How does foregrounding gender and sexuality enhance our understanding of globalization and transnational processes? From earlier approaches that focused on the ways in which globalization affected women, scholarship has moved toward theorizing the ways in which gendered and sexual dynamics underpin global relations—in other words, studying not just how globalization shapes gender and sexuality, but also how gender and sexuality shape globalization. Using this shift as a starting point, this course examines recent scholarship, primarily in qualitative sociology, on gender, sexuality, and transnational relations.

The course is organized into four parts. In the first part of the course, we develop a theoretical toolkit for making sense of the relationships between gender, sexuality, and globalization, and reflect on the methodological possibilities for putting such a toolkit into practice. In the second part of the course, we read studies of transnational processes that focus on a single case. In these studies, scholars use an in-depth understanding of the “local” to make sense of a global phenomenon. In the third part of the course, we move into the tradition of comparative ethnography, looking at ways in which scholars have used comparative case studies to illuminate a single topic. Finally, we move into studies that explicitly foreground transnational processes using qualitative research. We will also consider, throughout the course, how understanding histories of colonialism and imperialism may hone our thinking about transnational dynamics today.

Throughout the course, we will pay attention to the ways in which feminist and queer theory outside sociology have shaped sociological thinking, while focusing primarily on work by sociologists. While we will read some studies that place the United States in global context, most of the work we read will focus on Asia, Latin America, and Africa. By exposing you to a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives on gender and transnationalism, the course seeks to prepare you to envision in-depth research of your own that puts transnational perspectives into practice.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain major theoretical concepts sociologists of gender and sexuality have used in studying comparative and transnational contexts, and articulate the relative benefits of each to empirical research
- Relate, where relevant, sociological works on gender and sexuality to the broader interdisciplinary fields of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies and queer theory
- Discuss, write, and ask questions about gender and sexuality with insight and precision
- Become familiar with recent qualitative research on gender and sexuality in transnational contexts
- Develop a research paper with a transnational approach and position it effectively in sociological literature on gender and sexuality
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This is a graduate-level course. The course requirements depart from the assumption that you are here because you want to be here. I trust you to invest your full energy into readings, discussions, and written assignments for this course. That’s the most important thing. But, more concretely, your grade is based on your meeting the following requirements:

- **Attendance and Participation (30%).** You should come to class ready to engage: to discuss and develop ideas with your peers. I will spend very little time lecturing, so the success of the course is in your hands. The easiest way to prepare yourself for meaningful participation is to read. Don’t skim, don’t just read the first few pages, don’t read a Wikipedia article. Read and re-read, mark it up, and think about it. This is a reading-based course, and you are expected to read an average of 300 pages a week. If you really do all that reading, it’s unlikely that you’ll be left with no questions or comments. Speaking comfortably about sociological writings is an important part of your graduate education. My role is to make sure to create an environment that is safe and inclusive for discussion, and I take that responsibility very seriously. I will generally open class by giving everyone an opportunity to raise a few key questions and comments; these will guide our discussion and ensure that everyone shares thoughts at least once. If any of this terrifies you for any reason, I encourage you to come and talk to me about it one-on-one.

- **Short Essays (20%).** Four times this semester, you will submit a short (1-2 page, single-spaced) essay about the readings for the week. You’ll submit the essay on Latte in a public forum by noon the day of class. I encourage you to read others’ essays before class; you may also refer to and respond to others’ essays in your own essay or in class discussion. The aim of the essay is to push you to distill and refine your reactions to the reading before we discuss it as a group. Ideally, your essays will become long-term resources for you. Your colleagues’ essays may become resources for you too—seeing ideas expressed through others’ words can elevate your own understanding.

