



# WAYS 103: Gender, Sexuality, and Music Spring 2024

Class Times and Location:

Section 007: Bishop Hall C303, Tue/Thu, 12:30-1:45pm

## Instructor Information

Dr. Erin Brooks

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Office: Schuette Hall A102

## Office Hours

Office hours can be in-person or via online meeting—any office hour is scheduled by appointment in order to maximize the overlap between your schedule and mine. Please email or message me or come up before or after class to set up these office hour meetings; I'm very happy to discuss course material or just offer a supportive ear for anything you'd like to share in a safe space.

**This course fulfills the WAYS 103 requirement of the Potsdam General Education program**

## WAYS 103 Overview:

WAYS 103 is a speaking class that exposes students to concepts necessary to live, work, and create in the diverse populations and social identities that characterize the U.S., including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability status, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, and age. In this course, students will explore personal and societal assumptions about differences, and examine systemic cultural, political, and economic imbalances. This course encourages civil and respectful discourse (conversations, dialogue, debates, presentations) about difficult topics and charged issues.

## Gender, Sexuality, and Music:

WAYS 103, "Gender, Sexuality, and Music" is a course for those who wish to explore interfaces between fundamental aspects of human culture and identity—music, gender, and sexuality. Certain qualities of gender strongly resemble certain qualities of music—each is a kind of performance and each is intrinsically embodied. Starting from this fundamental tension-in-common, we will explore various binaries that constrain our thinking about gender, as well as the intersections of gender and music with sexuality, social class, disability, age, and race. We'll survey these manifestations via a range of Western European and American repertoires, musicians, and circumstances, encompassing both "art" and popular musics. Throughout the semester we will read and discuss foundational texts exploring relationships between music, gender, and sexuality, and engage in listening and discussion of selected musical works.

## Course Learning Outcomes:

*WAYS 103 Seminar Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)*

After completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe historical and contemporary social factors that shape the development of individual and group identity, involving but not limited to race, class, and gender. (Understanding)
2. Analyze the social construction of inequality at the individual, interactional, institutional, and ideological levels of society. (Analyzing)
3. Describe challenges (and responses to said challenges) regarding rights, access, and equity that are faced by underrepresented population(s) traditionally marginalized or oppressed in the U.S., especially in terms of social justice action. (Understanding)
4. Demonstrate oral communication that informs, persuades, or otherwise engages with audience(s) appropriately. (Applying)
5. Evaluate communication for substance, bias, and intended effect. (Evaluating)

*Course-specific SLOs for Gender, Sexuality, and Music*

After completion of this course, you will be able to:

6. Articulate foundational theories about gender and sexuality and how those relate to/impact music studies
7. Think creatively about how gender & sexuality influences your relationships with music
8. Demonstrate facility with speaking about and writing about music

## Course Prerequisites and Requirements:

There are no pre-requisite courses for this WAYS 103 class.

## Required Texts and How to Access Other Course Materials:

**Required text #1:** Saylor Academy (2012). *Stand Up, Speak Out: The Practice and Ethics of Public Speaking*, v1.0 which is available for free from this [website](#) (listed as SUSO in the calendar).

**Required Text #2:** All other class materials (readings, recordings, etc) will be open-access resources posted on Brightspace for a specific class meeting. These are required materials; please visit <https://brightspace.potsdam.edu> for your course resources. We'll also spend some time acclimating to our class's Brightspace site organization during Week 1.

## FAQ on how to get to stuff, when to do it, etc:

**What** kind of stuff might be assigned as homework?

- Throughout the course of the semester, you'll typically have something to do before coming to class—maybe some pages to read, music to listen to, a video to watch, etc.

**How** much?

- I've tried to be as humane as possible and streamline any assignments to make sure they are necessary, short, and essential; so please be sure to do all assigned work.

