“Science and medicine should be studied to better understand how, in all cultures, forms of power shape perceptions of gender in relation to many other differences.”

Instructors

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Welcome to  
We are excited to continue the Gender in Medicine selective for its third year. This course is designed to introduce the importance of gender and sexuality impact disease processes and clinical outcomes. We hope you will join us in this effort to broaden our horizons as humanistic physicians!

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Course Description

Gender is a complex phenomenon that includes the roles and characteristics of individuals that are socially, culturally and historically constructed. Our gender identity impacts our health and acts as a determinant of access and adherence to care, a notion recognized by leading health organizations such as the WHO, UN, and NIH. Yet medical literature often fails to appropriately address gender or relates inaccurate information through misuse of terminology. This course provides a foundation in gender studies with exploration of several topics that intersect modern medicine. This experience offers a unique gender perspective on patient care and serves to enhance the development of well-rounded physicians.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:
  1. Build upon foundation in gender studies and become well versed in gender terminology.
2. Understand gender as a social determinant of health.
3. Challenge scientific objectivity and critically appraise literature for sex and gender differences.
5. Understand health issues faced by transgender and intersex patients.

**Topics by Week**

*Articles will be emailed before class. Pre-reading is encouraged but not required.*

### Session 1- Introduction to Gender Studies

**Topics:** Gender disparities for aspiring physicians. We will discuss disparities faced by medical students, residents, and licensed physicians.

**Readings:**
- *Egg and Sperm: A Scientific Fairytale* by Emily Martin
- *The “Gender Gap” in Authorship of Academic Medical Literature — A 35-Year Perspective,* by Reshma Jagsi et al.
- *Medical Professions: The Status of Women and Men; Center for Research in the Professions*  
  *The Biological Connection, Anne Fausto Sterling*

### Session 2- Scientific objectivity and the illness experience through a gender lens; Reproductive Rights.

**Topics:** Gender stereotypes that interfere with proper patient care. We will discuss various pathologies, which physicians may attribute to one sex more so than the other, or be less inclined to make a diagnosis of based on the gender of a patient. We will also discuss the complex intersection between gender and other individual identifiers.

**Readings:**
- *Gender Disparities in Healthcare, Jennifer Kent et al.*
- *Boys, Men, and Eating Disorders,* by Jane Jankowski
- *WHO; Gender and Women’s Mental Health*
- *Reproductive Rights,* by Angela Davis
- *Framing Health Matters; The problem with the Phrase Women and Minorities: Intersectionality- an Important Theoretical Framework for Public Health,* by Lisa Bowleg

**Media:**
- *FDA approves 'female Viagra' with strong warning; Toni Clarke; video with Katie Couric*  
  *Killing Us Softly 4*

### Session 3- The Gender Spectrum, Intersexuality

**Topics:** We will discuss the issues and implications surrounding sexual reassignment surgery for intersex children. We will also discuss the transgender population, gender dysphoria, and the challenges and costs these individuals face in seeking medical care.

**Readings:**
- *How to Build a Man,* by Anne Fausto-Sterling
- *Consensus statement on Management of Intersex disorders, Peter A. Lee et al.*
- *Health care problems of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender patients,* by Rita Lee

**Media:**
Session 4- Reflections and Presentations

Topics: On the last day each student will have the opportunity to present a brief overview of a topic of his/her choice relating to gender in medicine.

Evaluation

1. Attendance and active participation in discussion.
2. Completion of a Gender Lens Tool* chart highlighting one medical condition of your interest.
   a. Site a minimum of one reference highlighting sex or gender differences for your topic of choice with evaluation.
   b. Brief 10-minute presentation on completed chart during final session.

*Developed by A. Day, University of Toronto