

Kinesiology 500V Seminar: Gender and Culture in the Gym

Winter semester, 2021. On line, canvas and zoom,

Instructor: Dr Patricia Vertinsky, School of Kinesiology

Class Schedule Monday 1 pm - 4 pm, January 11 – April 12, 2021

This seminar is a graduate research and writing workshop designed to explore physical activity and health behaviours among Asian females in North America, with a special focus upon East Asian students at Universities and Colleges. The course will take place on-line using zoom and canvas, and consist of a variety of readings, group discussions, workshops and presentations.

The recent virus emergency and growing calls for great inclusivity has alerted us that Universities with growing international student populations may need to add more cross-cultural content into their curriculum and fitness programs, increase awareness of cultural differences on campus and provide access to information that might remove physical activity participation barriers. This course will explore cultural aspects of physical activity and health behaviours among East Asian female students from a variety of perspectives. It will examine levels of access (real and perceived) to fitness and sports facilities with the aim of developing a set of research and/or position papers. This collaboration will train students to conduct culturally sensitive focused research activities, collaborate with managers in place, co-author one or more research papers and policy documents and/or develop prescriptions (in line with current offerings) for more culturally sensitive health, fitness and sport offerings on college and university campuses (and other similar environments).

Course requirements and expectations

Assessments:

Major graded assignments.

In class participation – 10%

The course is set up as a collaborative seminar and my expectation is that students will come to class prepared to participate fully in conversation and perspectives. **10% of the grade** will be based on in-class participation. Throughout the semester I will be asking you to participate in a range of activities such as speaking for several minutes about a reading/issue/experience. These activities, in conjunction with your general level of interest/contribution to discussions will be used to formulate your grade.

The first word (20%)

Each student will be asked to start one seminar with the ‘first word’; this might entail you discussing the suggested readings related to the day’s class, and/ or providing some sort of interesting real-life example that you can demonstrate related to the topic of the week and your own training, background and interests. The ‘first word’ should take 15 - 20 minutes and is intended to be a point of departure for further class discussion. No written work is required for the ‘first word’ beyond notes that you might make for your own use.

Reflections 20% (2 x 10%)

During this course, you will be asked to write up 2 responses to specific modules. Critical reflection pushes you to engage with the material at a deeper level than simply reading and/or taking notes. Throughout the semester (2 times) you will be asked to come to class with a reflection related to the week's readings, discuss it with a peer, and turn it in after class. Your reflections should be approximately 2 -3 pages double spaced and should engage with the material at a deeper level than just a summary of a particular reading. Beyond these requirements you have a great deal of latitude. You may write about how an idea from the readings challenges how you previously thought about an issue, or you may try to apply an idea to a research situation of your interest or an everyday experience. You may discuss how the readings for the current week related to something we discussed earlier in the course. Or you may articulate how a particular idea or concept remains unclear or confusing. You do not have to cover or touch upon all the readings for the week, but rather pull out a key idea, theme or concept that is of interest to you and your particular background.

Presentation 10% for presenting final paper or discussion of your project

Final papers 40% For group (or individual) papers. (In relation to group papers, each member will provide information relative to their own contribution).

The final output for the course for each of you consists of either an individual paper or project, or work on a multi-authored journal article; these will focus upon theoretical and/or practical approaches to East Asian females and physical activity, and will be aimed at distinct audiences/journals. Students will decide whether to develop their own paper and/or which article they wish to contribute to depending on their background knowledge and interest. They may also opt to develop a practical paper focused upon quality assurance practices in promoting physical activity and cultural sensitivity.

Schedule and Class Readings

Jan 4 Introduction to the course

Module 1: Describing the objects of inquiry: cultural, scientific, spatial, gender, performance and training issues, perspectives, challenges of sensitivity, data collection.

Each class will consist of various combinations of short lectures, individual responses to readings, small group discussions and presentations, and on-line talks from expert visitors.

The proposed output for the course consists of individual papers, and/or or work on one or more multi-authored journal articles; these will focus upon theoretical and/or practical approaches to studies related to East Asian females and physical activity (or similar focus to be discussed with instructor), and will be aimed at distinct audiences/journals/ quality improvement practices.

Students will decide whether to develop their own paper and/or which group article they wish to contribute to dependent on their background knowledge and interest.

Jan 11 Techniques of the body: Current data and analyses related to Asian females and physical activity.