**How** to get to it?

- Course content and activities are structured using a weekly format on Brightspace
- You'll see a module for a week, then individual modules for each day.
- All of the specific reading / listening / viewing instructions will always be provided on the day's module.
- Each day's module on Brightspace will contain the exact assignment of required page numbers, and (if applicable) PDFs and listening links
- While not true of every single week, as a generalization:
  - On **Tuesdays**, we will often be discussing a reading on gender, sexuality, and music (so there will typically be an assigned reading and a forum post)
  - On **Thursdays**, we will be doing some in-class listening/viewing related to the week's topic, and also working on speaking skills & approaches (so there will often be an assigned section from our common course textbook, *Stand Up, Speak Out*, abbreviated as SUSO here). For those readings from SUSO, we will discuss this work in-class and work on related skill acquisition during our course meeting.

**When** can I access the coursework?

- I generally will have the work for the following week posted by the end of business on Friday, so you can do it as it fits into your schedule.
- You should likely have a look at Brightspace every day for listening/reading assignments, discussion questions, quizzes, and any possible updates/changes.
- Anything that's listed for a day, please do it **BEFORE** I see you in class that day.
- Once modules are opened, they will remain visible for the rest of the semester.

**Gentle reminder:**

- SUNY guidelines assume **at least** 2 hours of study time per hour of class time or credit. For this 3-credit class, which meets 3 hours/week, you could potentially spend 6 additional hours a week outside of class (studying, listening, reading).
- Now: that number of hours you spend reading or listening will vary over the course of the week or the semester, but if you are obviously not doing work outside class, you will not be successful in this course.
- Please feel free to come meet with me for guidance on how to organize your studying and reading time most effectively.
- It is your responsibility to make sure that you can access the class materials; please let me know as soon as possible if you are having any problems. I may be able to help, but it's also possible I might not be able to troubleshoot some issues— if you've got problems with your setup, campus Computing & Technology Services (CTS) helpdesk is (315) 267-4444 or [helpdesk@potsteam.edu](mailto:helpdesk@potsteam.edu)
- For additional help, the Crane Music library has a variety of resources. The url <https://library.potsteam.edu/music> will take you to a page with essential resources such as links to audio/visual databases, articles, the library catalog, etc. We'll talk more about specific resources as the class progresses.

## Course Evaluation:

Grading will be based on seven overall categories, listed below:

1. Common Assignment #1 (assigned Week 3, due Week 5) 10%
2. Common Assignment #2 (assigned Week 10, due Week 12) 15%
3. Weekly assignments/forum posts on Brightspace (throughout) 20%
4. Class Participation & Preparation (throughout, includes work on *SUSO* readings) 15%
5. Group Project on Gender & Sexuality in New York 15%
  - This will be a small project (which can be done with a partner) on more local history
  - This project will be researched and completed from Weeks 6-8
6. Final Video Presentation or Podcast 20%
  - Projected due dates for each project part will be posted on Brightspace in Week 12.
  - I reserve the right to push due dates back due to unforeseen events, etc
    - Initial Topic Submission & Short Bibliography—5%
    - Final Project—15%
7. Reflection questions 5%

## Explanation of Procedures for Each Assignment:

### 1. Common Assignment #1—10% of final grade

We will watch Ruby Sales's talk "How We Can Start to Heal the Pain of Racial Division?" ([Ruby Sales: How we can start to heal the pain of racial division](#)). You will be asked to speak for 1 minute about the historical and cultural factors that shaped Sales's identity as showcased in her talk. You will turn in a one-page outline/précis of your reflection. Your outline will be submitted to Brightspace (see course assignment folder for date and rubric for outline and talk). Pay attention to the presentation mechanics. (Note: all WAYS 103 students watch this same TED talk).

This work helps you talk through DEI concepts with me and your peers (this assignment ties in to **SLO #1**)

### 2. Common Assignment #2—15% of final grade

The purpose of this assignment is for you to explore personal and societal assumptions about differences. This will be accomplished by having you participate in an event, presentation, workshop, or any other activity as decided by me.

