writers from the 19th century to the present day, speaking from perspectives informed by suffrage and abolition movements, second wave feminism, third wave feminism, Black liberation and Black pride movements, gay liberation and queer pride movements, and men’s movements; and from disciplines such as political science, anthropology, psychology, literary criticism, film theory, history, biology, sociology, cultural studies, and more. Throughout, students will consider how ideas about gender have changed over time and why, how the ideas and debates relate to their lives and everyday practices, and which ideas can or should be put into practice and how.

GSC 60651/61651  Media and Identity
TR 11:00am-12:15pm
Lab T 5:00-7:30pm
Mary Kearney/FTT
This course focuses on critical analyses of identities in media culture. Taking a cultural studies approach, we will interrogate theories and popular discourses of identity while exploring how identities are constructed, negotiated, resisted, and transformed within media culture. Our primary questions in this course are: What is identity? How do our identities inform our various relationships to media culture? And, how does media culture impact the construction of our identities? Our sites of analysis will be media representation (narrative, performance, aesthetics), media production (industrial and alternative), and media consumption (reception practices and audiences). We will examine a broad array of media forms, including film, television, the Internet, and popular music. Conventional demographic identities, such as gender, age, race, sexuality, class, and religion, are central to the course, although other identities, including geographic, lifestyle, and virtual identities, will be examined also. We will strive toward critical analyses that understand identities as socially constructed, not biologically determined, and intersectional, not autonomous.

GSC 63510  Religion, Gender & Development
M 3:30-6:15pm
Atalia Omer/IIPS
Much attention has been given to the diverse and instrumental roles religion, religious institutions, religious networks, leaders, and entrepreneurs have played in conceptualizing the meanings of development and in implementing programs conventionally classified as catalysts of development. In this particular set of conversations, religion is often interpreted instrumentally and in a manner unreflective of the genealogical analysis of religion as a category that has been complicit with the history of empire. Within this critical discursive context, “development” is often interpreted as yet another chapter in a long legacy of cultural, political, economic and other forms of global domination. This doctoral seminar will scrutinize what happens to the instrumental approach to religion and development when confronted by these modes of critique. Other scholarship has begun to theorize the connections between religion, development, and strategic peacebuilding but left out the critical engagement with questions of gender, systemic violence, and divergent normative horizons and interpretations of what exactly does it mean to be “developed” and whether being “developed” entailed certain normative prescriptions on the level of a gender analysis. Therefore, the course will engage synergistically the conceptual obstacles for theorizing development, focusing on questions of agency within religious traditions and the divergent and often contested meanings of development through a gender analytic lens.
Gender is arguably the most fundamental social division and axis of inequality in human society. Although gender categories differ cross-culturally, all societies use gender as a key organizing and stratifying principle. But what exactly is gender and how does it relate to biological sex? What is the history of gender as a category of analysis in sociology and how have gender scholars influenced other sociological sub-fields? In this course, we will read foundational tracts on theorizing gender and gendering theory, we will consider feminist methodological critiques, and we will examine empirical manifestations of gender and of gender inequality across varied arenas of social life and sociological research.

Department Approval Required
Special studies are available with Gender Studies – Affiliated Faculty.