- **In-Class Presentations (20%).** You will be responsible for two presentations during the semester. You are required to give one 10-minute presentation about the reading for the week. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for presentations in the second week of class. The goal is to provide an opening and set the agenda for the rest of the class. The presentation helps to get us all on the same page, remind ourselves of the basic contours of the argument, and introduce initial critiques and questions. I don’t expect pyrotechnics; just background on the authors, a clear summary, 3-5 thoughtful, nuanced discussion questions, and a commitment to taking an especially active role in the day’s discussion. You may want to prepare a handout before class; if you email it to me by noon the day of the presentation I can print copies for the group. You may work in a pair if you choose. In addition, once during the semester, you will sign up to provide a 5-minute critique of the day’s readings. A critique need not be “negative” or “positive”; instead, it provides a careful assessment of a piece of scholarship.

- **Final Research Paper (30%).** At the end of the semester, you will submit an 18-20 page research paper related to the questions and topics of the class. I expect you to be thinking about your final paper early in the semester, and after the February break we will hold a discussion in class of your evolving ideas about your paper. The paper should, ideally, be something useful to you—the groundwork for a new project, an application of literature to data you have already collected, an original synthesis or critical re-evaluation of existing literature. It should not be something you pull together at the last minute, turn in, and never look at again; it should be something you continue to work on, ideally on a path toward publication. The final paper is due on May 10th, 2018.
**Course Policies**

**Office Hours.** If you are unable to attend my office hours, feel free to email me to set up an appointment. Please come and see me at least once. It really helps.

**Academic Integrity.** Don’t plagiarize. If you feel overwhelmed by the material or by an assignment, come and see me instead. The University’s policy on academic integrity can be found in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* at http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/sdc/rr/. Plagiarism can carry severe consequences, including failing the course and/or suspension.

**Classroom Environment.** We will discuss difficult topics in this class, and it will take all of our trust, sensitivity, and maturity to create an inclusive and safe environment for conversation. Please remember that your classmates have a range of experiences and be thoughtful when you speak and listen. If you have any concerns about your ability to participate actively in class, because of personal experience, trauma, or something else, please do not hesitate to talk with me about it—the earlier in the semester, the better.

**Communication.** I will communicate any changes to the syllabus and schedule to you by email, through Latte. You are responsible for keeping on top of any announcements.

**Accommodations.** If you have been issued a letter of academic accommodation from Disabilities Services and Support, please see me in the first two weeks of the semester to work out the necessary arrangements. If you need an accommodation and have not yet obtained one, please set up an appointment with Beth Rodgers-Kay (brodgers@brandeis.edu), in the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Office (x63470, access@brandeis.edu).

**Expectations.** Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study per week in preparation for class.

**Readings.** All readings marked with an asterisk (*) below will be uploaded to Latte. In addition, the following required books will be available at the bookstore and placed on reserve at the library.


Thayer, Mille. 2009. *Making Transnational Feminism: Rural Women, NGO Activists, and Northern Donors in...*

**Course Schedule**

**Part I. Terms and Methods**

1/10 “Missing Revolutions” and Alternatives


1/17 Gender, Transnational Labor, and Ethnographic Method


**Part II. The Global Case**

1/24 Masculinities, Femininities, and AIDS in East Africa


1/31 Gender and War


Part III. Comparative Cases

2/7 Transnational Labor


Lee, Ching Kwan. 1998. *Gender and the South China Miracle.* Berkeley: University of California Press. [Chapter 1]*


2/14 Gender, Sexuality, and the State


**MIDTERM RECESS**

Part IV. Studying Transnationality

2/28 Domesticity and Empire

**FINAL PAPER TOPIC PARAGRAPH AND INITIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE**


3/7 Transnational Feminist and LGBTQ Activism


Altman, Dennis. 1996. “Rupture or Continuity? The Internationalization of Gay Identities.” *Social Text* 48: 77-94.*
3/14 Gender, Sex, and Finance


3/21 Global Masculinities


3/28 Sexuality, Nation, and Globalization


SPRING RECESS

4/11 Migrations


4/18 Wrap Up

4/25 NO CLASS (BRANDEIS FRIDAY)
FINAL PAPER DUE THURSDAY, MAY 10TH, 2018