
WHO

Gender and Nature, GNDR-5120 in-person class with a community engagement designation.

Gender will be our stepping-off point however, the class will aspire to decolonize ourselves, reshape and affirm multiple identities, and celebrate the relationship of humanity's return to nature.

- Time/ Date: 9:10-10:30 | TU/TH
- Locations: Gardner Commons GC1760
- Instructor: Kilo Zamora, He/Him | 801.558.9215 (txt/call) | kilo.zamora@utah.edu
- TA: Savannah Star McCall, She/Her | Teaching Assistant | 505-819-9908 | u1318286@utah.edu
- Discord Channel: Gender & Nature Extended Universe
- Office Hrs: by apt.

Teaching Philosophy

I will work diligently to ensure everyone can engage with the curriculum and with each other in a way that honors the multiple perspectives and identities in the classroom as well as to prepare us to learn from one another.

Each of us has a passion. Mine is about increasing the health of our ecosystems; both human and environmental. To stay true to my passion, I strive to be curious, creative, a ferocious learner, flexible, and compassionate. It is equally important to bravely interrogate the ways systems bind, harm, marginalize, and privilege us to construct new realities.

I have learned that under the right circumstances, anything/one can be our teacher. I have also learned that working with a group of learners, over an entire semester, brings forth breakthroughs in the field of study. Our discoveries can lead to community-wide

transformation. Hopefully, we will co-create a learning environment in which we can freely exchange our ideas and witness positive transformation unfold.

At the core of my teaching are encouraging self-reflection, providing real experiences, refining praxis skills, and investing in student education. To accomplish this, the pedagogy is divided into experiential activities, student-led teaching, student-driven community engagement projects, and studying diverse and relevant content.

Special Thank you to my co-designers of this course

KRCL, Lara Jones, Sylvia Torte, Ph.D., Natalie Blanton, Eva Zamora, Nikki Wayment, Hilary Thirlwell, Ph.D., Erin Capra, Kimberly Terry, Ph.D., Natalie Shewell, and Natalie Dutrow, and Alborz Ghandehari, Ph.D.. (3 Natalies, lucky me).

WHAT

A special note about the design of this course

My approach to designing courses has matured over the years, and I've now started using community engaged participatory research and community ownership strategies to develop a new curriculum. This class continues to be designed by interviewing creative thinkers in partnership with KRCL on air. Lara Jones, DJ and host of Radio Active (a community-based radio program on KRCL) and I ask the program's guests about how they would design the class and how their respective professions would approach the topic. These guests come from of different backgrounds and disciplines, and these differences spur unique perspectives and strategies for discussing the concepts of gender and nature and how they intersect. We also encourage listener input to the design. Everyone who helps with and contributes to the course design will be cited in this syllabus as co-creators. The intent of this collective course creation strategy

is to craft a class that can be taught by a variety of teachers, not one that is suited to only my personal teaching style. An interesting and unforeseen outcome from this process is that interviewees have already expressed interest in using the activities and pedagogical strategies proposed for the course, epitomizing the reciprocity embedded in this novel course design approach.

Course Description & Learning Objectives

This course challenges the concepts of “nature” and “gender.” Working within the frameworks of ecocriticism, ecofeminism, indigenous ecology frameworks, and queer theory, we will explore how cultural contexts and practices impose gendered roles on both humans and the non-human world. Drawing on the work of scholars, nature, and lived experiences we will consider how cultural depictions of nature and gender inform our own relationships with the more-than-human world. But rather than dwell fatalistically on the domination and silencing of ecosystems and human populations, this course explores possibilities for hope. Where ecofeminism frequently links the exploitation and domination of women to that of the earth, queer theory opens up possibilities for new relationships with the environment that are at odds with what is “normal” or “dominant.” Queer, which means to “destabilize” or to put “off-center,” becomes a playful move in relation to contemporary ecological destruction and opens up optimistic alternatives to current practices surrounding consumption, reproduction, and activism.

Using an experiential pedagogy we will learn how nature can offer creative ways to deconstruct and reconstruct our gender/sexuality. Although gender will be the stepping off point, the class will aspire to decolonize ourselves, reshape and affirm multiple identities, and celebrate the relationship of humanity's return to nature. The class has a **community-engaged learning (CEL) certification** so the final project will involve restoring the planet and promoting a social ecology that affirms marginalized

identities with a community engagement project of students' choosing. Community Engaged Learning (CEL) designation, involving students in work directly benefiting community partners. CEL is defined as an educational approach that involves experiential learning and has several key components:

- Addresses a community-identified need
- Is mutually beneficial for the community and students
- Intentionally integrates community-engaged work and academic learning objectives
- Prepares students for engagement, including critical analysis of the structures leading to the community needs and best practices for ethical engagement
- Requires critical reflection on community engagement.