This work helps you talk through DEI concepts with me and your peers (**SLO #5**)

### 3. Weekly Assignments/Forum Post/ Procedures and Guidelines—20% of final grade

\* You'll be asked to either complete an assignment or a discussion forum post on Brightspace most weeks during the course. Start early, stay on top of it, and it should help us start our discussions from a more complex and interesting place!

\* However many forum posts/homework assignments I give you—there will be between 10 and 12 of them this semester—you can miss up to two of them with no penalty.

\* If you miss additional assignments beyond the two freebies, you will lose 10% from this grade category for each additional missing assignment/post.

\* I will often give you some specific guidelines or things to think about to help you focus your thoughts a little. Starting with the first forum post, I'll give you a rubric to explain what counts as a "good/thorough" response to a reading (this is the basis for my grading of this).

\* Your post or assignment must be completed the evening before our class, 11:59pm (so that I and others can read them before class the next day) (SLO #2 and #6)

#### 4. Class attendance/Participation/Preparedness Procedures—15% of final grade

This class will only be successful if it becomes an engaged, active learning community, especially because it's a discussion and speaking-style course. During participatory discussions, you are expected to contribute (simply being present is not enough). Simply put, you can't successfully engage with this course if you're routinely not here. Due to these factors, attendance and participation is **essential** and is encouraged through multiple means of evaluation.

I've tried to build in some **flexibility** into this class—**EVERYONE NEEDS IT!**—while also acknowledging the **reality** that you can't be successful in this class without being present.

- F. There are a couple of days built into this semester when we won't meet in person, ranging from spring break and April recess....and who knows what else will come up in addition (snow days??). Overall, we're likely to have around 30 class meetings.
- G. This spring, you can miss **THREE** classes for whatever reason with **no** penalty (these are unexcused absences). **Use these as you see fit—you can use them for illness, mental health days, prep for some giant deadline, whatever works. I strongly suggest you reserve some of your absences for sickness, since we all get sick.**
- H. After your three freebie absences, **per common WAYS course policies, 0.2 will be deducted from your final grade for additional absences.**
- I. If you have more extended issues this spring—major illness, family crises, or anything else that significantly impacts your ability to attend the class sessions—please schedule a time to talk to me \*as soon as possible.\* I want to help anyone in need find workarounds, but I can't help if I don't know the situation. It is to your advantage in these kinds of extraordinary situations to make sure to communicate with me and/or other administrators so that we can help you find the right solution for your situation.
- J. **Except under specific circumstances, if you miss more than EIGHT classes during the term (that's one month of classes or more than 25% of our class meetings), I reserve the right to consider that you haven't been able to do enough of the work to successfully complete the course (meaning you can't "pass" the course). This isn't automatic, but is a possibility.**
- K. For **any** class you've missed, I strongly suggest you contact me to discuss missed course content, as you'll still need to know it for projects.
- L. If you have a religious observance during the semester, any missed coursework during that particular class will not count against you. However, you should inform me before the absence and you'll still want to stay on top of the relevant coursework for that class date.

#### 5. Group Project Presentation on New York State—15% of final grade

To be explained around Week 6, and completed by Week 8. This can be done with a partner. (SLO #3 and #4)

#### 6. Final Video Presentation or Podcast—20% of final grade

We'll start working on this about Week 12 and continue throughout the rest of the semester. This includes some smaller internal steps. (SLO #4 and 9)

#### 7. Reflection Questions—5% of final grade.

These are important to help us pull it all together, we'll work through these together in Weeks 14 and 15. (SLO #8)

# Course Policies

## Grading

All grades will be determined on the following scale:

|                    |                   |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>4.0:</b> 95-100 | <b>2.7:</b> 82-84 | <b>1.3:</b> 68-71 |
| <b>3.7:</b> 92-94  | <b>2.3:</b> 78-81 | <b>1.0:</b> 65-67 |
| <b>3.3:</b> 88-91  | <b>2.0:</b> 75-77 | <b>0.0:</b> 0-64  |
| <b>3.0:</b> 85-87  | <b>1.7:</b> 72-74 |                   |

Please note that passing grade for an undergraduate course is a 2.0 or above.

