



Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 628

Gender and Sexuality (Revision 8)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision ✕

Delivery mode:

Paced study [↗](#)

Credits:

3

Area of study:

Arts

Prerequisites:

Completion of **MAIS 601** is recommended; others should discuss prior academic experience with the course professor.

Precluded: None

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences [↗](#)

Notes: Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Brightspace site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

Overview

MAIS 628: Gender and Sexuality introduces students to the theories and empirical research that form the backbone of gender and sexuality studies. The course directly challenges the sociopolitical imperative that there are but two biological sexes and that heterosexual desire and practice are the norms against which all other desires and practices are measured and found to be “deviant.” The course invites a critical examination of the two-sex binary order and the ways in which this order is reproduced but also resisted through feminine, masculine, queer, and trans performances of identity. It also pays attention to the intersections of gender and sexuality with other social identities such as race and (dis)ability.

Outline

Unit 1: Biology, Binary Thinking, and Its Discontents

Unit 2: The Invention of Sex: Histories and Genealogies

Unit 3: Theorizing Sex and Gender and Intersectionality

Unit 4: Doing Cis Femininities

Unit 5: Doing Cis Masculinities

Unit 6: Sex and Desire

Unit 7: Making Things Perfectly Queer

Unit 8: Trans Matters

Note: The Study Schedule subdivides the thematic units into weekly study periods.

Learning outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to

- develop a clear understanding that sex, gender, and sexuality are not rooted in biology but are socially constructed categories;
- provide an overview of the historical and social changes in the understanding of sex, gender, and sexuality in Western culture since the Middle Ages;
- recognize and demonstrate some of the ways in which gender and sexuality intersect with other socially constructed categories such as race, ethnicity, Indigeneity, class, and (dis)ability;
- provide examples of performances of cis femininity and cis masculinity and explain how these reproduce and/or challenge the two-sex binary order;

- illustrate the disruption of the two-sex binary order through queer and transgender theory and identity; and
- draw on the theories and empirical research presented in this course and apply them to mediated and real-world scenarios.

Evaluation

To receive credit for this course, students must participate in the online activities, successfully complete the assignments, and achieve a final mark of at least C- (60 percent). Students should be familiar with the Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies **grading system** [↗](#). Please note that it is the students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of F in one course, or a grade of C in more than one course, might be required to withdraw from the program.

You will be evaluated on your understanding of the concepts presented in the course and on your ability to apply those concepts. Your final grade in the course will be based on the marks achieved for the following activities.

Activity	Weight
Online Participation	15%
Short Essays	25%
Research Proposal	15%

Activity	Weight
Gender Journal	10%
Research Essay	35%
Total	100%

Materials

All materials are available online.

Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 8, October 14, 2025

Updated August 27, 2026

View **previous revision** 