Learning Outcome Logic Model

Course Objectives	Bennion Center CEL Learning Objectives	Outcome 1: Theory and History (Knowledge)	Outcome 2: Communication and	Outcome 3: Social Responsibility in a Diverse World (Values)
(Theory-History) Explore the implications of how the material world <u>orients people</u> based on the binaries of sex, gender, sexuality, and its intersecting identities	1. Develop and apply the abilities needed to influence positive community change including research skills, project management,	1. Identify theories and approaches to gender and sexuality as these intersect with class, ethnicity, race,	1. Not measuring Develop information literacy: assess and evaluate the	1. Use knowledge of the historic and contemporary role and differential effects of gender and sexuality on local and global
(Skill) Develop a <u>reflexive practice</u> to recognize how <u>positionality</u> informs your humanness in nature.	2. Increase their awareness of and reflect on the interconnectedness between individuals, society, and public policy	2. Use these theories to evaluate how these forces construct our worlds and to reveal power	2. Cogently synthesize, employ, and communicate theories and key concepts in	2. Identify one's own cultural patterns and values and how they shape attitudes to difference and relationships to power.
(Skills) Practice technics to develop your ability to learn from nature in order to <u>transform your identities</u> .	3. Not measuring Develop habits related to ongoing community engagement	3. Not measuring Understand the history of social movements and connect social	3. Not measuring Communicate effectively in written and	3. Engage ethically with others in the class and in the larger community.
(Skills) Increase your ability to trust your imagination, creativity, and passion to <u>develop academic</u>	4. Articulate an increased sense of responsibility and commitment to the			4. Attend to and be accountable for diverse ways of being, thinking,
(Skills) Developing the skills to help advance both <u>social justice and environmental justice</u> .	5. Enhance awareness of their sense of place in and ownership of community issues,			5. Understand one's positionality within interdependent global communities.

(Skill) Increase <u>relatedness</u> to nature.	6. Further develop professional life skills: showing up, being reliable and punctual, keeping			

How: Learning material- readings, assignments, quizzes, and class schedule can be found in the module section of Canvas Readings and Learning Material

- Braiding Sweetgrass, (Kimmerer), This book is available via the library eBook ([link Links to an external site.](#)) or the university bookstore. You may also use the audiobook which students say is really great
- A Billion Black Anthopecens Or None (Yusoff)
- OPTIONAL Pleasure Activism: The Politics Of Feeling Good (Brown),
- In addition, a compiled series of articles, videos, and book chapters that you will be able to access online (for free!).

Class Changes

This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for the course. Please note that I may modify it at any time with reasonable notice to students. It is your responsibility to come to class and check your University of Utah email and Canvas regularly to ensure you are aware of any changes.

Grades are assigned based on the following scale:

94-100 A, 90-93 A-, 87-89 B+, 83-86 B, 80-82 B-, 77-79 C+, 73-76 C, 70-72 C-, 67-69 D+, 63-66 D, 60-62 D-, Below 60 E

How: Learning material, including assignments, quizzes reading material, and class schedules for this course can be found in the module section of Canvas.

Participation

Participation is determined by a combination of attendance and the quality of your contribution to discussions. To minimally qualify for: the A range (no more than 3 absences); the B range (no more than 4 absences); the C range (no more than 5 absences). IF YOU MISS 6 CLASSES YOU FAIL THIS COURSE. For excused absences for school functions (e.g., athletics) or documented illness (i.e., a doctor's note), please provide me with the appropriate paperwork.

Expectations and Policies

1. I expect us to attend class. This means arriving on time and staying until class is dismissed. If this is a problem for you I suggest you consider another class.
2. I expect us to treat one another with respect. This means no extended "side conversations" during class, turning your cell phone to vibrate mode, or refraining from texting or surfing the internet during class. If you need to be in touch with someone please leave the classroom.
3. I expect us to come to class prepared. This means, having completed assigned readings before the lecture so that you have the necessary background and vocabulary to comprehend the lecture. In some cases, this will mean coming prepared to lead the class in particular readings in an informed and thoughtful manner.
4. I expect you to take responsibility for any absences by asking fellow students for notes.