Module 2

Class discussion on Mauss's *Techniques of the Body* as forerunner to Pierre Bourdieu's theories on habitus. Followed by analysis of Yan and Cardinal project findings.

Class Readings:

Mauss, Marcel. "Techniques of the Body." *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (February 1, 1973): 70–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147300000003>.

Zi Yan & Bradley J. Cardinal (2013) Perceptions of Physical Activity Participation of Chinese Female Graduate Students: A Case Study, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 84:3, 384-396, DOI: 10.1080/02701367.2013.813895

Rodrigues, Nathan Joo, Richard V. Reeves, and Edward. "Asian-American Success and the Pitfalls of Generalization." *Brookings* (blog), April 20, 2016.

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/asia-american-success-and-the-pitfalls-of-generalization/>

RJ Gilmour, D. Bhandar, J. Heer and M.C.K. Ma (eds)., *Too Asian? Racism, Privilege and Post-Secondary Education* (Canada: Between the Lines, 2012).

Jan 18 Culture and Gender in the development and promotion of physical culture

Module 3

'First word' and focused discussion around different aspects of cultures and gender in relation to physical activity promotion.

Class Readings:

David Wiggins, the Color of My Writing, Reflections on Studying the Interconnection among Race, Sport and American Culture, *Journal of Sport History*, 43,3, 306-320.

Niko Bernier, Susan Brownell and Thomas Carter, Sport and Sex, Gender and Sexuality, in *The Anthropology of Sport, Bodies, Borders*, University of California Press, 20018, Ch 5, pp146-157.

Susan Brownell, Sex, the Body and History in Chinese and Western Sports, in *Training the Body for China,: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic*, University of Chicago Press, 1995, ch 8 213-237.

Jan 25 The influence of space and place: Gender meets culture in the gym

Module 4

'First word' and focused discussion on the influence of space and place upon gender and physical activity participation. (examples, Hong Kong: physical activity determinants at the crossroads of east and west; UBC report on space and physical activity; culture meets gender in the gymnasium.

Class readings: Stephanie E. Coen, Mark W. Rosenberg, and Joyce Davidson. "'It's Gym, like g-y-m Not J-i-m': Exploring the Role of Place in the Gendering of Physical Activity." *Social*

Science & Medicine 196 (January 1, 2018): 29–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.10.036>.

Laura Spielvogel, “The Discipline of Space,” in *Working out in Japan: Shaping the Female Body in Tokyo Fitness Clubs* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2003), Ch 2, 61-84.
<https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384809-007>.

Huan Xiong, “The Construction of Women’s Social Spaces through Physical Exercise in Urban China.” *Sport in Society* 22, no. 8 (August 3, 2019): 1415–32.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1614919>.

Feb 1 Muscularity and the gendered body: East vs West

Module 5

‘First word’ and discussion around; Why do men desire muscles? Cultural preoccupations with muscularity and the female body, Is muscularity a peculiarly Western preoccupation?

Class Readings: Wacquant, Loïc J.D. “Review Article: Why Men Desire Muscles,” *Body & Society* 1, no. 1 (March 1, 1995): 163–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X95001001010>.

Jan and Terry Todd, The Conversion of Dr Peter Karpovich, *Iron Game History*, 8,4,4-12.

Patricia Vertinsky, Muscularity and the Female Body, in *Venus with Biceps: A Pictorial History of Muscular Women*, Chapman, David L., and Patricia Anne Vertinsky (Vancouver: Arsenal Press, 2010).

Shigehisa Kuriyama “in *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine*. (Preface” (7-14) and “Muscularity and Identity” (111-151)

Feb 8 Cultural issues related to body shape, size, and fat shaming

Module 6

‘First word’, ppt on Embodying Normalcy, and group discussion around cultural preferences for size, body shape and the effects of fat shaming

Class readings: Jaime Schultz, “Reimagining Obesity.” *Quest* 69, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 236–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2016.1218777>

Laura Spielvogel, “Selfishly Skinny or Selflessly Starving,” in *Working out in Japan: Shaping the Female Body in Tokyo Fitness Clubs* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2003), 174–205. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384809-007>.

Anna Lora-Wainwright, “Fatness and Well-Being,” In *The Body in Asia*, edited by Bryan S. Turner and Zheng Yangwen, (eds.), (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 113–26.

Feb 15-19 READING WEEK

Feb 22. Exercise is medicine – whose medicine, whose exercise?