## Extra Credit

There is no opportunity to earn extra credit for absences, missed assignments/exams, or low grades. I am, however, always happy to meet with you to talk about ways to improve any work so that you can make sure to do better on future assignments!

## Incompletes

As a general policy for WAYS courses, incompletes are not allowed (they create all kinds of problems with degree progression, and incompletes are often never finished.....). Any incompletes in WAYS courses would be very unusual (a very specific set of emergency circumstances) and would be processed through the WAYS director Christine Doran.

## Grade Appeals

If you have questions about a grade, please speak with me (in person) first. Please note that the undergraduate catalog includes the specific criteria upon which you are allowed to appeal a course grade. If we cannot come to an informal resolution, you would then complete a formal Grade Appeal Form and we would consider if additional resolution is necessary. Details about the specific steps and timelines for this process are located in the undergraduate catalog: <https://www.potsdam.edu/academics/catalog>

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- **Emails:** I check email several times a day; if you don't hear back from me within 24 hours, feel free to try again. Please make sure to check your campus email regularly—I frequently send essential updates or class comments via email.
  - **Pandemic? Policies:** Well, we continue to be in the midst of this....at the moment there aren't a lot of specific protocols on campus that should impact this class, but given how we don't know what we don't know, it is entirely possible that circumstances may change during the semester (for better or worse). As a faculty member, I will continue to follow official campus guidelines, which may mean that our classroom policies could change over the course of the semester. I'll keep you posted should there be any changes in policy as we go.
  - **Trauma-Sensitive Teaching:** In my entry ticket for the course, I asked each of you to feel free to come to me with any personal issues and/or other things that might impact your semester; please always feel free to keep me updated should your circumstances change during the semester.
  - I am committed to using trauma-sensitive teaching and learning principles to support your resilience and success in this course. Trauma-sensitive principles help create a safe, transparent, connected, and collaborative classroom environment where you feel empowered and respected. Be sure to do periodic self-checks on how course material—and the ways in which material is delivered and discussed—are affecting you, and please talk with me if you are having difficulties with any aspect of the course. Getting support from friends, colleagues, family, and mental health professionals is also important, especially if you have risk factors or you find yourself becoming distressed. For

additional links to campus and community services, see <https://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/wellness/counseling-center>

- **Accessibility:** I'd like to borrow a few words from the wonderful scholar Mimi Khúc (scholar/artist/activist in Residence in Disability Studies at Georgetown University): **"Everyone's access needs matter, and we will try collectively to meet them as they arise. Access needs are needs that when met enable participation in the course to the fullest--therefore they are wide-ranging and can be met in wide-ranging, creative ways.** I am committed to making participation as accessible as possible. Please let me know if anything comes up that makes participation feel hard....**We are taught not to have needs, that needs mean we are "weak"; resist this impulse.** Access is relational. This means that creating access and accessibility is something we do together, in relationship and community. It requires a shared commitment to each other's wellbeing and participation in the community space, and requires communication and negotiation and flexibility. We learn each other's needs and try to meet them as best we can, so that we can all participate as much as possible in this classroom space. **Everyone has access needs, and these needs change over time. I will try to anticipate as much as possible but I cannot know everyone's needs at all times. When you become aware of your access needs, please communicate them to me."**
- If you have any concerns about our in-class work, please let me know and I will work with you to find acceptable accommodations. I know that some of you may have a registration on file with Accommodative Services (<http://potsdam.edu/support/oas>)—you're very welcome to share these with me. I look forward to talking to all of you about your access needs as we work together this semester.
- **Classroom conduct:** Active participation in this class involves speaking, taking notes, contributing questions and commentary, and challenging each other to think more deeply. Indeed, critical engagement—which should include reasoned debate, critique, and questions—is one of the best ways to learn. It is essential, however, that we be considerate in the ways we conduct these discussions; have an open mind, don't make assumptions about your classmates, have respect for different viewpoints, and hone your ability to listen thoughtfully and compassionately to each other and the instructor. Anyone who struggles with this policy will be asked to meet with me to figure out better approaches; please let me know if you have any concerns about discussion during the course.