Sharing in class: This class is built around us being able to share our lived experience and how it informs our outlook on the world. However, it is important that you know that as your instructor I am a mandatory reporter for disclosures of sexual assault. Given

the topics we discuss in Gender Studies and our commitment to valuing student voice, experience, and knowledge, it is possible that there will be times when some of you feel compelled to share personal experiences related to sexual assault, abuse, or misconduct. We value this sharing as it is often helpful to students and we do not want to silence you. We also do not expect you to share these things if it is not helpful to you. Please know that sharing any of these instances in class or on an assignment does require me to make a report to the Office of Equal Opportunity so that they can reach out to you to see if you need support – this is mandated under Title IX. When I make the report I will not share the details of what you disclosed in our class or your assignment, just your name and email and the statement that you did disclose something that needs to be reported according to Title IX. Someone from that office will reach out to you and you can respond to them or not; ignoring that message is absolutely an option. If you'd like to know more about OEO and sexual misconduct: <https://oeo.utah.edu/how-can-we-help/sexual-misconduct.php>

[Links to an external site.](#)

Extra Credit

To earn extra credit you have to be playing an active role in an event or action and it has to be relevant to our class. It is not enough to just attend an event, you need to be volunteering, protesting, asking questions at the microphone, reporting on the event to a wider audience, etc. The best practice is to talk with me about it. Do not assume that I will say yes to your proposal just because it has the word gender or politics in the title.

Confidentiality

Some level of personal disclosure may be appropriate for students in this course as it relates to our learning about a

particular topic or in relation to particular assignments. Students are expected to adhere to all professional standards of confidentiality during the semester.

Correspondence

It is preferable that email correspondence occurs within Canvas. Email from non-UMail accounts may go to my junk mail folder, which will not be reviewed. You may text me for simple questions but refrain from sharing anything confidential via text.

Assignments Due dates will be in canvas

Late papers will be docked one-half grade for each day past the due date. The assignments can be found in Canvas. These assignments are tailored for this class and were not made solely to keep you busy. They are designed to keep you engaged and strengthen your knowledge and skills. Each of us has some degree of personal interpretation, which I hope will increase your creativity rather than your ability to find ways to cut corners. If you require more structure please reach out to me and your classmates. Transforming your new knowledge to practice is inherent within each assignment. I hope each assignment is fun, challenging, and life changing.

- Teaching Collective- You will be in a teaching group and will lead our class one time during the semester. The most successful small groups work as a team, engage their audience, are prepared to perform, are creative, and know the content area. I will grade you on each of these areas of success and it is your job to let me know how you have integrated them into your presentation. If you feel that one or more of your teammates came unprepared let me know within 24 hours after your presentation via canvas email. I will not accept your comments after I have posted your grades because they will likely be biased.

- Annotating- Robinson, A. L. (2020). Of Monsters and Mothers: Affective Climates and Human-Nonhuman Sociality in Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner's "Dear Matafele Peinam". [The Contemporary Pacific, 32\(2\), 311+.](#) [Links to an external site.](#)
<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A674438803/AONE?u=marriottlibrary&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=c705c598>
[Links to an external site.](#)

1 hour. Annotate this article and submit your work. What you are looking for is how Dr. Robinson can inform your land and environmental land acknowledgment assignment.

- Land and Environmental Acknowledgement Assignment- To begin this course, it is important to develop your own land and environmental acknowledgment statement of the first people(s) to live on these lands and how you want to be on this land. Developing a land and environmental acknowledgment is helpful in developing your decolonization framework. Constructing your personalized statement requires you to explore how your identities are situated in your statement (positionality), how you want to respectfully portray the Indigenous peoples of this land, how colonization has contributed to environmental racism (colonial anthropomorphism), what historical truths you want to share, and how to write a statement that conveys your authentic beliefs about what you wrote. A worry I have about the trend in land acknowledgments is that they are just that a trend. I fret that they can be performative gestures instead of a way to decolonize your approach, pay respect, and plant transformational seeds of change. My hope is that the statement that you author evolves over your lifetime.

Special note for graduate students I expect your work to reflect formal citations (APA) and theoretical explorations from critical theories or your discipline (concepts, theories, frameworks) that are guiding your final product. In addition,

you may write informally if it helps you articulate your ideas however, I expect a well-edited assignment.