Module 7

'First word' and general discussion on 'exercise is medicine' and its focus in kinesiology . How do we understand the blurring between TCM and Western biomedicine in relation to exercise? What can we learn from studies blurring these perspectives?

Class readings: Anne Harrington, "Eastward Journeys," in *The Cure Within: A History of Mind-Body Medicine* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 205-242.

Shannon Jette and Patricia Vertinsky, "'Exercise Is Medicine': Understanding the Exercise Beliefs and Practices of Older Chinese Women Immigrants in British Columbia, Canada," *Journal of Aging Studies*, Special Section: Age and the Cultivation of Place, 25, no. 3 (August 1, 2011): 272–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2010.10.001>.

Jack Berryman, "Exercise Is Medicine: A Historical Perspective," *Current Sports Medicine Reports* 9 (July 1, 2010): 195–201. <https://doi.org/10.1249/JSR.0b013e3181e7d86d>

[Walter R Thompson, Worldwide survey of fitness trends for 2020, *ACSM Health and Fitness Journal*, 23,6,20201-18.]

March 1. Views on exercise, fitness practices and the Asian female body

Module 8

'First word' and examination of cultural approaches to fitness practices for the Asian female body; special focus on cultural issues related to menstruation, pregnancy and exercise.

Class readings: Shannon Jette, Patricia Vertinsky and Cara Ng, Balance and Biomedicine: How Chinese Canadian Women Negotiate Pregnancy Related Risk and Lifestyle Directives, *Health, Risk and Society*, 16,no 6,Aug 18, 2014,494-511.

Ainslie Keller and Katie Heinrich, A Selective Review of prenatal exercise guidelines since the 1950s until present. Written for women, health care professional and female athletes. *Women Birth*, 2015.

Wendy Frisby, "Promising Physical Activity Inclusion Practices for Chinese Immigrant Women in Vancouver, Canada." *Quest* 63, no. 1 (February 2011): 135–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2011.10483671>.

Holly Blake, Betsy Lai, Emil Coman, Jonathan Houdmont, and Amanda Griffiths, "Move-It: A Cluster-Randomised Digital Worksite Exercise Intervention in China: Outcome and Process Evaluation," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 18 (September 2019). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16183451>.

March 8 Examining the Campus climate: Leadership, inclusivity and organizational issues in exercise promotion and fitness programs

Module 9

"First word' and discussion of campus climate as it effects physical activity; barriers to and opportunities for change. Focus on potential for inclusivity and equity

Class readings: Malinda S. Smith, with K. Gamarro and M. Toor, A Dirty Dozen: Unconscious Race and Gender Bias in the Academy, in Frances Henry et al., *The Equity Myth, Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. UBC Press, 2017, Ch 11, 263-296.

M. Danford and P. Donnelly, Racial Representation in Canadian Inter-University Sport: a pilot study. U of Toronto, Faculty of PE and Health, May 2018.

Julie J. Park, Nida Denson, and Nicholas A. Bowman, “Does Socioeconomic Diversity Make a Difference? Examining the Effects of Racial and Socioeconomic Diversity on the Campus Climate for Diversity.” *American Educational Research Journal* 50, no. 3 (June 2013): 466–96. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831212468290>.

Mar 15 Exploring the effects of covid19 on exercise and fitness practices **Module 10**

‘First word’ and discussion regarding effects of covid on current institutional climate and problems re exercise promotion programs ; Opportunities opened by covid experiences; sharing of ideas and projects.

Class Readings: Samuel M. Clevenger, Doing Nothing during Covid 19 Suspension of Sport, *Engaging Sports* March 26, 2020.

Peter Donnelly, Simon Darnell and Bruce Kidd, Social Policy Tool for Community Sport and Sport for Development in response to Covid 19.

Mar 22 Discussions and Writing workshops /presentations

Module 11 Discuss objectives for writing collective interdisciplinary papers/policy reports; required elements in developing research articles/projects; working in small groups to share individual work or support partnership work.

Class Readings: Gunilla Oberg, Facilitating Interdisciplinary work : Using quality assessment to create common ground. *Higher Education*, 2009, 57, 405-415.

Editorial, Qualitative Interviews in sport and physical activity research: do not forget the body. *European Journal for Sport and Society*, 16, 1, 1-4, 2019.

Mar 29 Presentations, group feedback, discussions

Module 12 Individual or group presentations; Class feedback and support

April 5 Presentations, Future directions

Module 13 Individual or group presentations, class feedback, plans for completion, target and submission, critical reviews.