A couple of particular notes about this class:

- We're dealing with *historical* subject matter about gender and sexuality in this course, so we will encounter earlier frameworks of thinking about these issues (some of which will likely intrigue, surprise, aggravate, or infuriate us in turn). While these feelings are appropriate, we need to be able to discuss historical change—so don't be surprised to encounter dated terms or ideas at certain points in the semester. Some articles or readings may include as primary sources terms which may be considered offensive in modern contexts. We'll try to discuss this as needed, but also make sure we have a nuanced understanding of terminology and ideas used during the 19th and 20th centuries [in addition to our modern terminology, which is itself always in flux!]
- This class material will deal with identities that are relevant to everyone—we all have gender identities and sexualities. With that said, there is no chance that *all* the course material will be an identity you are part of. No one has lived experience of all identities or positionalities! :) So this entire course is an opportunity for learning and growth and listening for each of us. It's also a good reminder to be thoughtful—we don't know where a specific person may be coming from, and we importantly and inevitably don't know it all. We'll each take a pledge to be as thoughtful and compassionate as possible, but also offer apologies and learning for when we may stumble at times—that's an important thing to practice, as well.
- I may occasionally give content warnings in class about particular class dates. Please feel free to let me know (in private) if you have any concerns about any class content in this regard and we can find a solution for you.
- **Note taking:** A few friendly note-taking suggestions:

- If I use slides in the class, I will post the slides on Brightspace, no need to copy down all the info directly from the slides as you go. In particular, it will help you the most to focus on ways of jotting down important verbal content from lecture (i.e. material beyond just copying down any information directly from a slide).
- **Technology:** we're likely to be using technology regularly in this class! Please feel free to come to me personal issues and/or technology limitations that might impact your ability to participate in the semester. You'll likely find it helpful to bring laptops, tablets, or phones to class—I'll let you know in advance if there's a particular class where it is especially useful to have such devices. Regardless of what we're doing during our in-class meetings (unless we're specifically using the internet to look things up) please help yourself focus on your classmates by being "present" during discussions and refraining from multitasking (texting, being on social media, etc).
- **Late work:** Generally speaking, late work is not accepted in WAYS courses; however, I am willing to discuss extensions in specific emergency circumstances. Please be aware that no matter the circumstances, I am unlikely to grant any extensions longer than one to two weeks, since it causes major problems for you and me! Please contact me with questions.
- **Academic Integrity:** This class will strictly follow SUNY Potsdam's policies on academic integrity. Please consult the Academic Honor Code website (<http://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/honorcode>) for more information regarding your responsibilities as a student. In general, academic misconduct includes acts in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation. Examples include (but are not limited to):
  1. Cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation.
  2. Paraphrasing from the web or written texts without crediting the source.
  3. Using notes in an exam when such use is not allowed.
  4. Using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own.

**\*Please note that this also includes working together on any assignments that are not explicitly framed as collaborative projects.**

I encourage you to discuss class content with each other inside and outside of class. For assignments, however, no collaboration with other students is permitted. Disguising words or work by others as your own undermines the academic community here at SUNY Potsdam. If you have any questions about this, don't hesitate to ask me. For specific questions on intellectual property and proper citation techniques, advice is available both at SCCS and the Writing Center.

AI/Chat GPT, etc:

Here's a specific guide on ChatGPT. [https://library.potsdam.edu/citing\\_ai](https://library.potsdam.edu/citing_ai)

While I don't have issues with you using AI as a *research* tool, I'll just say BE CAREFUL (it's got issues and makes a lot of weird mistakes....it may actually be getting less accurate with time, not more so!). Do not present any writing from AI as "your own" (it's not!)

Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification and other academic honor code violations are taken very seriously. Any suspicious situations will be dealt with through proper judicial channels and may result in serious consequences. For more information about academic misconduct procedures, see the processes and procedures at the Academic Honor Code website.