- **Nature & Self Documentary:** To understand how nature can offer you insight to rethink your gender, racial, and sexual identity you will be spending every day for two weeks documenting yourself and one flora or fauna subject using photography, short videos, sketching, or creatively writing documenting yourself with one flora or fauna that is inspiring to you. Whichever medium you select make sure you are both represented in it. For every recording, you have to write one to two reflection paragraphs describing your subject, share new observations and insights, and finally how your own identity relates to the subject. Remember that Western science has disconnected us from nature by viewing nature as an object vs. a subject. Many cultures have used words such as people, mother, sisters, father, brothers, or family when referring to nature kin.
- **Ancestral Ethnography:** Pick one of your ancestral lines and trace it back as far as possible. Your task is to identify an artifact medium such as statues, writings, rituals, fashion, etc., and collect examples across a timeline of how it portrays any combination (it doesn't have to be all three or limited to these three) of gender, race, and sexuality. Make a timeline with examples of your collection of artifacts and write about how it reflects the identities you are examining and your best guess of why they formed identities these ways. Across your timeline show both identity portrayal connections/similarities across time and their deviations. In some instances there can be a clear change in how your ancestors have changed their identities over time and in other instances come back to original identity constructs; much like a double helix DNA strand moving away and then coming back together. As you weave your way into the present of the timeline, add yourself into it, and finally project into the future of your timeline 20 years and what will be the artifact then.

- Anthropomorphism (An in class presentation)- Exploring and critiquing how you have anthropomorphized nature by exploring the ways you gender and racialize a pet or a meaningful natural life force in your life. The final product will be a 3D sculpture, diorama, or interactive digital art piece. Everyone will share their art and do a verbal report of it in class.
- Restoration CEL (Final Project): The word restore is being used for two reasons- first, the opportunity to give back to the planet what has been taken from it and second, that this beautiful blue globe in its most natural form is perfect thus it doesn't need to be formed into the image of the human materialism. For this assignment, you will complete a project to restore the planet and promote a social ecology (i.e. queer, ethnic, disability, etc. ecologies) that affirms intersectional marginalized identities with a community engagement project of your choosing. This community engagement assignment requires you to identify a community partner (human and/or non-human) that identifies a need, develop a plan together, and operationalize the project. This is going to require you to think and act beyond convention, which means melding imagination, scholarship, reflexive practice, field observation methods, and your unique lived experiences together. This assignment will enable you to develop a lifelong practice of holistically situating humanity into a positive relationship with the rest of the natural world. You can do your final project solo or as a group.
- Special note for graduate students: You must deploy Critical Community Engaged Methods into your projects. I can help you develop your research for this project. You must have your final project approved by the instructor before you begin to ensure it meets graduate standards.

Assignments being developed

- Synanthrope Assignment: An animal that has not been domesticated but thrives on a farm or near a big city (coyote, field mice, raccoons, crows, rats etc)
- Decolonizing Plants
- Colonizing Mars

Late Work Policy

Late assignments will be reduced by 3 points each day the assignment is late (including weekend days). Given advance notice of at least 48 hours, extensions may be granted by the instructor.

Academic Integrity Statement

Student Code of Conduct: While scholastic dishonesty is not anticipated, students shall be subject to The University of Utah's policy on this subject. See the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy at <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual>. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this policy and standards.

Equity

ADA Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access.

- I am committed not only to the letter but also the spirit of the ADA. If you qualify for accommodations in any aspect of the course, I encourage you to use them,

starting with the first class. Please talk with me as soon as possible so that we can work together to make arrangements.

- Please help me identify any information on Canvas that may not be of optimal quality for use with screen readers or other assistive technologies. I will do my best to find a higher-quality version.
- Please also let me know if you have suggestions for improving access to other class activities, such as small group discussions or class presentations.

Gender Pronoun & Name Preferences

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. However, I am happy to honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so I use your correct name and pronouns.

Wellness Statements

- Mental Health- Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness (801) 581-7776 or the University Counseling Center (801) 581-6826.
- Physical Well-being- If you are having difficulty securing food or housing and it could potentially affect your school performance reach out to the Dean of Students (deanofstudents.utah.edu) for support. Furthermore, I am here to strategize with you on identifying resources. We care about the well-being of everyone on campus and will do what we can to be supportive.

- Safety- To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu. If you are uncomfortable with interfacing with a police officer, I am happy to strategize with you to develop a personalized safety plan.
- Harassment- Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status, or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776.
- Wellness If you are not feeling well request a ZOOM link in a timely manner to participate in the class virtually.